

LSU Community Connections

Building Community-Classroom Partnerships Through Service-Learning

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SPRING 2008

More than 300 attend Chancellor's Showcase

Poster exhibits feature examples of outstanding service-learning and civic engagement projects

More than 300 guests joined LSU in a display of its commitment to community at the first Chancellor's Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Showcase in December in the Lod Cook Alumni Center.

The Showcase featured 48 poster exhibits of academic service-learning projects, extra-curricular civic engagement, and community-engaged research. LSU administrators, faculty, students, and community representatives attended.

The exhibits represented a wide range of engagement, from chemistry demonstrations to math and music tutoring in public schools to memoir writing for senior citizens.

"In its Commitment to Community Statement, LSU pledges 'to contribute positively to the life of the campus and the surrounding community,'" said Chancellor Sean O'Keefe. "As Louisiana's Flagship land grant university, it is our mission to serve the people of the state.

Service-learning and civic engagement help us to achieve that mission," he said to a crowded room of guests.

"One of LSU's goals is to produce enlightened citizens by fostering critical thinking, historic understanding, ethical reflection and cultural appreciation, and we see ample evidence of that here today," O'Keefe said.

Provost Astrid Merget commended students, faculty and community representatives committed to a "partnership

Merget told Showcase guests that the University seeks not only to prepare students for a career or advanced study but also to prepare students for responsible citizenship.

"We seek not only technically trained and analytically adroit graduates; we also seek graduates who are concerned about the world's problems and passionate about fixing them," she said.

"We seek productive and creative graduates who are enlightened, responsible and purposeful members of our community from the grassroots to the globe."

The Showcase featured models which pointed out the primary principle of effective community engagement—reciprocity, said Jan Shoemaker, director of the Center for Community Engagement, Learning, and Leadership, which organized the Showcase.

"Effective projects benefit both community and university; both sides are involved from planning to evaluation and both sides learn from each other.

"This was the first time that so many community partners, students, faculty, and administrators have come together to see the breadth and depth of civic engagement in our community. We were all energized by each other and we all learned from each other," she said.

"We seek productive and creative graduates who are enlightened, responsible and purposeful members of our community from the grassroots to the globe."

Provost Astrid Merget



Chemistry Professor George Stanley, left, explains the successful ChemDemo Program in K-12 schools to Chancellor Sean O'Keefe.

of learning and doing" that results from civic engagement. We at LSU believe that an integral part of education occurs outside the classroom in all sorts of learning communities, especially our own community," Merget said.

"We at LSU seek to impart not only knowledge and skills to our students but we also seek to encourage their purposeful use, application and impact."

Inside this issue

This issue contains descriptions of many of the service-learning projects displayed by LSU faculty and students in the recent Chancellor's Service-Learning Showcase.

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**CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT,
LEARNING, AND LEADERSHIP (CCELL)**

LE PAS: Lifetime Exercise and Physical Activity Service-Learning Program

Russell L. Carson, Kinesiology

Undergraduate physical education students have been part of a recently-established service-learning project devoted to addressing the physical and social needs of children affected by Hurricane Katrina.

This initiative has allowed kinesiology students to authentically experience course content while providing the children of Renaissance Village, the state's largest FEMA trailer village, with all-inclusive, interactive, fun-filled physical activities.

This initiative is the newest addition to an ongoing partnership between the LSU College of Education and the University of California-Berkeley.



Russ Carson displays his students' work.

Neighborhood Advocacy Project: Returning OSBR Oral Histories

Priscilla D. Allen, Social Work

Fifty-four graduate Social Work students resolved an ongoing university-community dispute about the ownership and housing of 210 oral history tapes through the Community University Partnership. The oral histories were abstracted, archived, and returned to Carver Library in the Old South Baton Rouge community. The partner agency was a neighborhood organization near LSU composed primarily of residents who participated in the original oral history project.

