



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Awards .....2  
Sentinel Snapshots .....6  
At Your Service .....8  
Sentinel Snippets .....10  
Faculty & Staff News .....12  
Students in Service .....14  
Fresh Perspective .....17  
Looking Ahead .....20



## School of Health Sciences Receives Leading Light Award

The School of Health Sciences is the latest recipient of the Leading Light Award from the Center for Service Learning.

Dr. Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, presented the award to the school recently. The award symbolizes the highest achievement among Western Carolina's academic departments in integrating service learning into the curriculum.

Service-learning courses in the school include "Recreational Therapy for Older Adults," the first WCU course to receive the SLC (service-learning component) designation; "Clinical Laboratory Science"; "Health Information Administration"; "Community Nutrition"; and "Personal Nutrition."



Director Phil Kneller

"Thank you for this wonderful award. ... I am appreciative of the dedication and the hard work of the faculty in the School of Health Sciences," wrote Director Phil Kneller in an e-mail to the Center for Service Learning. "Receiving recognition for their time and effort will be a lasting memory."

In a message to the school, Kneller wrote: "The Leading Light Award given to the School of Health Sciences was for exemplary integration of service learning into the curriculum and is the highest achievement to be received for service learning among all of Western Carolina University's academic departments. All of you who have service-learning components in your courses should take great pride in this award and you are to be congratulated for your dedication and the hard work you do to allow your students to become the best that they can be!"

He also offered congratulations to Dr. Ashley Long, Dr. April Tallant and the Nutrition and Dietetics Student Association (advised by Dr. Wayne Billon) for their achievements.



*Service Learning  
Receives Excellence Award  
– story on page 2*

## Service Learning Receives Support Program of Excellence Award

The Center for Service Learning is the recipient of Western Carolina University's Support Program of Excellence Award for the 2008-09 academic year.

This was one of several university awards presented to faculty and staff for teaching, research and service for the academic year at the annual Spring Awards Convocation, held

April 24 in the performance hall of the Fine and Performing Arts Center.

In presenting the award, Chancellor John W. Bardo noted that the center has an important presence in every college of the university and with student and employee organizations. In addition, the center has established

formal relationships with more than 100 community service agencies. Chancellor Bardo also noted that the university has received national recognition as a result of the accomplishments of the center.

"Students are provided with opportunities to learn outside the classroom, with their hands and with their hearts, interacting in the community," said Chancellor Bardo. "Since 2005, WCU students have contributed nearly \$17 million in voluntary and course-based service to the community in the areas of education, community development, environmental conservation, health care, poverty and hunger alleviation, and social justice."

Among faculty leaders offering congratulations on the award were Center for Service Learning Advisory Board Chair Anna McFadden and the Coulter Faculty Center Advisory Committee Chair Debra Burke. In separate e-mail messages to Director Glenn Bowen, both said the award was "well deserved."



Chancellor John W. Bardo, left, presents the Support Program of Excellence Award to Glenn Bowen, director of the Center for Service Learning, and Jennifer Cooper, assistant director.

## Community Partners Receive Service-Learning Awards

Western Carolina University has presented Service-Learning Partnership Awards to a Jackson County nursing home, three administrators of Jackson County Public Schools, and a Clay County social services supervisor in recognition of effective collaboration with university faculty and students working on community service projects that are linked to the curriculum.

The Partnership Award recipients were the Mountain Trace Nursing Center; Lisa Dean, Eleanor Macaulay, and Peggy Ayers of Jackson County Public Schools; and Todd Goins of the Clay County Department of Social Services.

They were honored at the fifth annual WCU Service-Learning Awards Ceremony, billed as "a celebration of learning and service to the community." The event was held in the A.K. Hinds University Center's Grand Room in April.

Mountain Trace Nursing Center, located in Webster, is a 106-bed nursing facility that provides long-term skilled nursing care, intermediate care and subacute rehabilitation services. The 26-bed Alzheimer's Dementia Care Unit offers a therapeutic environment for residents of the nursing home. Mountain Trace has been a WCU service-learning community partner since 2003. Last academic year, WCU recreational therapy students continued working with residents of the nursing home, including those with Alzheimer's disease.

The Jackson County Public School System administrators assisted WCU faculty members Jamie Davis and Lori Oxford with coordinating a project designed to assist children from Spanish-speaking backgrounds. As part of this project, 174 university students were paired with children who attend Cullowhee Valley and Fairview schools. They tutored the children, helped them with homework and read to them in Spanish, said Davis, an assistant

professor in the Department of Modern Foreign Languages. The three administrators "encouraged the WCU students in their work with the children and demonstrated to them the relevance of their knowledge and significance of their contributions to multicultural relations," Davis added.

Todd Goins, the child protective services supervisor at Clay County Department of Social Services, collaborated with a WCU faculty member to develop the service-learning component of a social work course.

"Students in this course learn about the difficulties faced by children in foster care and the implications of not being prepared for school," said Jeanne Dulworth, an assistant professor of social work. "Todd and I work together to teach students about how this impacts their bio/psycho/social as well as their cultural and spiritual development. Then the students engage in advocacy for these clients."

## Excellence in Teaching Liberal Studies Award goes to Singleton



Debby Singleton

Faculty member Debby Singleton was recognized recently with the Excellence in Teaching Liberal Studies Award. Her inclusion of service learning in her courses contributed to this achievement. Singleton, a visiting instructor in the Health, Physical Education and Recreation Department, is regarded as "a thoughtful and innovative teacher who does whatever it takes to positively influence student learning."

In presenting the award, Provost Kyle Carter said, "Debby builds learning opportunities into her classes that emphasize the importance of health and exercise beyond the duration of the course. ... She goes beyond that, too, requiring her first-year students to improve their writing and interpersonal skills to facilitate success in their entire university experience."

The Excellence in Teaching Liberal Studies Award is designed to recognize a faculty member for excellence in promoting significant student learning while teaching liberal studies courses on a regular basis, Carter said.

## What They're Saying...

*In the assisted living unit [where I did my NC-ACTS work] I became aware of some of the common barriers to communication with these older adults such as hearing aids, poor eyesight, and memory problems. I also learned a lot about Alzheimer's disease. ... In class, I learned very general principles about this population, but in this facility I learned how to interact with older adults.*

– Becky Hannah, NC-ACTS member

## Honors College Awards Project Grants

The Honors College awarded three Undergraduate Academic Project Grants to the Center for Service Learning for student projects last academic year.

The award winners were "WCU's 2008 Alternative Spring Break in Chicago: Life-Changing Experiences from Service-Learning Sites," presented by students Bessie and Alan Goggins; "Invisible Children Campaign," by student Ellen Rowe; and "Alphabet Programming," by student Casey Lowe. Their projects became presentations at the 2008 N.C. Campus Compact Student Conference.

Katherine Graunke, Center for Service Learning program coordinator, acted as faculty sponsor.



Jamie Davis, winner of the Paul A. Reid Distinguished Service Award for faculty.

## Davis Honored with Distinguished Service Award

Jamie Davis, an assistant professor in the department of modern foreign languages, was honored with the Paul A. Reid Distinguished Service Award for faculty April 24.

A WCU faculty member since 2005, Davis was praised as someone who works tirelessly to build community between faculty and students and who helps his students master the Spanish language and cultural study through such initiatives as Spanish House and an array of service-learning opportunities. These include teaching Spanish phrases to county law enforcement officers and Health Department workers, and helping launch a tutoring and literacy program that paired WCU students with Cullowhee Valley School students from non-English speaking homes.

