

LSU Community Connections

Building Community-Classroom Partnerships Through Service-Learning

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Math program benefits LSU, elementary schools

From on-line resources to one-on-one tutoring, LSU service-learning math classes are forging a mutually beneficial partnership with area public schools that is encouraging elementary school students to succeed.

Service-learning has been a part of the LSU math program since fall 2001, beginning with math tutoring in local elementary schools.

Since fall 2005, on-line math tutoring materials, developed by **Stephanie Kurtz** of the

math department, have been available and offer activities, strategies, and tips to assist service-learning

tutors and Volunteers in Public Schools.

This semester, **Math 1202** service-learning students of Kurtz and **Debra Kopsco** are tutoring at Magnolia Woods, Buchanan, and Westminster elementary schools. About 100 students in Math 1202—Geometry and Measurement for Elementary Education Majors—are involved.

Recently, Professor **Robert Perlis**

has engaged his large section course for liberal arts majors—**Math 1100**—in tutoring in Dufrocq, Melrose, and Twin Oaks elementary schools.

Service-learning is optional in his 400-member class; those who tutor receive extra points. Last fall, 59 students participated, and Perlis hopes to double that count in fall 2007.

Prospective tutors must also attend a training session, pass a math skills test and background check, tutor for at least

six, one-hour sessions, and keep a tutoring log.

They write reflections on the tutoring experience

and how it relates to Math 1100, which are posted on an on-line discussion board, and must also read and comment on another student's posting.

"Many students said they signed up to tutor because of the extra points, but they found that they really enjoyed the experience," Perlis said. "Many students chose to tutor beyond the required six sessions because they felt a connection to 'their' school child."

Kurtz said she developed the on-line tutoring program with two goals in mind. "One was to help Dr. Perlis's students feel more prepared," she said. Secondly, Volunteers in Public Schools began a pilot program called "EveryOne Counts" where adult volunteers commit

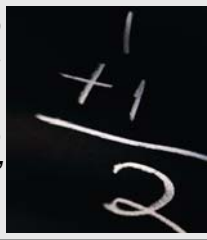
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PLAYGROUND PROJECT— From left, Kyle Bridges and Katie Rousseau, Biological Engineering sophomores; Adam Sloey, Project Manager, KaBOOM!; and Matthew Gravens, Biological Engineering freshman, work on Highland Elementary playground.

"Connecting a math class to civic engagement helps students relate classroom learning to life beyond the university."

Robert Perlis, Math Professor



Student perspective: Service-learning helps to build confidence

By **Kyle Bridges**

(Kyle Bridges of Rayville, La., is a second-year student majoring in Biological Engineering.)

When I scheduled **BE 1252**, a service-learning class in the Biological Engineering Department, it was not quite clear to me what type of class this would be. The name implied that I would be doing a service for someone else, but that was all I could possibly imagine.

On the first day of the class, Dr. **Marybeth Lima** explained the benefits of service-learning. We were to partner with Audubon Elementary School to design AND build a playground if funds became available within the semester.

At the time, I wondered how anything as intense as her course would be possible. We learned the concepts behind playground design and construction, and took field trips to our school.

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

Eight faculty members named in first S-L scholars program

Eight full-time faculty members representing a variety of disciplines were selected for LSU's inaugural 2007 Service-Learning Faculty Scholars Program, which offers \$2,000 stipends to encourage experiential education and "hands-on" learning that benefits the community.

CCELL has initiated the innovative program to promote the institutionalization of service-learning courses in every department and to advance the objectives of the LSU Flagship Agenda.

Faculty Scholars are **Frank Anselmo**, Honors College and Department of French Studies; **David R. Brown**, Department of Bio-

logical Sciences; **Margaret Denny**, Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice; **Cynthia DiCarlo**, School of Human Ecology; **Lisa Lundy**, Man-ship School of Mass Communication; **Solimar Otero**, Department of English; **Terrie Poehl**, Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice; and **Mark Schafer**, Department of Sociology.



SCHOLARS MEET—From left, Faculty Scholar David R. Brown discusses syllabus construction with Math Professor Robert Perlis, Scholar Terrie Poehl, and Jan Shoemaker, director of CCELL.

"The number of applications for the Scholars Program indicates a widespread faculty interest in interdisciplinary and collegial course planning."

