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Chancellor John Bardo accepts the civic engagement award from Richard Wood, dean emeritus of the Yale Divinity School.

WCU Earns National Honor for Civic Engagement, Service Learning

Western Carolina University is among six universities from across the nation recognized recently by the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars for exceptional commitment to civic engagement and service learning.

The Washington Center presented a 2010 Higher Education Civic Engagement Award to Western Carolina at an Oct. 4 luncheon at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

Chancellor John W. Bardo accepted the award from Richard J. Wood, dean emeritus of Yale University's Divinity School and president emeritus of Earlham College.

Joining Bardo at the academic affairs and civic engagement awards luncheon were Linda Seestedt-Stanford, WCU interim provost and senior vice chancellor, and Glenn Bowen, director of the Center for Service Learning.

In remarks immediately following the presentation, Bardo said the best education is "what students take with them when they leave the university, reflected in their contributions as good citizens who are productive and lead meaningful lives."

Bardo pointed out that all WCU students are required to have "an engagement experience each year and an opportunity to reflect on the meaning of that experience." He referred to WCU's adoption of the "stewards of place" model, through which the university promotes a high quality of life, a vibrant economy and social inclusion.

The national honor is based in part on WCU's recent emphasis on incorporating civic engagement into the undergraduate experience through its Quality Enhancement Plan. The award also recognizes the university's Center for Service Learning, which develops campus-community partnerships, monitors engagement initiatives and assesses project outcomes.

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WCU Congratulated on Civic Engagement Award

Lisa Keyne, executive director of North Carolina Campus Compact, has congratulated WCU on the national award received recently from the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars.

The Washington Center presented the award recently in the nation's capital.

Keyne acknowledged the work of the Center for Service Learning in "keeping civic engagement front and center at Western Carolina, contributing significant opportunities for faculty to develop their commitment to service, and to providing opportunities for students to hone their service skills and live out their passion for service."

Mike Smith, president of the Washington Center, said: "Western Carolina University is a true role model for civic engagement in the academic community." Smith added: "The university is teaching students a quality that can't be learned in the classroom alone, the importance of getting involved, giving back and making a difference."

Civic engagement efforts by WCU students, faculty and staff have included planting a garden to help reduce regional food insecurity, assisting the municipality of Dillsboro with economic recovery, and participating in post-hurricane revitalization efforts in nearby Canton.

"The Washington Center's Award for Higher Education Civic Engagement strengthens our national presence in civic and community engagement practice," said Carol Burton, WCU's assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies. "This national recognition for our increasing emphasis on civic engagement is a validation of the efforts of faculty, staff and students at WCU."

Burton praised the efforts of the Center for Service Learning, director Glenn Bowen and assistant director Jennifer Cooper for their role in advancing an institutional mission of community and civic engagement.

"All members of the university community, our alumni, board of trustees and our community partners share this honor



because all have contributed to our efforts in being selected to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with five other exemplary institutions," she said.

This marks the second consecutive honor for Western Carolina from the Washington Center, which last year awarded honorable mention to WCU for its civic engagement activities.

This year's honor is based in part on WCU's Quality Enhancement Plan, which requires students to develop an "education briefcase" – an electronic repository in which they will document their learning. The award also recognizes the work of the Center for Service Learning, which hosts an annual symposium that welcomes participants from across the country.

The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars is an independent, nonprofit organization that serves hundreds of colleges and universities in the United States and other countries by providing selected students challenging opportunities to work and learn in Washington, D.C., for academic credit. The largest program of its kind, the Washington Center has close to 40,000 alumni who have become leaders in numerous professions and nations around the world. It was established in 1975.

The other award recipients were Indiana University, Purdue University-Indianapolis, Miami Dade College, Santa Clara University, the College of New Jersey and Wagner College. The six honorees were chosen from among 121 nominees across the United States.

"These institutions put service learning at the center of their students' work," said Joseph J. Johnston, senior vice president at the Washington Center.

Alan J. Blinksen, chairman of the Washington Center's board, welcomed guests to the luncheon and congratulated the award recipients.

Richard J. Wood, who presented the civic engagement awards, is a founding presidential member of Campus Compact, the national coalition of higher education leaders committed to civic engagement and service learning.

A personal friend of the late Ernest Boyer, Wood noted that WCU had changed its faculty reward system to recognize work based on the Boyer model of scholarship. He noted also that WCU was strengthening its neighboring communities and helping with their economic recovery.

WCU Featured at Gala

The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars featured its six civic engagement honorees, including Western Carolina University, in the program for its 35th anniversary gala Oct. 4 at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.

"Each academic year since 2007, a substantial majority of WCU students have engaged in curriculum-based service learning and co-curricular community service," said a statement in the program. "The prominence of this kind of activity results from sustained efforts at the university to ensure that civic engagement is recognized as having academic legitimacy and is incorporated into the WCU culture."



Shanéé Sullivan is seen here with N.C. Campus Compact's Community Impact Student Award, presented by Lisa Keyne, executive director. Budd Berro (right), the Piedmont regional director for the Office of the Governor, presented a certificate from Governor Beverly Perdue. Sullivan received her award at Johnson C. Smith University on Nov. 6. (Photo by Brooke Loftis)

Student Receives State Award for Service

A Western Carolina University student who is making service to the deaf community her life's work was recently honored at the state level for her efforts and achievements.

Shanéé Sullivan received a Community Impact Student Award on Nov. 6 in Charlotte from North Carolina Campus Compact, a statewide coalition of college and university leaders dedicated to promoting community service, service learning and civic engagement in higher education.