"He takes his students beyond the classroom and into the surrounding community," said Chancellor John W. Bardo, who presented the award at the annual Spring Awards Convocation.

## Faculty, Staff and Students Honored at Service-Learning Awards



From L to R: Dr Robert Anderson, Dottie Greene, Dr. Patricia Morse, Dr. April Tallant, Dr. Paul Jacques, Dr. Jamie Davis, Dr. Ashley Long

Four faculty members, Dr. Robert Anderson (engineering and technology), Professor Dottie Greene (social work), Dr. Patricia Morse (social work) and Dr. April Tallant (School of Health Sciences), were given "Outstanding Achievement: Teaching" awards.

Dr. Paul Jacques (management) was honored for outstanding achievement in the "Outstanding Achievement: Research" category during the Center for Service Learning's 2009 Awards Ceremony.

"Outstanding Achievement: Teaching" awards went to two faculty members, Dr. Jamie Davis (modern foreign languages) and Dr. Ashley Long (School of Health Sciences).

The fifth annual Service-Learning Awards Ceremony was held in the Grand Room of

the A.K. Hinds University Center. Awards in the form of plaques, pins and certificates were presented. In all, 27 major awards (in 10 categories) were presented to faculty, staff, students and community partners

Other major award winners included five students in Professor Arledge Armenaki's "Directing the Documentary" class who won for Outstanding Achievement (Students): Sean Cassidy, Ross Dillon, Kirk Gunton, Stephen Johnson, and Jesse Romine. Colin Scott and Shawna Hipps were named "Shining Stars." Alpha Phi Omega, the Nutrition and Dietetics Association and the Western Athletic Training Association were honored in the "Community Service: Organization" category.

Kathleen Cummins, Mollie Richards, Wil Owens, Ashley Merrill and Samuel "Colin" Scott were recognized with Medford Scholars certificates. So too were five service-learning faculty fellows, Dr. Robert Anderson (Kimmel School), Jamel Anderson-Ruff (College of Education and Allied Professions), Professor Marie Cochran (College of Fine and Performing Arts), Professor Jeanne Dulworth (College of Health and Human Sciences) and Dr. Paul Jacques (College of Business).

Certificates also were presented to Civic Place members; participants in the NC- ACTS! AmeriCorps Program; Alternative Break Program participants; and volunteers for the Invisible Children Campaign.

## Student Selected for Community Impact Award

Shawna Hipps, a Western Carolina University senior, is a recipient of the North Carolina Campus Compact Community Impact Student Award for 2009.

The award is presented annually to students from member campuses of the organization who exhibit outstanding leadership and innovative approaches in community service or service-learning endeavors. Hipps, a history major at WCU, is one of 27 students selected for the award.

Hipps will receive the award Saturday, Nov. 7, when WCU hosts the annual N.C. Campus Compact Student Conference.

"Shawna is both passionate and compassionate," said Glenn Bowen, director of WCU's Center for Service Learning. "Her volunteer work, focusing on cancer survivors and bringing attention to the plight of child soldiers in Uganda, reflects a deep understanding of what it means to be a caring, active citizen of the world. She is an exemplary student leader, a dedicated volunteer and a positive role model for her peers."

Since her first year at Western, Ms. Hipps has participated in the Student Leadership Institute and in various student organizations and community service projects. In Alpha Phi Omega, the national co-ed service fraternity, she is currently the

president, having previously served as vice president of fellowship and vice president of service. Through APO, she has assisted with various service-learning initiatives including the Invisible Children Campaign, which raised campuswide awareness of the atrocities being committed against children in Uganda, where many are forced to fight as soldiers.

She also participated in the Campus Kitchen Garden Project and the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.

Hipps recently was selected as WCU's Relay For Life event chair for 2010 after serving as a volunteer since 2006 and helping to raise \$25,000 for the American Cancer Society in 2009.

"As a volunteer student leader, she has not only increased giving to the American Cancer Society, but has also supported the organization's effort to increase relay participation and expand awareness of cancer's impact on the campus and surrounding community," said Lisa Duff, senior community manager for the American Cancer Society's South Atlantic division. "Due to her direct involvement, several cooperative efforts have been established on campus, including those with the School of Nursing, Wellness Center and the athletics department."



Shawna Hipps

Hipps was a recipient of the Center for Service Learning's Shining Star Award for 2009 and Omicron Delta Kappa's Award for Service.

"I have discovered that regardless of what is going on in my life, there is always time to help others," she said.

The daughter of Sharon Hipps from Raleigh, N.C., Hipps graduated from Millbrook High School in 2006.

N.C. Campus Compact is a 46-member coalition of college and university presidents and chancellors established to encourage and support campus engagement in the community. WCU became a member campus in 2005.

## University gets "Honorable Mention" for Civic Engagement

The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars honored Western Carolina University recently for the "extraordinary strength" of its civic engagement initiatives.

WCU was one of five colleges and universities nationwide chosen for honorable mention among 67 institutions recently nominated for the Washington Center's Higher Education Civic Engagement Award.

"We warmly congratulate you and your colleagues on this especially noteworthy work you're doing," said Michael B. Smith, president of the Washington Center, in a letter to WCU Chancellor John W. Bardo.

He said further that the efforts of institutions such as WCU "tell an inspirational story of effort and accomplishment ... and demonstrate compellingly how central service learning and community engagement have become to our colleges and universities and to the educations they provide."

The national recognition underscores the important strides made in implementing the university's quality enhancement plan (commonly called the QEP), which features civic engagement as a key component, said Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies. "Students need multiple, concrete opportunities

to synthesize their entire undergraduate experiences in a holistic, integrated way," Burton said. "Practicing civic engagement is one method for accomplishing that."

Service learning was identified in WCU's award nomination as one of the outstanding civic engagement efforts.

WCU recently became an affiliate of the Washington Center, an organization that provides an integrated academic and work experience to prepare college students and professionals for lives of achievement and civic engagement. Glenn Bowen, director of service learning, was named WCU campus liaison with the Washington Center.

### MAJOR AWARDS

#### COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Individual / Students .....Aaron Camp, Ashley Merrill
- Individual / Staff .....Bryan Boyer
- Organization .....Alpha Phi Omega, Nutrition and Dietetics Student Association, Western Carolina Athletic Training Association

SHINING STAR .....Colin Scott, Shawna Hipps

MERITORIOUS SERVICE .....Staff of Base Camp Cullowhee

#### OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

- Students .....Sean Cassidy, Ross Dillin, Kirk Gunton, Stephen Johnson, Jesse Romine
- Teaching .....Dr. Robert Anderson, Professor Dottie Greene, Dr. Patricia Morse, Dr. April Tallant
- Research .....Dr. Paul Jacques
- Service .....Dr. James Davis, Dr. Ashley Long

PARTNERSHIP .....Lisa Dean, Eleanor Macaulay and Peggy Ayers (Jackson County Public Schools); Todd Goins (Clay County Dept of Social Services); Mountain Trace Nursing Center

LEADING LIGHT .....School of Health Sciences (Professor Phil Kneller, then-director)

Congratulations!



