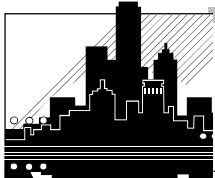


- Closure: Reflecting on Service
- Enhancement Grants Awarded
- Students' Service Learning Experiences

# The Inside Track

*The Tulane Service  
Learning Newsletter  
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## Service Learning at Tulane University *Enhancement Grants Awarded; 21 SL Courses will be Offered in Spring 2001*

### On the Move

The end of the semester is a busy one for everyone involved in service learning. At our office, we continue to monitor service learning students at various sites, while at the same time, planning for the Spring semester. We expect to have 21 service learning courses (the course listing is available at our office) and are busy finding community sites at which students will work. Service learning students are preparing for finals and getting those last few service hours at their sites. And our community partners continue their efforts to educate and assist our students.

In this flurry of activity, we want to remind our service learning students to take time to reflect on their service and create a satisfactory way to end their service experiences (see article on closure). And to our community partners and Tulane faculty, we wish to thank all of you for graciously working with our staff and students. We hope that our partnership continues!

Finally, we wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. As we celebrate our good fortune, let's not forget about those who are less fortunate. We look forward to seeing everyone in January!

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### Reminders for Students Currently Engaged in Service Learning:

**MAKE SURE** that your service hours are completed prior to the start of study days (December 8). **ALL** time sheets should be turned in to your professor.

**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.

**SHARE** your experiences with others and think about how you can continue your service experience beyond your service learning course.

### Closure

As your semester comes to an end and you begin thinking about finals and holiday plans, please do not forget about the people with whom you work at your Service Learning site. For most of you, this will be the end of your time at a particular site, and even if you plan to be at the same site next semester, circumstances may require you to work

with different people (particularly at schools, where scheduling can differ). Therefore, it is important that you let those with whom you work know that you won't be coming back. The following are some suggestions for ways to create closure.

Tell the people with whom you work that you will be leaving before your last day (particularly with children, this makes it less surprising and reduces the chance that the person will be upset).

Write, draw, or make something that let the individuals know how much they mean to you.

Cover the highlights of your shared achievement together. To end on a good note, it is important to remind the people that you've worked with (and also yourself), of the positive things that you have cooperated to achieve.

Avoid making promises that may not be realistic. Remember that things do come up in your life that might prevent you from being as available as you would like to be.

~ Megan McFarland and Devi Miron, Evaluators and Psychology Graduate Students

### Amanda's Space

Students who are involved in service learning through Political Science, Women's Studies and Psychology classes have been contributing to a variety of different projects at city agencies this semester. In the meantime, students are developing relationships with New Orleans residents they would otherwise never have met.

Service Learners from *Professor Travis' Feminist Theories* course are participating in several projects. Some students work with *Laura Zamjahm* at **Grace House** where they tutor clients who are studying for the GED. Four students are learning about current community issues and local organizations with *Rachel Breunlin* and *Brian Azona*, contributing to the **New Orleans Public Forum Newspaper Collective**. They will write two community-based articles and a third article focusing on feminist theory. A student is organizing archival materials on women involved in the Louisiana women's movement with *Susan Tucker* at **Newcomb College Center for Research on Women**. Another student is working with a team of three high school students on alternative media projects with *Jim Randels* and the **Students at the Center** program, and is implementing a similar program at Bell Elementary School. Two are working at the **Williams Research Center** with *Nancy Ruck*. The students work with New Orleans Women's Club archival records from the 1920s, creating a guide, membership roster and member profiles, and studying the women's relationships.

Students in *Professor Singleton's Environmental Politics* course are doing service learning with several agencies. Three students are working with *Tonya Jordan* at the **LA Green Party** where they are maintaining volunteer lists, contacting and scheduling local volunteers and preparing materials for campaign events. One student is working with *Liz Davey* at **Tulane's Office of Environmental Affairs** on a Recycling Education project.

