

Highlights

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The Inside Track

*The Tulane Service
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Service Learning at Tulane University *Over 400 Students Participating in Twenty-six Service Learning Courses*

On the Move

It has been a very exciting semester for everyone involved with service learning. With 26 courses offered, we have almost reached our yearly goal of 35 service learning classes and it's only the fall semester! We would like to take this time to thank our wonderful partners - community members, faculty and students - by highlighting course offerings and the community sites that have generously accepted our service learning students! With your help and support, we are making strides to improve our program offerings.

In this issue, we are featuring some courses and community sites that are providing service learning experiences for our students this semester. Due to the many courses and community partners we have this semester, we have randomly chosen about half of them for this issue. The other partnerships will be described in our next issue. Also, starting with this newsletter, we will be highlighting one community partner. For this issue, we will be focusing on Touro Infirmary.

On a more personal note, I'd like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work that is put forth by staff members of the Office of Service Learning. We

have several new staff members and I am amazed at the ease in which they have handled the maelstrom that faced them when they started their jobs last August! New to our program are: administrative assistant Yvette Barnett, van drivers James Wood and Michale Williams and graduate students, Megan McFarland and Devi Miron. Another new addition to our team is Anne Winchell, taking over as Internship and Service Learning Coordinator. Anne has transitioned into her new position and will certainly contribute to our growing internship program. Service Program Coordinators Amanda Buberger and Greg Chapuis have returned for a second year with Greg becoming a full time staff member. Without a doubt, these two people have made tremendous contributions to our programming and have been great advocates for all our partners. Finally, I would be remised if I did not mention our mentor and leader, Barbara Moely, without whom this program would not be in existence. I can't imagine going to work without any of these people. They are a great joy to work with and it's a true blessing to be able to call them friends.

~ Vincent Ilustre

Reminders for Students:

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY for your service activities.

REFLECT on what you have learned from your service and how this can help you gain a better understanding of the content of your course.

DRESS appropriately for your site and be consistent in your attendance.

ASK for assistance. If you have any questions or problems, call your site coordinator. We are here to help you!

Congratulations!

The following students won the raffle for participating in our survey:

\$75 certificate to Jacques-Imo's Restaurant - Jayna Turchek - Social Problems in Latin American Culture

\$50 certificate to Belladonna's Day Spa - Conner McClure - Child Psychology

\$25 certificate to Barnes and Noble - Matthew Tavares - Introduction to Sociology

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Amanda's Space

There's a great variety of service learning opportunities for students in the classes that I am working with this semester. Here are some examples:

Students from *Professor Shea's Social Problems in Latin American Literature* can choose one of several Service Learning activities. One Service Learner is helping *Lisa Bush* at the **March of Dimes** to organize, recruit participants, and publicize the "Comenzando Bien" program for young Latino mothers. Another Service Learner, working with *Tuli Guitart* at the **Hispanic Apostolate**, is compiling life stories of Spanish-speaking refugees and working with bilingual adults on GED preparation. Two Service Learners are conducting research and will present an inventory of major media sources in Latin America to *Jason Cuevas* at **MetroVision**. Another Service Learner is working with bilingual children at **Head Start's** "El Yo Yo Program" with *Gaynell Anderson*, developing and implementing a curriculum about Hispanic culture and Spanish language.

Service Learners from *Professor Potter's Politics of Environment in Latin America* course are working with several agencies: Students are working under the direction of *Brenda Barrett*, from the **Agency for Environmental Health**, on fundraising, promotional material, Internet Outreach, and project development. Other Service Learners are placed at **Loyola's Center for Environmental Communication** with *Dr. Thomas* and *Lisa Boe*. Students are organizing a high school journalism workshop, building connections with the Trinidad Asa Wright Nature Center, and cataloguing portrayal of the environmental industry in local media. Students are working with *Rebecca Strome* at the **Green Project** in Mid City. One student is researching disposal alternatives and proper handling of hazardous materials. Another student is working on a publicity and advertising campaign.