# SENTINEL snapshots

PHOTO CREDIT: NICHOLE A. MEIER



## Campus Kitchen Garden Project

### Service Fraternity Digs into Garden

Members of the Alpha Phi Omega service fraternity held their annual rush event Sept. 15 at the Campus Kitchen Garden. Led by Shawna Hipps, president of APO, the members worked on readying the garden for fall by weeding, picking corn and planting a bed of cabbage. WCU's APO chapter, a national co-ed fraternity devoted to community service and civic fellowship, brings fellowship, leadership and service to its campus, community and nation.

Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity has more than 17,000 male and female student members at 366 college campuses nationwide. Its mission is to prepare campus and community leaders through service. Its purpose is to develop leadership, promote friendship and provide service to humanity. More than 350,000 members have joined Alpha Phi Omega since its founding.

### Center Organizes Service Projects in Honor of Homecoming 2009

A group of volunteers winterized the WCU Campus Kitchen Garden as a Homecoming service project October 14. Volunteers also created and installed a new sign for the garden.

The Center for Service Learning developed the garden in 2008 and donates produce to the Community Table, a nonprofit dining facility in Sylva that serves dinner four days a week, always free of charge.

Four community service projects were planned for the day in honor of Homecoming 2009. However, three were canceled because of inclement weather, explained Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of the Center for Service Learning. Those projects included painting and community cleanup in Cullowhee; trail-building and gardening at the Appalachian Homestead Farm and Preserve; and splitting, loading and delivering firewood to low-income and elderly Jackson County residents as part of Project FIRE, a Jackson County Department on Aging initiative.

## Service-Learning Symposium a Success



Amy Driscoll was the symposium's lead presenter.

"Responding to the Challenges and Opportunities for Engagement" was the theme of WCU's fifth annual Symposium on Service Learning and Civic Engagement, held June 11.

Amy Driscoll, a nationally recognized service-learning scholar and author, was the lead presenter. Representatives from WCU, Elon University, Lees-McRae College, N.C. State University, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, UNC-Greensboro and the University of South Florida made presentations at the symposium.

Driscoll is a consulting scholar with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, where she has coordinated the development and piloting of the community engagement elective classification. WCU is classified by the Carnegie Foundation as a community-engaged institution, which is a special category for college and universities with extensive involvement in their communities in terms of service, partnerships and scholarly activity.

Driscoll also is co-author of "Making Outreach Visible: A Guidebook to Documenting Professional Service";

"Assessing Service Learning and Civic Engagement: Principles and Techniques"; "Taking Ownership of Accreditation: Processes that Promote Institutional Improvement and Faculty Engagement"; and "From Outcomes-based Assessment to Learner-centered Education: A Faculty Introduction."

The daylong symposium in the A.K. Hinds University Center began with an opening session titled "The Institutional Context of Civic Engagement," led by Carol Burton, WCU's assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies.

"I walked away from the [symposium] with my brain very full of new ideas and insights about community engagement. ... Thanks again for an enriching, energizing day," commented Annie Carlson, director of service learning for the Thielman Center for Faith and Action at Montreat College in Montreat, N.C.

"Thanks so much for the great conference. I really enjoyed Amy Driscoll. ... You did a really amazing job.," said Beth Warner, associate professor of human services at Elon University.

Judi Jetson, director of the USF Collaborative for Children, Families and Communities at the University of South Florida, wrote: "I enjoyed meeting and talking with the faculty and staff attending [the] symposium."

## New Advisory Board Appointed



Anna McFadden

A new 17-member advisory board has been appointed for the Center for Service Learning. Dr. Anna McFadden, director of the Coulter Faculty Center and professor in the department of educational leadership and foundations, remains chair of the board.

Dr. Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, made the

appointments in July. She welcomed the new members at this year's first board meeting in September.

Board members include Rotimi Ariyo, interim associate director for programs, A.K. Hinds University Center, WCU; Mardy Ashe, director of Career Services and Cooperative Education, WCU; Aaron D. Camp, undergraduate, WCU; Bessie Dietrich Goggins, graduate student, WCU; Heather Gordon, extension agent, Jackson County 4-H; Amy Grimes McClure, executive director, Community Table; Glenda Hensley, assistant professor, department of stage and screen, WCU; Karrie Joseph,

wellness coordinator, WCU; Lynn Mathis, coordinator of resident student success, department of residential living, WCU; Dr. Mickey Randolph, professor of psychology, WCU; Dr. William (Bill) Richmond, associate professor, computer information systems, WCU; Ellen Rowe, undergraduate, WCU; Walter Turner, director of the department of student community ethics, WCU; Emma Wartenberger, coordinator, the Appalachian Women's Museum; and Harold Watson, executive director, Full Spectrum Farms.

Dr. Glenn Bowen, director of the Center for Service Learning, is secretary of the board.

## WCU Donates Books to Charitable Organizations



Katie Graunke coordinated the collection of books for charitable organizations.

Western Carolina University has donated a set of used books to two organizations as part of a service-learning project.

A total of 349 books went to Better World Books and 85 books, primarily titles for children, were donated to the Friends of the Library in Sylva. The donation to Better World Books included a contribution of 227 books from the WCU Bookstore.

The WCU Center for Service Learning has developed a partnership with Better World Books, which collects and sells books online to fund literacy initiatives worldwide. Better World Books has converted more than 11

million donated books into funding totaling \$4.5 million for literacy and education since 2002, diverting more than 6,000 tons of books from landfills.

Fifty percent of the proceeds from the sale of books collected at WCU will go to the Schools for Schools program developed by Invisible Children Inc., a nonprofit organization raising awareness about the plight of child soldiers and night commuters in northern Uganda.

The aim of the Schools for Schools program is to help children in northern Uganda receive a quality education. The program works by partnering a school in the United States with a secondary school in Uganda. The money raised through the host school helps fund initiatives at the school in Uganda, such as refurbishment projects and construction of new classrooms. The proceeds also go toward teaching and learning materials.

The donation benefiting Schools for Schools included textbooks, manuals, creative nonfiction, and novels.

## Participants in Morehead State Leadership Academy Visit WCU

Participants in the President's Leadership Academy at Morehead State University visited Western Carolina University last March and met with faculty and staff managing various programs including service learning.

Director Glenn Bowen and Assistant Director Jennifer Cooper made a service-learning presentation to the group.

The yearlong academy provides professional development experiences to Morehead State faculty, staff and administrators who have exhibited the potential for effective leadership. Participants tour other

"model" university campuses and meet with key faculty and staff in order to make a comparative study after reading and discussing four or five books, attending seminar sessions, and completing online activities, group projects, in-state trips and an internship.

The goal of the academy is to increase participants' awareness of the complexity of issues facing the university and post-secondary education, and to challenge them to expand their understanding of the environment in which decisions are made at MSU and other higher education institutions.

## New Coordinators in Service Learning



The Center for Service Learning has two new coordinators on its staff this year. They are Julia Konish and Brendan Braaten.



Julia Konish and Brendan Braaten

Konish joined the staff in July, replacing WCU alumna Katie Graunke as program coordinator. Participating in the North Carolina Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA program, she is co-supervising the Alternative Break Program, serving as liaison with the Center for Leadership, and acting as the Center for Service Learning's primary contact for student clubs and organizations. She also tracks and assesses student involvement in community service.