The student teaches a series of weekly hands-on classes on recycling at local elementary schools. A Service Learner at the **Mississippi River Basin Alliance** is researching the loss of forests and biodiversity in Louisiana as related to regional, national, and global markets. He is collecting information on the rate of loss, biodiversity implications, and economic trends, and laying the groundwork for the MRBA to become informed and more involved in forest issues.

Tulane's **Upward Bound** program, run by *Dr. Tanis Dasher* and *Aaron Starck*, offers local high school students one-on-one assistance with academics and ACT preparation, with the help of about 50 Service Learners from *Professor Moely's Educational Psychology*, *Professor Dempsey's Child and Adolescent Social Development*, *Professor Olson's Child Psychology* and *Professor Taras' Politics in Nationalism* courses. Other students from these courses are tutoring students in local public schools including **Hoffman** and **Lafayette Elementary Schools** and working on campus with *Crystal McLean* in the **Positive Talk Program**.

This semester the service learning partnerships that I have seen take shape allow students and community partners to learn from and work with each other. I would like to thank everyone involved for their effort and commitment to making the partnerships work.

~Amanda Buberger

Service Program Coordinator

### Greg's Corner

Service learning students have really gotten involved at their sites. Over the past few weeks I've talked to a number of students who have done an outstanding job of staying excited about service learning.

One service learner from *Professor Overstreet's Urban Child Development* course works with **Project L.A.S.T.** social workers at the **Children's Bureau**. Project LAST works with children in Orleans Parish who have lost either a sibling or a parent. The service learner at Project LAST designs and implements

educational and recreational activities for the children in the program. Every week she goes with the Project LAST social worker, *Deborah Olivera*, to meet with a family on the West Bank. Other students in *Urban Child Development* work at a bilingual **Head Start** program in the city. Service learning students work as childcare assistants, help with arts and crafts, and help plan a fun curriculum for the children.

Students in *Professor Wilson's Advanced Exercise Physiology* class work with two community-based exercise and wellness programs: **Healthy Lifestyles and Fit, Fun, and Thin Some**. Students teach aerobics classes, assist aerobics instructors, serve as exercise and health mentors for the participants, and make educational presentations on a variety of exercise and nutrition-related subjects.

One student in *Professor Mackin's Persuasion* class works at the **Green Project**. He is working with the agency to design and implement a persuasive campaign to get local contractors to donate their leftover supplies to the Green Project for re-sale.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend these students and others who have been working diligently to create a positive experience with their community partners. Keep up the good work!

~ Greg Chapuis

Service Program Coordinator

### Ann's Space

In the last issue, I focused on the Undergraduate Internship Program. I also monitor several Service Learning classes. Here are some examples of the sites that service learning students are working in this semester:

Students in *Professor Muneoka's Embryology* class are engaged in service learning at **University Medical Center** and **Great Expectation Foundations**. The students are working with pregnant women on several projects relating to prenatal care: education, nutrition and parenting issues.

*Professor Dohanich's Psychopharmacology* students have returned this fall to **Bridge House**, a residential alcohol and drug

treatment center for indigent and homeless men, women and adolescents. The students act as medication consultants for residents, answering questions about the medication they are taking after doing some research on the medication's effects.

Students from *Professor Morse's Sociology of Medicine* class are working with children and their families who are hospitalized either at **Children's Hospital** or **Charity Hospital**.

Students from *Professor Klingler's French Phonetics* class and *Professor Pritchett's Intermediate Economics* class have the opportunity to do service learning in two sites in our community. The French students are assisting kindergartners with their French at the **International School of Louisiana**, a French and Spanish immersion school. The Economics students are tutors in the Free Enterprise class taught at **O.Perry Walker High School**.

The Undergraduate Internship Program will continue in the Spring semester. If you are a Political Science, Sociology or Psychology major and interested in an internship experience, please give me a call at 862-3356 or email me at [awinche@tulane.edu](mailto:awinche@tulane.edu).