Jan Shoemaker,
CCELL Director

"The number of applications for the Scholars Program indicates widespread faculty interest in interdisciplinary and collegial course planning. The various disciplines have much to teach each other," said Jan Shoemaker, CCELL Director.

"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 will also explore ways to integrate service-learning and research. I look forward to working with such innovative faculty members."

Scholars meet in a weekly seminar to plan and discuss course design, social responsibilities of universities, liability, assessment, and reflection. At the completion of the seminar series, scholars will develop a service-learning syllabus and implement the course in a subsequent semester.

Kayser receives Reily graduate assistantship

Casey Lee Kayser, a graduate student in the English department at LSU, is the most recent recipient of the **H. Eustis Reily Service-Learning Graduate Assistantship**. The award is named in honor of the late Mr. Reily for his devotion to community advancement and is funded by his family.

The assistantship is presented each semester to an outstanding graduate student for the advancement of service-learning. Recipients work to promote service-learning through CCELL.

Kayser earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, and a Master's degree in English from the University of Missouri-Columbia. She is currently working on her doctorate in English at LSU.

H. Eustis Reily, a native of New Orleans, participated in a wide variety of community service activities.

He served actively on the boards of William B. Reily & Co., Metropolitan Crime Commission, Visiting Nurses Association, and Louisiana Civil Service League.

In March 2005, Reily was honored by the American Judicature Society for his outstanding work to promote a merit selection process for judgeships.

Celebration event funding available

CCELL is pleased to accept applications by service-learning faculty members for reimbursement of monies spent for service-learning Celebration Events.

We strongly encourage you to involve your community partners, such as by inviting them to an event or having students deliver a completed project in a celebratory way.

The maximum reimbursement is up to \$100 per class per semester. Only one person will be reimbursed.

Application forms are available at the at www.ccell.lsu.edu. For information, contact 578-4245 or ccell@lsu.edu.

LSU math program

(Continued from Page 1)

to spend one hour per week in math tutoring for an elementary school child.

"Many of these volunteers do not have a background in teaching, and the information on my website was given to them as another source of information, guidance, and encouragement," Kurtz said. "Those who do use this information have said that the ideas for activities and the discussion about how math learning takes place make them feel more confident going into a tutoring session," she added.

Perlis believes service-learning will help his students see life outside of Math 1100. "I think that connecting a math class to civic engagement helps students relate classroom learning to life beyond the university."

Faculty, student recognized by Gulf-South Summit

An LSU faculty member and a student were awarded for outstanding contributions to service-learning, and 30 representatives of the University presented their work at the recent 2007 Gulf-South Summit on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement in Higher Education.

S. Kim MacGregor, associate professor in the Department of Educational Theory, Policy, and Practice, was presented the Award for Outstanding Contri-



AWARD RECIPIENT—*S. Kim MacGregor, left, was recognized by the Gulf-South Summit for her contributions to research. At right is CCELL Director Jan Shoemaker.*

butions to Service-Learning Research. MacGregor is the current **TIAA-CREF Service-Learning Fellow**. Her research focuses on the assessment of academic programs, particularly those in higher education aimed toward integrating service-learning experiences into course content.

Lyndsi Lambert, an English major from Gonzales, La., was presented the Outstanding Student Contributions to Service-Learning Award for her exceptional record of classroom-community engagement.

During her first semester at LSU, Lambert collaborated with community members

and other students in her service-learning English class to create the first edition of *The GrandPaper*, a newsletter created for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Information Center of Louisiana (GRGICL).

Also, 30 representatives of LSU, including faculty, staff, and students from a wide variety of disciplines, presented at the Summit conference, March 14-16, in New Orleans.

The conference was attended by approximately 350 participants engaged in service-learning at colleges and universities throughout the Gulf South, as well as representatives of community-based organizations.

Service-learning practitioners from across the U.S. offered presentations about civic engagement at the Summit.

UPC awards grants for community service to student projects

University Presbyterian Church (UPC) recently awarded four additional Community Service Grants to members of the LSU community, addressing needs ranging from hunger and nutrition to education and economic development.

The UPC grant program was established to support innovative projects that address challenges in Baton Rouge, specifically for partnerships between LSU students and community organizations.

One grant will fund a recipe and informational book for low-income audiences, proposed by **Human Ecology** students working in conjunction with the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank.