Two students are working on in-house recycling with *Linda Calvert* and *Rodney Littleton* at the **Mayor's Office of**

Environmental Affairs in City Hall. Their goal is to make sure every office in City Hall has a recycle bin and is educated about recycling. One student is working on the South American River Connection project with *Doug Daigle* at the **Mississippi River Basin Alliance**. She is contacting grass roots groups with objectives for the Rio Plata river system in South America and creating a file on projects taking place in South America.

As Service Program Coordinator at Tulane's Office of Service Learning, I have been able to see each of these Service Learning opportunities develop. I am proud to see service learners taking ownership of the projects and working to meet community needs. In my next article, I will talk about my other courses and their sites.

~Amanda Buberger,
Program Coordinator

Greg's Corner

Service learning students are working at a wide variety of sites all across the city this Semester. Some of my sites are as follows:

Service learners enrolled in *Professor Mike Cunningham's Adolescent Psychology* course are working at **Bishop Perry Middle School**. Bishop Perry is a Catholic school in the French Quarter that targets low-income African-American males. Service learners work as tutors in the afternoon during 'guided study time' with students identified by Bishop Perry faculty.

Students in *Professor Amy Koritz's City Life: Representations of Urban America* course work in conjunction with the **Students at the Center (SAC)** program at **Douglass High School**. Service learners at Douglass work with High School English students in the SAC classroom. Service learners and Douglass High students will interview one another and produce writing pieces out of those interviews, work on a presentation for a lower-level English class at the school, and publish a piece of their collaborative written work.

A number of service learners in *Professor Dempsey's Child and Adolescent Social*

Development, Professor Overstreet's Urban Child Development, and Professor O'Neal's Seminar in General Psychology work with grade school students at **Hoffman Elementary**. Tulane service learners either work one-on-one as tutors with grade school children or work as in-class assistants.

Some of *Professor Taras' Politics and Nationalism* students work with **Community Labor United (CLU)**. CLU brings representatives from business, unions, the community, and universities together to work on solving problems. Service learners work on constituency communication, attend CLU planning meetings, and participate in bi-weekly CLU forums where students, community leaders, and workers have the opportunity to discuss a variety of issues within a diverse group. Other students in Professor Taras' class work with the **Knowledge is Power (KIP)** program. The KIP program aims to "conquer the digital divide" by training volunteers to work on computer skills with adults and public school children. Tulane service learners are paired with 2-3 program participants to provide Internet and library tutorials.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the students, faculty, and community partners who have been working so hard this semester to make these programs work. If you have any additional input please contact our office anytime. Look for my courses and sites in the next newsletter!

~ Greg Chapuis
Program Coordinator

Ann's Internship Nook

As Internship Coordinator and Service Learning Development Specialist, my time is split between coordinating the Undergraduate Internship Program and monitoring several Service Learning classes. In this issue, I will focus on the internship program.

The Undergraduate Internship Program in Psychology and Sociology that began in the spring has continued, and a new internship in Political Science has been offered this semester. Twenty-three students are participating in the program

this semester. The Internship Program gives students a chance to explore career options as well as enhance their involvement in the New Orleans community. The Psychology internship sites include **Chartwell Center, Tulane's Upward Bound Program, Tulane's Positive Talk Program, Habitat for Humanity, Children's Bureau, and DePaul-Tulane Behavioral Health Center.** The Sociology internship sites include **March of Dimes, Great Expectation Foundation, and Tulane/Xavier National Center for the Urban Community.** The Political Science sites this semester include the **Fair Housing Action Center** and the office of **City Council Member Oliver Thomas.** Students at all of these sites have varied activities based on their interests and the needs of the agency. If anyone is interested in an internship for next semester, please call me at 862-3356.

It has been a pleasure to work in the Office of Service Learning these past 2-1/2 months. I would like to thank the OSL staff, faculty, students and the community partners I have had the honor of working with so far.

