

LSU Community Connections

Building Community-Classroom Partnerships Through Service-Learning

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 1

WWW.CCELL.LSU.EDU

FALL 2008

LSU to host 2009 Gulf-South Summit on Service-Learning

Louisiana State University, with the Center for Community Engagement, Learning, and Leadership (CCELL), will host the 2009 Gulf-South Summit on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement through Higher Education in Baton Rouge on March 25-27 at the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center.

The 2009 Summit is expected to attract over 350 higher education staff, faculty, and community partners who are engaged in service-learning at colleges and universities throughout the Gulf-South. During the conference, service-learning practitioners from across the nation will present interactive workshops, poster sessions, and panel discussions on best practices of service-learning.

The 2009 Summit challenges participants to explore the theme of "Civic Engagement at the Crossroads: Rethinking Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities."

"Service can no longer be taken for granted, complicated by questions of who serves and who is served," said CCELL director Jan Shoemaker. "The 21st century challenges us to take seriously such possibilities as students as teachers, faculty as learners, and new models for community partners."

Conference attendees can choose to attend pre-conference workshops on March 25 led by national leaders in service-learning. Workshops include: "Navigating the Challenges of Tenure



and Promotion as an Engaged Scholar"; "Face to Face, Hat to Hat: Dialogue with Service-Learning Directors"; "Cultivating Students to be Agents of Change"; and "Service-Learning 201: Course Design for Experienced Practitioners."

Nationally respected service-learning leaders Patti Clayton, Lyvier Conss and Edward Zlotkowski will serve as the Summit's plenary speakers.

On March 28, participants can join LSU biological engineering professor Marybeth Lima on March 28 for a Saturday service project constructing a playground for children at University Terrace, a public school adjacent to LSU's campus.

"I anticipate special enthusiasm for this project, since it is being planned by Professor Lima, plenary speaker at last year's conference in Nashville and winner of the two most prestigious national awards for service-learning faculty: the

2007 Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service-Learning and the 2005 Ernest A. Lynton Award," Shoemaker said. "Participants will have an opportunity to hear about LSU's service-learning partnership with University Terrace, as well as tour LSU's campus."

This is the first time LSU will host the Summit.

"We are delighted that it is our turn to host now," Shoemaker said. "While it takes much time, energy, and collaboration to arrange an event of this size, hosting the conference will bring faculty from around the country to Baton Rouge, exposing them to the outstanding work of our faculty. The conference will advance LSU's efforts in recruitment and national recognition."

The Gulf-South Summit presents five awards recognizing the hard work and dedication of outstanding people and programs in the field of service-learning and community engagement in higher education. Award nominations are due November 17, 2008 and are accepted in the following

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Jan Shoemaker, CCELL Director

Practitioner Contributions, Community Partner Contributions, Faculty Contributions, Student Contributions, and Outstanding Service-Learning Partnership.

Individuals interested in more information on registration, awards, hotel accommodations, and agenda items should visit www.lsu.edu/summit09. Conference scholarships are available in the form of hotel accommodations and/or registration fees. ❖

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

“Connections for Life” Named Outstanding Community Partner at 2008 Gulf-South Summit

Connections for Life, a nonprofit agency providing opportunities for indigent women to become independent and productive members of the Baton Rouge community, won the 2008 Gulf-South Summit Award for Outstanding Community Partner Contributions to Service-Learning for its exceptional work with LSU English students.

Connections for Life Administrator Karen Stagg received the award, which also honored agency founder Myria Andre-Martin, at the 2008 Gulf-South Summit on Service-

Learning and Civic Engagement in Higher Education in Nashville, TN.

The Summit annually honors a community organization that has demonstrated excellence in creating, providing, and sustaining opportunities for engaging university students in service-learning.

For the past seven years, LSU service-learning students in Sharon Andrews' First-Year Writing and Introduction to Poetry classes have worked alongside women in the Connections for Life program. In their classroom, they read related poetry and then wrote, reflected, and discussed their experiences.

“Each year, nearly 200 of my students have worked in partnership with this agency to provide opportunities for indigent women who are dependent on ‘the system’ to become independent, productive members of the community,” Andrews said. “As a result, they have experienced first-hand the ways in which the written word reflects cultural realities and can be used as a means of empowerment.”

