

Service-Learning Program

Volume 3, Issue 3

February, 2009

Information for the Service-Learning Community!

A Note from the Service-Learning Staff

Service-Learning...

- ◆ *Integrates classroom theory with practical experience*
- ◆ *Enhances leadership skills*
- ◆ *Encourages active community commitment*
- ◆ *Increases awareness of social justice issues*



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Hello again!

If you have visited our campus recently you may have seen one or two of us walking around with the following quote from Margaret Mead written across our shirts: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." It seems that more and more of our students are accepting this statement as truth. Just take a look on page 2 to see the extent to which service-learning has had an impact written in plain numbers... more students, more hours, more of an impact!

A great fall semester is leading into what will be an even better spring semester. Many of the students have been enjoying their service-learning experiences and are already able to make some valuable connections to their academic work. Michelle Eberhard gives us an idea of the knowledge about the community she has gained through her service at the Dream Center on page 2.

Students have also been pursuing service-learning in new and exciting ways. Check out how service is incorporated into many of our study abroad programs and how the Bonner Foundation has helped both students and communities on page 3.

With such wonderful students and opportunities for serving the community, service-learning is bound to have an even bigger impact this semester!

CSB/SJU Service-Learning Staff,

Service in Peru: Confronting Poverty, Encouraging Change

Last semester, we interviewed Campus Ministry about their service trips over winter break. Paul Conroy supervised a trip to Chimbote, Peru from December 30, 2008 through January 12, 2009.

Paul's expectation for the trip was "all who go on this trip will come back to America changed... Help students gain a global perspective through travel in a foreign country, develop passion for service, [and] grow in their spirituality and relationship with God." This goal was greatly achieved, Paul says. "The group of participating students all came from various backgrounds of service, travel, and activity in social justice, yet all came away not with feelings of dejection and hopelessness after witnessing the acute poverty that is a reality, but of hope and determination to use their experience to grow, learn, and make change."

The students who attended the Peru mission trip

accomplished various short-term service projects. These projects were not the only aspects of the trip that convinced the students their involvement was worthwhile, it was the "interactions, conversations, and relationships formed with the people of Chimbote and those involved with the mission of Our Lady of Perpetual Help (the hosts), that really left a lasting impression." The growth and change was evident in the nightly reflections, Paul says. "I was impressed and heartened during our nightly group reflections to hear the students hash through the panoply of daily experiences they underwent, and voice their commitment of living lives more in solidarity with the poor of the world, as well as a starting point to use the privileges they have been blessed with in life to better not only their own lives, but the lives of those to whom such privileges are but a distant dream."

The Campus Ministry trip to Peru is a perfect example of the power of service.



The students involved have certainly come back with a changed perspective on poverty, as well as life. As poverty continues to grow in the United States, take time to remember the others going through similar challenges and ask yourself, "What can I do to serve or help my community?" You will always find an answer.

Brian Long

Service-Learning Academic Coordinator

Real Life Experience: Michelle Eberhard, CSB/SJU Junior

Every service-learning experience is unique. Michelle Eberhard, a Junior Peace Studies and French major, is currently serving at the Dream Center in St. Cloud, MN.

The mission of the Dream Center is to provide food and clothing to those in need as well as to provide prison ministry, minister to the sick, and provide shelter for the homeless while enhancing the spiritual well-being of each individual.

Michelle said that her service-learning experience has been different than she had expected. Her service opportunity at Dream Center is to sit at the front desk and to answer the telephone for incoming calls, either from the residents' families or potential employers. Although Michelle's service-learning involves sitting at the front desk, she has many opportunities to interact with the residents. "There

are people that I recognize that come over and talk to me for a little bit. Even if I have a five minute conversation with people before they walk out the door, it is nice."

When asked if serving at the Dream Center has challenged her, Michelle replied "Yeah, I think so. For me, it is hard to see what is going on, because you can read... about something, but giving them names and knowing what the situations are is different. It is hard because a lot more can be done but there [are] just not enough resources. I have normal interactions with people but you have to meet them at their level. This is so different from my daily life and you just have to think about that before you talk to them."

Jackie Carlson

Service-Learning Academic Coordinator



Pictured above: CSB/SJU Junior, Michelle Eberhard

(im)Measurable Service

Each semester, CSB/SJU students go into the community and give back in meaningful ways. While the amount of growth experienced by students and the benefit provided to those they work with is immeasurable, there are some things that we can put down in numbers. In Fall 2008, 276 students from 11 courses completed over 5,600 hours of service at 38 community partner sites in the Saint Joseph/Saint Cloud area. This spring, 326 students from 15 courses are completing service-learning projects with 45 community partners. We take pride in our students, faculty, and community partners and look forward to seeing their accomplishments made this Spring.

Service-Learning in Numbers

	Fall 2008	Spring 2009
Students	276	326
Courses	11	15
Sites	38	45
Hours	5,600	TBD!

Rebecca Peichel

Service-Learning Academic Coordinator

Bonner Love

What is Bonner Love?

Let me tell you!

The Bonner Foundation was started in the early 1990's by Bertram and Corella Bonner. This couple shared a passion for helping young adults go to college, those who otherwise would not have the means to do it. The national foundation they established provides service-based scholarships to young adults. Since its conception, The Bonner Foundation has offered scholarships to over 2,500 students from over 70 institutions around the nation.