~ Ann Winchell

Internship Coordinator

Touro Infirmary

If you were to stroll down the halls of Touro Infirmary, you are more than likely to see a Tulane service learner. Starting in the fall of 1998, Tulane students have roamed the halls of Touro on their way to work for their service learning courses.

This semester is no different than in the past! If anything has changed, it's the even more obvious presence of Tulane service learners. Students from *Professor Burdsal's Molecular Biology of Cancer* course, *Professor Smith's Graduate course, Research in Cell and Molecular Biology* and *Professor Wee's Brain and Behavior* course are all doing service at Touro.

Students from Molecular Biology of Cancer work with **Helen Neill and her staff on the Oncology unit** while students from Brain and Behavior work in the **Rehabilitative units with Susan**

Greco and her staff. Their work experiences give students a new perspective on the issues they learn in class, putting a "human face" on the lecture topics. Graduate students from Cell and Molecular Biology, under the direction of Dr. Bret Smith, are participating in a yearlong program at Touro. They are placed in the **Emergency Room with Dr. Kevin Jordan** and his staff or with **Cynthia Rousell and her staff at the Pathology lab.** Students shadow personnel from these departments and assist them in various ways. Next semester, students will be working in projects that they have developed in cooperation with various hospital personnel while continuing to shadow personnel at the Emergency Room.

All of this would not be possible without the help of the staff members at Touro's Volunteer Office who work with our office in setting up these programs and monitoring students' progress. Special thanks go out to **Caroline Drumm and her assistant, Susan Levingston.**

From My View . . .

What's a typical Friday afternoon like? Done with your classes and excited for the weekend you go home to make plans with friends. That's what Fridays meant to me until the beginning of this semester when I got involved with service learning. The Office of Service Learning provides this excellent opportunity for students who wish to become involved in the community.

Since I am enrolled in Professor Wee's Brain and Behavior course, I thought it would be helpful to get engaged in the program being held at Touro. I work four hours a week at either M6 or M9 units where patients with brain injuries or diseases are in the process of rehab. It might not sound like the best thing one can do on a Friday night, but when I started working at Touro's M6 unit, I realized it was a great experience and I felt privileged that I was a part of the program.

On my first visit, nervous and a bit scared, I walked in to the volunteer

service office and was welcomed by the smiling friendly faces of Caroline and Susan. Since they are in charge of the volunteer services, they told me about the program and introduced me the staff on M6. The nurses and the doctors were extremely helpful; they gave me a census and talked to me about the patients.

I didn't know how to start making contacts with the patients until I saw this thirty-year old gentlemen, who was sitting alone in the dining area, giving me the nicest smile. Once I sat down next to him, he started telling me how he ended up in the hospital. He was talking really fast, with clear and sophisticated English. After he explained his reasons for being there in a very detailed way, I asked him if he actually remembered all of that had happened to him. He replied "No ma'am, I don't remember that forty days of my life." As we were talking, a seventeen-year-old boy walked in the room and introduced himself. I realized the two patients had the same last name and when I asked if I had it right, the older man replied "Yes ma'am he's my younger brother." I was surprised to see two brothers on the same floor of this type of unit. The younger brother also communicated very well since he only had problems with his short-term memory. We had two hours of great conversation. I realized that I would be able to communicate normally with the patients, which set aside my fears due to my presumptions that they would all be unconscious or have great trouble communicating.

I enjoyed the two hours I spent with my new friends, but it was time to go. After shaking hands, they walked me down the hall to the locked door at the end of the M6 area separating nurses and patients. The older man said "After they open that door for you, walk down and take a right for the elevators." That was the hardest moment for me. It was odd making friends and then having to leave walking through a door they have been watching every day to be opened for them. Nurses "buzzed" me through and walking down the hall I looked back to see them waving at me through the clear glass door.

I left the hospital feeling strange and reflecting upon my freedom for the first time. The sun was going down and my friends were calling to make plans to go out that night. I felt privileged just being able to walk outside and live my life the way I wanted to. I enjoy being able to work on Touro's M6 unit and I appreciate the clearer outlook on life it has given me.