Before joining the Center for Service Learning, Konish served for a year as an AmeriCorps Massachusetts Promise Fellow at MY TURN Inc. in Brockton, Mass. She previously worked as the volunteer coordinator for AIDS Walk Boston, on behalf of the AIDS Action Committee.

Konish graduated from St. Anselm College in 2007 with a Bachelor of Arts in politics.

Braaten is the center's new project coordinator. His responsibilities include alternative fall break, National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, and grant proposal-related research. Throughout the academic year, Braaten also will recruit and train students for volunteer projects.

He recently received a Bachelor of Science in public relations from Appalachian State University.

A WCU graduate assistant, he is currently working on his master's degree in college student personnel and is "looking forward to assisting students who have an open heart and mind for service learning."

Chris Parker, a sophomore majoring in business management, is the student assistant in the Center for Service Learning for the fall 2009 semester.

# SENTINEL

# Snippets



**TUCKASEIGEE RIVER CLEANUP MARKS 25TH YEAR:** More than 650 members of the campus and local communities participated in the Tuckasegee River Cleanup on April 18, contributing a total of 4,564 hours of service. The volunteers spent about seven hours in rafts and canoes and on foot to clear debris from 26 miles of river.

The Center for Service Learning gave a Meritorious Service Award to the Staff of Base Camp Cullowhee for organizing the annual project, which celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2009.

**ON FACEBOOK:** The Center for Service Learning now has its own Facebook page that will allow students, faculty, staff and community partners to get updates about the center's upcoming events and service opportunities. Currently featured on the page are photo albums of service events and the Service-Learning Bulletin. Program Coordinator Julia Konish created the page and manages the center's Facebook account: [www.facebook.com/WCUServiceLearning](http://www.facebook.com/WCUServiceLearning).

**SUMMER INSTITUTE:** "Experiencing Service Learning" was one of the six Focus Team topics covered at the Coulter Faculty Center's Summer Institute for Teaching and Learning from May 12 to 14. Assistant Director Jennifer Cooper was the service-learning focus team facilitator.

**WELLNESS MINI-GRANTS:** The WCU Wellness Council's efforts to involve students in fulfilling its mission – "to cultivate a social and physical environment that encourages individual wellness and nurtures a vibrant and just community" – were supported by the Center for Service Learning's participation in reviewing proposals for the Wellness mini-grants. A recipient of one of the \$300 mini-grants developed the Yellow Bike Project as an alternative, healthy means of transportation on campus.

**GREEK DAY OF SERVICE:** WCU's Greek-letter organizations provided 220 hours of service to the community last spring. Volunteers worked with Project CARE and Habitat for Humanity and organized a change drive to benefit Jackson County Neighbors in Need (formerly Save the Warmth).

**UNIVERSITY ORIENTATION:** The Center for Service Learning participated in seven information fairs organized by the Office of Orientation Programs last academic year. Also, the center took part in six open houses organized by the Office of Undergraduate Admission.

**RESOURCE FAIR:** The Center for Service Learning took part in the Residential Living Fall Training Resource Fair on Aug. 13 in Reid Gym.

**ACADEMIC SUCCESS PROGRAM:** For the third year, the Center for Service Learning coordinated service projects for participants in the Academic Success Program. The program, which includes academic, social and service components, allows incoming freshmen to begin their college experience early and helps them develop skills they need to be successful in college. The summer 2009 program's 200 students contributed 600 volunteer hours to community agencies in Jackson, Macon, Swain and Buncombe counties. Students helped at the Cherokee Boys Club, CREATE, Full Spectrum Farms, Macon County Habitat for Humanity, MANNA FoodBank, Pinnacle Park, REACH of Jackson County, WATR and the WCU Campus Kitchen Garden. The volunteers helped these community agencies with a variety of projects, including construction, landscaping, gardening, park maintenance, a creek cleanup, sorting donated food, working with children and assisting at a thrift store. Assistant Director Jennifer Cooper coordinated the projects.

**CIVIC DUTY:** Participants in the Center for Service Learning's residential program completed 183 hours of volunteer service last academic year. The eight students, members of the living-learning community called Civic Place, worked on Homecoming, Make a Difference Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and the Tuckasegee River Cleanup projects. Some members volunteered at MANNA FoodBank, the Jackson Christmas Store, Holler Ministries in Asheville and the Community Table.

**NC-ACTS!:** A total of 20 WCU students were enrolled in the NC-ACTS! AmeriCorps Program in fall, spring and summer the 2008-09 academic year. Each committed to completing 300 hours of service in a calendar year as part of this program, organized by N.C. Campus Compact and aimed at "activating citizenship through service."

**MUSEUM IN THE MAKING:** As part of Western Carolina University's March celebration of Women's History Month 2009, the Center for Service Learning and the Women's Center organized an improvement project at the Monteith Farmstead in Dillsboro. The Monteith property was part of the estate of Edna and Edith Monteith, sisters whose family lived in Jackson County for generations. Their 1908 house is being restored and will become the Appalachian Women's Museum once repairs have been completed. The museum will focus on Appalachian women and their work both in and out of the home. The grounds will include walking trails, a playground, an outdoor amphitheater and gardens that highlight native and heirloom plants.

## What They're Saying...

*I am learning about programs to help families with low socio-economic status. I never realized the great programs that are available for families that give parents resources to help their children. Most of the programs I have learned about in my work, I did not hear about in classes.*

– Ashley Ardoin, NC-ACTS member

**CELEBRATION:** Region A Partnership for Children held its 15th Anniversary Celebration on Sept. 18. A WCU service-learning community partner, the agency hosted an open house at its Jackson Street offices in Sylva. WCU Associate Professor Phil Sanger and Center for Service Learning Director Glenn Bowen attended the event. Among agency officials participating in the celebration event were Juanita Wilson, board chair; Janice Edgerton, executive director; and Emma Miller, early learning specialist.

**RELAY FOR LIFE:** The Center for Service Learning assisted with the 2009 WCU Relay for Life, which raised awareness about cancer and netted more than \$25,000. This awareness and fundraising event for the American Cancer Society drew more than 350 participants, in 43 teams, to meet the fundraising goal.

The relay was held April 24 on campus.

## QEP in Spotlight

Western Carolina University's Quality Enhancement Plan, or QEP, was the "In the Spotlight" feature on the University of North Carolina system home page in September with the article "WCU Students and Faculty Engage Community through Quality Enhancement Plan."

"The QEP was designed ... to help students create connections between what they learn inside and outside of the classroom and to afford faculty, staff, and students more opportunities to collaborate," according to the feature article. Service learning was highlighted in the article.

Dr. Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, is quoted as saying, "We saw a need for students to be more intentional about their undergraduate experiences. Engaging with the community was a way to help them to make connections and learn in a more meaningful way. We encourage our students to be involved in mutually beneficial projects where they can learn from the community while giving back."

To access the article, by UNC intern Carrie Henderson, go to [www.northcarolina.edu](http://www.northcarolina.edu), roll over "public service" on the bar at the top of the page, and then select "engagement and outreach" from the drop-down menu. On the left-hand rail, select "news," then "2009," then "September." Or access the story directly by logging on to [www.northcarolina.edu/leadership/econ\\_dev/engagement/spotlight.php?code=engage\\_spotlight&actn=view&article\\_id=189090](http://www.northcarolina.edu/leadership/econ_dev/engagement/spotlight.php?code=engage_spotlight&actn=view&article_id=189090)



## Faculty Fellows Offer Support to Colleagues



From L to R: Domagalski, Kastrinos, Anderson, Anderson-Ruff, Cochran

Five service-learning faculty fellows and three liaisons are serving as consultants to their colleagues in colleges across the university.