~ Ann Winchell

*Internship Coordinator*

The NOPF Newspaper  
Collective

The New Orleans Public Forum Newspaper Collective (NOPF) is an independent non-commercial news consortium, organized to ensure public access to the varying news, events, and opinions on issues that concern our lives. The NOPF is bridging communities by providing a forum for groups and individuals to share information and ideas. It has proven to be a glove-in-hand partnership for four students involved in service learning through *Professor Molly Travis' Feminist Theories* course.

The forum was started by recent graduates *Rachel Breunlin* (Newcomb '99), *Brian Azona* (Tulane, '99), current Tulane student *Khalil Shahyd*, and local activist

*Alec "Icky" Dunn*. The idea for the forum developed out of many conversations Brian and Rachel had a few summers ago about how to increase access to progressive news in the media. Through encounters at many area events, Khalil and Icky soon jumped on board. NOPF became accessible to our local (and global) community in Spring 2000, when articles were just posted on the forum's website:

<http://www.endsound.com/nopf>.

A wide range of topics is covered on their site, including gentrification, public housing, media and democracy, corporate greenwashing, and U.S.-backed dictatorships.

This semester Service Learners have been investigating and writing articles about local issues that they find important.

*Kaiyti Duffy* recently wrote an article about Grace House, a local residential drug dependency rehabilitation center in Central City. *Liz Galligan* wrote an article on the "Dyke March" and her research "brought to light" some of the abuse experienced by lesbians in the local community.

*Megan Johnson* covered Tulane's recent vote on whether to remain in the FLA or join the student-supported WRC—a very hot issue for many students, faculty members and administrators on Tulane's campus and in the community. *Jennifer Stoy* wrote an article about women's health care issues in Louisiana. All articles written by service learners and other forum participants can be found on the Internet (at the address above). NOPF's first hardcopy will be printed by the end of the semester.

### Enhancement Grants

One way the Office of Service Learning supports the efforts of public school teachers and service learners in the schools is through our Service Learning Enhancement Grant Program. Each semester, teachers at our school sites may apply for 50 - 500 dollars to purchase materials for an innovative project that involves Tulane service learners working with students at the school.

This year one of the enhancement grants went to Lafayette Elementary School to start a school newspaper. A teacher applied for the grant and is working to coordinate the project within the school. Tulane students will assist the elementary school students with the writing of articles and the production of the paper.

At Hoffman Elementary School a number of teachers received grants. One of those grants went to third grade teachers Ms. Scott and Ms. Green. They ordered a number of books, videos, and art supplies for a project to encourage Hoffman students to get excited about reading with their service learners. First, the students will read a book with the assistance of a service learner. Then, they will watch the video version of the book that they read. Finally, the Hoffman students and their service learners will create an art project that relates to the book they read and the video they watched.

At the El Yo Yo bilingual Head Start program a service learner received a grant to help facilitate a Spanish-based curriculum. Service learners will work with the Spanish teacher at El Yo Yo to come up with a set of lessons related to the "Rock 'N Learn Spanish" video series. The grant was used to purchase a TV/VCR, a set of "Rock 'N Learn" videos, and some art supplies. Service learners will watch the Spanish videos with the children and plan fun activities to supplement the videos.

Our staff is very excited that we are able to provide funding for these innovative projects. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to apply for an enhancement grant. These projects are truly extraordinary and reflect the commitment and dedication we see everyday at our partner schools.

### From My View . . .

This semester I've been working one-on-one with two sixth graders at Hoffman Elementary School, arriving every Monday and Wednesday morning to work with one of the two students for an hour. They're both fairly quiet, and

don't show much emotion beyond the occasional smile. But every morning they're ready to work! It's not always easy to hold a sixth grader's attention for a full hour, but these students cooperate from beginning to end.

Usually I just help them with their class work, reviewing vocabulary or explaining grammar. But I always try to leave the last twenty minutes or so purely for reading. Though not as far behind as some of their peers, neither student is reading at a sixth grade level. From the hesitant way even familiar words are read, it's obvious that their main problem is simply a lack of practice and individual direction—exactly what I'm there for.