~Melissa Kizildemir is a service learning student for her *Brain and Behavior* class. You can reach Melissa @ mkizild@tulane.edu

From My View . . .

Monday morning I roll out of bed with a wonderful sense of expectation. Today I meet with my Site Supervisor at the Loyola Center for Environmental Communications for service learning. We get together about once every two weeks to review what I have done, and to talk about the next step of my project. Mostly I work on my own. I surf the web at 2 a.m. for any and all information on the island of Dominica. I file it away for future reference, or send it along to Dr Thomas for inspection if I find something especially intriguing. Most of my site contact is through e-mail. Again, this gives me the opportunity to work whenever time presents itself. Stranded in the airport, I start outlining my idea of the ideal eco-tourism site.

Have you ever felt the need to do something really long lasting and relevant? At this moment, I am working on the beginnings of a government-sponsored nature preserve on Dominica. My service learning has given me the opportunity to work on a project with real-world relevance. Something that, in thirty years, I can point to and say. "I did that."

Above even that, my service learning has given me a direction I never thought I would have in life. I love what I am doing; I have been given the opportunity to continue. For the moment, I am submerged in my project. Dr Thomas has given me the opportunity to attend environmental lectures held at Loyola on Thursday nights. This coming week, I will be participating with his graduate

students in a Coastal Erosion Workshop. Next fall, I will most likely be attending Loyola as a graduate student in Communications, thanks to the service learning opportunity this semester.

While Service Learning is only worth one credit, and takes a great deal of free time, I can honestly say that it has been, by far, the most important credit I have had in any of my classes. Perhaps not everyone will have the completely stellar experience I have when it comes to service learning, but if it is even half as rewarding, I'd say everyone should give it a chance.

~ Mary Schmidt is a service learning student for her *Latin American Environmental Politics* course. You can reach Mary at mschmid@tulane.edu

From My View . . .

A unique experience that has been afforded to me this semester is the opportunity to have a psychology internship that is coordinated through the Office of Service Learning. After the application process, I began working with Positive Talk: Prevention and Life Skills Program. Positive Talk is primarily aimed at pregnancy prevention in 6th graders, but incorporates a variety of classes to enrich their experiences and depth of the focus. The interesting aspect of this program is the use of high school age students, rather than adults, as mentors for the target middle school students. Therefore, in addition to the main objectives mentioned above, Positive Talk also has a positive impact on these mentors, beneficial to both them and the program.

I am working directly with the Program Coordinator to develop sessions, organize activities, and assist in follow-up research on past participants. I am involved in all aspects of the program, from working with the middle school students, to training the mentors, to performing organizational functions. With this direct and hands-on experience, I have been able to link my psychology knowledge with real-world situations. My main psychology interests lie in the field of organizational and industrial studies, which is not clearly or

directly related to my work at Positive Talk, but many aspects of training development, organizational design, and group interactions are relevant. Since I plan to continue into graduate school, I see this internship as valuable in that it provides me with experience and exposure to areas that I might not otherwise encounter in either my undergraduate or graduate studies.

In addition to personal benefits of working with Positive Talk, I see this program as instrumental in Tulane's community involvement. By working with students from a variety of schools in New Orleans, the program not only links the communities of Tulane and the students, but connects the participating students as a group that transcends school, neighborhood, social division lines. I think that this sort of community involvement is key in working with, understanding, and developing relationships that have the potential to foster changes in social, political, economic, or educational arenas.

On an individual level, my community involvement began prior to my internship with Positive Talk. I worked through the Office of Service Learning in a mentoring program and with a community service organization as an educational assistant. With each experience, I began to see the link between learning, involvement, and the necessity for individual participation. For me, it has been this first-hand exposure that has instilled the importance of "service learning" and hands-on experiences in the process of education that no lecture, textbook, or lab experiment can replicate.

~Kelly Goff is an intern with the Department of Psychology. You can reach her at kgoff@tulane.edu