



Director Jacqueline Smith (with the Leading Light Award plaque) and teaching fellows, from left, Christine Wilson, Adam Ray, Brad Beaver, Caitlin Yench and Ashley McLendon.

*Student Assists
N.C. School for the Deaf*
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*SGA Creates Senate Seat
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Lead Symposium Presentations*
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Teaching Fellows Program Takes Top Award

The Office for Special Programs and Teaching Fellows is the winner of the Leading Light Award for 2009-2010. The award symbolizes the highest achievement in service learning by an academic department at Western Carolina University.

Service learning is an integral part of the teaching fellows program, in which 151 students participated this academic year, completing more than 4,500 hours of service.

The future teachers completed a variety of projects. Some served as tutors and mentors in local schools; helped to install a ramp for an elderly woman; and participated in WCU's Relay for Life, which raised nearly \$30,000 to support cancer research. Others lent a hand at the Community Table in Sylva and at the Jackson County Christmas Store in Cullowhee; helped with a highway cleanup project; and assisted with the Cullowhee Valley School's Fall Festival and Smokey Mountain Elementary School's Winter Fest. Fellows also joined in a cleanup project organized by CuRvE – Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor; supported a WCU Red Cross Blood Drive, as well as Cullowhee Valley School's fundraising paper crane project; volunteered with a food bank and a nursing home; and completed a service-learning project with REACH of Jackson County.

"Our teaching fellows engaged in a variety of projects throughout the year to prepare for their roles as teachers who care about their communities," said Jacqueline Smith, director of the Office for Special Programs and Teaching Fellows. "They are honored by this recognition."

Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, presented the Leading Light Award to Smith and teaching fellows Austin Davis, Jessica Masters and Amanda Smith, at the sixth annual Service-Learning Awards on April 29 in the Grandroom of the A.K. Hinds University Center.

Thirty-seven major awards in 10 categories were presented to students, faculty, staff and community partners. Attending the event were Linda Seestedt-Stanford, interim provost; Sam Miller, vice chancellor for student affairs; and Richard Beam, chair of the faculty.

(See related stories, pages 2-7.)

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Students, Faculty and Staff Receive Service-Learning Awards

A total of 37 major awards were presented to faculty, staff, students and community partners on April 29. The 10 categories of awards included community service, shining star, outstanding achievement and partnership.

The Center for Service Learning hosted the sixth annual Service-Learning Awards Ceremony in the University Center's Grandroom.

Eleven students were the winners of awards recognizing academic excellence in the service-learning component of a course, based on evidence of the impacts on their academic learning, community awareness, civic commitment and personal development. Tracy Bailey, Christopher Novack and three teams of students who created documentaries for community agencies received outstanding achievement awards.

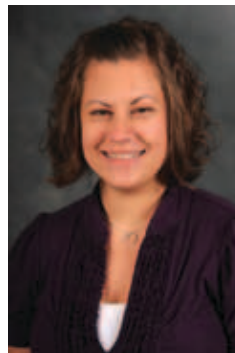
Bailey developed a presentation for local child-care staff on the topic "Asthma in the Child Care Setting." His presentation was so well received that he was asked to give an encore at the Western Regional Early Childhood Conference, sponsored by Channels for Child Care Advancement and Buncombe County Child Care Services. For his part, Novack, an RN-to-BSN student, developed a clinical trial study protocol for a large physician practice in Asheville. He also developed the protocols for creating a health clinic and the research protocol to be followed at the clinic.

Certificates of achievement were presented to interior design undergraduates who implemented service-learning projects in Cherokee and Waynesville; physical therapy graduate students who developed and implemented two clinical anatomy workshops for students enrolled in the physical therapist assistant program at Southwestern Community College; and education students who participated in a reading partnership with Jackson County Schools.

The Department of Athletics, the staff of the A.K. Hinds University Center and VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) member Julia Konish received awards for meritorious service. Jennifer Brown, associate athletics director and senior woman administrator,

accepted the award on behalf of her department while Jeff Hughes, director, accepted the University Center's award.

Since the summer of 2009, Konish has been working in the Center for Service Learning, where she is assigned the role of program coordinator. Throughout the year, she assisted with the center's participation in orientation open houses, programming for Civic Place and supervision of both the alternative break program and the Campus Kitchen Garden Project. Konish also managed the center's Facebook account and prepared the center's weekly bulletin to students.



*Julia Konish, an AmeriCorps*VISTA member with the Center for Service Learning, received a meritorious service award.*

"Shining Star" awards were presented to Krista Robb, the student coordinator of the Campus Kitchen Garden Project, and Mindy Smith, the WCU Women's Center liaison with the Center for Service Learning.

Community service awards went to Amanda Smith, who volunteered for a variety of projects in Jackson, Buncombe and Surry counties; Shaneé Sullivan, a volunteer tutor at the North Carolina School for the Deaf; and Jake Watkins, who played a leadership role in

facilitating the participation of his peers in a recreational therapy service-learning project at Webster Enterprises.

Smith, who completed 300 hours of service as part of the NC-ACTS! AmeriCorps Program, also received an AmeriCorps pin and keychain.

Rakim Lash and Steven Whitehorn received certificates for "exhibiting the spirit of service."

Community service awards for student organizations went to Alpha Kappa Alpha, for supporting Make a Difference Day, MLK Day and fundraising for Haiti earthquake relief; Sigma Chi, whose members volunteered at places such as the Skyland Care Center and the Appalachian Women's Museum; and Catamount Communications, for public relations work supporting the Fundred Dollar Bill Project, a nationwide effort to clean up lead-contaminated soil in New Orleans.

Staff members receiving awards for Community Service were Jennifer Bennett, assistant director of outdoor programs, for coordinating the Tuckaseegee River Cleanup; Residential Living's Lisa Wilson, for her "enduring commitment" as coordinator of the campuswide Angel Wings Christmas project; and the Center for Service Learning's Brendan Braaten, who coordinated events for WCU's first observance of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.



Lisa Wilson, an administrative support associate with the Department of Residential Living, was recognized for her "enduring commitment" to the Angel Wings Christmas project.



Teaching fellows Adam Ray and Caitlin Yencha take a close look at the Leading Light Award plaque.

College-based service-learning faculty fellows Robert Anderson (Kimmel School), Marie Cochran (Fine and Performing Arts), Teri Domagalski (Business) and Glenn Kastrinos (Health and Human Sciences) were recognized for their contributions. Department-based liaisons Jennifer Brown (Athletics), Jessica Shirley (Nursing) and Mickey Randolph (Psychology) received recognition as well.

Catamount Student Service Corps members Ben Rutz, Chris Parker and Andrew Oliver also were recognized at the Service-Learning Awards Ceremony.

In addition, certificates of appreciation went to Emma Wertenberger and Bessie Dietrich Goggins, members of the Center for Service Learning's advisory board; Yolany Gonell, assistant director of multicultural affairs; and Clint Hardin, visual arts specialist with the Printing Services Department.

Awards in the form of plaques and certificates were presented by Sam Miller, vice chancellor for student affairs; Richard Beam, chair of the faculty; Anna McFadden, chair of the Center for Service Learning's advisory board, and William Richmond, an advisory board member; and Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of service learning.

McFadden and assistant vice chancellor Carol Burton delivered remarks, as did "Shining Star" award winner Mindy Smith. Smith reflected on her involvement in community service and thanked people who inspired her and others to serve their communities.

Cynthia Smith (mezzo soprano) and Michael Collings (guitar), Master of Music candidates, rendered selections from "Seven Popular Spanish Songs" by Manuel De Falla.



Arledge Armenaki, Sharon Metcalfe and Todd Collins were honored for outstanding achievement in teaching.

Faculty Recognized for Teaching, Research and Service

Service-learning awards for outstanding achievement in teaching, research and service were presented recently to six faculty members.