The residents and staff take an active part in the students' learning throughout the semester, visiting classes to share sto-

ries and information. At mid-semester, residents and staff are often there in the classroom with them, offering feedback.

“As further evidence of their commitment to our partnership, the staff encourages students to share ideas for the agency, demonstrating that students do indeed have a voice and impact on the daily life of this organization,” Andrews said. “Thus, students have another chance to learn about civic responsibility and about taking responsibility for their own learning.”

“The staff encourages students to share ideas for the agency, demonstrating that students do indeed have a voice and impact on the daily life of this organization.”

Sharon Andrews,
English Instructor



MAKING CONNECTIONS — *Karen Stagg of Connections for Life accepts the Outstanding Community Partner Award at the 2008 Gulf-South Summit.*

Each semester concludes with a Service-Learners' Appreciation Dinner where staff and residents prepare a feast for the students to celebrate their commitment to the service and learning that each has experienced. Besides presenting students with their own “Outstanding Student” Awards, residents personally express their appreciation for the students' willingness to be actively involved in the community.

“Last year, several of my poetry students asked if they could read original poems at the dinner that were inspired by their service-learning experience,” Andrews recalled. “The emotion that filled the room in response to their reading was clear evidence of the bond that had formed.” ❖

LSU Chancellor Supports Community Engagement

During the week of Sept. 29, new Louisiana State University Chancellor Michael V. Martin spoke to LSU faculty, staff, and students at a Campus Communicators meeting on Sept. 30 and at an open Chancellor's Forum on Oct. 1 in which he asserted his commitment to community engagement and its place as a part of LSU's Flagship Agenda.

Citing the covenant on engaged universities from the Kellogg Commission on the Future

of State and Land-Grant Universities, Martin told Campus Communicators that he believes LSU needs to redefine what “land-grant” means in the 21st century.

“The covenant about engaged universities from the Kellogg report has stuck in my head because I believe in it and believe the capacity is here at LSU,” Martin said. “I am convinced the University has the capacity to serve more constituents than on-campus students and I've become convinced that our community and state need this University to reach out to them. We can grow our population at LSU by serving our community and building bridges.”

At the Chancellor's forum, Martin expressed his desire to extend the “cultural footprint of the University” by reaching out to local neighborhoods and becoming an effective and positive force in the community.

“We need to find ways for the University to project itself into the community of Louisiana and touch lives that we haven't touched before,” Martin said. “The way we can distinguish ourselves is to be more important to our citizens.” ❖

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Michael V. Martin,
LSU Chancellor

Chemistry Course Highlights Importance of Research Skills

High school students at Robert E. Lee High School in Baton Rouge are experiencing a snapshot of college-level chemistry this semester by working with LSU Environmental Chemistry students on a joint poster project exploring the study of different spheres of the environment and the chemistry which takes place in them.

During the fall semester, LSU students and Lee High students will be working as teams to design posters comparing different research sources on environmental issues that are important to the local community.

LSU students will study peer-reviewed scientific literature on their selected topic and compare their findings to the information Lee High students gather from the internet and other mass media. The groups will then col-

laborate to design a poster comparing the scientific information with public knowledge widely available on the topic.

The course, CHEM 4051, is now in its third semester and is taught by LSU Professor of Chemistry Robert Cook in partnership with Lee High science in-



COMPARING NOTES—A team of LSU and Lee High School students study the differences between scientific and popular knowledge of environmental issues.

structor John Lappin's ninth and tenth grade students.

"The intention is for the LSU students to share their knowledge and enthusiasm for science, in general, and chemistry, in particular, with the high school students," Cook said.

During the semester, LSU students will visit the high school twice to collaborate with their high school group members to choose a topic, compare research, and design the poster.

"This teaching aspect benefits LSU students as they learn the subject matter

and, at the same time, have to explain its details to students who know and understand a lot less," Cook says.

Lee High students also will make a visit to LSU for additional group work near the end of the semester, and to tour the Chemistry Department laboratory facilities and meet faculty.

Cook says the skills LSU students develop as part of the course will be useful as they graduate and need to communicate scientific information to the general public, specifically information about environmental findings and their implications for public well-being.