Another UPC grant went to **Landscape Architecture** students working with Phoenix of New Orleans to design a public promenade in the Tulane/Gravier community of New Orleans.

A third grant went to **Honors College** students who will help build test-taking and job application skills at the Capitol Pre-College Academy for Girls.

A fourth went to the Ceramic Art Student Association, which created bowls to be sold to help raise money for the Empty Bowls effort to fight hunger.

Art & Design service-learning projects aimed at rebuilding hurricane damage

Service-learning faculty with the LSU College of Art & Design are using their expertise as they work with students to help rebuild hurricane-damaged areas of south Louisiana.

Students of **Karla Christensen** and **Elizabeth Mossop** of the School of Landscape Architecture partnered with the Priestley School of Architecture and Construction, Colton School in Bywater, Albert Wicker School in the Gravier/Tulane neighborhood, and the New Orleans Charter School of Science and Math to develop schoolyard designs.

Currently, four of Christensen's **LA 5001** students are working with The Phoenix of New Orleans to create a corridor design, using a \$1,000 grant from University Presbyterian Church (UPC). Two other students are working with Wicker Elementary to create a schoolyard design, also with a UPC grant.

Also in the School of Landscape Architecture, students of **Bruce Sharky** and **Kevin Risk** developed a rebuilding plan for the Jefferson Parish lakefront, which has been adopted by parish leaders who will use it to seek funding for reconstruction along Lake Pontchartrain.

The 40-page plan, "Jefferson Parish

Lakefront: Rebuilding for a More Flood-Resistant Future," contains sections written by individual students, graphics, and computer-generated renderings. The plan proposes to rebuild the lakefront wetlands so as to provide a natural barrier to the levee system and inland areas.

Sharky and Risk's students also worked with the City of Lake Charles to offer solutions on recovery and revitalization following Hurricane Rita.

Through the School of Architecture, Project 3|30|1 is a comprehensive service-learning initiative that builds neighborhood capacity through construction and training through a partnership between ACORN and the LSU Office of Community Design and Development, which is the School of Architecture's best practice service-learning teaching laboratory.

Marsha Cuddeback and **Frank Bosworth** developed a new hurricane-resistant design for affordable housing, winning a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development grant. One project goal is to train previously unskilled individuals to become builders and trainers, thus duplicating the process while creating home ownership opportunities.

Safe House residents benefit from LSU students' services

By **Deborah Thomason**
Director, Safe House

I started my first experience with LSU service-learning with a good bit of apprehension.

The organization I represent, Safe House for Battered Women & Their Children, is a non-profit domestic violence shelter located in Baton Rouge.

Unlike most traditional crisis-based domestic violence programs, we provide at least six months solution-

based transitional housing shelter for women and their children up to age 18.

Residents receive housing, food, clothing, counseling, educational and vocational programs, children's services, referrals, advocacy, and legal aid. As a non-profit, we are always lacking in two fundamental things – money and people.

I met with **Becky Ropers-Huilman** of Women's and Gender Studies and **Sharon Andrews** of the English Department. I wanted students to understand about the women who are victims of domestic violence; I wanted them to learn about why these women were here.

My first surprise was the willingness

of the students. Their impressions of "battered women" changed very quickly. They saw women of every race, background, and religion. The second surprise was what the students did for the children at Safe House, who are the hardest hit victims of domestic violence.

"So now we have women who are attending college for the first time, starting careers they never thought possible, and seeing a future that they never dreamed could be. That is what service-learning did for us.

Deborah Thomason, Director, Safe House

Students who were at first the most reluctant were the very ones who spent all of their time with the children.

These students gave more than their "required" hours for class.

The few months that these students were here will bring better results than years of counseling. Andrews' students also created thought-provoking videos for Safe House to use as advocacy, service, and volunteer tools.

Ropers-Huilman's students formed three groups. One collected about 50 bags of items from sororities and dorms. Another collected several hundred dollars through a change drive in the Quad. The third group transformed a junk room into an "Internet Café." The students received a \$1,000 University Presbyterian Church grant to complete the work.



SAFE HOUSE CAFÉ—From left are volunteer Nancy Pursell and resident Martha Jackson, reading in the "Safe House Café," which was created by LSU students.

They created an elegant, warm, and inviting study and meeting room where residents can read and work on computers and have group meetings and counseling sessions. It is by far our most beautiful room.