A senior biology major from Raleigh, Sullivan served from 2008 to 2010 as a volunteer tutor at the North Carolina School for the Deaf in Morganton, where she assisted students with learning sign language and English vocabulary, and with American College Test preparation. Her fundraising efforts last year resulted in college scholarships totaling nearly \$1,000 for two NCSD seniors.

Ruth Jones, volunteer services director at NCSD, praised Sullivan's enthusiasm, energy,

creativity and dedication as a volunteer. "She is truly a treasure," Jones said.

Sullivan is currently a volunteer teacher assistant at Cullowhee Valley School, where she develops enrichment units for academically or intellectually gifted students in the fourth and seventh grades to connect their current literature to the world around them. She also teaches sign language to students in a special needs class. In addition, she is a volunteer tutor at Blue Ridge School, assisting students with English/American Sign Language vocabulary and reading comprehension.

"The students with Down syndrome and those students who are nonvocal benefit the most because sign helps them better communicate what they want, or what they need, better than the methods currently used," Sullivan said. "I also help with inclusion in the general education physical education class and with basic living skills such as eating, washing hands, and putting on shoes."

Sullivan recently changed her career goal from veterinary oncology to special education focusing on the needs of deaf students. On the WCU campus, she founded WheeSign, the American Sign Language Club, to raise awareness about deaf culture, sign language and related issues.

"Her passion for working on campus and in the community has been infectious to everyone around her," said Rotimi Ariyo, adviser to Last Minute Productions, the WCU student programming board, which supported Sullivan's fundraising projects.

Already honored last academic year with a WCU community service award, Sullivan was one of 22 students who received Community Impact Awards from N.C. Campus Compact at its annual student conference, hosted by Johnson C. Smith University. The Community Impact Awards are presented annually in recognition of outstanding student leadership and innovative approaches to volunteer and curriculum-based community service.

New Advisory Board Appointed

Peg Connolly, program director for recreational therapy, has been appointed chair of the Center for Service Learning's advisory board.

Connolly succeeds former Coulter Faculty Commons Director Anna McFadden, who was recently appointed director of academic engagement and IT governance in the Division of Information Technology at WCU.

For the first time, a vice chair has been named for the board. William "Bill" Richmond, associate professor of computer information systems, is the vice chair for the 2010-11 academic year.

Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, announced the appointments in August.

The 17-member board is composed of four faculty members, five administrators, four students and four community partners.

Board members include Rotimi Ariyo, interim associate director of programs in the A.K. Hinds University Center at WCU; Mardy Ashe, WCU director of career services and cooperative education; Carrie Blaskowski, assistant director of the Jackson County Green Energy Park; Brendan Braaten, a graduate student; Carroll Brown, an assistant professor of hospitality and tourism; E. Branden Cable, an undergraduate who serves as the Service-Learning Senator; Maggie Chandler, also an undergraduate; Todd Collins, an assistant professor of political science and public affairs; Heather Gordon, extension agent with Jackson County 4-H; Holly Krake, liaison specialist and work-based learning coordinator with the U.S. Forest Service; Lee Roddick, an undergraduate who represents WCU on the N.C. Campus Compact student advisory board; Jacqueline Smith, director of special programs and teaching fellows at WCU; Walter Turner, director of student community ethics; and Eddie Wells, manager of senior and volunteer services at Mountain Projects Inc.

Director Glenn Bowen serves as secretary of the board. Burton is an ex-officio member.

The advisory board supports the Center for Service Learning in enhancing and promoting service learning at Western Carolina University. Specifically, the board reviews service-learning initiatives, recommends pertinent policies and procedures, and promotes reciprocal relationships among campus and community stakeholders.

The Center for Service Learning is an academic and administrative support unit of the Office for Undergraduate Studies and a major contributor to the implementation of the university's Quality Enhancement Plan. The award-winning center also functions as the coordinating unit for campus-community partnerships, providing a foundation for civic engagement initiatives throughout Western North Carolina and beyond.

ADVISORY BOARD CHAIR

About Peg Connolly

Peg Connolly, an associate professor, has served as the director of the recreational therapy program at Western Carolina University since 2005.

She was the executive director of the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification from 1986 to 2002.

Connolly brings more than 35 years of experience in recreational therapy to the classroom.

When she began teaching a 300-level course titled "Recreational Therapy for Older Adults," she decided that the class needed an opportunity to work with real people to maximize student learning. In the spring of 2006, she established a service-learning relationship with Mountain Trace Nursing Home in Webster. That course became one of the first SLC-designated courses at WCU and is now offered every semester to recreational therapy students.

Connolly has since supported the inclusion of service learning in several recreational therapy courses and promotes service learning as an integral part of the WCU education experience.

"I have always believed in the importance of hands-on experience to enhance student learning," she said.

Connolly served on the National Therapeutic Recreation Society board of directors from 1980 to 1983 and in 1984 was elected the founding president of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association. She is currently serving as a board member on the national Committee for the Accreditation of Recreational Therapy Education. She has received distinguished service awards from the American Therapeutic Recreation Association and the New York State Therapeutic Recreation Association.



About Bill Richmond

William Richmond is an associate professor of computer information systems in the College of Business at WCU. He has served as a member of the Center for Service Learning advisory board since 2007.

"I have been involved, albeit unknowingly, in service learning since the late 1980s," he said. "Since coming to WCU in 2005, I have been intentionally involved in service learning in my teaching, research and service."

Two of Richmond's courses have the service-learning component ("SLC") designation. Through these and other courses, his students have provided more than 5,000 hours of service to the local community.

Richmond co-authored a journal article entitled "Integrating Curriculum across Courses in the Same Semester and across Semesters Using a Service-Learning Project" and was a principal investigator of "Canton Revitalization: The Aftermath of Disaster," which was awarded a Learn and Serve America grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service.