Cook is hopeful that high school students who participate in the project are inspired to pursue a college degree.

"To see role models, such as successful university students, apply knowledge to study issues that affect everyone should motivate the high school students to study science with the purpose of going to college," he explains.

The project is also intended to increase the high school students' exposure to scientific issues that may not have been covered in school curricula.

For the culmination of the project, the LSU students will finalize the posters and present them to their peers. The high school students will vote on the best two posters, which will then be posted outside of the Chemistry classroom at Lee High. ❖

UPC Awards \$1,000 to Service-Learning Classes

Two service-learning classes in architecture and human ecology received \$1,000 Community Service Grants awarded by The University Presbyterian Church (UPC) to support partnerships between LSU students and community organizations that serve lower to moderate income communities in the areas of education, healthcare, or human services.

Architecture service-learning students worked with Glasgow Middle School to develop a portable solar lab and accompanying curriculum materials for science classes. The project was conducted in the Spring 2008 Community Design Practicum (ARCH 5008) and was initiated and developed by two fifth-year LSU School

of Architecture students, Jared de Jonge and Krista Kennedy, who also led the project. Marsha R. Cuddeback, director, Office of Community Design and Development in the School of Architecture, was the project supervisor.

Plans are for the portable solar lab to continuously migrate on a monthly basis throughout Louisiana and supplement traditional middle school curricula.

Graduate students in the Division of Textiles, Apparel Design, and Merchandising in the School of Human Ecology formed a partnership with St. Vincent de Paul during the spring 2008 semester to complete a service-learning project. Bonnie Belleau's Human Ecology 7043

graduate students worked with the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Baton Rouge.

Grants of up to \$1,000 each are awarded by UPC on a competitive basis until available funds are exhausted. Grants may be awarded to students who have existing partnerships with community organizations and a well-defined project in which they will engage during the semester, or they may be for students who want to develop a relationship with an organization, identify a need, and write a grant to meet that need during the semester. Faculty and students can apply.

To apply for a UPC community service grant, visit www.upcbr.org and go to the University Outreach link. ❖

Provost Presents 2008 TIAA-CREF S-L Faculty Awards

Two LSU service-learning faculty members active in the "Summer Experience" nutrition and gardening program for at-risk teens have been named 2008 TIAA-CREF awardees for their outstanding contributions to community engagement.

Carl Motsenbocker, professor in the School of Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences, has been named the 2008 TIAA-CREF Service-Learning Fellow, an award presented annually with the goal of deepening the level of the "scholarship of engagement" at LSU. TIAA-CREF presents the \$5,000 Service-Learning Fellow

Award to encourage a continued University-wide commitment to the scholarship of engagement.

Judy Myhand of the School of Human Ecology is the recipient of the 2008 TIAA-CREF Outstanding

Service-Learning Faculty Award for her exceptional and long-standing commitment to integrating quality service-learning activities in her nutrition courses and for her efforts to improve community health. TIAA-CREF presents the \$1,000 award



COOKING HEALTHY — TIAA-CREF Outstanding Service-Learning Faculty Award winner Judy Myhand instructs students in her "Summer Experience" nutrition class.

annually in recognition of an LSU faculty member who has demonstrated exceptional commitment to integrating quality service-learning activities in the classroom and/or throughout the LSU campus and community.

Both Motsenbocker and Myhand are active in the annual "Summer Experience," an eight-week urban agriculture program for at-risk high school students. Motsenbocker

and Myhand join other LSU faculty, student interns, Old South Baton Rouge

community leaders and volunteers to provide selected teens with leadership, teamwork and cooking skills, basic horticulture concepts and practices, and nutrition information.

As TIAA-CREF Fellow, Motsenbocker will strengthen his own scholar-

ship in his field and contribute to the body of knowledge related to service-learning and/or conduct research in community settings and involve community members in the design and implementation of research projects. Community-based re-

search provides information of direct benefit to the community involved.

He will also share service-learning-related research and mentor other faculty regarding principles of effective service-learning pedagogy. He plans to evaluate service-learning's effect on leadership and life



PLANTING SEEDS — 2008 TIAA-CREF Service-Learning Fellow Carl Motsenbocker demonstrates horticulture practices for students at Bernard Terrace.

skills, perceived teaching ability, environmental attitudes, and civic awareness.