Although the students named it *Safe House Café*, the residents have lovingly renamed it "The LSU Room" for the students who gave their time and talent to make our house more of a home.

The greatest impact has been on our residents. Through these amazing students, all of the women here not only made friends but also saw that they were not forgotten in the community.

Not only have the students learned but, more importantly, the residents have learned also. So, now we have women who are attending college for the first time, starting careers that they never thought possible, and seeing a future that they never dreamed could be. That is what service-learning did for us.

LIS projects include research, grant writing

Library and Information Science service-learning classes have contributed to projects including replacing materials in a flood-damaged New Orleans school, research, and grant writing.

In 2006, \$5,000 grants written by students in **LIS 7400** (School Media Centers) were awarded by the Laura Bush Foundation for print materials for library media centers for two area schools. The grant for Crestworth Elementary in Baton Rouge was written by **Maranda Howell** and **Leslie Smith**; **Susan Smith** and **Alicia Wiltz** authored the grant for

Jackson Elementary in Jackson, La.

Also in 2006, students in **LIS 7102**—Media and Service for Young Adults—developed a selective annotated bibliography to replace the college prep collection lost to Katrina flooding at Ben Franklin High School in New Orleans.

Students were assigned to one of five groups: social sciences; pure sciences; applied sciences; arts, humanities, and literature; and history and geography.

Using recommended selection tools, they developed five annotated bibliographies of 40-50 titles, each published in

the past five years, for the college prep, gifted, and academic high school. All titles identified by the students have since been either purchased or acquired, and are now in use.

In summer 2006, three students in **LIS 7902**—Field Experience in School Libraries—participated in the rebuilding of the Ben Franklin High library. **Karen Breeden**, **Lolita Chatelain**, and **Lisa Mire** spent approximately 80-90 hours each assessing, ordering, processing, and cataloging the print and non-print collection at the school library.

Social Work classes provide Teen Court group strategies

School of Social Work students have used their service-learning experiences to help Teen Court of Greater Baton Rouge by researching, designing, and implementing effective group interventions for first-time teen offenders.

The initiative by **Carol Plummer's** fall 2006 Child and Family class, SW 7415, began when **Melanie Fields**, a Juvenile Justice System prosecutor, asked Plummer to work with her and others in forming Teen Court.

Teen Court is an alternative to the juvenile justice system for first-time misdemeanor offenders ages of 10-17. The offender voluntarily submits to trial, community service, and other sentences imposed by a trained jury of their peers.

Teens also participate in court hearings for their peers as court clerks, bailiffs, jurors, prosecuting attorneys and defense attorneys. Local attorneys and judges serve as judges. Social Work students offered psychoeducational group services, covering such topics as peer pressure, goal setting, problem solving, and anger management.

Plummer's class worked in groups. The first group researched the best type of intervention for the teens and created

exercises appropriate for the age, gender, developmental level, and infractions.

The second LSU group conducted the intervention; the third group evaluated the program.

"All of those groups were continually reporting back to the whole class, so it was a very dynamic process, with each

group learning from each other," said Plummer. The successful service-learning project was

continued this semester in SW 7415, Child and Family II, using the group intervention research and design developed in fall 2006.

She said the project helped her students grapple with the questions of what promotes juvenile delinquency and how the problem could be solved.

"It really brought it home with the actual kids being right in front of their faces," Plummer said. "Juvenile delinquency was not just a vague concept any more. It was flesh and blood for them."

Through this project, Plummer's students have put theory into practice, Teen Court has a valuable resource, and troubled teens are learning to make positive life decisions.

"Juvenile delinquency was not just a vague concept any more. It was flesh and blood for them."

Carol Plummer
School of Social Work

Muse is CCELL partner liaison

By **Tiffany Muse**

I am very new to Service-Learning.

I joined AmeriCorps through Louisiana Delta Service Corps in September 2006. My host site is CCELL at LSU, where I am the Service-Learning Partner Liaison.



Tiffany Muse

Among my key responsibilities is to establish service-learning partnerships between LSU and community partnership sites, which include public and private schools as well as non-profit organizations.

I am also responsible for providing ongoing communication between community partners, faculty/staff, and students, assisting with orientation and placement of LSU students, and identifying training and service needs and streams of service for different sites.