New faculty fellows are Dr. Theresa (Teri) Domagalski, associate professor of management, College of Business; and Glenn Kastrinos, an assistant professor of recreational therapy, College of Health and Human Sciences. They join returning fellows Robert Anderson, Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology; Jamel Anderson-Ruff, College of Education and Allied Professions; and Marie Cochran, College of Fine and Performing Arts.

Domagalski teaches courses in organizational behavior and human resource management. She received her doctorate in management and organizational behavior from the University of South Florida. She has a Master of Business

Administration from the State University of New York at Buffalo and undergraduate degrees in psychology and social work. Prior to joining WCU, she taught at the Florida Institute of Technology in Melbourne, Fla.

“As an educator who works with aspiring business professionals, I believe that business students must realize the responsibility they have to various stakeholder groups,” said Domagalski. “Service learning provides an excellent way for business students to cultivate a personal sense of stewardship to the communities in which they live and plan to work. By engaging with local organizations and members of the community in a service-learning context, business students will be well positioned to embrace the values of service and stewardship as they embark on their professional career paths.”

Kastrinos has a Bachelor of Science in psychology and a Master of Education in therapeutic recreation. He is completing his doctorate in education. He was department head for therapeutic recreation at Eastern Institute of Technology in Napier, New Zealand. His other positions in higher education included recreational therapy coordinator at the University of Idaho and therapeutic recreation instructor at Temple University.

“I am a strong believer in the need for service learning and service leadership, and giving students the opportunities to learn from experience,” he said.

Anderson is an assistant professor and program director for engineering technology; Anderson-Ruff is curriculum specialist/visiting instructor; and Cochran an assistant professor in art and design.

Former service-learning faculty fellow Mickey Randolph is a new liaison. She will represent the psychology department. Randolph, a full professor in psychology, joins three previously appointed liaisons: Steve Carlisle, Honors College associate dean; Jessica Shirley, School of Nursing (Enka Campus) student services specialist; and the athletic department’s Dr. Jennifer Brown, associate athletic director/senior woman administrator and director of academic support services for student-athletes.

### What They’re Saying...

*My service site is the AWAKE Children’s Advocacy Center in downtown Sylva. The center focuses on physical and sexual child abuse. We have forensic interviews and educational materials on hand that are available to the public. I’m learning a great deal about this agency, especially how a nonprofit organization operates. I’ve learned how grants are done at the agency and also all the things that must be followed in order to ensure that the center can stay open. I’ve also learned a lot about child abuse and how to look for the signs that a child may be suffering from abuse. This is more hands-on training than what I’ve learned in class. It is totally different when you are in a different setting and actually experience events rather than talking about them.*

– Amanda Cafaro, NC-ACTS member

## Staff Senate Donates to Hospital Auxiliary

The WCU Staff Senate organized its first community service project last academic year, donating items to the local Hospital Auxiliary.

Lisa Frady, Staff Senate representative and scholarship committee chair, reported: “As our first attempt to join staff and EPA nonfaculty members of Western in community service, we chose to focus on the Hospital Auxiliary. We collected items of clothing specifically for the Hospital Auxiliary. Any other items people wanted to donate were placed for sale during a large indoor yard sale to aid in growing the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund. Anything remaining after the sale was also donated to the Hospital Auxiliary to help in their efforts to support our community.”

Items donated to the Hospital Auxiliary included purses, shoes, children’s books, games, costume jewelry and knickknacks.

“This was a good way to show support, and we were grateful for such donations, especially during times of economic hardship,” said Frady.

### What They’re Saying...

*We had lots of students [at the Cullowhee Valley School’s Fall Festival on Sept. 25]. I am always so impressed that people care to serve! It is such a huge event. We could not do it without the help of our students. They are always great.*

– Dr. Mary Kay Bauer, Cullowhee Valley PTA member

## Faculty and Students Publish and Present

DR. CHRISTOPHER BLAKE, assistant professor of applied linguistics, co-authored “English Language Learners in Appalachia: Meeting the Need,” which was recently published in the Journal for Civic Commitment. The article, which Blake co-authored with WCU alumna PATRICIA GRAHAM of Jackson County Public Schools, examines how a service-learning project in Southern Appalachia helped meet the needs of English-language students. The project, named “Estrella Brillante (Shining Star),” featured a three-month, after-school alternative program in which Spanish-language students from WCU helped kindergarten through 12th-grade students produce short stories, art and dramatic productions that reflected their cultures.

DR. PAUL JACQUES, assistant professor of management, and VESELINA VRACHEVA, admissions processor, made presentations at two civic engagement conferences recently. They presented “An Assessment of Dual Leadership of Instructor and Client on Participant Perceptions of Service Learning to Both Satisfaction and Course Relevancy” at the North Carolina Campus Compact’s 11th annual Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement Conference held at Elon University. “The Role of Student Personality and Leadership on Outcomes of College-Level Service Learning Projects” was the topic of their presentation at the Gulf South Summit on Service Learning and Civic Engagement through Higher Education at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, La. Both presentations were based on research conducted by Jacques and Vracheva with the support of John Garger, a consultant with Metronome Computer Services.

SHEILAH MOYLE, an undergraduate in the College of Business, presented “Service Learning and a Financial Planning Case Study” during a poster session at Western Carolina University’s 11th annual Undergraduate Expo. DR. GRACE ALLEN, associate professor of finance, was Moyle’s faculty sponsor for the poster presentation. Organized by The Honors College, the expo was held in March.



## IN OUR LIBRARY

TITLE:  
*Civic Engagement in Higher Education: Concepts and Practices*

AUTHOR:  
Barbara Jacoby and Associates

PUBLISHER:  
Jossey-Bass, San Francisco

YEAR:  
2009

PAGE COUNT:  
288 pages

PUBLISHER’S SYNOPSIS:  
Numerous studies have chronicled students’ lack of trust in large social institutions, declining interest in politics, and decreasing civic skills. *Civic Engagement in Higher Education* is a comprehensive guide to developing high-quality civic engagement experiences for college students. The book defines civic engagement and explains why it is central to a college education. It describes the state of the art of education for civic engagement and provides guidelines for designing programs that encourage desired learning outcomes. In addition, the book guides leaders in organizing their institutions to create a campuswide culture of civic engagement.

*Barbara Jacoby, an administrator at the University of Maryland, College Park, was the guest speaker at the inaugural WCU Service-Learning Award Banquet, held in April 2005.)*

## Students Teach Spanish to Macon County Public Health Center Employees

Students studying Spanish through Western Carolina University's Modern Foreign Languages Department recently worked in partnership with the Macon County Public Health Center, or MCPHC, to reach out and help bridge the communication gap with the Hispanic population.

Dr. Jamie Davis, assistant professor of Spanish and French, and his students taught Health Department employees useful Spanish phrases specific to individual jobs in each division of public health, including environmental health, nursing, dentistry, nutrition, clerical work, family planning and prenatal care.

Davis distributed printouts and MP3 recordings of pertinent phrases as a reference guide and to help employees continue to practice after the program ends.