For demonstrating excellence in using service learning as a teaching and learning strategy, awards went to Arledge Armenaki, associate professor of stage and screen; Sharon Metcalfe, assistant professor of nursing; and Todd Collins, assistant professor of political science.

Armenaki's service learning-designated "Directing the Documentary" course engages students in documenting the local culture and honoring the work done by nonprofit organizations in Western North Carolina. Armenaki "understands how partnerships should work in relation to pedagogy," said Glenn Bowen, in announcing the award. "He holds discussions with Center for Service Learning staff and invites us to his class; he talks directly with community partners; he monitors his students as they work in the community."

Metcalfe's 400-level service learning-designated nursing intervention course engages RN students in 30 hours of service with healthcare institutions and administrators throughout the 17 counties of Western North Carolina. Metcalfe guides her students in planning health fairs, teaching health occupation classes, writing policies and procedures, and creating innovative projects for local emergency departments.

Collins, the instructor for a civic engagement course, provided guidance to his students as they collaborated on the Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor this year. Students conducted research, including detailed analysis, and made recommendations related to the proposed revitalization of Old Cullowhee. According to Gibbs Knotts, head of the Political Science and Public Affairs Department, "The partnership and instructional strategies used by Dr. Collins provide considerable benefits to the students and the community, and exemplify the mission of the Center for Service Learning."

The award for outstanding achievement in research was presented to Paul Jacques, associate professor of management, who completed notable research projects this year. "We tip our hats to him as much for promoting the Service Learning Center's research agenda as for conducting research projects himself in collaboration with colleagues," said Bowen, the director of service learning, who emceed the awards ceremony.

Joan Byrd and Victoria Faircloth, associate professor of middle- and elementary-grades education, won awards in the service category. Byrd has been a mainstay in Jackson County's Empty Bowl Project. This year, eight students from the intermediate ceramics class each contributed four bowls and volunteered at the culminating event at the Community Table in Sylva. One WCU alumnus and two faculty members, including Byrd, also contributed pieces. In all, they donated 43 soup or salad bowls, which generated \$860 for the Community Table, Jackson County's soup kitchen. Byrd also has helped to initiate WCU's involvement in a pottery project at Full Spectrum Farms.

Faircloth's leadership of WCU's involvement in the PeaceJam Program, provided the basis for her award. PeaceJam brings young people together with Nobel Peace Prize winners to address global issues such as access to clean water and social justice. Faircloth, who also is director of the middle-grades graduate program in the College of Education and Allied Professions, encouraged several WCU students to become active in PeaceJam this year, and the program was expanded to Jamaica. At this year's PeaceJam conference in Tallahassee, Fla., WCU students served as mentors to other students, including participants from Waynesville Middle School, Tuscola High School and the Indian Education Program at Robbinsville Middle School.

AWARDS



Physical therapy student Marion Macy teaches physical therapist assistant students from a local community college in a clinical anatomy service-learning project. Macy and classmates Zachary Githens, Andrea Klocko and Megan Lukey received certificates of achievement at the Service-Learning Awards.

Congratulations!

MAJOR AWARDS

COMMUNITY SERVICE

- Student (Individual)*Amanda G. Smith, Shaneé Sullivan, Jake Watkins
- Student (Organization)*Alpha Kappa Alpha, Sigma Chi, Catamount Communications
- Staff*Jennifer Bennett, Lisa Wilson, Brendan Braaten

MERITORIOUS SERVICEDepartment of Athletics, University Center Staff, Julia Konish

SHINING STARKrista Robb, Mindy Smith

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

- Students*.....Tracy Bailey, Christopher Novack, Stephen Barber, Zachary Johnson, Adam Morris, Trey Campbell, Amanda Hughes, Christopher Walters, Carey McKelvey, Mike Santoro, Graeme Watt
- Teaching*.....Professor Arledge Armenaki, Dr. Todd Collins, Dr. Sharon Metcalfe
- Research*Dr. Paul Jacques
- Service*Professor Joan Byrd, Dr. Victoria Faircloth

PARTNERSHIPTerry Bradley (Principal, East Franklin Elementary School), Kevin Hughes (Volunteer Coordinator and Kitchen Manager, Community Table), Appalachian Homestead Farm and Preserve, REACH of Macon County, SOAR – Success Oriented Achievement Realized

LEADING LIGHTOffice for Special Programs & Teaching Fellows (Dr. Jacqueline Smith – Director)

Partnership Awards Presented

Western Carolina University presented service-learning partnership awards to a Macon County social service agency and two Jackson County nonprofit organizations in recognition of effective collaboration with university faculty and students on community service projects linked to the curriculum. A school principal and a volunteer coordinator also received awards.

Award recipients were REACH of Macon County; Appalachian Homestead Farm and Preserve; SOAR; Terry Bradley, principal of East Franklin Elementary School; and Kevin Hughes, volunteer coordinator at the Community Table in Sylva. They were honored during the sixth annual WCU service-learning awards ceremony April 29.

REACH of Macon County, headquartered in Franklin, functions as a domestic violence and rape crisis center. The agency provides counseling services and operates an emergency shelter, which was a service site for WCU students in the fall semester.

Jennifer Turner-Lynn, a program coordinator at REACH, accepted the partnership award on behalf of the agency from Sam Miller, vice chancellor for student affairs.

Appalachian Homestead Farm and Preserve focuses on education, advocacy and research designed to preserve a 65-acre farmstead, forested areas and a watershed in the Tilley Creek community of Cullowhee. The farm's mission is to inspire through example the preservation of mountain landscapes and farmsteads through conservation, education, research and advocacy. Student groups from Western Carolina regularly assist the nonprofit organization with cleaning up streams, clearing fields and painting buildings.

Director Vera Guise accepted the award on behalf of the organization.

SOAR (Success Oriented Achievement Realized) is a nonprofit organization that manages an adventure-based wilderness program with experiential education components for persons with learning disabilities and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Participants in the Balsam-based program include preteens to young adults who are striving to develop self-confidence and social skills, problem-solving techniques and a willingness to attempt new challenges.

"SOAR has provided exceptional commitment to supporting service learning," said Jennifer Hinton, associate professor of recreational therapy. "The WCU students in the adventure-based recreational therapy course facilitate and process initiatives for the students of the Academy at SOAR, learn firsthand their needs and gain practical experience in leadership."

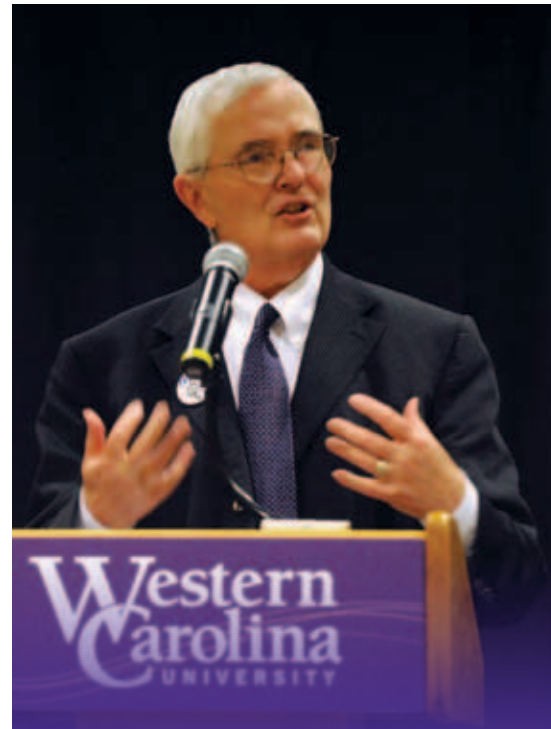
On hand to receive the award was Logan Walters, director of the Academy at SOAR.