Richmond served as the Faculty Fellow for Service Learning for the College of Business during the 2006-07 academic year. He received an Outstanding Achievement in Teaching award from the Center for Service Learning in 2007 and an Outstanding Achievement in Service award in 2008. In addition, he was a recipient of the Chancellor's Meritorious Award for Engaged Teaching in 2007.

Service-Learning Liaisons Named

The Center for Service Learning has named four liaisons for the current academic year. They are Brian Railsback, dean of the Honors College; Kathleen Jorissen, an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations (College of Education and Allied Professions); Jessica Shirley, School of Nursing (College of Health and Human Sciences); and Jennifer Brown, Department of Athletics.

Liaisons support the work of the faculty fellows in building and sustaining support for service learning in departments, schools and colleges across the university.

Morse Appointed Committee Chair



Patricia Morse, professor of social work, has been appointed chair of the review committee for the service-learning course designation. Her one-year appointment became effective in August.

Morse also is the department head and graduate program director for social work, a department whose faculty members have used service learning as a teaching strategy for several years. The Center for Service Learning gave Morse a 2009 award for outstanding teaching.

Service-Learning Fellows Selected



D.V. Caitlyn, an assistant professor in the School of Stage and Screen, is a new faculty fellow for service learning. He represents the College of Fine and Performing Arts.

Faculty fellows serve as college liaisons with the Center for Service Learning and assist their colleagues in integrating service learning into the curriculum.

Caitlyn, who holds a master of fine arts degree from the University of California at San Diego, was a member of the former League of Professional Actor Training Programs.

Caitlyn has worked as a professional in theater, film and television as an actor, director and writer. He teaches acting, stage movement and stage combat, directing for the stage and professional development; and he is the designer and instructor for the new bachelor of fine arts recital for performance students. He also works closely with the motion picture and television production program, assisting in the integration of performance and film production projects.

Mickey Randolph, professor of psychology in the College of Education and Allied Professions, and **Glenn Kastrinos**, assistant professor of recreational therapy in the College of Health and Human Sciences, are the other service-learning fellows for 2010-11. Randolph was a service-learning fellow in 2006-07 and 2007-08. Since then, she has served on the Center for Service Learning's advisory board and as the service-learning liaison for the Psychology Department. Kastrinos was a fellow last year.

Center Welcomes New Staff

Jennifer Nickel, a recent graduate of Western Carolina University with a master's degree in business administration, is the new administrative support associate for the Center for Service Learning.

Nickel, who joined the staff in June, came to WCU as a freshman in 2004. In May 2008, she earned her BSBA in management. In addition to her studies at Western Carolina, Nickel was a student employee with the Information Technology Services instructional and student computing team for four years.

"I am really excited about working on campus again," Nickel said.



Jennifer Nickel,
administrative
support associate



Josh Lively, program
coordinator

Her responsibilities include serving as Web administrator for the center and assisting with the coordination of the NC-ACTS! AmeriCorps program.

The Center for Service Learning has a new program coordinator. Joshua "Josh" Lively, an AmeriCorps*VISTA member with North Carolina Campus Compact, joined the Center for Service Learning staff in July.

Lively has been assigned coordinating responsibilities for alternative breaks, National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, and the new Campus Kitchen Garden Club. He also is serving as the center's primary contact for student organizations and is assisting with the assessment of volunteer projects.

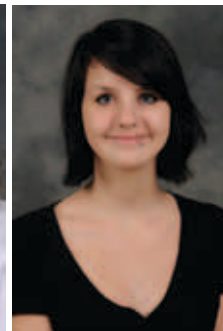
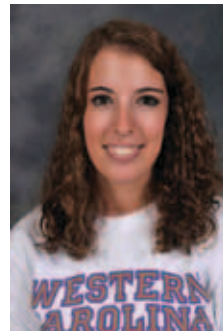
Lively worked as an English language instructor in Japan for a year and in South Korea for four years.

He received a bachelor of arts in anthropology and a master of science in applied anthropology from the University of North Texas. While pursuing his graduate degree, he conducted research on the recruitment of ethnic minority students for a community college in rural North Texas.

WCU has served as a host site for North Carolina Campus Compact's AmeriCorps*VISTA program since July 2007. Lively's one-year appointment will end in July 2011.

Reva Manikas, a sophomore, and Amanda Fields, a freshman, are the student office assistants in the Center for Service Learning. They have been assigned various clerical tasks.

Manikas plans to declare a major in recreational therapy, with a minor in Spanish, and has set her sights on graduation in 2013. Fields is majoring in anthropology, with a minor in art, and she plans to graduate in 2014.



Reva Manikas and Amanda Fields, office assistants

More Courses Earn “SLC” Designation

The “SLC” (service-learning component) designation has been added to four more courses, resulting in a new total of 18 SLC-designated courses.

Three of the courses are in the Social Work Department, and one is in Recreational Therapy. “SLC” is added to courses in the schedule and on students’ transcripts.

The Center for Service Learning has outlined seven criteria for the “SLC” designation:

- (1) The service-learning component of the course (or section), as described in the syllabus, must reflect Western Carolina University’s definition of service learning;
- (2) The syllabus must show direct and deliberate connections between the community service and the course content and must explain how these connections will support or enhance student learning;
- (3) The community agency or service site must be appropriate to the course goals, and service placements must not create a religious, political and/or moral conflict for the student;
- (4) Students must complete at least five hours of community service for each credit hour;
- (5) The service-learning

component must count for no less than 20 percent of the total course grade; (6) The reflection (learning assessment) method or activity must be specified in the syllabus; and (7) Students will earn academic credit for learning that is demonstrated and assessed (rather than for the service itself).