"The purpose of this service-learning program is to show Spanish students at WCU the relevance of their knowledge in a rapidly changing world," said Davis. "Hispanics have often been consigned to second-class status in the United States because of ethnocentrism and the hegemony of the English language. This program brings together compassion, learning and humanitarianism in order to meet the burgeoning needs of Hispanic immigrants."

For several weeks, Davis and the students paired with employees from different departments to practice pronunciation

and proper use of phrases, most of which were in the form of questions or instructions. Some commonly used phrases were: "Do you have any allergies?" (*¿Tienes alergias?*); "Have you had anything to eat in the last 12 hours?" (*¿Has comido en las últimas doce horas?*); "Don't move" (No te muevas); and "Wait." (*Espera*).

Tammy Keezer, MCPHC human resources coordinator, arranged regular meetings and coordinated staff participation. "MCPHC strives to assure a competent public health care workforce in order to best meet the needs of the community," Keezer said. "With a growing number of Spanish-speaking consumers, it is of utmost importance that our staff be able to communicate and provide services effectively. Because we provide services at the clinic as well as in schools, at residential building sites and various other locations, our two full-time interpreters are not always available to assist with daily routine information that is required of every patient."

MCPHC employees said they were enthusiastic about the program because not only did they feel it would make their jobs easier, but it enabled them to form a more personal connection with patients and ease the apprehension of Hispanic patients when receiving health care in an unfamiliar atmosphere. Some employees purchased



Mark Smith, a junior Spanish major from King, teaches Spanish skills to registered nurses, from left, Sue Fitzgerald and Sue Smith.

Spanish translation books to further what they were learning from WCU students and Davis.

Tracy Hord, a registered nurse at MCPHC, said she was sympathetic to the needs of the Hispanic population. "How would you like to be in another country and in need of medical attention when you couldn't even communicate with the people taking care of you?" she asked.

Mark Smith, a junior Spanish major, said he enjoyed his participation in the service-learning program. "By helping to break the language barrier with the Hispanic community, we can encourage both sides to be more open to communication," he said.

*This report was adapted from a WCU Office of Public Relations news release.*

Five students currently are members of the corps: Lexi Glista, a freshman majoring in business administration; Joe Kieffer, a graduate student majoring in social work; Andrew Oliver, a sophomore majoring in communications; Emily Phillips, a freshman majoring in art; and Ben Rutz, a freshman majoring in communication with a concentration in radio broadcasting.

## Students Help Local Businesses with Computer Information Systems

By Bessie Dietrich Goggins

Two teams of Western Carolina University seniors majoring in computer information systems recently worked with local organizations to solve information technology problems as a part of a capstone class, titled "Applications Development" and based in service learning.

One team developed software for the Jackson County Department of Social Services, and the other team developed a system for Appalachian Wireless ISP.

The Social Services office provides numerous services to the residents of Jackson County, including child and family services, adult services and economic assistance programs, said Dr. William Richmond, WCU associate professor for computer information systems. Employees must account for the time they spend helping clients through reports to the N.C. Division of Social Services in Raleigh. Employees manually fill in a form with multiple entries and give it to their supervisor before the clerical unit keys the information into the state computer system.

"The WCU student team developed a system to automate much of the form's process," said Richmond. "The students' system integrates with the local department's existing database to populate the client name and unique 11-digit identification number." Employees now select service and program codes by using drop-down boxes, and the form calculates the time spent with each client.

Tyler Joyner, a student who worked on the project, said he enjoyed the learning experience. "We learned to collaborate with other clients in order to analyze, design and implement a new system that will be useful to their agency by helping to streamline data entry," Joyner said. "The project was a unique opportunity because we received real on-the-job experience."

Ruth Thompson, DSS computer systems administrator, said WCU students and Richmond, as their adviser, have done the

community a great service in developing the automated system. "Our staff will save so much time every day," Thompson said. "This will not only make them happier in their work, but it also will enable them to spend more time helping clients, which is what the community wants them to do rather than filling out state forms. We are so very appreciative of the partnership we have developed with WCU."

The class's other client, Appalachian Wireless ISP, is a small, local Internet service provider serving customers in rural areas in and around Highlands and offering Web development and network management. It has approximately 100 clients using its wireless network.

When a customer places a service call for requests, such as new service installation or to address problems with existing service, the information is recorded on paper. "The company owner, Chris Cutshaw, conducts the service call, but may have to return if he needs additional equipment or parts," said Richmond. "After the service call, Chris writes down relevant information, and the customer is billed."

The student team developed a system to support the work orders generated by the service calls, Cutshaw said. "I looked at many work order systems on the market, but they all seemed to have a large company in mind," he added. "They were too complicated with too many bells and whistles that are not needed in a small business environment." The system the team developed allows Cutshaw to quickly enter information for each service call and generate invoices based on the parts used and the time spent.

"I am very proud of the students and the system they created and feel that the project has given them a real-world scenario that they can take to their jobs," said Cutshaw. "This collaborative project is one of the best I have ever experienced, and I will offer my business to the university for future projects anytime they need me to."

## from the Chancellor: Students Make a Difference Through Service



A capacity crowd of 6,600 packed the Ramsey Center at the end of the last academic year as WCU held commencement for about 860 undergraduates who completed their course work this past spring.

In his charge to the graduating students, WCU Chancellor John W. Bardo spoke about the branding process that the university carried out over the past year. The company hired to oversee that process spoke to hundreds of people affiliated with WCU and boiled down their feedback into one sentence, Bardo said.

"That one sentence is an easy way to remember what we're all about. In today's language, it's called a branding statement, but I prefer to think of it as the reason the university exists," he said. "Really, it's the university's core creed."

That statement, "Western Carolina University offers opportunities for those who aspire to make a difference in their world," is exemplified in the university's emphasis on service, Bardo said. Each year, the Corporation for National and Community Service compiles an honor roll of colleges and universities that view service as a critical component of a student's education, and WCU was one of only 88 institutions across the nation named to the President's Honor Roll with Distinction. That happened because more than 7,000 of the university's 9,000 students contributed service to the community, region, state or nation, Bardo said.

"You're here today because you chose to do the work that prepared you to make a difference," Bardo told graduating students at the May 9 event. "Continue to aspire. You are among the state and nation's best."

Bardo introduced members of the platform party, including recent recipients of major university awards – among them, Glenn Bowen, director of the Center for Service Learning, which received the Support Program of Excellence Award for the 2008-09 academic year.



## Students Present Results of Cullowhee Survey

Political science students enrolled in Civic Learning at Western Carolina University presented results from the survey “Cullowhee Revitalization: What Students Say” on April 21 in the A.K. Hinds University Center. The student-driven survey was completed in conjunction with the Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavour, or CuRvE, a nonprofit group concerned with the development of the Old Cullowhee Road area.

The 1,082 students who participated in the survey were interested in further development of the Cullowhee area. “Many of them mentioned wanting to see more businesses and recreational areas,” said Todd Collins, WCU assistant professor of political science and public affairs.

On the other hand, many of the students wanted to preserve the natural beauty of the area. Many also reported they would use Cullowhee businesses if the area was revitalized.

For more information about the presentation or the survey, contact Collins at [tcollins@wcu.edu](mailto:tcollins@wcu.edu). For more information about CuRvE, visit [www.gocullowhee.org](http://www.gocullowhee.org) or contact Blake at [blake@wcu.edu](mailto:blake@wcu.edu).