Service-Learning in a Large Enrollment General Education Course: Learning Math, Civic Engagement, & Having Fun

Robert Perlis, Math

Students in Math 1100 "The Nature of Mathematics" work as tutors in local elementary schools, compose written reflections on their experiences, and share their experiences in weekly class discussions. The students develop civic pride and responsibility and also gain a deeper understanding of how mathematical thinking is useful in daily life.

The Summer Experience, the "Book," and Food Fundamentals

Judy Myhand, Human Ecology

Dietetic students in Food Fundamentals (HUEC 2014) worked with McKinley High students to teach nutrition and to model healthful food preparation methods and food safety. They planned cooking experiences, developed handouts to encourage nutrition education, and helped in the food lab and grocery store tour.

Students also worked with food distribution sites and the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank to develop and produce a comprehensive, culturally appropriate, easy to read and use cookbook for distribution with food boxes.

Integrating Undergraduate Biology Research Opportunities with Community Engagement

David Brown, Biological Sciences

Students in an upper-division undergraduate ecology laboratory course conducted environmental research on-site in partnership with Baton Rouge Parks and Recreation Commission. Students were able to apply knowledge they gained in the classroom and in class readings in a real-world situation to address issues of invasive plant species management.



From left, English students Jared Muth, Reagan Mann, and Yesenia Medina, instructor Kristi Richard and partner Jan Muse.

Voices from the Halls

Kristi Richard, English

As part of an English composition course and in connection with the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History, students recorded the oral histories of eight retired Baton Rouge educators who live at Sterling Place or St. Clare Manor. Students provided companionship and used their interactions to write profiles, which were presented to the educators in a bound book. Through this project, students developed ideas about how education functions in our society, questioned master narratives recorded in history books, and discovered the ethical dilemma in telling others' stories.

Service-Learning in a Capstone English Literature Course: What Can Lit Majors Do?

Rick Moreland, English

Senior LSU English majors enrolled in a capstone English course worked weekly with eleventh-grade McKinley High students on related readings, writing, and discussion. This project allowed LSU English students to use their knowledge and skills to interpret and evaluate what was happening in the eleventh-grade class; reflect on the knowledge and skills they had acquired since they were eleventh-graders themselves; and plan how they would use their knowledge and skills in this eleventh-grade class and in their future careers. LSU students helped McKinley students produce a book of the high school students' art and creative writing.



From left, Provost Astrid Merget; student Christine Pyle; Marybeth Lima, 2007 Thomas Ehrlich Award winner; and CCELL Director Jan Shoemaker.

The Baton Rouge Playground Project

Marybeth Lima, Biological and Agricultural Engineering

This longitudinal program is an illustration of best practices for service-learning in a technical discipline. Biological engineering students work with students from local public schools to design playgrounds at the schools and participate in follow-up efforts to make these designs a reality.

The project goal is to design and build a safe playground for every parish public school, all of which will be accessible to children with disabilities and will incorporate the children's own creativity. For her work, Lima received the prestigious national 2007 Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service-Learning.

Educational Technology S-L Projects Enhance LSU Coastal Roots Program

Pam Blanchard and Yiping Lou, Educational Theory, Policy, & Practice

Two student groups in a graduate-level educational technology course (ELRC 7505) have created two Internet-based environmental science curriculum webs to enhance the educational objectives of the LSU Coastal Roots Program.

The webs focus on high school-level research regarding critical coastal issues and will benefit 18 pre-college schools across south Louisiana that participate in the LSU Coastal Roots Program.

Service-Learning and Theater: Collaborative Acts and Performative Results

Leigh Clemons, Theater

Honors college students in an Introduction to Theatre class create and perform original plays for students at local elementary schools. In addition, students develop engaging, interactive lesson plans on the various components of a theatrical production such as acting and set design and present these lessons to the elementary children.