RTH 470: “Adventure-Based Recreational Therapy,” fall and spring, Dr. Jennifer Hinton

SOCW 486: “Social Work Field Practicum,” fall and spring, Professor Judy LeRoy Robinson

SOCW 586: “Social Work Foundation Field Practicum,” spring (various social work faculty members)

SOCW 686/SOCW 687: “Social Work Advanced Field Practicum I/Advanced Field Practicum II,” fall and spring, Professor Rebecca Lasher

Bowles Commends Bardo for University Recognition

Erskine Bowles, president of the University of North Carolina System, has commended retiring Western Carolina University Chancellor John W. Bardo for his years of exemplary service to the university and for bringing national recognition to its engagement efforts.

“John Bardo has been a truly phenomenal leader for Western Carolina University, the surrounding region and the entire state. Over the past 15 years, he has dramatically changed WCU for the better, significantly growing enrollment and academic offerings while also raising the academic quality of the student body,” Bowles said.

“Throughout his long tenure, he also has worked on multiple fronts to establish WCU as a catalyst for sustainable economic development in that region of the state. In the process, the campus has attracted national recognition for its ongoing efforts to incorporate civic engagement and community outreach into the undergraduate experience,” he said.

Bardo, who guided WCU through a period of unprecedented growth in student enrollment, campus construction and academic stature during 15 years as the institution’s 10th chief executive officer, announced Oct. 11 that he will leave his position as chancellor next summer.

Bowles announced his own retirement plans earlier this year.

Service-Learning Portfolio Added to Education Briefcase

Service learning is one of three portfolios added to the Education Briefcase as the phased implementation of the university’s Quality Enhancement Plan continues. The eBriefcase is one of the key tools that will support the QEP.

The other portfolios feature advising and career services.

Students enrolled in English 101 are using the eBriefcase this fall.

“The eBriefcase will allow students to develop and refine artifacts in academic and co-curricular experiences that meet the QEP learning outcomes,” said Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies. “The goal is to assist students in building a tool that will facilitate and document their learning, showcase their success while at WCU, create professional-level presentations regarding their accomplishments, and help them to land their dream job or pursue advanced study following graduation.”

The eBriefcase is built within the university’s new learning management system, Blackboard 9.1. Students will be able to share this electronic portfolio with fellow students, instructors, advisers, and ultimately with employers and graduate schools, explained Jason Ottie, instructional technology specialist in the Coulter Faculty Commons. Students can continue to develop their eBriefcase even after graduation, he said.

The service learning-related outcomes to be achieved through the QEP include intellectual growth, effective communication, career exploration, collaboration and appreciation of diversity. Students’ participation in service learning also facilitates practicing civic engagement, one of the global learning outcomes of the QEP.

Nory Prochaska, director of the Mathematics Tutoring Center, is chair of the Education Briefcase Implementation Team.

Faculty, Staff and Students Make Conference Presentations

Physical Therapy faculty members **Elisa Zuber**, assistant professor and academic coordinator of clinical education; **Kathy Starr**, associate professor; and **Karen Lunnen**, associate professor and department head, presented a workshop on service learning at the annual conference of the American Physical Therapy Association in Boston, Mass., recently. "Facilitating PT Students' Knowledge of the Role of the PTA" was the topic of the workshop. (PTA is the abbreviation for physical therapy assistant.) Zuber, Starr and Lunnen presented an overview of service learning as an instructional strategy and discussed service-learning projects in the WCU Department of Physical Therapy. They highlighted a service-learning project in which physical therapy students created and implemented clinical anatomy workshops for physical therapist assistant students from Southwestern Community College.

Candace Roberts, assistant professor of interior design, made a presentation on "Universal Design in a Retail and Service Context: Applying UD Principles in a North Carolina Community" at Universal Design Summit 4 in St. Louis, Missouri, in October. Roberts highlighted her "Senior Friendly" service-learning project.



Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, recently led two sessions at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities' national American Democracy Project meeting in

Providence, R.I. Burton was moderator for a panel discussion titled "Student Voices: Civic Agency," which included WCU student **Shaneé Sullivan**, a 2010 community service award winner; and a plenary panelist for a session titled "Labor Disputes and Teachable Moments."

Several faculty and staff members made presentations during concurrent sessions at WCU's sixth annual Symposium on Service Learning & Civic Engagement in June.

Lance Alexis, director of disability services, and **Jacqueline Jacobs**, a professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Foundations, were co-presenters (with Teresa Brooks Taylor and Cynthia Chambers of East Tennessee State University). The topic of their session was "Pathways and Perspectives for Inclusion."

Jamie Davis, assistant professor of Spanish and French, presented "Dismantling Prejudice through Service Learning: The Praxis of Engagement."



Jane Nichols, assistant professor of interior design, made a presentation on "Assessment, Accreditation, and Service Learning." Nichols also presented a poster titled "Service Learning and Civic Engagement: Integral to Social-Sustainable Design."

The poster session also featured "Rock On! Band Together to Fight Hunger: Results from a Food Insecurity Awareness Project," by **April Tallant**, an assistant professor in the School of Health Sciences.

Glenn Bowen, director of service learning, presenter a poster on "Indicators of Engagement: A Preliminary Assessment at a Comprehensive Institution."

Teri Domagalski, an associate professor in the Global Management and Strategy

department, also presenter a poster, "Optional service learning projects in an MBA Human Resource Management Course: A Comparison of Full-Time Students and Full-Time Working Adults in Project Selection and Learning Outcomes."

"The Impact of Instructor Leader Behavior and Student Personality on Performance in Service-Learning Participation" is the title of a poster contributed by **Paul Jacques**, associate professor of management.

Service-learning program coordinator **Julia Konish** presented a poster titled "Impact of the NC Campus Compact AmeriCorps*VISTA at Western Carolina University: A Capstone Presentation."