Myhand's service-learning classes have worked with the GBR Food Bank to create healthy alternatives using foods available at the food bank. Another class, Cultural Foods, worked with the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a website containing healthier Cajun recipes.

Her students also used foods from the food bank to develop and test recipes in the classroom. The result is an on-going project: a cook book for low-income individuals offering information about different foods and food economics. ❖

Student Chosen as Finalist for Humanitarian Award

An LSU service-learning student was among three Louisiana students who were finalists for the Howard R. Swearer Student Humanitarian Award through Campus Compact.

Madeline Peters of Pensacola, Fla., is a third-year, Honors College mass communication major. Peters was a service-learning student in Sharon Andrews' English 2000 course, which partnered with Connections for Life, a nonprofit agency which serves indigent women, mostly ex-offenders and recovering substance abusers.

Throughout the service-learning course, Peters and fellow English 2000 students worked alongside the women, learned their stories, and reflected upon her experiences.

"The course has affected my future ambitions because it made me question how I measure success. Being required to

keep a journal and write my thoughts and emotions down has allowed me to realize that it does not matter how successful I become; rather it is the relationships and impact I make in my career that will determine my success," Peters said.

"I want to do a promotional campaign to encourage students on campus to take service-learning courses. I believe the benefits far exceed the work in the classroom, and [service-learning] encourages volunteering as a regular responsibility in life," she said.

Peters also created the Freshman Leadership Council at LSU to allow students to become involved and contribute to causes pertaining to their interests. Under Peters' leadership, the FLC has raised \$1,000 for St. Jude's Research Hospital. ❖

French Studies Class Preserves Local Veterans' Experiences

A service-learning course dedicated to the study of the experiences of American Combat Infantrymen in World War II paired LSU Honors College students with local WWII veterans to interview, record and honor their experiences.

In fulfillment of the requirements of this course, which was taught by Professor Frank A. Anselmo of the Department of French Studies, the students met with the veterans over the course of the semester and interviewed them about their war experiences.

"No matter how much we read about these experiences and discuss them, it does not compare to having the opportunity to meet and speak to someone who was actually there."

Frank Anselmo,
Professor,
French Studies



MAKING HISTORY — WWII veteran John H. Jackson honored student Sarah Ripple with a USS *Henry T. Allen* naval pin in recognition of their work together preserving Jackson's wartime experiences.

In preparation for the interviews, students spent the semester studying first-hand accounts about the war. These included well-known American fiction writers such as Norman Mailer and Kurt Vonnegut as well as historical accounts by E. B. Sledge and Paul Fussell and the wartime journalism of Ernie Pyle. Unpublished memoirs and declassified war documents were also read and discussed.

Mr. James Bollich, a survivor of the Bataan Death March, also spoke to the students about his experiences in the Philippines and the four years that he spent as a Japanese prisoner of war.

Professor Lilly Allen of the LSU School of Social Work and Jennifer Abraham of the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History on the LSU campus helped to prepare the students for their interviews.

Anselmo says that the service-learning component was essential to help develop the students' understanding of these experiences.

"No matter how much we read about these experiences and discuss them," he stated, "it does not compare to having the opportunity to meet and speak to someone who was actually there."

Four assisted living residences with WWII veterans participated in the students' project — Lake Sherwood Village, Lakewood Quarters Retirement Community, St. James Place, and Williamsburg

Senior Living Community.

Seventeen veterans from these communities agreed to meet with Anselmo's students. These veterans had served in all branches of the ser-

vice and included an Army infantryman, two former POWs, and an Army nurse.

The presentation of the students' written reports to the veterans at the end of the semester was the culmination of the students' interviews. Many veterans as well as students came with family and friends.

As the students presented the veterans with their written work, one veteran, John Jackson, who had served as a naval medic on the USS *Henry T. Allen*, clearly demonstrated the veterans' appreciation for the work of the students—he stood up and removed a naval pin from his lapel and gave it to his student-interviewer, Sarah Ripple, whom he declared as an honorary member of his vessel.