Theory + Tutoring + Reflection

Deborah Normand, English

Composition theory students explained how tutoring at Dufrocq and Children's Charter elementary schools and rigorous reflection enabled them to understand difficult theoretical concepts in composition pedagogy. Students also gained a deeper insight into the systemic problems in East Baton Rouge Parish public schools.

Assessing Quality of Life among LGBTQ Residents of the Greater Baton Rouge Area

Elaine M. Maccio, Social Work

Students and faculty of SW 7807 partnered with Capital City Alliance of Baton Rouge to conduct research on the quality of life among LGBT residents in Greater Baton Rouge. Students met with CCA Board members to design a survey to collect data. They designed fliers to publicize the study and have begun to collect data at area churches and nightclubs. Students will create a statistical database and will present preliminary results to the CCA board.

Expanding the Service-Learning Paradigm through Undergraduate Research

Marsha Cuddeback & Frank Bosworth, Architecture

Undergraduate students in ARCH 4001 investigated the early learning environment in pre- and post-Katrina Orleans Parish. Their work included activities and papier-mâché props designed by the students to elicit responses from pre-school children regarding spatial preferences, motion studies, and on-site behavioral observation and analysis. In addition, the presentation includes their urban typology research, consisting in part of the inventory of every childcare center in Orleans Parish (currently 107 open facilities).



From left: Kevin Serrin, board chair of the Capital City Alliance, joins Social Work 7807 students Keisha Moore, Ashley Duplechain, Giselle Grisol, and Joy Parker, along with Elaine Maccio, faculty, School of Social Work.

ChemDemo Service-Learning Program

George G. Stanley, Chemistry

The ChemoDemo program sends LSU students to teach K-12 classes about chemistry and scientific concepts and to perform exciting hands-on demonstrations that reinforce the concepts. Since the program began in 1997, it has included more than 5,700 LSU students and catered to more than 2,800 classes impacting at least 75,000 K-12 students.

Connections through Writing

Sharon L. W. Andrews, English

English 1001 students work with Connections for Life, a community service agency which provides services for indigent women making the transition from dependent to independent living. The students' Showcase display highlighted their interactions with the women and how the experience influenced their writing and learning.

Building Family Structures in Modern Retirement Communities

James Honeycutt, Communication Studies

Undergraduate students in a cross-listed Sociology and Communication Studies upper-level course worked at Ollie Steele Burden Manor providing companionship for elderly residents. Students' observations and interactions with residents enriched their understanding of family systems theory concepts.

Expanding Boundaries of Graduate School Education through Community Engagement

S. Kim MacGregor, Educational Theory, Policy, & Practice

Students enrolled in a doctoral level course focused on qualitative research methodology work with community partners in the non-profit sector. Through first-hand experience, students can see how their research methodology skills contribute to effective and sustainable solutions to issues relevant to these community partners. Recent partners are individual school districts and Louisiana Delta Service Corps.



Sharon L. W. Andrews, center, of the English Department, joins students (from left) Bethany Waddell, Barbara Rodriguez, Meagan Rogers, Lorna Fitzjarrell, and Kyle Gahagan, who displayed their work with Connections for Life.

Service-Learning in a School-Based Instrumental Music Setting

James Byo, Music

Music Education majors joined fourth through eighth grade St. Jude School music students as performing musicians in a school instrumental music setting. St. Jude students benefited from the examples set by LSU students, and LSU students learned from students and their teachers in this authentic teaching and learning environment.

Ordinary Houses: Extraordinary Tales

Marsha Cuddeback & Frank Bosworth, Architecture

Students exhibited extraordinary tales of grassroots reconstruction, collaborative learning among diverse stakeholders in a non-traditional classroom environment, the capacity of partnerships to serve as a catalyst for positive change, and the subsequent development of a sustainable training-through-construction program that supports local economic development and serves neighborhoods in need. Students who participated in home design and construction in Fall 2007 shared their experiences with guests.