Graduate student **Joey Long** presented a poster featuring "Volunteer Manuals for Non-Profit, Service-Oriented Organizations."

Assistant Vice Chancellor **Carol Burton** and Service-Learning Director **Glenn Bowen** made a presentation at WCU's inaugural Boyer Executive Retreat in Asheville in September. "Engagement Exemplified: Integrating Teaching, Scholarship and Service" was the theme of the presentation. WCU, which adopted new faculty reward policies based on the Boyer model in 2007, is widely regarded as a leader in promoting institutional change that recognizes a broad range of scholarly activities by faculty. Civic engagement and service learning were featured in the presentation by Burton and Bowen. **Laura Cruz**, interim director of WCU's Coulter Faculty Center, organized the retreat, which is expected to become an annual event.

Journal Articles Published

Lisa Briggs, associate professor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice, published "Integrating Student Engagement – Without Resorting to an Overly Applied Focus" in the Teaching Tips section of the November-December 2010 issue of *The Criminologist*.

An article by **Glenn Bowen**, director of the Center for Service Learning, has been accepted for publication in the January 2011 issue of the *Journal for Civic Commitment*. The article is titled "Fostering College Students' Civic Commitment through Alternative Breaks."

Trustees Told about Achievements

Each academic year since 2007, approximately 80 percent of Western Carolina University students have engaged in service learning and related community-based activities, Director Glenn Bowen told the WCU Board of Trustees, Dec. 1.

“Our students now provide more than 55,000 hours of service to the community each year,” Bowen said.

He explained: “Our students apply their knowledge and skills to address real-world issues; to solve social and economic problems; to meet genuine community needs, while pursuing their academic and career goals.”

Introduced by Interim Provost Linda Seestedt-Stanford, the director noted that, as a result of the dedication and diligence of

WCU students and faculty, the university has repeatedly earned a place on the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll. WCU was recognized on the Honor Roll “with Distinction” for achievements in 2008 and 2009. Furthermore, the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars recently recognized WCU’s commitment to civic engagement.

The Center for Service Learning supports the implementation of WCU’s Quality Enhancement Plan and UNC Tomorrow. It promotes service learning as effective pedagogy, and as an avenue to civic engagement and social responsibility.

“In particular, the center serves as a coordinating entity for partnerships with the wider community, fostering

reciprocal relationships among campus and community stakeholders,” Bowen told the trustees.

“We do what we do not to win awards but to help our students succeed and excel,” Bowen declared. “However, when our efforts and achievements are thus recognized, we accept the accolades as validation of the efficacy of the strategies we design and implement. Moreover, the recognition of our efforts serves as an impetus to do more – and better – in nurturing students imbued with passion and purpose, as they make a difference in their world.”

Members of the Board of Trustees viewed posters reflecting students’ engagement activities in all colleges of the university. Supported by faculty, students whose posters were on display answered questions from board members.

University Hosts Sixth Annual Service-Learning, Civic Engagement Symposium

Nineteen universities were represented at Western Carolina University’s sixth annual Symposium on Service Learning & Civic Engagement in June.

Presentations during concurrent sessions were made by faculty and administrators from East Carolina University, Eastern Michigan University, East Tennessee State University, Elon University, Georgia State University, Lees-McRae College, St. Thomas University (Miami), University of Alabama, University of North Carolina at Asheville and WCU.

Nine WCU faculty and staff members made presentations. MBA student Joey Long presented a poster on a volunteer manual project that he completed with classmates James Wynn and Tex Jones. (See *Faculty, Staff and Students Make Conference Presentations*, p. 8.)

The lead presenter was nationally recognized civic engagement scholar KerryAnn O’Meara, associate professor of higher education in the College of Education at the University of Maryland, College Park. O’Meara, who also is an associate editor of the *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement* and the *Journal of the Professors*, made presentations on an

institutional engagement agenda, academic structures to support engaged teaching and learning, and faculty rewards for the scholarship of engagement.

WCU faculty member William Richmond, representing the advisory board of the Center for Service Learning, formally introduced O’Meara during the opening session.

Also during the opening session, Carol Burton, assistant vice chancellor for undergraduate studies, made remarks on the symposium theme, “Pursuing an Engagement Agenda: Pathways and Perspectives.”

In a message to participants, Chancellor John W. Bardo said the theme of the symposium reflected an acknowledgment of the diversity of approaches that can be taken toward the achievement of civic engagement goals.

“Clearly, service learning is one of the most recognized pathways to campus-community engagement,” Bardo said. “At Western Carolina University, engagement has been an important part of our mission for many years. Engagement is the process by which the university links its programs

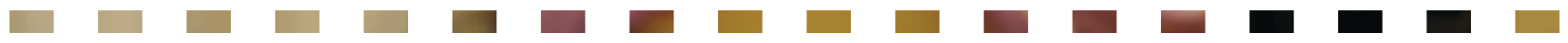
and resources to the needs of the people of the larger community. For example, we are implementing a ‘stewards of place’ model of public engagement that is responsive to the economic and social needs of our region. Our current Quality Enhancement Plan is designed to foster integrated learning within the context of student engagement.”

Bardo said the university is implementing a Boyer Model-based faculty reward system that recognizes work done by faculty members in applying their scholarly activities to help solve problems facing the community.

Beth Tyson Lofquist, associate provost, and A.J. Grube, then assistant vice chancellor in the Provost’s Office, attended the event.

The Center for Service Learning organized and hosted the event, which was held in the A.K. Hinds University Center. Director Glenn Bowen was the symposium chair.

The seventh annual symposium, scheduled for June 9, will explore the theme “Impacts of Engagement on Teaching and Learning: Maintaining the Momentum.” The session proposal deadline is March 18, and the registration deadline is May 13.