This position has allowed me to gain experience establishing rapport with school administrators, parents, and students, which I believe to be a very important aspect of my future career goals.

I also work with the Service-Learning Student Advisory Council (SLSAC) as its sponsor. As the SLSAC sponsor, I have been actively involved with assisting the council in service activities and club meetings. I really enjoy working with these students and helping them in any way that I can.

Student perspective: Service-learning builds confidence

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This is when the fun began. Our interaction with Audubon students was amazing. I now believe that service-learning is one of the strongest concepts in my curriculum.

As Dr. Lima stated it in the book she co-authored for the class, "In order to be a successful engineer, understanding society and societal context is as important as understanding engineering and technological contexts."

One of the greatest benefits of this class was seeing "hands-on" what engineers do daily. It was also great to know

that I was helping a school that may not have otherwise had the funds to think about a properly designed playground.

The feedback from students was astounding, and to see students who once seemed very lackadaisical about their studies become excited made this course what it was.

After having learned so much from this course, my friend and colleague **Alicia Abadie** and I were awarded the United States Environmental Protection Agency P3 Award. We researched the actions of arsenic in pressure-treated wood used on children's playgrounds.

The knowledge I gained from this class helped me communicate with professors from Caltech, Harvard, and the National Academy of Engineering. Without my service-learning experience, I would have been speechless.

Not only did this class teach me engineering design, it also taught me how to communicate more effectively and how to reach out to a community in need.

My service-learning experience gave me a confidence in these things that I could not have gained from any other class.

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A DIVISION OF UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

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

ACORN of New Orleans
Alzheimer's Services of the Capital Area
American Red Cross
Americorp
Baton Rouge Bar Association
BR Center for Visual & Performing Arts
Baton Rouge Crisis Intervention Center
Baton Rouge Green
Battered Women's Program
Big Buddy, Word Play at Big Buddy Program
Brusly Elementary School
Buchanan Elementary School
Cajun French Music Association
Cameron Parish
Cancer Services of Greater Baton Rouge
Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless
Capital Area Human Services
Capital Area Recovery Program
Children's Charter School
City of Lake Charles
Community University Partnership
Connections for Life
Consultants for New Beginnings
Council on Aging
Department of Juvenile Services
Dufrocq Elementary School
Earl K. Long Pediatric Center
East Baton Rouge Parish Recycling
East Baton Rouge Parish School System
Foundation for Historic Louisiana
GEAR-UP
Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Info. Ctr.
Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank
Greater Baton Rouge Literacy Coalition
Habitat for Humanity
Hilltop Arboretum
Hope Ministries
International Cultural Center
Jefferson Manor Nursing Home
Jobs for America's Graduates
Juvenile Court of Baton Rouge
Lafayette Addictive Disorders Clinic
Leo S. Butler Center
Louisiana Road Home
La. Volunteers for Family and Community
Louisiana War Veterans Home
LSU Museum of Art
Magnolia Woods Elementary School
McKinley High School
McKinley Middle Magnet School
McMains Children's Developmental Ctr.
Medical Management Options
Melrose Elementary
Newcorp Business Assistance Center
Ollie Steele Burden Manor Nursing Home
Our Lady of the Lake Hospital
Park Forest Elementary School
Phoenix of New Orleans
Polk Elementary School
Prescott Middle School
Priestly School of Architecture
Renaissance Village—FEMA trailer park
Safe House for Battered Women, Children
Safe Schools/Healthy Students
Sherwood Middle School
South Boulevard Elementary
Southdowns Pre-K Center
SE Ministries: Broadmoor United Meth.
St. Anthony's Home
St. Jude School
St. Landry Evangeline Sexual Assault Ctr.
St. Vincent de Paul
State Library of Louisiana
Susan G. Komen Foundation
Teen Court—BR Bar Foundation
The Healing House
Thibodaux Regional Medical Center
Trinity Hospice, LLC
Twin Oaks Elementary
United Methodist HOPE Ministries
University Lab School
University Terrace Elementary School
Valley Park Alternative Center
Villa del Rey Elementary School
Voluntary Income Tax Assistance
Volunteers of America
Volunteer! Baton Rouge
Volunteers in Public Schools
West Jefferson BMC
West Baton Rouge Parish Library
Westdale Heights Academic Magnet
Westminster Elementary School
Woman's Hospital
Youth Oasis
YMCA-Charles Lamar Branch



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