TOP: Student Shaylee Formanek discusses the Cullowhee Revitalization survey.  
BOTTOM: Student Matt Hauck explains survey statistics.



## WCU Athletes Get Involved in Community

Somewhere between the workouts, practices, classes and study halls, student-athletes at Western Carolina University found time to go into the community and volunteer their time and services to help others. During the 2008-09 academic year, student athletes contributed 3,825 hours of community service in Jackson County, reported

Dr. Jennifer Brown, associate athletic director and service-learning liaison.

The football team contributed the most volunteer hours overall at 1,119, helping with projects such as the Special Olympics. The softball team contributed the most hours per player, averaging 26.

Volunteers also spent time assisting with WCU’s Alcohol Awareness Week, the Jackson County Christmas Store and the Angel Tree Project. Some athletes served at the REACH Thrift Store in Sylva.

## Students Create Documentaries for Community Agencies

Students in Professor Arledge Armenaki’s course MPTP 460, “Directing the Documentary,” created documentaries to support and showcase community agencies and projects.

Harold Watson, Full Spectrum Farms’ executive director, sees the documentary as an important resource for the organization in its efforts to increase autism awareness and raise funds. The video is available on the Full Spectrum Farms Web site.

Three students, Ben Mongold, Jesse Romine and Rollie Thomas, produced a documentary for Full Spectrum Farms. The three-and-a-half minute video highlights the history and mission of the organization, which provides services to adults with autism in Western North Carolina. The organization currently operates a flower and vegetable garden, as well as a cottage industry, and is planning to establish a farm with residential and vocational opportunities for autistic adults.

In all, six groups of student filmmakers participated. Other organizations featured by the groups of student filmmakers include REACH of Jackson County, the Community Table, Balsam Mountain Preserve and Mountain Heritage Day.

This service-learning project is a major feature of Armenaki’s course, which now has the “SLC” (Service-Learning Component) designation.



Arledge Armanaki teaches “Directing the Documentary.”

## fresh perspective:

### ‘It Is Satisfying to Serve’

By Sarah Cecilia Nuñez

Through my recent service with the Latino Advocacy Coalition (LAC) in Hendersonville for the NC ACTS! AmeriCorps Program, I was given the opportunity to apply what I learned in the classroom to my volunteer work.

As a student in the Master of Public Affairs program, I was able to apply four courses – “Public Organizational Theory,” “Public Affairs Administration,” “Public Policy Analysis” and “Budgetary Process” – to my service. Two examples of assignments that I used for LAC are a briefing memo on local immigration actions and a 14-page paper assessing the vitality and sustainability of LAC’s 2008 and 2009 budgets. This opportunity to apply real-life scenarios discussed in the classroom helped me academically, professionally and personally.

My service began in November 2008 and ended in May 2009. The work I provided centered on organizational capacity building and direct services to the coalition. One of my responsibilities was to facilitate and lead discussions about the organizational structure. I offered a training session about board of director roles and responsibilities at the annual LAC board retreat of 2009. Also, I helped to plan and organize the annual board retreat and membership meeting. I acted as the secretary of the board of directors and took meeting minutes at monthly board meetings, which I distributed to interested parties.

In addition, I acted as the facilitator of the Latino Information Networking (known as LINK) monthly meetings and helped to arrange presenters for the

meetings. I conducted extensive research on organizational structure, accountability, board of director roles and transparency.

Furthermore, I volunteered at LAC’s booth at the Dia Del Nino/Children’s Day festival, educating attendees about the many services the coalition offers in Henderson County. I also served as a mentor to a Latino youth on his senior project; volunteered for a performance by TELASH, a Spanish-language theater group; and finally, was a part of the dialogue circle hosted by the North Carolina Peoples’ Coalition for Giving.

I have always thought of my volunteer time as my contribution to philanthropy. At the dialogue circle, I learned other ways that people give – not just with their money, but also as a part of their culture through helping their neighbors, family and community by giving their time and knowledge. I like to think of giving in this way because it helps to break the regular stereotypes that exist in our world. Everyone

can, in a sense, be a philanthropist as we give, and give back, in various ways.

In the dialogue circle, we asked questions such as: In what ways do you give (time, talent and treasure)? In what ways do you take care of your community? What are the primary values, priorities and concerns in your culture regarding giving

behavior? What do you see in your culture that is different from the dominant culture in the way of giving? This experience taught me a lot about myself and others and brings me to the conclusion that we cannot



PHOTOS SPECIAL TO THE SENTINEL

TOP: Sarah Nuñez with Asheville High School student Erick Sorto at a college access event, “Nuestras Historias, Nuestros Sueños/Our Stories, Our Dreams,” held at the YMI Cultural Center in Asheville.

BOTTOM: Nuñez takes meeting minutes at the board of directors’ retreat.

underestimate what our service can do for others as well as how it can enrich our own lives.

Volunteering is a part of my life, and I help others as a way to help myself. It is satisfying to serve, and using the opportunity to help others while growing academically, professionally and personally makes these experiences quite enriching.

Sarah Cecilia Nuñez is a former member of the NC-ACTS! AmeriCorps Program, graduate student and assistant director of admission for Western Carolina University at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College.

## WCU Students Assist People in Need During Fall Break

A group of students from Western Carolina University participated in alternative fall break projects Oct. 8-12 in Myrtle Beach, S.C. The nine students contributed 20 hours of service, assisting three social service agencies and local churches with various projects over the five-day period.

The nine student volunteers were Branden Cable, Patricia Dorian, Ramona Dowdell, Chaz Glenn, Julia McLaughlin, Cyrus Roberts, Brittany Rutherford, Tyeshia Woods and Hannah Yarborough.

At the Community Kitchen of Myrtle Beach, the WCU volunteers served meals to more than 250 local residents. The group also participated in a Habitat for Humanity housing project. At the Carolina Youth Development Center in Moncks Corner, S.C., they helped children from abusive homes with their schoolwork. The volunteers also assisted with cleaning and painting the facility.

"Students had eye-opening experiences," said Brendan Braaten, Center for Service Learning project coordinator, who organized the trip and accompanied the students. "This trip was a memorable component of each student's collegiate career."

The Community Kitchen of Myrtle Beach has been serving meals to people described as "hungry, homeless and working poor" since 1993. Located in the Community Assistance Center, the nonprofit organization is open 365 days a year.

The Carolina Youth Development Center assists children in reaching their full potential by delivering a continuum of prevention, assessment, intervention and treatment services.

The Center for Service Learning organizes fall and spring break trips as part of WCU's Alternative Break Program. The program's emphasis is on providing direct service to people in need in North Carolina and adjacent states. The Myrtle Beach trip was the third for fall break, with previous trips to Johns Island, S.C., and Atlanta.

## ALTERNATIVE BREAK PROGRAM

### The Other Side of the City By Katie Graunke

WCU Group Travels to Nashville for Alternative Spring Break Trip

Bright lights. Big city. That's what it's all about, right?

At least, that's what most people would imagine when someone mentions spending spring break in "Music City, USA." Such was not the case, though, for a group who traveled to Nashville, Tenn., to spend spring break volunteering. That group caught a different glimpse of the big city.

Seven students and four staff members visited Nashville during the first week of March 2009 as part of the Alternative Break Program, an initiative of WCU's Center for Service Learning. The center co-sponsors local trips for spring break with Last Minute Productions, the student activity-programming board.