The College of St. Benedict and St. John's University are working hard to implement The Bonner Leaders Program on our campuses. The Bonner Leaders Program is a very prestigious national, service-oriented program for college students, aiding in the development of leadership, professional and personal skills.

Our team

Marah Jacobson-Schulte, Director, Bonner Program, and Service-Learning Coordinator; Lindsey Cermak (junior), Senior Bonner Intern; Stacey Endres (senior); Ashley Aggen (sophomore); Victoria Yamry (sophomore); Molly Peterson (sophomore); Jackie Carlson (first year); Adia Zeman (first year); Brian Long (first year)

Getting Started

On the weekend of January 23rd, our team of 8 Bonners had our orientation! On that Friday night, we interacted with 5 wonderful community partners through our own version of "Speed Networking."

Stacey Lund, Director of the Fast Forward Youth Program, Jo Ellen Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator at St. Benedict's Senior Community, Christine Kustelski, Unit Director of Southside Boys & Girls Club, Mary Kay Hawkins, Housing Manager at Arlington Place, and Suzy Amundson, Social Services Coordinator at Reach-Up Inc./Head Start, were there to share with the Bonners through one-on-one conversations things such as the nature of their work, how they got to where they are now and the most important things they have learned through their service. Being on campus too much can make students forget about what's happening in "the real world," so it was beneficial for the Bonners to get an idea of what kinds of service opportunities there are in our broader community.

The following morning, Mary Kay Hawkins and the residents at Arlington Place, a home for the elderly, hosted our team for a service project. We made 8 tie blankets with the residents and packaged them in gift bags containing a baby bib, baby shampoo and a note of encouragement and advice from the residents. The Bonner team then delivered them to New Beginnings, a home for pregnant teen mothers who are in need of support during that vital time in their lives. It was great to bridge the generation gap for the morning—I know our Bonners loved it!

The Future

As stated earlier, our first team is comprised of 8 Bonners and our Director, Marah Jacobson-Schulte. We hope to select 10 Bonners from each incoming class over the next four years, making a grand total of 40 Bonners in our program. We want to build



upon the current relationships we have in the community so that our community partners will be hosting our Bonners. The goal is for each Bonner to grow in leadership, personal and professional skills, ideally at one site for all 4 of their college years. Right now, though, we are still in our "pilot" stages! We have a lot of work ahead of us, but I am confident that with the team we have we will accomplish great things. First, and foremost, though, we are working to spread the Bonner Love!

Lindsey Cermak
Service-Learning Academic Coordinator
Senior Bonner Intern

International Focus: Service Abroad

This semester, we will be taking a look at service and experiential learning abroad in multiple programs. We spoke with Peggy Retka, who is one of two education abroad advisors in the Office for Education Abroad. Retka has the responsibility of running half of the international education programs in addition to helping students decide where they will be going and assisting those returning to the United States with reentry. Retka has been with the Office for one and one-half years. When asked about service-learning opportunities abroad, Retka made a point to say that the South Africa program is the only program with a true service-learning component, while others offer volunteer or experiential learning opportunities.

Additionally, students on the South Africa program seem to self-select this program

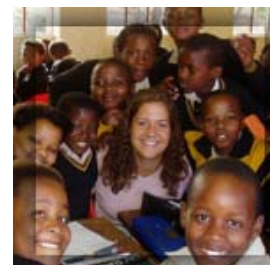
perhaps in part due to their strong desire to serve. The program has an eight hour per week service-learning requirement.

Although the South Africa program is the only program with an actual service-learning component, several other programs offer volunteer experiences. London, China, and Chile all have volunteer opportunities; Japan has English language learning volunteer opportunities, and the Guatemala program allows students to assist in primary education initiatives.

Retka believes that having an experiential learning or volunteer opportunity abroad helps students to "dig a bit deeper," and become more ingrained in the community in which they are studying. Likewise, having CSB/SJU students volunteer abroad helps to establish and strengthen connections between our institutions and our partnered institutions

abroad. Retka mentioned that the goal is to have an experiential learning component built-in to all study abroad programs, and also mentioned that she is working on creating a component for the Australia program right now. The future also holds a potentially brand new India program with a service-learning component modeled on the South Africa model.

Andy Kleinendorst
Service-Learning Academic Coordinator





Service-Learning Program

College of Saint Benedict

37 S. College Ave.

St. Joseph, MN 56374

Phone: 363-5256

E-mail: servlearn@csbsju.edu

Located in Upper Level

Murray 170

The Liemandt Family Service-Learning Program is committed to holistic learning by incorporating the classroom and community into the learning experience. It develops intentional and meaningful service experiences based in social justice and academic learning.

Engage, Reflect, Change.

We encourage, support and appreciate diversity in all of its forms. We strive to meet the specific needs of the community. We encourage students to engage in their community, reflect on their experience, and allow it to change their lives.

WE'RE ON THE WEB

WWW.CSBSJU.EDU/SERVICELEARNING

The Service-Learning Program

College of St. Benedict

Murray Hall 170

37 S. College Avenue

St. Joseph, MN 56374

Inspired Learning. *Inspiring Lives.*