But I'm more guide than teacher, only helping every so often with an error or a new word. At the end of a story I'll ask them to summarize it, which they can usually do without difficulty. And then, surprisingly soon, our time is up. Sometimes as I'm leaving I'll think about the problems faced by my students and all the others. To some the situation seems hopeless, yet I've found solutions in the simplest way; opening up the potential of the students themselves.

~ Christopher Ponoroff is a service learning student at Hoffman Elementary School for his *Introduction to Psychology (H)* course. You can e-mail Christopher at [cponoro@tulane.edu](mailto:cponoro@tulane.edu).

#### From My View . . .

Walking into the Upward Bound office during the first few weeks of the program, I fully expected to meet students whose life and academic experiences were very different from my own. I planned on encountering things that had never before crossed my mind and getting a closer glimpse at the world of the student I worked with. I was (I thought) prepared to provide a promising student with the scholastic encouragement and assistance that every student deserves but that sometimes fails to materialize when school districts are pressed. What I did not expect was the *type* of challenges I would face.

The young lady with whom I work with is extremely bright. She has a lively

imagination and a nimble wit. She is also extremely difficult to teach. Even on my first day, I realized that I would be competing with every opening and closing door, every person walking by the window, every bird, every radio, and every random thought that entered her mind. Her mercurially selective attention, I found, seldom chooses to alight on our ACT preparation booklet.

My challenge, then, has been to get around her roving attention span rather than buckle her down for the duration of the study time. The semester has been a long-running experiment in accomplishing that end. While I cannot say that I have had as much success as I would have liked, I still feel that my work has been important.

With a lot of help from Upward Bound coordinator Dr. Dasher, and no little help from the student herself, I have slowly been finding ways of getting and keeping my student's attention, and hopefully helping her develop the skills – in study habits as well as in the ACT workbook – that she will need to succeed.

~ Katherine Taylor is a service learning student at Tulane's Upward Bound Program for her *Educational Psychology* course. You can e-mail Katherine at [ktaylor@tulane.edu](mailto:ktaylor@tulane.edu).

#### From My View . . .

After having completed forty hours of volunteering at Children's Hospital for the service learning component of a Sociology of Medicine course, I now truly understand the meaning behind the term "service learning." My services consisted of transporting patients, assisting nurses, patients, and their families, and primarily, extending, extending our hands and hearts to people who could use an extra friend during a rough time. I feel that I have completed my duty; I have successfully provided my "service." However, never did I imagine the extent to which I would gain from this experience. I have been recompensed tenfold. Volunteering at the hospital has been an unbelievable learning and growing experience for me.

While volunteering at the hospital, I encountered a number of heart-wrenching experiences. I played with innocent children who were victims of child abuse, having to hold back my rage toward parents accused of violating something so undeniably precious. I attempted to soothe the anxious families awaiting test or surgery results. I offered friendship to terminally ill cancer patients, and they received me with open arms. I gave exhausted parents the temporary break they needed to regain their strength while I attempted to provide support for the child. I developed a profound admiration for the strength of these children and sheer amazement at their willingness to accept me as their friend. They have taught me a sense of optimism and faith that I never knew existed. The gentle courage they convey is inspiring. These patients exude a radiance that forces you to rethink your outlook on life.

Throughout this project, I have also gained a heightened sense of respect and admiration for every member of the hospital staff. Nurses, doctors, aids, cafeteria workers, and recreation staff become support groups, teachers, friends disciplinarians, and extra parents for the patients. With their smiles and genuine concern, they bring light to a time that could otherwise be enveloped in darkness. They give themselves over to their patients wholeheartedly. An occupation in a hospital definitely requires a special sort of person.

I know now that the little time I gave to the patients, their families, and the staff at Children's Hospital could not begin to compare to what they were able to give me. I left a piece of my heart in Children's Hospital. I am grateful for the opportunity, and I encourage others to take advantage of this life-changing experience.

~ Jenny Duos is a service learning student at Children's Hospital for her *Sociology of Medicine* course. You can e-mail Jenny at [jduos@tulane.edu](mailto:jduos@tulane.edu).