Portions of the interviews with the veterans were recorded and will be deposited at the T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History, where the general public will have ready access to them. In an ongoing project, the center will make these recordings available on the internet. ❖

— Frank Anselmo

LSU Faculty Selected as 2008 S-L Scholars

Faculty members representing a variety of disciplines were selected for LSU's 2008 Service-Learning Faculty Scholars Program, which offers \$2,000 stipends to encourage experiential education and "hands-on" learning that benefits the community.

The Center for Community Engagement, Learning, and Leadership (CCELL) initiated the innovative Faculty Scholars Program to promote the institutionalization of service-learning courses in every department and to advance the objectives of the LSU Flagship Agenda. Scholars were selected by a committee of the Service-Learning Advisory Council.

The 2008 Faculty Scholars include representatives from several departments, including African and African American Studies; Women's and Gender Studies; Mass Communication; Communication Studies; Biological Sciences; Kinesiology; History; Social Work; Foreign Languages and Literatures; Communication Sciences and Disorders; Construction Management; Oceanography and Coastal Sciences; Mass Communication; Stephenson Entrepreneurship Institute; and Accounting.

"The number of applications for the Service-Learning Faculty Scholars Program indicates widespread faculty interest in interdisciplinary and collegial course planning," CCELL Director Jan Shoemaker said.

"Some of the Scholars had already begun to implement elements of service-learning into their courses, but they all recognized the value of a planning process whereby they can develop more effective strategies for reinforcing the academic and civic mission of a Land Grant research university," Shoemaker said. "In addition to pedagogy, we also explore ways to integrate service-learning and research."

During the spring semester, Scholars attended a weekly, 90-minute seminar to plan and discuss course design, social responsibilities of universities, liability, assessment, and reflection as they relate to service-learning courses.

Applications for 2009 Faculty Scholars are due in January 2009. ❖

**Center for Community
Engagement, Learning,
and Leadership**

SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM

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CCELL 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
Ann Arbor Bar Association
Baton Rouge Zoo
Belfair Montessori Magnet Elementary
Bernard Terrace Elementary
Big Buddy Program and Wordplay at Big Buddy
Bluebonnet Swamp Nature Center
Boys and Girls Club of GBR
BR AIDS Society
BR Recreation & Parks Commission
Broadmoor Elementary School
Broadmoor High School
Brusly Elementary School
BREC "Free Dreams" Teen Center
Buchanan Elementary School
Catholic Charities, Diocese of Baton Rouge
Charlie's Place Respite Center
City at Peace
City of Lake Charles
Clinton Elementary School
Community University Partnership
Connections for Life
Council on Aging
Crestworth Elementary School
Culture Candy
Duffrocq Elementary School
East Feliciana Alternative Land Use Plans
EBR Recycling
EBR School System
EBR Laboratory Academy
Expanded Food and Nutrition Program
Food and Nutrition Program of Louisiana
GBR Food Bank
GEAR-UP
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren
Greenville Elementary School
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 Delta Service Corps
Louisiana Junior Youth Orchestra
Louisiana Serve Commission
LSU AgCenter
LSU Student Government
LSU Student Health Services
LSU Writing Center
Magnolia Woods Elementary School
Melrose Elementary School
NOAA Office of Response and Restoration
Ocean Commotion
Office of Public Health and Science Region
Ollie Steele Burden Manor Nursing Home
Polk Elementary School
Progress Elementary School
Renaissance Village—FEMA trailer park
South Boulevard Elementary School
Southdowns Pre-K Center
SE Ministries: Broadmoor United Methodist
St. Clare Manor Assisted Living
St. James Place Retirement Community
St. Jude School
St. Vincent de Paul
Sulphur High School
T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History
Teen Court—Baton Rouge Bar Foundation
Twin Oaks Elementary School
University Lab School
University Terrace Elementary School
Volunteer! Baton Rouge
Volunteer LSU
Volunteers in Public Schools
West Baton Rouge Parish School System
West Baton Rouge Child Nutrition Program
Westdale Heights Elementary School
Westminster Elementary School
Williamsburg Senior Living Community
Women's Community Rehabilitation Center
YWCA of Greater Baton Rouge



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