Bradley, the school principal, was recognized for collaborating with two WCU faculty members on a strategy to improve teaching practice at three schools located in Cherokee, Mitchell and Swain counties. This professional development strategy, called "whole-school learning walks," involves classroom observations and discussions among teachers.

"Classroom learning walks give all teachers a structured way of learning from each other by regularly visiting each other's classes informally and reflecting on what they have learned throughout the school year," said Kathleen Jorissen, an assistant professor in the College of Education and Allied Professions at WCU. "In schools where teachers use this strategy, collaboration increases, teachers are less isolated and they actually implement best practices in teaching. Learning walks contribute to a positive professional culture and a schoolwide focus on student learning. In schools where teachers use this strategy, collaboration increases. Teachers work together to develop instructional practices that meet the needs of all the students in the school."

Jorissen and Ann Allen, also an assistant professor, are the two WCU faculty members who collaborated with Bradley.

The Community Table, a nonprofit organization that marked its 10th anniversary last August, is a regular service site for WCU volunteers. Hughes, the volunteer coordinator and kitchen manager, supervised students throughout the 2009-10 academic year and led discussions on campus during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in November.



from the Chancellor:

"This is a Major Achievement"

Chancellor John W. Bardo highlighted the national recognition for achievements in service learning given to Western Carolina University this year in remarks at the annual spring Awards Convocation on April 16.

"For the second consecutive year, the Corporation for National and Community Service named Western to the President's Honor Roll with distinction. Of more than 4,000 colleges and universities, we were in the top 100. ... This is a major achievement."

Having the President's Honor Roll symbol at the university's Web site will signal to the public that this university is committed to service learning and engagement, Bardo said. "It will help us attract students who really want to make a difference in their world."

Knotts Wins UNC Teaching Award

H. Gibbs Knotts, associate professor of political science and public affairs at Western Carolina University, has been named one of the best teachers in the University of North Carolina system in recognition of the way his classroom enthusiasm for politics and government inspires students to become better citizens.

Knotts, head of WCU's Department of Political Science and Public Affairs, is among 16 recipients of the UNC Board of Governors Awards for Excellence in Teaching. A faculty member at WCU since 2000, he is highly regarded as a skilled classroom teacher by faculty colleagues and by undergraduate and graduate students.

Knotts employs service learning as part of his teaching strategy. In one project, students from one of Knotts' classes designed, implemented and analyzed a survey for the Downtown Sylva Association, Bardo said. "This hands-on experience gave students a chance to better understand the course's learning objectives while at the same time assisting a local community organization," he said.



Gibbs Knotts, who employs service learning as part of his teaching strategy, encourages his students to have meaningful reflection on their experiences in the community.

In announcing the honor as part of the annual spring Awards Convocation on April 16, Chancellor John W. Bardo said Knott's excitement for teaching is both contagious and inspiring.

"He motivates students to become engaged individuals who are active participants in their learning," Bardo said. "Gibbs also

moves student growth and learning beyond the classroom by utilizing service-learning projects."

The Center for Service Learning sent a congratulatory note to Knotts, who chaired the service-learning scholarship selection committee for three years.

Students Evaluate Businesses for 'Senior-Friendly' Designation

Interior design students at Western Carolina University evaluated commercial spaces in Haywood County for "senior-friendliness" as part of a service-learning project launched during the last week of April. The students were recognized at the Service-Learning Awards Ceremony that same week.

The students gauged the readiness of businesses in Waynesville for the senior-friendly designation. The evaluations focused on accessibility to buildings and maneuverability within interior spaces.

The project comes as the population of aging Americans continues to grow dramatically, said Candace Roberts, WCU assistant professor of interior design.

"Students were trained to evaluate commercial environments from the viewpoint of older adult consumers," said Roberts. "Previous class training at the sophomore level included maneuvering a campus building in wheelchairs and walkers, and using crutches to simulate physical limitations that anyone can experience at some point in his or her life, such as a temporary disability of an injured leg or arm."

The interior design program at WCU encompasses training in designing for people in need of structural accommodations. Training exercises include simulations in loss of dexterity, vision changes and hearing loss.

"The purpose of these hands-on exercises is for students to learn by doing and to understand the importance of designing interior and exterior spaces that go beyond what is specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act," said Roberts. "By engaging students in this service-learning project, they helped meet the needs of senior citizens and have made a difference in the community by solving real design problems."

The service-learning project was organized in conjunction with Haywood Community Connections, a local support project funded by the Community Partnerships for Older Adults initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The WCU Center for Service Learning providing administrative support.



Shaneé Sullivan signing the word "connect," which is what she does with the students at North Carolina School for the Deaf through her tutoring and other volunteer work. Sullivan received a community service award for being "an exemplary volunteer who has demonstrated inventiveness and a caring spirit."

WCU Student Assists N.C. School for the Deaf

Western Carolina University student Shaneé Sullivan has served as a volunteer tutor at the North Carolina School for the Deaf in Morganton since the fall of 2008. A senior biology major from Raleigh, Sullivan also has raised funds to provide scholarships for graduating students at that school.

Sullivan received a WCU community service award, presented by Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of service learning, on April 29.

Sullivan's tutoring role with hearing-impaired middle- and high-school students has focused on English literacy, American Sign Language vocabulary and phrasal practice, and ACT vocabulary.

She choreographed and taught a salsa routine to a middle-school physical education class at the school.

Sullivan recently turned her attention to raising funds to provide scholarships for two graduating students to attend Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C., and the National Technical Institute for the Deaf in Rochester, N.Y. So far, she has raised almost \$800 by organizing a show featuring deaf actor-comedian CJ Jones, selling artwork and soliciting donations from patrons attending movies in the student center on the WCU campus.

The attendance at the show in April was disappointing.

"It has been difficult to attract many people to events where they think they will have to know sign language," Sullivan said. "Before CJ Jones' performance, I asked several of my friends if they were planning to attend, and many of them said that they did not know sign language and that is why they were not coming."

Still, Sullivan has persisted in her efforts to raise funds for scholarships. She has been molding and sculpting "I Love You" hand-sign lapel pins out of polymer clay and selling them on and off campus.

"Shaneé is an exemplary volunteer who has demonstrated inventiveness and a caring spirit," said Glenn Bowen, director of service learning. "Furthermore, she has shown that one student's efforts can, and do, make a difference."

Last January, Sullivan organized the iSign American Sign Language Club, a WCU student organization, to raise awareness about deaf culture and issues affecting people who are deaf or hard of hearing. After she graduates in December, she hopes the club will continue to bring attention to the needs of the deaf community.

Meanwhile, Sullivan hopes that her volunteer work will reduce ignorance, in the form of stereotypes, about deaf people and their culture.

"By encouraging people to take a look at sign language and into the deaf world, I believe that people will relate better to deaf people or, at the very least, be more open-minded," Sullivan said.

In a follow-up interview May 12, Sylva-based radio station WRGC asked Sullivan about her plans for the future.

"When I graduate from Western Carolina, I'm going to Maryland to get my master's degree in deaf education, and hopefully [will] be working in a deaf school or a mainstream school with deaf students," she responded. "I really want to focus on literacy because for hearing-impaired students, they don't pick up language as quickly as hearing students. So I really want to focus on literacy because it really is the key to pretty much everything."

Sullivan further told WRGC Radio News that she wants to start a nonprofit group that will collect and repair hearing aids and donate them to kids who cannot afford them.

More Courses Get “SLC” Designation

The “SLC” (service-learning component) designation has been added to five more courses, bringing to 14 the number of SLC-designated courses. The recently designated courses are “Art Methods for the Middle and High School,” “Reading Practicum,” “Engineering Logistics,” “Nursing Leadership III (Intervention Project)” and “Religion, Suffering and the Moral Imagination.”

