



Office of Service Learning and Civic Engagement

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Students Respond Positively to Service Learning Courses

In Fall 2006 approximately **221 CSUCI students in 14 service learning courses contributed 3,743 hours to 14 community-based organizations through various service learning projects.** Using the Bureau of Labor Statistics value of volunteer time (\$19.74 / hour), this student effort translates into **\$73,887 of economic benefit to Ventura County.**

Service learning opportunities were provided from multiple disciplines including: Art, Education, Environmental Science and Resource Management, History, Liberal Studies, and Sociology.

At the end of the fall semester 190 service learning students were surveyed to gather input and feedback on their service learning experiences and community contributions.

Results showed overall 78% of students who engaged in service learning found the quality of their experience to be excellent or good, while 86% strongly agreed or agreed that the service aspect of the course provided them with a better understanding of the needs and problems facing the community in which they live.

"Service learning classes are the ones you learn the most from. There should be more offered"

CSUCI student, Fall '06

A majority of students (92%) strongly agreed or agreed that they learned course content better when it was connected to "real life" situations,

and more than half (70%) said they would like to see more service learning courses offered at CSUCI.

For a full report please visit our website at www.csuci.edu/servicelearning

Hunger Banquet Highlights Global Poverty and Hunger

More than 850 million people worldwide live in poverty and to them dinner is a luxury they cannot afford. On the evening of October 5, 2006, CSUCI students, faculty, staff and community members joined together in one simple act to help raise awareness around these staggering statistics. As a part of Citizenship Week and "Be A Part From the Start", the Office of Service Learning and Civic Engagement (OSL-CE) hosted an Oxfam Hunger Banquet.

Oxfam is an international relief and development organization dedicated to providing lasting solutions to global poverty, hunger, and social injustice in the US and around the world.

The Oxfam Hunger Banquet dramatized the inequitable distribution of food resources in today's

world and, if for only a brief moment, gave participants firsthand experience of the realities of global hunger and poverty. The event, facilitated by Dr. Julia Balen, provided a forum for students, the campus community, and the community-at-large to come together to explore and examine their own roles as informed, engaged, and socially responsible citizens.

Ann Sobel, CEO of FOOD Share, Ventura County's food bank, spoke about the regional issues of hunger and poverty as well as local efforts to combat them. Leading up to the banquet CSUCI campus community took action towards combating hunger in Ventura by collecting canned food items for FOOD Share.

Spotlight on Service



Art has been shown to positively impact children's academic achievement, attitudes and behaviors, and self-concept. Yet schools are finding less time for this form of creative expression.

Armed with this information Professor Lytle's Art Capstone students: Aaron Benner, Jaimie Cavalieri, Sandy Parker and Kristin Tuckosh decided to involve their art interests and skills in a meaningful way by offering art classes to children that may not necessarily have the exposure in school.

Working with Cabrillo Economic Development (CEDC) the Capstone students brought art classes to the children of Meta Street Housing Development in Oxnard, one of eight managed by CEDC. The Capstone project drew on the student's expertise and strengths.

"As artists it was important for us to coordinate and implement an art project that would allow us to give back to the community but at the same time be a culmination of what we had learned in the Art program at CSUCI," offered Jamie.

Each week for 1.5 hours children, ranging in age from 2 years and up, gathered in the community room to work with clay, watercolors, and photography and learn about art history, visual language and aesthetics.

"Our goal was to have children produce artworks and have them displayed in the community room, as well as initiating

an ongoing rotation of the children's work between the 8 housing developments to create cross-community communication."

At first the Capstone students were a bit unsure of what to expect from the children. Would children show up? Would they be interested?

"We were a bit anxious because we didn't know if we had taken on a bigger project than expected? But each week the children kept coming back with smiles on their faces," said Jamie. "We were like a giant family," added Aaron, "...the children would feed off of each other artistically and this created a sense of togetherness."

The Capstone students discovered, not only could they build a creative learning environment, but in doing so had to be resourceful.

"We had to be inventive because as students we had limited funding. We had all these great ideas but needed the materials. We found outside resources; people who kindly donated clay, glaze and various art supplies to our cause," said Jamie, "...we came to depend on each other, our ideas, and our resources."

Through their work with CEDC and the community the students found a sense of achievement and satisfaction.

"Working in the community gave me a sense of pride and optimism; one can be cynical thinking about all that is going on in the world. I feel very positive and proud of what we did." Added Aaron, "Children always provide you with a sense of hope, working with them helped me to see that together we can do something...make a difference in each other's lives."

Community Partner Database Now On Service Learning Webpage

NEW

The OSL-CE has re-vamped and renewed its webpage. Thanks to the IT services of **Marc Aten** our webpage now has an online Community Partner database which features profiles of over 20 + University-approved community partners (and growing!). Faculty interested in partnering with an approved community partner in our database will need to contact the OSL-CE one semester in advance of the service learning course offering.