Making Neuroscience Simple by Promoting Metacognition

Jan Hondzinski, Kinesiology

Undergraduate Kinesiology students research, plan, and present an interactive fact-and-activity session with children in the local schools. The structure of the project is designed to promote reflective practices and experiential learning, resulting in metacognitive development. Although the material reviewed is specific to the development of a neural-related project, it also addresses general service-learning issues that might be of interest to those from many different fields.

Teen Court: Social Work Involvement in a Diversion Program

Carol Plummer, Social Work

Social Work service-learning students are partners in a community-wide effort to help first-time youth offenders. For three semesters, students have designed, implemented, and evaluated a psycho-educational group aimed to re-direct errant youth.

Allons Danser!: Collecting Cajun Jokes and Stories in an Introductory Folklore Course

Casey Kayser, English

Students in a Fall 2007 Introduction to Folklore class partnered with the Baton Rouge chapter of the Cajun French Music Association to collect folklore from Cajun individuals at the American Legion Hall Cajun dances on Friday nights. Students collected such items as jokes, foodway traditions or recipes, family stories, and social rituals. They compiled each of these into a book presented to the CFMA, which will be used as one of the organization's historic documents and for fundraising purposes. Students learned about the rich history and culture of Louisiana's Cajun population through their work in the class.

Working with Children of Crisis: Putting Theory to Post-Katrina Practice

Laura Jewett & Jola Smolen, Education

Delta Express, an initiative of the College of Education, has engaged 180 students and faculty in 2000 hours of service meeting the educational and social needs of children, youth, and adults living in Renaissance Village (RV). In conjunction with Delta Express, the EDUC 2000 service-learning course allows LSU students to engage emerging academic knowledge in the civic service of disaster relief through mentoring and tutoring RV children and youth.

Spay/Castration Wellness Program *Susan Eddlestone and Wendy Wolfson, Veterinary Medicine*

Faculty and students in the School of Veterinary Medicine perform spay/castration and wellness exams on shelter animals in southeast Louisiana. Through education for shelter staff and the public, the project promotes the human-animal bond and encourages post-graduate participation in shelters.

From left, Wendy Wolfson and Susan Eddlestone, faculty, School of Veterinary Medicine, and fourth-year students Kia Gray and Courtney Miani.



Horticulture Service-Learning Programs in the Local Baton Rouge Area *Carl Motsenbocker, Horticulture*

Horticulture classes focusing on organic gardening, vegetable crops, and Horticulture Science Education have worked with various schools, including University Terrace, Highland, Bernard Terrace, and Park Elementary schools, Glasgow Middle School, and McKinley High School.

Horticulture students also work with the local community in Old South Baton Rouge in conjunction with LSU Community University Partnership (CUP) to build school gardens, engaging public school students in the process.

Fostering Civic Engagement as a Value among LSU Honors Students

Mark Dochterman, Honors College

This presentation highlighted three programs: The Freshmen Service Project, in which 200 students participated in New Orleans building projects; FOCUS, a student organization that conducts a summer arts and humanities camp for outstanding 9th public school graders who attend schools with underfunded humanities programs; and Alternative Service Break, a student group that plans service trips during breaks. Service-learning students selected as FOCUS leaders took a course in which they learned the basics of the theory and practice that undergird the pedagogical approach.

Community Engagement of PK-3 Teacher Education Candidates

Cynthia DiCarlo & Renee Casbergue, Educational Theory, Policy, & Practice

Undergraduate students enrolled in a teacher certification program for preK-3rd grade are engaged in community activities from their entry into the program, which emphasizes the importance of advocacy for developmentally appropriate practices as a means to establish quality educational opportunities for young children. Students provided hundreds of hours of service in preschool and primary grades classrooms, organized the "No Child Left Indoors" festival, and rallied at the state Capitol for children's issues.

Utilizing LSU Students and Community Partners in the GEAR UP Project

Letrez Myer, GEAR UP Project

GEAR UP and LSU students partner with YWCA and Volunteers In Public Schools to offer tutoring, mentoring, counseling, financial aid, and other services to students and their parents at five local middle schools. A team of five case-managing advisors and five parent liaisons organize and resource out various services to students and their families.