The SLC notation informs students they will be required to spend more time in the community as part of the designated course, unlike the typical course. Because students will know ahead of time, they can plan accordingly. Designating courses sends a signal to the campus and the wider community that WCU is serious about deepening the integration of service learning into the curriculum and maintaining high standards. And it helps keep the university in the top tier of institutions with exemplary service-learning programs.

In reviewing applications for the SLC, the Service-Learning Course Review Council focuses on the service-learning component in relation to the course (or course section) in its entirety as described in the syllabus. The review is based on seven criteria. The criteria cover the definition of service learning; the connections between community service and course content in relation to student learning; service site and

SLC-DESIGNATED COURSES

ART 463/563: “Art Methods for the Middle and High School” – Spring (Dr. Erin Tapley)

CIS 455-01: “Systems Analysis & Design” – Fall & Spring (Dr. William Richmond)

CIS 651-01 & 70: “Information Systems for Competitive Advantage” – Spring (Dr. William Richmond)

EDRD 470-01, -02, -03: “Reading Practicum” – Fall & Spring (Dr. Teresa Folger)

ET 362-01 & 02: “Engineering Logistics” – Spring (Dr. Robert Anderson)

IDES 356: “Commercial Design I” – Spring (Professor Candace Roberts)

MPTP 460: “Directing the Documentary” – Fall (Professor Arledge Armenaki)

NSG 305-50, 51, & 52: “Community Health Nursing III (Intervention Project)” – Fall & Spring (Dr. Barbara St. John)

NSG 484: “Nursing Leadership III (Intervention Project)” – Fall & Spring (Dr. Sharon Metcalfe)

PAR 354-01: “Religion, Suffering and the Moral Imagination” – Spring (Dr. John Whitmire)

PSY 678: “Family Systems” – Spring (Dr. Mickey Randolph)

RTH 360: “Recreational Therapy for Older Adults” – Fall & Spring (Dr. Peg Connolly)

SOWC 564: “Generalist Practice with Communities & Organizations” – Spring (Professor Jeanne Dulworth)

THEA 271-01: “Theatre in Education” – Fall/Spring (Professor Glenda Hensley & Professor Peter Savage)

placements; length of community service in relation to credit hours; the percent of course grade allocated for the service-learning component; and the reflection (learning

assessment) method or activity. Students are expected to earn academic credit for learning that is demonstrated and assessed, rather than for the service itself.



Glenn Bowen, director of the WCU Center for Service Learning, was the guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Sylva Rotary Club. Introduced by Jennifer Dirkes, president-elect of the club, Bowen spoke about the university's goals and achievements in service learning and civic engagement. Here, he exchanges pleasantries with Tom Schutte, president of the club. (Photo by Bob Cochran, courtesy of the Sylva Rotary Club.)

Work-Study Community Service Program to be Expanded

The Center for Service Learning has developed a partnership with the Financial Aid Office to expand and manage the Federal Work-Study Community Service Program. One component of the program, America Reads/America Counts, will be reorganized. Another component, the Catamount Student Service Corps, will be further developed.



America Reads/America Counts aims to improve reading and math through one-on-one tutoring and mentoring.



Jennifer Cooper, assistant director, will supervise ARAC and the Student Service Corps.

students. ARAC tutors/mentors provide fun, hands-on activities that meet the academic needs of the individual child, as well as assist with homework, reading aloud and journal writing.

At the start of the 2010-11 academic year, a graduate assistant will be assigned the role of ARAC coordinator.

The Center for Service Learning, in collaboration with the Financial Aid Office, will manage ARAC and place FWS-eligible students as reading and math tutors and mentors in local schools and community centers.

The Catamount Student Service Corps is a Center for Service Learning initiative launched in 2009. The corps engages WCU students in leadership roles in specific programs and projects. A student service corps leader will be selected for the 2010-11 academic year.

Members of the Service Corps help to coordinate service-learning orientation sessions, lead service-learning reflections, represent the center at university open houses, function as site leaders for days of service, assist with organizing alternative break trips, help to coordinate the Campus Kitchen Garden Project and serve as liaisons with community agencies.

Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of service learning, will have direct supervisory responsibilities for both ARAC and the Student Service Corps. She will work closely with JoAnne Foster, the FWS coordinator in the Financial Aid Office.

The FWS Community Service Program is a federally subsidized work program that offers eligible students the opportunity to work for an eligible public or nonprofit organization whose mission and work benefit the community and to earn money to help cover education-related expenses.

Community service jobs are designed to improve the quality of life in the community. Relevant services cover various areas such as health care, child care, literacy training, education, welfare, social services, transportation, housing and neighborhood improvement, public safety, crime prevention and control, recreation, rural development, community improvement, support to students with disabilities, mentoring, tutoring and counseling.

In a statement, the Center for Service Learning explained that FWS community service “provides students with rich opportunities to apply academic learning to real-world problems; explore and develop their interest in public and community service; develop interpersonal, teamwork and leadership skills, as well as a sense of self-efficacy; experience working with individuals from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds; and learn new, career-related skills while exploring potential career paths.”

America Reads/America Counts aims to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of children in kindergarten through eighth grade (particularly those considered academically at-risk) through one-on-one tutoring and mentoring provided by university students. ARAC tutors/mentors provide fun, hands-on activities that meet the academic needs of the individual child, as well as assist with homework, reading aloud and journal writing.



Carter Congratulated on Chancellorship

The Center for Service Learning has congratulated Kyle R. Carter, WCU provost and senior vice chancellor, on his appointment as chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

Center staff expressed confidence that he would “be equal to the challenges of that office” and would achieve the goals he set.

At WCU, Carter has been credited with redesigning the strategic planning process and modifying the institutional mission to focus on regional engagement. Undergraduate degree requirements and faculty promotion and tenure policies have been revised to reflect this heightened emphasis on service learning and engaged scholarship. He headed the team that developed WCU’s response to the UNC Tomorrow Commission report.

Carter, who has been the chief academic officer at WCU since 2004, will assume his new duties at UNC Pembroke on July 1.

The Center for Service Learning also congratulated Linda Seestedt-Stanford, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences, on her appointment as interim provost and Marie Huff, appointed interim dean of that college.



Alternative Spring Break 2010

NORFOLK, VA

(Story on page 13)

SENTINEL snapshots



STUDENTS IN SERVICE



RIVER CLEANUP

Campus and community volunteers numbering 628 contributed 3,140 hours of service as part of the Tuckaseegee River Cleanup Project in April. This 26-year-old project is the largest one-day event of its kind in the United States.

Students Attend National Conference, Visit Capitol Hill

Western Carolina University seniors Bethany Ketting and Samantha Moss participated in the CARE National Conference and Celebration in Washington, D.C., in May.

Ketting is an English (professional writing) and philosophy major from Cullowhee while Moss is a criminal justice major from York, S.C. They joined about 800 individuals from across the United States at the two-day conference organized by CARE, a humanitarian organization fighting global poverty.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton delivered the keynote address on the first day of the conference. Sia Nyama Koroma, first lady of Sierra Leone, also addressed the conference. International development experts led sessions and participants received advocacy training in preparation for meetings on Capitol Hill.

On Capitol Hill, each student visited the office of the two U.S. senators representing her home state and the U.S. representative for her congressional district to discuss a number of global development issues including poverty. They advocated for U.S. policies to combat global poverty and help women lift themselves, their families and their communities out of poverty.

Founded in 1945, the Atlanta-based CARE is one of the world's largest private humanitarian organizations. According to information at its Web site, CARE tackles underlying causes of poverty so that people can become self-sufficient. Recognizing that women and children suffer disproportionately from poverty, CARE places special emphasis on working with women to create social change.