The OSL-CE will support the development of new community partnerships not noted in our database. All new community partners must go through a risk management assessment and enter into a contract with CSUCI. This contracting process may take between 3-6 months; therefore, the OSL-CE must have notice of future community partners from faculty at least one semester in advance.

Our database and website can be accessed at www.csuci.edu/servicelearning where you will discover a world of resources that will be enhanced and upgraded throughout the year, such as service learning guidebooks, reflection activities, and forms that you will need for effective service learning projects. Join us in cyberspace for a world of service learning resources and thanks again Marc!

Service Learning Has Real World Consequences For One Student

Cynthia Fulgencio had no idea the impact service learning would have until she reflected upon the experience in her journal. In fall '06 Cynthia enrolled in Professor Reder's English 312: Children's Literature course which included a service learning component. For her assignment Cynthia chose to serve at Mar Vista Elementary working with children on reading aloud and other literacy activities. The following paragraphs, excerpted from her service learning journal, offer her perspective on the value of service learning and are reprinted with her permission.

"Today I brought along a poem about traveling to America, *Tattered Sails* by Verla Kay. I began to read and by the end of the poem I only had three faces looking at me, everyone else had their heads down and sat quietly. I was nervous, what did I do? The teacher quietly explained that this book was too difficult for many to follow. As I looked up I realized that the three faces looking at me were the ones who understood English. I saw the look on the others; embarrassed perhaps because they did not understand the poem.

Luckily I had three bilingual books with me and asked the kids if they would give me another chance. As soon as they saw the covers of the books they hollered, "YES!" They were excited to listen to these books, they were English and Spanish and all could easily follow along.

Together we read *Slip, Slurp, Soup, Soup, Caldo, Caldo*, by Diane Gonzalez-Bertard. This book was about a family of Mexican descent and many of the students could relate to it. The room filled with laughter as I read the book filled with such humor. After the story we talked about the variety of soups that their families ate at home. The discussion was so lively; so many yummy soups! I left feeling very satisfied.

Service learning was a great learning experience for me, it was about applying classroom lessons into the real world. I had attended this elementary school and felt a sense of pride in being able to give back. I gained confidence. The children looked forward to my reading and activities. I took a different approach to every book in order to engage all my students. It was during the activities when I discovered the many ways to make learning fun.

One positive aspect I gained was that I served as a mentor to the children. I started this project having trouble translating but throughout the course and with the help of the children my Spanish improved tremendously. I became very involved in my classroom because that is where my heart is. I can't begin to explain how this experience has changed me! If this is a taste of what is to come, I can't wait for the full plate."

Federal Work Study Students Help Support CSUCI Mission

In support of the University's civic and community engagement mission the OSL-CE has partnered with the Financial Aid office to build and grow a Community Service Federal Work Study (FWS) Program. Currently, the OSL-CE has placed two FWS students out in the community working with a literacy program at Sheridan Way, Child Development Center, Inc. FWS students, Trisha Willard and Paul Zielinski, work with K-5th graders tutoring them in literacy homework and supporting teacher directed literacy activities.

We also have two FWS students, Errin Perkins and Atylana Singh who are working in the OSL-CE. Errin and Atylana will play a significant role in supporting the infrastructure of the service learning program both in the classroom and in the community by working as liaisons between faculty, community partners, and students to help with placement, training and critical reflection. In addition, they will help to organize and implement various service learning events in the coming semester. We look forward to having our FWS students serve as leaders on campus and in the community!

Upcoming Spring Conferences

Diversity in California

The **2nd Annual CSU Community Based Teaching and Research Conference** will be held on February 23-24, 2007 at the Sainte Claire Hotel in San Jose, CA. The Keynote Address: *Context Diversity: A New Paradigm for Higher Education and Beyond*, will be presented by, Roberto A. Ibarra, Ph.D., Associate Professor and former Special Assistant to the President and Provost for Diversity, The University of New Mexico. To find out more about this conference visit: http://www.calstate.edu/csl/meetings/research_conference.shtml

Catching Waves: Using Engagement Address Critical Issues

Join with other students, faculty, and community partners at the **Tenth Annual Continuums of Service Conference April 12-14, 2007** in San Jose California. The conference will bring together colleagues together to explore multiple perspectives on service-learning and civic engagement; share program models, research, and best practices; and network with diverse service-learning practitioners. For more information go to <http://www.acadweb.wvu.edu/campcomp/>

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Submit Your Stories

We welcome and encourage faculty and community partners to submit stories of your recent accomplishments, and information about upcoming events and opportunities. If you would like to be included in future newsletters, please submit your information pilar.pacheco@csuci.edu or call Pilar Pacheco at (805) 437.8851.

“Students must have initiative; they should not be mere imitators. They must learn to think and act for themselves and be free.”

– Cesar E. Chavez