Symposium on Service Learning & Civic Engagement

(Story on page 9)

SENTINEL snapshots





Jordyn Fuller stands in front of a mural created for the Jackson County Department of Social Services. Swain High School art teacher Dora May and her students began the work on the mural, and the WCU summer mural class completed it.

Students Create Community Murals

Western Carolina Students completed 31 murals and signs as part of a summer course taught by Erin Tapley, associate professor of art education. Eleven students took the course and participated in the mural project.

The students designed and created a sign to support the work of the Cullowhee Revitalization Endeavor, or CuRvE, the WCU faculty-led organization that is working to bring new life to Old Cullowhee. The sign has been installed on Old Cullowhee Road.

One of the murals now adorns a wall at the offices of the Jackson County Department of Social Services in Sylva.

Both CuRvE and the Jackson County DSS are WCU service-learning community partners.

“The mural class wedded the idea of purposeful design and creativity,” said Tapley. “Most students had previous training in art or painting in which their assignments were probably based in technical mastery

and the development of their individual style. This course required working together and selecting/executing a design based on the expressed needs of the non-profit agency.”



Joseph Hader designed the north-facing side of this sign, which is now hanging on Old Cullowhee Road. The reverse of the sign, designed by Kristina Finsterwalder, reflects the Cullowhee revitalization effort.

Days of Service Projects “Very Successful”

Western Carolina University’s “Days of Service” projects for the fall 2010 semester were “very successful,” reported Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of service learning.

The Center for Service Learning coordinated volunteer participation in Mountain Heritage Day (Sep. 25). The 100 volunteers provided 300 hours of service.

For the Homecoming Day of Service (Oct. 6), five projects were completed, Cooper told the advisory board of the Center for Service Learning on Nov. 29.

On Make a Difference Day (Oct. 23), 63 volunteers participated in eight projects, logging more than 300 hours.

One of the projects for Make a Difference Day took place at the Martin Luther King Park, downtown Asheville, where a small group of WCU volunteers assisted with the Alzheimer’s Association’s Memory Walk. In addition to Cooper, the volunteers were students Cody Bryant, Samantha Fountaine, Jessica Grant, Rachel Locket, Zachary Owens, Jessica Ritchie and Jimmy Ritchie.

A total of 173 volunteers provided nearly 400 hours of service for the AIDS Quilt event, hosted by WCU, Nov. 17-20.

In the spring 2011 semester, there will be two days of service in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Service projects are being planned for Monday, Jan. 17, and Saturday, Jan. 22.

A Women’s History Month service project will be planned for March, the assistant director reported.



Staff Senate Sponsors Food Drive

Western Carolina University’s Staff Senate sponsored a food drive recently to support food security efforts at the Community Table in Sylva. The food drive yielded nearly 405 pounds of food for the Community Table’s Backpack Program, which provides easy-to-prepare food for schoolchildren to take home on weekends and holidays.

In addition, staff and faculty donated 229 toiletry items.

USI (university experience) course instructor Meredith McCall and special education course instructor Marissa Ray offered extra credit to their students for participating in the food drive, reported Tammy Frizzell, a member of the Staff Senate.

“The Backpack Program is for students of local elementary schools who may not be receiving regular meals at home,” explained Frizzell. “The students pick up packages of food at their school and take the packages home in their backpacks.”

The Staff Senate started the food drives last year. The Center for Service Learning had proposed that the Staff Senate engage in at least one major community service project each year, and Brenda Holcombe, then senate chair, warmed to the idea.

“The Staff Senate deliberated on what we wanted to do, and decided to donate food to help the children,” Frizzell recalled. “I had heard about the program at church and brought it before the senate for consideration.”

Another food drive for the Backpack Program is scheduled for the spring.

“Thanks to all for the help and dedication to do this project,” said William Frady, chair of the Staff Senate.

Students Register for Service Corps

Undergraduates Ellen Anderberg, Gabby Evans, Ben Rutz and Marian Smith registered for the Catamount Student Service Corps at the start of the fall 2010 semester.

Anderberg is a freshman, majoring in hospitality and tourism management. Also a freshman, Evans is majoring in fine arts (drawing and painting). Rutz, who first registered for the corps last year, is a sophomore, majoring in communication with a concentration in broadcasting. Smith, a junior, is a middle-grades mathematics and science major.

The Catamount Student Service Corps is a Center for Service Learning initiative that engages WCU students in leadership roles in specific programs and projects. Members help to coordinate service-learning orientation sessions; lead service-learning reflection sessions; represent the Center for Service Learning at university open houses and information fairs; function as site leaders for days of service; assist with organizing alternative fall and spring break trips; help to coordinate the campus kitchen garden project and serve as liaisons with community agencies.



A garden plot on campus; INSET: Krista Robb, the first president of the Campus Garden Club, discusses environmental matters with Roger Clapp, executive director of the Watershed Association of the Tuckasegee River.

How Does Our Garden Grow?

A new student club has taken root at WCU. It is an offshoot of the Campus Kitchen Garden Project.

The Campus Kitchen Garden Club of WCU has been organized as an official student organization, recognized by the Student Government Association.

Besides engaging members in sowing and reaping, the club will organize training and development projects as well as fundraising events.

WCU senior Krista Robb, a farm steward at Appalachian Homestead Farm and Preserve, has been elected president. Robb has already been recognized for her volunteer work with the garden project. She received a "Shining Star" award from the Center for Service Learning last April.

Other elected officers of the club are Kaitlyn Phillips, vice president; Neddy Gonzalez-Alanis, secretary; and Ben Collette, treasurer.