The WCU Center for Service Learning, with support from CARE, sponsored the students' participation in the conference.

Moss is a member of Civic Place, a residential learning community organized by the Center for Service Learning.

Ketting represents the Department of Philosophy and Religion on the dean's student advisory board in the College of Arts and Sciences. "The department is making an effort to build more service-learning



Bethany Ketting



Samantha Moss

experiences into its curriculum, with student participation in the CARE Conference being a good example," said John Whitmire, an assistant professor.

Another example is a course titled "Religion, Suffering and the Moral Imagination," which Whitmire teaches. Service learning is a major component of the course, with responsiveness to social issues being one of its themes.

Volunteers Participate in Alternative Spring Break

Fifteen volunteers from Western Carolina University participated in an alternative spring break during the week of March 27-April 4 in Norfolk, Va.

The group, consisting of 11 students and four staff members, assisted four area nonprofits with various projects over the seven-day period.

At Camp Hope Haven, WCU volunteers helped to ready the summer camp for its seasonal opening. Camp Hope Haven has been providing a free Christian overnight summer camp to the children of the Hampton Roads community for almost 50 years. Campers enjoy horseback riding, swimming, sports, Bible study and nature activities. The camp is a part of Union Mission Ministries, "dedicated to serving the least, the last, and the lost" in the local community.

The volunteers also assisted the Ronald McDonald House of Norfolk with daytime cleaning chores. Ronald McDonald House offers low-cost lodgings near a treatment facility to families with sick children.

Volunteers worked on a Habitat for Humanity construction project. Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit organization through which volunteers donate labor, money and materials to provide affordable houses to families in many countries. Group members also worked on an erosion control project at the main campus of Union Mission Ministries.

Linda B. Baughn, executive director of the Union Mission Ministries, told the volunteers that their kindness would help to make a difference in the lives of people without hope. In a thank-you letter to Julia Konish, Center for Service Learning program coordinator, Baughn wrote: "Thank you for your generous gift of time and energy, to relocate large rocks to prevent erosion on our property. It was a pleasure meeting you and your hard working crew. Your effort impacts the homeless and hurting men and women who come to the Union Mission for help each day. Your kindness will help make a difference in the lives of those without hope. ... In 2009, the Union Mission served over 230,000 meals, provided over 90,000 nights of free lodging and distributed over 14,000 articles of clothing to the homeless in our community. We could not do this work ... without [your] help. May God bless you as you have blessed us and those we serve."

A student team supervised by Konish planned the trip. Last Minute Productions, the WCU student programming board, was a co-sponsor.

The volunteers who joined Konish and staff member Brandon Tighe of the Admission Office were Rebecca Barnes, Brendan Braaten, Sarah Brown, Matthew Davis, Lauren Gray, Rachel Harris, Neil Henry, Amber Holland, Casey Laing, Alicia Millar, Shaadia Moore, Mindy Smith and Ian Ward.

"Going to Virginia on the ASB trip was a great experience. I learned new ways to help people, whether it was behind the scenes or in a direct way," said Casey Laing, a rising junior majoring in anthropology. "I got to know different kinds of people and how to work with them. It was a wonderful experience."

The Center for Service Learning organizes fall and spring break trips as part of its alternative break program. Volunteers participate in community service projects and learn about local issues. The spring break trip to Norfolk was the sixth since 2005.

Student Government Creates Senate Seat for Service Learning

Western Carolina University's Student Government Association has created a senate seat to support programs organized by the Center for Service Learning. The service-learning senator will be the SGA liaison to the center and will serve on its advisory board. Michael Fitzwater served as interim Service-Learning Senator during the spring semester. Branden Cable, the first elected service-learning senator, will assume responsibilities at the start of the 2010-11 academic year.

Former SGA member Aaron D. Camp proposed the senate seat to the association.

"Service learning enhances not only the individuals receiving the assistance or service but also the lives of all involved in the experience," said Camp in his proposal to the SGA. "As a part of Western Carolina's growth and identity, service learning is proving to be an essential part of the university's foundation. Our students are grasping the academic side of their college career by putting classroom dialogue to work through services that benefit communities, agencies and our world."

Camp represented WCU on the North Carolina Campus Compact Student Advisory Board and served on the advisory board of the Center for Service Learning until his graduation last December.

During Camp's tenure on the state board, WCU hosted the North Carolina Campus Compact Student Conference. Lisa Keyne, executive director of North Carolina Campus Compact, said it was one of the best organized student conferences.

Reading Partners Program a Success

A group of 111 WCU students and the same number of elementary and middle-school students participated in a major reading project in local schools this academic year as part of a required course, "Practicum in Teaching Reading."

The service-learning component of the 400-level course was designed to provide reading enrichment for the elementary and middle-grades students. The project provided individual reading assessment, strategy selection and tutoring for three Jackson County Schools: Fairview, Cullowhee Valley and Scotts Creek.

In the fall and spring semesters, the WCU students – preservice teachers in their senior year – and the young readers partnered for 10 weekly one-to-one sessions held in the local schools each semester as part of the Practicum in Teaching Reading program.

"The program has been ongoing, in one form or another, for more than 10 years," explained Teresa Folger, assistant professor of elementary and middle-grades education. "However, this year the Center for Service Learning designated this course with the 'SLC,' to be marked on each of the WCU preservice teachers' transcripts. This designation lets future employers know that the participants have provided significant service to their communities while in college. The Reading Partners program is the real-life application of reading assessment and strategy instruction that brings the course content to life. It is critical to the future teachers' success in the classroom."

Folger explained further that the reading partners read to each other and with each other. "Both parties benefit greatly from this one-to-one interaction that revolves around quality children's and adolescent literature, targeted strategies matching individual needs, and the love of reading. In fact, the love of reading and having a lifelong reader share that love with beginning and developing readers is a major goal of the program. Each week, the reading partners together write short letters home letting parents and guardians know what books and strategies have been part of that day's work. This communication is one of the best parts of the program.

The elementary and middle-school readers also had a snack and drink during each session. In the spring, WalMart of Sylva



Katie Discus of Waynesville talks with a parent about his son's achievements in reading.

made a \$100 contribution to defray the costs of snacks and drinks. Parents also contributed funds. "These monies also make possible the gift of a book for each reader as selected from Scholastic Book Clubs by the WCU preservice teacher," Folger added. "Towards the end of the semester, parents and guardians are invited to meet with their reader and the WCU preservice teacher for a conference, to meet them face to face and socialize while enjoying refreshments."

In April, the elementary school students took a trip to WCU's Hunter Library, where the WCU students were on hand to welcome their young "reading buddies" as part of the end-of-year conference. Parents and teachers also attended and heard about the youngsters' reading accomplishments for the year.

The event at the library was one of the concluding activities of the reading partnership for this year. A similar conference and celebration was also held at Scotts Creek School in April.

During their time together, the education majors introduced the young readers to a variety of good books, evaluated their reading strategies, and worked into the activities some new competency goals in communications skills from North Carolina's

Standard Course of Study, the prescribed curriculum for the state's public schools.

"We feel that the elementary students learned many new things because of the reading program, but it also was an ideal learning experience for our WCU students to have an opportunity to work with them," said Caitlin Cavin, a WCU graduate teaching assistant who helped coordinate the program.

"Both the elementary students and WCU students benefit greatly from this interaction revolving around quality literature, targeted reading strategies to match individual needs, and a love of reading," said Folger. "For our students, this is the real-life application of their classroom instruction. It brings the course content to life for them and is critical to their success in the classroom as future teachers."

After the state budget crisis led to the closing of the WCU Reading Center last year, there were concerns about the loss of the tutoring programs the center had provided for young readers in the local area, said William Dee Nichols, head of WCU's department of elementary and middle-grades education. The reading partners program helps to respond to these concerns, he said.