Participants in the alternative spring break perform short-term, community-based service and learn about problems faced by members of communities with whom they typically would have little or no direct contact.

Jessica Porter, a study-abroad student from Australia who participated in the trip, shared how she struggled with some of the situations that she had been exposed to. She commented that it was "hard to leave people in a situation that you know is horrible. ... [Knowing this] made me want to be more involved."

The group spent the week volunteering at a different location each day:

- Monday's destination was Second Harvest Food Bank's warehouse. There the group spent the morning shoveling cornflakes into gallon-sized bags that would be shipped out to local agencies and the afternoon filling orders for the Backpack Program, which sends nonperishable food home with children for the weekend.
- Tuesday's projects were part of Catholic Charities' Geriatrics Program. Half of the

group spent the day with elderly participants in the Adult Day Program, playing games and assisting with daily activities, while the other half traveled to an elderly woman's house to help clean and replace the bathroom toilet and floor.

- Wednesday, the group volunteered with the Loaves and Fishes Program, cooking and serving a hot midday meal to more than 100 homeless men and women.

- Thursday was the final volunteer day, and the group worked with the YWCA Domestic Violence Center sorting and organizing donations.

Apart from its strong, direct-service component, the Alternative Break Program includes time for reflection and team-building activities. Reflection is a strong factor in having the participants process their service experiences and gain some real meaning from the trip. The team-building activities help to bring the group together in a fun, relaxed way while forming new relationships with one's peers. By the end of the trip, Claire Karriker, a sophomore and previous alternative fall break participant, declared that the part of the trip she liked best was the "family we became."



STOCK PHOTO

When the group wasn't hanging around the hostel, their home away from home for the week, they had time in the evening to explore the city and its rich culture. During their nightly excursions, the trip participants experienced Nashville nightlife and listened to live music in the numerous music venues the city has to offer. One group even caught a sighting of country music stars Tim McGraw and Faith Hill while out exploring the country strip!

Although each person's experience differed from the other's, the participants said they enjoyed the experience and were looking forward to participating in alternative break trips to come.

The student participants on the trip were Lauren Gray, Claire Karriker, Alex Martin, Ashley Merrill, Jessica Porter, Amanda Smith, and Brandon Vanhook. Staff participants included Rotimi Ariyo (University Center), Susannah Patty (Center for Service Learning) and Brandon Tigie (Admission).

*Katie Graunke, a former Medford Service-Learning Scholar, was program coordinator in the Center for Service Learning during the 2008-09 academic year. The Nashville trip was the fifth since 2005. That year, a small group of volunteers, including Graunke, assisted with hurricane rehabilitation efforts in Pensacola, Fla.*

## Student Volunteers Pitch in for Agency that Helps Children

More than a dozen WCU students showed up on a cloudy and rain-threatened morning during the 2008-09 academic year to provide volunteer labor installing a 70-foot french drain around the perimeter of the office building of the Region A Partnership for Children.

The Sylva-based agency reported that for more than five hours, the students worked on digging a trench to accommodate a drain pipe to divert water from the foundation of its office building at 116 Jackson St.

Western student volunteers from Sigma Lambda Chi, the Construction Honorary Society on campus, and Pi Lambda Phi, a social fraternity, worked hard to ensure the project's success.

"We are grateful to these students for their hard work and can-do attitude surrounding this project," stated Janice M. Edgerton, executive director of the Region A Partnership for Children. "These outstanding student volunteers saved us well over \$1,000 in labor costs that would have been required without their assistance. Their hard work will result in the elimination of flooding in our basement, where we store many of the materials we use to serve young children and families."

Students participating in the project included Michele Bretz, Drew Carnes, Christa Connor, Mike Kinlaw, Yotam O'vil, Wil Owens, Blaze Porter, Welzie D. Reed Jr., Jared Roberson, Kate Vafai and Sean Webster.

Katie Graunke, Center for Service Learning program coordinator, organized this volunteer effort.



## LOOKING AHEAD >>>

### WCU to Host Statewide Student Conference Centered on Community Involvement

Students from nearly 30 colleges and universities will gather at Western Carolina University for the 17th annual North Carolina Campus Compact Student Conference on Saturday, Nov. 7.

N.C. Campus Compact is a coalition of colleges and universities collaborating to increase campuswide participation in community and public service across the state, and the annual conference is designed to help students learn about best practices and innovative ideas in civic engagement.

“Students from community colleges, private colleges and our public universities will share their ideas about how to be involved in the community through research and service,” said Lisa Keyne, executive director of N.C. Campus Compact. “These very committed students are developing habits of engagement that will extend throughout their lives.”

Preceding the conference will be a canned food drive, which begins on conference participants’ campuses in October, and a blanket-making service project at WCU on Friday, Nov. 6. Events at the 2009 conference, themed “Color Outside the

Lines,” include workshops, presentations and roundtable discussions. A workshop for civic engagement administrators will feature a panel discussion about “Canton Connections,” a WCU initiative to assist the Haywood County town with post-disaster revitalization projects.

In addition, the Community Impact Student Awards will be presented at the conference. Each Campus Compact member institution selects one recipient of the award in recognition of outstanding service.

“Western Carolina is a perfect host for this conference, as the university continues to be a leader of community engagement in the region,” Keyne said. Last year, WCU was named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with distinction.

WCU Chancellor John W. Bardo will give the official welcome. Aaron Camp, a senior majoring in social work from Forest City and WCU’s representative on the N.C. Campus Compact’s student advisory board, will participate in the opening session. WCU graduate student Bessie Dietrich Goggins will deliver the closing address.

### Volunteers Needed for Community Holiday Party

A group of WCU staff and students is expected to volunteer at this year’s Community Holiday Party, hosted by the Jackson County Smart Start Team on Dec. 15 in Webster. Interested volunteers are asked to contact the Center for Service Learning by Nov. 9.

Assisting at last year’s event were Center for Service Learning staff members Jennifer Cooper, assistant director; Katie Graunke, program coordinator; Margo Raff, project coordinator; and Susannah Patty, administrative support associate.

Activities usually include arts and crafts, face painting, story time, and visiting with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Entertainment includes live music.

Former WCU Service Learning Advisory Board member Emma Miller, the early learning specialist at Region A Partnership for Children, is a principal organizer of the event. “Without the help of volunteers, I don’t know how we would have pulled off this event,” she commented at the end of last year’s event.

## the SENTINEL

The Sentinel is a publication of the Center for Service Learning, WCU.

EDITOR: Glenn Bowen  
COPY EDITOR: Jill Ingram  
DESIGN: Office of Creative Services  
PHOTOGRAPHY: University Photography (unless otherwise noted)

See all issues of The Sentinel online:  
<http://www.wcu.edu/9963.asp>



The Center for Service Learning is an administrative unit of the Office for Undergraduate Studies within the Division of Academic Affairs.

Glenn Bowen, Ph.D., *Director*  
Jennifer Cooper, M.A., *Assistant Director*  
Carol Burton, Ed.D.,  
*Assistant Vice Chancellor*

273 Belk | Cullowhee, NC 28723  
828.227.7184 tel | 828.227.7179 fax  
[servicelearning.wcu.edu](http://servicelearning.wcu.edu)

Western Carolina University is a University of North Carolina campus and an Equal Opportunity Institution. 400 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$800.00 or \$2.00 each. Office of Public Relations/Publications: November 2009 09-518