Sophomore Gonzalez-Alanis, a WCU student government senator, also is secretary of the Latino Appreciation Student Organization and is the first in her family to attend a university. Phillips, also a sophomore, has expressed enthusiasm about the planned expansion of the garden. Collette, a senior, has worked for the Forest Service in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in Idaho.

The purpose of the Campus Kitchen Garden is to provide a sustainable source of nutrition for community members in need. Students are expected to research agricultural factors such as crop rotation, water conservation and organic gardening techniques, including mulching and composting. They are expected also to attend to all details necessary to reap a bountiful harvest.

"The club hopes to establish a tradition of horticultural charity for future generations of students at WCU," said Josh Lively,

program coordinator in the Center for Service Learning and adviser to the club.

Since 2008, the garden project has received donations of gardening tools, seeds, manure and fertilizer, and fencing material.

"Members of the club hope to bring WCU and the outside community into a closer relationship through the growing and harvesting of food," Lively said. "Future plans for the Campus Kitchen Garden Club of WCU include organizing workshops and participating in local farmers' markets."

So far this academic year, club members have planted a number of winter crops, including kale, lettuce, garlic, cabbage, radish and carrots. They have also planted an apple tree donated by the Haywood Nursery.

Women's Basketball Team Gives Nursing Home a Facelift

The WCU women's basketball team and coaches spruced up a local nursing home Sept. 18.

Players and the coaching staff painted the walls of living spaces and exterior areas at the Mountain Trace Nursing Center in Webster.

"Like an all-star team, this group of women took part in a well-oiled, coordinated effort," observed Josh Lively, Center for Service Learning program coordinator. "The project appeared to be daunting and impossible to finish in a single day. However, the steadfast determination displayed by these women saw the project to its finish in just over four hours."

All 12 players on the women's basketball team were involved in the project. The

volunteers were Alexandra Abraham, Kendra Carroll, Emily Clarke, Caitlin Hollifield, Diamond Hunnicutt, Kristen Lyon, Janaé McKinney, Kailá Shea Menendez, Laura Sanchez, Melanie Stewart, Shauna Terry and Rena Wakama. They worked side by side with Hannah Price, manager; Karen Middleton, head coach; and assistant coaches Tréka McMillian, Jonelle Streed and Hillary Beck.

"It was a pleasure for our team to work with and help Mountain Trace Nursing Home. Our team enjoyed the day and the way we helped brighten the outside area for the patients to see each day," said Middleton. "We enjoyed knowing we were making a daily difference for the residents of Mountain Trace."



Three basketball team members paint a fence at Mountain Trace.

Students Support Youth Arts Festival

Students from the College of Fine and Performing Arts were "very involved" in the Green Energy Park's third annual Youth Arts Festival in September, reported Dean Robert Kehrberg.

"It was great fun," Kehrberg commented. "This had to be the happiest bunch of folks I have seen in awhile and included the faculty and students from the three schools."

The college comprises the schools of Art and Design, Stage and Screen, and Music.

Organizers Carrie Blaskowski and Timm Muth of the Jackson County Green Energy Park thanked all volunteers and participating artists.

"There was a wide array of talent that helped us create such a successful day, including the faculty, staff and students from WCU," they said. "We truly could not have made the event happen without you!"

Next year's festival is scheduled for Sept. 17 at the Green Energy Park in Dillsboro.

Students Provide Service through Engineering Technology

Students enrolled in Assistant Professor Robert Anderson's 300-level engineering technology course provided approximately 120 hours of service to the region in the spring semester.

The students implemented six service-learning projects. The community partners and service sites included Harris Regional Hospital and Balsam Creek Designs.

At Harris Regional Hospital, a three-member student team analyzed the patient admission process in the emergency room and created suggestions for improving patient flow logistics. Mercedes Bruard, Robin Hitch and Steven Morris were the team members.

At Balsam Creek Designs, a student team did a cost analysis of shipping methods based on cost, time and distance. Chris Raper, Zac Sharp and Winston Davis comprised the student team. The plan was implemented and has been evaluated as successful.

In addition, students Uro Yarosh and Brandon Blakely completed a project at Rockwell Automation in Arden; Brandon Butler, Chase Miller and Vance Chavis assisted Conmet/Volvo in Bryson City; and Billy Sorrells, Dustin Spears and Jason Harris did their project at Sorrells Merchandise Co. in Waynesville.

Meanwhile, a student team of Chris Raper, Josh Young, Matt Roy and Will Deaton assisted Aramark Dining Services at WCU.

ET 362 is a service-learning designated course. Courses with the "SLC" (service-learning component) designation reflect the highest standards of service learning at WCU.



Delta Sigma Theta Makes Service a Priority

The Pi Gamma Chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. has stood out among the Greek-letter organizations on campus with its dedication to community service. Since the start of the semester, this sorority has undertaken five community service projects, which included work with the Sylva Community Garden, Cullowhee Valley Fall Festival, Mountain Heritage Day, and the WCU Red Zone Campaign.

At Fairview Elementary School, sorority members assisted with a bake sale and read to children.

“Service is certainly a priority for the sorority chapter,” noted Waithira Koine, chapter president. “We strongly believe that helping others should come first. Through various acts of community service, we have gained exposure to real-world problems and also have honed our interpersonal skills, which are necessary for professional life.”

Aimee Farquharson, the programming chair, said members were “very self-motivated young ladies who portray determination and self-control throughout our everyday lives.” She added: “We help our community not only to complete community service hours, but we also give back because it gives us a sense of accomplishment. Not only does it give us a sense of accomplishment, but also it warms our hearts to know that we made a difference in a positive light.”

Fall Festival Well Supported

A record 177 WCU students volunteered for the 2010 Fall Festival at Cullowhee Valley School.

The volunteers helped with various tasks at the event, such as coordinating inflatable rides, games and food service.