Management Students Provide Real-Time Consulting

Students in a 400-level management class documented more than 7,000 hours in providing real-time consulting assistance to nonprofit organizations and both public- and private-sector entities, this academic year.

Bruce Berger, assistant professor of business administration and law, collaborated with Roger Higgs and Edward Wright, associate professors of global management and strategy, as course instructors.

Berger reported that the students' service-learning work over two semesters included global outreach and collaboration with foreign university students in Mexico. "Our client satisfaction was the highest possible rating," Berger said.

Women's History Month Service Project

In honor of Women's History Month, the Center for Service Learning and the Women's Center co-sponsored a service project at the Appalachian Homestead Farm and Preserve in the Tilley Creek community in Cullowhee on March 20.

WCU students teamed up with Girl Scouts from Jackson and Swain counties and served as the girls' mentors for the day. The participants spent the day decorating journals and helping with gardening tasks, such as planting forget-me-nots.

Of the 34 participants, 16 were WCU students and 18 were Girl Scouts. Six chaperones participated as well.

"The experiences we had and the memories we made ... were incredible," said Mindy Smith, a WCU Women's Center graduate assistant who participated as a chaperone.

Several of the volunteers were interviewed by Amy Ammons Garza of Catch the Spirit of Appalachia for the "Stories of Mountain Folk" radio program. The segment, broadcast on WRGC Radio on April 17, can be heard at <http://storiesofmountainfolk.com/>.

Students Sew Quilts for Hospitalized Children

As part of an extra-credit project, 15 students in fall and spring sections of a beginning stage-crafts class spent about 70 hours using primarily cotton fabric scraps to make quilts for WestCare Health System's Comfort Quilts Program.

"Our students wanted to do something for children," said Susan Brown-Strauss, professor and director of WCU's theater and dance program. "For most, this was the first time they had ever sewn anything on the sewing machine. The project was a wonderful way to apply what they were learning in class in a meaningful way that has an impact beyond the classroom. They can see what this will mean to a child."



Carol Douglas (second from right), volunteer coordinator for WestCare Health System, accepted quilts made by Western Carolina University students for the Comfort Quilts Program. Presenting one of the quilts are WCU students (from left) Katherine Paglia, Coty Keziah and Anna Hoopes.



Art created by Western Carolina University student Jimmy Raines as part of the Fundred Dollar Bill Project, a nationwide effort to clean up lead-contaminated soil in New Orleans.

Sendoff of Fundred Bills Caps Yearlong Initiative

A yearlong effort at WCU wrapped up April 16, when an armored truck pulled away from campus loaded with thousands of mock hundred-dollar bills created for the national Fundred Dollar Bill Project.

The Fundred goal is to clean up lead-contaminated soil in New Orleans and raise overall awareness about the environment.

"We asked participants to create a valuable commodity with their drawings and the messages written on their bills," said Marie Cochran, a faculty member in the School of Art and Design, who spearheaded Fundred at WCU.

At the WCU sendoff, Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, noted that the Fundred project was "an example of Western Carolina University's commitment to civic and community engagement – longstanding central elements of our institutional mission."

"State colleges and universities play a special role beyond being a center for student higher education and learning," Burton said. "They were established to meet the needs of a growing democracy with all the challenges and opportunities that entails. WCU embraces its role in educating students for a global, increasingly diverse and highly political world, and we have taken several steps to demonstrate our commitment.

"This event underscores our belief that there is more to a college education than passing a compilation of courses in a specific discipline. We want our students to be full participants in their communities and to be able to make a difference in their world. I am pleased that we are supporting the city and surrounding area of New Orleans, for which the Fundred Dollar Project was designed. No matter how old we get, it is always good to do art!"

Anipets

WESTERN CAROLINA GETS AN A: The Asheville Citizen-Times gave an A to Western Carolina University for being named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction for the second straight year. "That's a mouthful of a title that means an emphasis on community service and civic engagement," according to the newspaper's Report Card on March 5.

CAMPUS VISIT:

Joseph Johnston, senior vice president at the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars, recently visited Western Carolina University. Johnston,



who leads the institutional relations department at the Washington Center, met with administrators of Career Services, the Center for Service Learning, Office of the Provost, Registrar's Office, and the Political Science and Public Affairs Department. The Center for Service Learning organized the campus visit. Among administrators attending the meeting were Beth Tyson Lofquist, associate provost, and Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor. Mardy Ashe, director of career services and cooperative education, has since assumed the liaison role previously assigned to Glenn Bowen, director of service learning. The Washington Center honored the university last year for the "extraordinary strength" of its civic engagement initiatives. WCU was among five colleges and universities nationwide chosen for honorable mention among 67 institutions nominated for the center's Higher Education Civic Engagement Award.

RELAY FOR LIFE: This year's Relay for Life at WCU raised \$29,818 to support the American Cancer Society's cancer research projects. More than 50 teams with 500 participants were at the April 23 event on the lawn of the A.K. Hinds University Center.

NEW LIAISONS: Three faculty members in the College of Education and Allied

Professions were added to the list of service-learning liaisons for the 2009-10 academic year. They are Kathleen Jorissen, Department of Educational Leadership & Foundations; Chris Tuten, Department of Health, Physical Education & Recreation; and Valerie Schwiebert, Department of Human Services.

CIVIC PLACE: Fifteen students have registered for Civic Place, the residential service-learning program that promotes civic engagement. The students will live together in two houses in the Village, which will be their base for civic, leadership and academic-support activities.

SOCIAL MEDIA BASICS: Dillsboro business owners participated in a social media class taught by Western Carolina University students in April as part of the Dillsboro/Western Carolina University partnership effort to support community revitalization. WCU public relations students Lauren Gray, Garrett Richardson and Ashley Funderburk led business owners step-by-step in how to use Facebook pages. Participants learned to upload photos and business information, create events, set privacy controls and post status updates. In addition, they discussed tools such as e-mail and Twitter, and the effectiveness of using social media tools for marketing. Also in April, as part of the Dillsboro-WCU partnership initiative, WCU hosted "Dillsboro on Display" on the lawn of A.K. Hinds University Center. The event showcased the food, art, merchandise, music and culture the historic town of Dillsboro has to offer.

VOLUNTEER: Wiley Danner (Facilities Management) was one of the coordinators of the canned food drive organized recently by the WCU Faculty Senate. The food donation went to the Community Table, the Sylva-based community soup kitchen.

EARTH DAY: The Center for Service Learning joined the 40th anniversary celebration of Earth Day on April 22 by mounting a display featuring the Campus Kitchen Garden Project. WCU's celebration – "Happy bEARTHday Earth Day!" – was staged on the lawn of the University Center.

BOARD APPOINTMENT: Gloria Patterson, a WCU undergraduate studying construction management, has joined the board of Jackson County Neighbors in Need. A voluntary organization, Neighbors

in Need brings together community organizations and citizens "to promote effective collaboration to assist Jackson County citizens in need of adequate warm shelter during the cold weather months." Major goals of the organization are the weatherization of homes, providing cold-weather shelter, and also providing funds to help with heating and shelter needs.

PRESENTATION: Megan Crews, a Civic Place member, and Ben Rutz, a member of the Catamount Student Service Corps, made a presentation to a small group of parents attending a WCU Family Association event on April 24. "Student Opportunities: What Prospective Students Need to Know" was the title of the presentation in the University Center. A few prospective WCU students were in the audience. Civic Place and the Student Service Corps are programs organized by the Center for Service Learning.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE: "WCU Addresses Food Insecurity and Hunger in Western NC" is one of the stories in the March 2010 issue of the UNC Tomorrow Newsletter published by the University of North Carolina. The UNC Tomorrow initiative was launched in February 2007 to respond to diverse needs and issues in North Carolina.