Playgrounds as Instructional Spaces

Jennifer Jolly and Margaret-Mary Sulentic Dowell, Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice

Highland Elementary was the site for LSU students' professional education sequence courses in Block 1 (Spring 2007), where they painted a 30x35-foot U.S. map on the school playground. The map can be used in geography and related social studies and literacy instruction and to enhance the campus. LSU's goal was to engage in service-learning through literacy and social studies content-learning and to allow students to give back to the community.

Service-Learning to Promote Professional Development: Enhancing Workforce Knowledge and Skills among Louisiana Substance Abuse Counselors

Catherine Lemieux, Social Work

This graduate-level service-learning project was implemented in an elective course on addictive disorders (SW 7804). Course learning objectives focused on increasing knowledge about empirically-based interventions for addictive disorders, and demonstrating application of empirically-based knowledge to practical settings and critical thinking about literature on prevention and treatment.

CCELL**Center for Community
Engagement, Learning,
and Leadership****Service-Learning Program**

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CCELL's Mission

The Center embodies principles of excellence and fosters the scholarship of community engagement by integrating teaching, research, and service that emphasize civic responsibility and social accountability.

CCELL works with Louisiana State University faculty, students, administrators, and community partners to facilitate service-learning and strengthen LSU's commitment to being an exemplar of an engaged public research university.

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'Thank you' to our community partners

Abramson Science & Technology Charter
Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area
Arlington Preparatory Academy School
Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge
Association of Retarded Citizens
Baton Rouge Zoo
Bernard Terrace Elementary
Big Buddy
Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center
BR Recreation & Parks Commission
Broadmoor Elementary School
Broadmoor High School
Brusly Elementary School
BREC "Free Dreams" Teen Center
Buchanan Elementary School
Cajun French Music Association
Capital City Alliance
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Baton Rouge
Charlie's Place Respite Center
Children's Charter School
City at Peace
City of Lake Charles
Clinton Elementary School
Community University Partnership
Connections for Life
Council on Aging
Crestworth Middle School
Dufrocq Elementary School
EBR Recycling
EBR School System
EBR Parish Laboratory Academy
GEAR-UP
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren GBR
Food Bank
Habitat for Humanity
Highland Elementary School
Hope Ministries
Interfaith Federation of GBR
Jefferson Terrace Elementary School
Lake Sherwood Village
Lee High School
Leo S. Butler Center
Louisiana Children's Museum
Louisiana Coastal Roots
Louisiana Department of Social Services
Louisiana Junior Youth Orchestra
Louisiana School for the Deaf
Louisiana War Veterans Home
LSU Student Health Services
Magnolia Woods Elementary School
McKinley High School
McKinley Middle School
Melrose Elementary
New Beginnings Sexual Assault Center
NOAA Office of Response and Restoration
Office of Public Health and Science Region
Ollie Steele Burden Manor Nursing Home
Polk Elementary School
Prescott Middle School
Progress Elementary School
Reach Out and Read
Renaissance Village—FEMA trailer park
South Boulevard Elementary School
Southdowns Pre-K Center
SE Ministries: Broadmoor United Methodist
Spay Baton Rouge
St. Clare Manor Assisted Living
St. James Place Retirement Community
St. Jude School
St. Vincent de Paul
Sterling Place Assisted Living
Sulphur High School
T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History
Teen Court—Baton Rouge Bar Foundation
Twin Oaks Elementary
University Lab School
University Terrace Elementary School
Volunteer! Baton Rouge
Volunteer LSU
Volunteers in Public Schools
West Baton Rouge Parish Schools
Westdale Heights School
Westminster Elementary School
Williamsburg Senior Living Community
Women's Community Rehabilitation Center
WordPlay at Big Buddy Program
YWCA of Greater Baton Rouge

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