SUPPORTING ENGAGEMENT: WCU's College of Arts and Sciences has launched a program that will support student participation in engaged learning activities, including service learning. Dean Wendy Ford recently announced the creation of the Arts and Sciences' Student Engagement Awards, a part of the college's efforts to embrace the Quality Enhancement Plan. "Perfectly aligned with our college's QEP initiatives, the new awards support our students' participation in meaningful engagement opportunities that extend and enrich their education at Western Carolina," Ford said. "The awards may support professional field experiences or internships, service-learning and volunteer projects, international studies, research and participation in conferences, and other engagement activities that extend beyond the classroom." The program was initiated by a \$1,000 gift from Bob Thomas, a 1970 graduate of the WCU history program, and his wife, Pam. Thomas is president and chief executive officer of EIS, a leading distributor of electrical apparatus, equipment, wiring supplies and related equipment based in Atlanta.

What They're Saying...

"Service-learning projects provide opportunities for students to apply their discipline in real-world settings. The result is often a deeper and more meaningful understanding of course content."

– Kyle Carter, WCU Provost

"Through their participation in service-learning projects, students learn to solve real world problems and discover that they can be instruments for change within their community. The service-learning experience puts students in touch with the real world and this helps to promote the development of a social conscience."

– Emma Wertenberger, executive director, Appalachian Women's Museum, Dillsboro

"Service learning has become a standard requirement at colleges and universities around the globe, giving students an opportunity to learn practical skills while helping out in their communities. At Homestead Farm, WCU students and student groups have made it possible for us to move forward with a multitude of tasks without paid staff."

– Excerpted from *Ridgelines and Plowshares* (Vol. 2, Issue 1, 2010), the newsletter of Appalachian Homestead Farm and Preserve, Cullowhee

"Western Carolina University's growing emphasis on community involvement is refreshing. As a Western Carolina alumnus, I am proud of the university's interest in giving to the surrounding communities."

– Jerry W. Tate, director, The Shook Museum, Clyde

"Service learning is an integral part of a student's education at WCU. Becoming responsible citizens and assisting efforts in running valuable community programs enriches the college experience and keeps one engaged in civic endeavors possibly throughout a lifetime. "

– Mardy Ashe, WCU director of career services and cooperative education, and Center for Service Learning advisory board member

"The 2008 alternative spring break trip to Chicago that I participated in is certainly a cornerstone of my life. Over chess and coffee with homeless men and women at a café, I finally affirmed my career, which is social work. Service learning provided me with a real-life, in-the-moment chance to mix skills and compassion and gave me the desire to be of service and support, and sensitive to people I will encounter in my life as a social worker. It's simply an experience that I feel all students should partake in."

– Aaron Camp, WCU alumnus

"The advisory board adds significance to the work of the Center for Service Learning via its formal structure. The makeup of the board with university and community working together models the goals for the center to other faculty, staff, students and community members – those goals being to work together – to truly collaborate as advocates for common goals."

– Glenda Hensley, coordinator of first-year experiences (Office for Undergraduate Studies) and Center for Service Learning advisory board member

"It is like an apprenticeship. In-class exercises are nice and neat. Addressing real problems and working with clients usually is not. The students get to experience this. Solving these issues and delivering a solution that the client can use builds their confidence. They realize that even if they don't know the answer, they have the capability to find it."

– William "Bill" Richmond, associate professor of computer information systems, former service-learning faculty fellow and current advisory board member

"Service-learning collaboration has helped to broaden the perspective of the students to understand the dynamics of the community in which they live by being actively involved in service to others that cannot be replicated in the classroom."

– Sharon Elizabeth Metcalfe, assistant professor of nursing

fresh perspective:

Stewards of Cullowhee: Revitalizing a College Town through Student Engagement

By Christopher Blake

When we hear the term “college town,” plenty of images come to mind. Cafes, quirky shops, local entertainment venues, lampposts festooned with university banners – the list goes on. Cue the current images of downtown Cullowhee, starting, let’s say, at the tattoo parlor on the right (just as you enter town as if coming from Sylva), moving past the forgotten billboard (also on your right), and ending at the abandoned general store just at the back entrance to Western Carolina University.

The setting is a source of jokes for some and looks of bewilderment from others, but it increasingly is viewed as the center of a once-in-a-lifetime service-learning opportunity – a chance for those of us at WCU to transform our own backyard.

Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor, or CuRvE, was founded in 2007 when Todd Henry, a student in Health, Physical Education, and Recreation, presented a slideshow of his senior project to a group of community members. Todd’s project had explored how sleeping towns across the United States managed to revitalize themselves by developing recreation resources along nearby rivers.

“Imagine, for a moment, Cullowhee as a cool college town with a whitewater recreation area surrounded by outdoor cafes, arts and music venues and local shops – all accessible from a walking and biking greenway,” Todd said at the time.

On that March day, the eight of us watching Todd’s presentation in the Mad Batter (Mary Jean Herzog, Stephen Page, Maurice

Phipps, Brian Railsback, Lori Richards, Melba Richards, Josh Whitmore and I) knew that Cullowhee, with its river and pristine scenery, had all the makings for a college town unlike anything in the region. We knew it could become the type of place that most municipal planners can only dream about.

“The next 10 years are critical for Cullowhee’s future as inevitable growth shapes the face of the region. CuRvE is confident that the Cullowhee college town of 2020 will be far more attractive to students”

Now, just three years after the seminal meeting and the official incorporation of CuRvE a few months later, efforts are under way to make the vision a reality, thanks in large part to service-learning partnerships with faculty and students on the WCU campus. A glance at some of these projects underscores the level of engagement that is helping to put Cullowhee on the path to revitalization.

BEAUTIFICATION

Over the past two years, nearly 200 students from the Honors College have put their hands to shovels and pitchforks to transform eyesore areas that were previously barren or home to kudzu. This fall, they will focus on developing a landscaped entrance to Cullowhee on what is currently a dirt and gravel pullover spot. And just a month from now, several students in associate professor Erin Tapley’s summer mural course (ART 493) will use their artistic flair to transform the “forgotten billboard” with a new mural to welcome passers-by.

BUSINESS

With a largely untapped market of nearly 10,000 students, Cullowhee could be an entrepreneurs’ mecca. Sidewalks and other changes will eventually make way for local business development, but for now students are already working to help the businesses



Christopher Blake

that are here. Last fall, students in assistant professor Debra Connelly’s public relations campaigns class (CMPR 460) worked with Cullowhee businesses to create a promotional discount card. The card will be available soon, giving students and residents a discount incentive to shop and eat locally. This spring, students in associate professor Steve Ha’s regional economics course (ECON 307) selected CuRvE for their term project. They researched the impact that CuRvE is having on the community and presented a poster of their paper at the WCU Undergraduate Expo.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

At the core of the revitalization is the effort to engage community members and involve them in the process of envisioning what a transformed town could look like. For two semesters, students in assistant professor Todd Collins’s civic engagement course (PSC 349) took that task head-on by developing and administering two surveys that had nearly 1,500 respondents. A survey for the local residents is in the works.

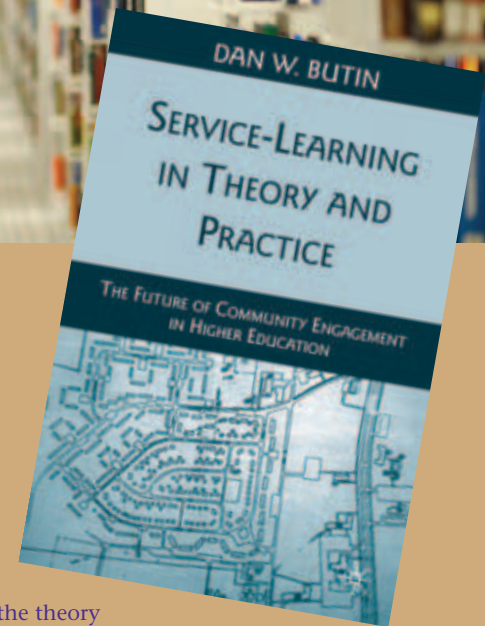
GOVERNMENT

Many are surprised to learn that Cullowhee is not a municipality but instead bears the humble categorization of a “census designated place.” Without a local government, Cullowhee residents have minimal control over their own town’s future. At the same time, Cullowhee is unable to tap important improvement grants due to its unincorporated status. With the support of associate professor Chris Cooper at WCU’s Public Policy Institute, CuRvE has made significant progress in exploring possible routes to incorporating Cullowhee. This spring, Charlie Fox, a student in the Master of Public Affairs Program, completed a capstone project that provided CuRvE with valuable information on this front.

These projects are just a sample of the types of engagement opportunities unfolding as WCU’s “steward of place” model transforms



IN OUR LIBRARY



its own backyard. Virtually none of the progress up to this point would have been possible without this campus-community partnership. The next 10 years are critical for Cullowhee's future as inevitable growth shapes the face of the region. CuRvE is confident that the Cullowhee college town of 2020 will be far more attractive to students, thanks in large part to the talent and efforts of those who are enrolled right now.

To discuss ways to partner with us in this revitalization effort, you can contact CuRvE at cullowheerevitalization@gmail.com or look for us on our new Facebook page – 240 members and growing, thanks to yet another WCU service-learning project!

Christopher Blake is assistant professor of applied linguistics at Western Carolina University and is co-chair of the Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor with Mary Jean Herzog, professor of educational leadership and foundations.

TITLE: *Service-Learning in Theory and Practice: The Future of Community Engagement in Higher Education*

AUTHOR: Dan W. Butin

PUBLISHER: Palgrave Macmillan

YEAR: 2010

PAGE COUNT: 208

PUBLISHER'S SYNOPSIS:

This book offers a comprehensive rethinking of the theory and practice of service learning in higher education. Democratic and community engagement are vital aspects of linking colleges and communities, and this book critically engages the best practices and powerful alternative models in the academy. Drawing on key theoretical insights and empirical studies, Butin details the limits and possibilities of the future of community engagement in developing and sustaining the engaged campus.

Faculty Publish and Present

An article coauthored by MARIE THIELKE HUFF, associate dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences; CAROL BURTON, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies; and LINDA SEESTEDT-STANFORD, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences, titled "Implementing Service Learning across the Curriculum: A Catalyst for Change," has been published in the Spring 2010 issue of *The Department Chair: A Resource for Academic Administrators*. The article highlights the role of service learning in the implementation of Western Carolina University's Quality Enhancement Plan. The authors recommend specific strategies that department chairs may use to encourage faculty to incorporate service learning into their courses.

Two articles by GLENN BOWEN, director of service learning, were recently accepted for publication. "Service Learning in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Effective Practices" will be carried in July

2010 issue of the *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. "Exploring Civic Engagement in Higher Education: An International Context" is expected to be published in the *Asian Journal of Educational Research and Synergy* in December.

PHILIP SANGER, associate professor and director of the Center for Rapid Product Realization, participated in a presentation on social entrepreneurship at North Carolina Campus Compact's Civic Engagement Institute recently held at Elon University. Sanger was on a team of seven presenters representing AdvantageWest, the economic development commission serving the 23 westernmost counties of North Carolina; Appalachian State University; DigitalChalk; Google; WCU; and Western Piedmont Community College for a session titled "How a Juicy Idea Engaged 900+ students and Put N.C. in the National Spotlight." Sanger focused on a project in which his

students created a wind generator from plastic bottles. The project took second place in the Juicy Idea competition, a national collegiate competition designed to stimulate and celebrate innovation, entrepreneurship and social responsibility in students and community leaders. Three of Sanger's students, Josh Kirkland, Ben Plowman and Drew Tolliver, submitted the entry. Twenty-eight colleges and universities participated. The video of "Wind Generator Made from Plastic Bottles" can be seen at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsvVUSzdoho>.

JENNIFER COOPER, assistant director of service learning, gave a presentation on "Best Practices for Living-Learning Communities" at North Carolina Campus Compact's eighth annual Civic Engagement Administrators Conference on May 26. Representatives from 35 institutions in North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia attended the conference, hosted by Barton College.



KerryAnn O'Meara

Higher Education Scholar to Lead Presentations at Symposium

KerryAnn O'Meara, a nationally recognized civic engagement scholar, will be the lead presenter at Western Carolina University's sixth annual Symposium on Service Learning and Civic Engagement on Thursday, June 10. The event will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the A.K. Hinds University Center.

"Pursuing an Engagement Agenda: Pathways and Perspectives" is the theme of the one-day conference that will focus on issues, perspectives and effective practices in service learning and civic engagement. O'Meara's presentations will include "Creating Academic Structures and Cultures to Support Engaged Teaching and Learning" and "The Scholarship of Engagement: Faculty Roles and Rewards."

O'Meara is an associate professor of higher education in the College of Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her research and practice focus on the civic mission of higher education, including issues of faculty development, reform in academic reward systems and community engagement. She also is an associate editor of both the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* and the *Journal of the Professoriate*, and is co-author of the book "Faculty Priorities Reconsidered: Rewarding Multiple Forms of Scholarship."

Before joining the faculty at the University of Maryland in 2007, O'Meara served on the higher education faculty at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Previously she spent two years at the Harvard Project on Faculty Appointments and five years as a professional in student affairs and academic affairs, directing service learning, undergraduate research and a residence-life program. In 1998 she received the Emerging Leader Award from the National Society for Experiential Education; in 2003 the Teacher of the Year Award from the School of Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; and in 2008 the Early Career Research Award from the International Association for Research on Service Learning and Community Engagement.

The target audience for the symposium includes higher education faculty, researchers, administrators and upper-class or graduate students who have an interest in service learning and civic engagement. Representatives of community-based organizations and nonprofit agencies also are invited.

WCU interim Provost Linda Seestedt-Stanford will deliver opening remarks on the symposium's theme. Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, will welcome participants.

Presentations during concurrent sessions will be made by faculty, administrators and students from East Carolina University, Eastern Michigan University, East Tennessee State University, Elon University, Georgia State University, Lees-McRae College, St. Thomas University, University of Alabama, University of Asia and the Pacific (Pasig City, Philippines), University of North Carolina at Asheville and WCU.

PeaceJam Chapter in the Works

Vicki Faircloth, director of the graduate program in middle-grades education, is organizing a WCU PeaceJam chapter and is looking for faculty and staff to volunteer their support.

Faircloth will host a meeting from 10 a.m. to noon Friday, July 16, in preparation for a PeaceJam Slam on campus in October. That event, scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 2, will bring middle- and high-school students from across the state to campus to work with WCU students.

PeaceJam is an organization that brings young people together with Nobel Peace Prize winners to address global issues of basic rights and needs, such as access to clean water and social justice. It often has college students serve middle- and high-school students as mentors.

Several WCU students already are active in PeaceJam, and several 2010 graduates of Tuscola High will be WCU freshmen and already have volunteered to be PeaceJam collegiate leaders on campus, Faircloth said. WCU's Center for

Service Learning and Cherokee language program also are active in the WCU PeaceJam effort.

"There are lots of options for the collegiate students," said Faircloth, who attended a PeaceJam conference at Florida State University in March, where WCU students served as mentors to students across the Southeast. "There's just so much potential for our children in the region. It is a joy to watch the leader within these youth emerge as they tackle issues in their communities," Faircloth said.

the SENTINEL

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<http://www.wcu.edu/9963.asp>



Center for Service Learning

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