“We had a wonderfully successful event,” reported Mary Kay Waters, associate professor in the School of Music and a member of the Cullowhee Valley PTA. “We had more students than ever come over to help us out.”

Academic Success Groups Render Community Service

Forty students participating in WCU’s Academic Success Program performed community service projects with five of the Center for Service Learning’s community partners during the summer. They provided more than 30 hours of service between July 12 and 30.

The students worked in groups on projects with the Community Table; MANNA FoodBank; the Watershed Association of the Tuckasegee River, or WATR; Cherokee Tribal Child Care; and REACH of Macon County.

About 20 of the program participants worked with WATR staff at the Monteith Farmstead in Dillsboro. The farmstead is located on a curve in Scotts Creek, and the WATR project is focused on developing a natural buffer of trees and deep-rooted undergrowth needed to protect the banks from erosion and to stop sediment from flowing directly into the creek.

“The students did an impressive job of removing the weeds that would crowd out the live stakes that were planted in February,” said Roger Clapp, executive director of WATR. Clapp explained that the stakes will become dogwood and willow bushes to hold the bank during a flood.

“The students helped in creating and clearing the ‘buffer trail’ that in time will provide visitors a feeling of the wild woods next to the stream,” Clapp said. “The buffer portion of the buffer trail absorbs runoff and landscaping chemicals from the open park itself. After a quickie lesson in aquatic ecology, the students left, knowing that they helped the WATR-Monteith Farmstead project by keeping this small pocket of land intended for environmental education both accessible and natural.”

Some students and staff members assisted with the Community Table’s Bluegrass Benefit Concert, which raised \$330 and brought in many donated items.

Volunteers Take Alternative Break Trip to Lexington

By Josh Lively

Alternative Fall Break participants start the day at Habitat by signing in while trying to keep warm on a chilly Friday morning.

The Center for Service Learning sponsored its annual Alternative Fall Break trip in October. Nine WCU students and two staff members from the center traveled to Lexington, Ky., to perform community service during the six-day trip.

The volunteers took part in a variety of activities, including work with Habitat for Humanity, Lexington Rescue Mission and the local Community Action Council.

Taking the trip were students Youssef Alamri, Melanie Burzloff, Branden Cable, Tess Doerfler, Patricia Dorian, Jessica Huhn, Aaron Marshall, Joe Rehak and Mohammed Shutayfi. Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of service learning, also participated.

The students not only gained valuable community service experience, but they also shared a bond with one another that crossed cultural and individual backgrounds. They gained a great feeling of accomplishment after working for Habitat for Humanity. The

house that they worked on will be donated to a large family from Kenya who moved recently to Lexington. Students worked on building the roof and the wall frames of the house. There was a moment of celebration once the last sheet of plywood was nailed in to complete the roof. Aside from the significant contribution students made to a family in need, working with Habitat for Humanity turned this group of individual students into a cohesive team.

Homelessness was one issue addressed through the Alternative Fall Break. Lexington Rescue Mission, a homeless shelter that operates two thrift shops in the area, accepted volunteers to work in the shops for a few hours Saturday. Students sorted donated clothing and moved large pieces of furniture. They also participated in a homelessness awareness event, "Sleepless in Lexington," helping families construct cardboard houses in which volunteers would sleep overnight to simulate homelessness.

The final service project involved the Community Action Council, one of Lexington's larger nonprofit charitable organizations. Volunteers gave a helping hand in the council's two Head Start centers. We cleaned the facilities, organized instructional materials/ toys and raked leaves on the playground.

The Alternative Fall Break trip was not entirely about work. The group got some relaxation and enjoyed the cultural sights that Lexington had to offer. Sunday started with the group going to brunch, followed by a tour of downtown Lexington, which was spotlessly clean a week after hosting the World Equestrian Games. Lexington, and much of Kentucky, is best known for its horses and equine-related competitions. The WCU group gained an appreciation for the local culture when we visited Keeneland racetrack, where we spent Sunday afternoon watching the horse races in the packed venue.



Fall break participants, from left, Jessica Huhn, Mohammed Shutayfi, Melanie Burzloff and Joe Rehak bond outside a Community Action Council Head Start center.



Volunteers Tess Doerfler and Joe Rehak sort clothing at one of the Lexington Rescue Mission's thrift shops.

Volunteers Support Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week Projects

WCU students, faculty and staff marked National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week 2010 by participating in a film show and discussion focusing on homelessness issues, a presentation on local housing needs, a “sleep-out,” a fund-raising dinner and two service projects.

National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week was November 14 through 20.

The documentary “Easy Street” was screened in the theater of the Hinds University Center. It depicts the experiences of homeless individuals in St. Petersburg, Fla. Forty students, staff and faculty attended the event. During an intermission, Jeanne Dulworth, a faculty member in the Social Work Department, gave a brief talk about poverty-related issues and led a discussion with the audience.

Many students in the audience indicated that they were at once shocked and enlightened by the real-life depictions of the homeless.

“Easy Street was eye-opening; at times humorous, at times tear-jerking,” said Glenn Bowen, director of the Center for Service Learning.

Whereas “Easy Street” focused on homelessness issues in an urban context, a presentation the following day by Charles McConnell, board chairman of Neighbors in Need, identified housing problems encountered by Jackson County residents. About 50 students, along with faculty and service-learning staff, heard McConnell, a former school superintendent, talk about his organization’s mission to provide heating to area households that would otherwise remain cold throughout the winter months.

McConnell said his organization has received “an overwhelming amount of support” from the community, primarily from volunteers. However, Neighbors in Need is still seeking monetary donations to continue its work. McConnell explained that the nonprofit organization has no administrative fees; funds go directly toward improving housing infrastructure for needy Jackson County residents.

A fundraising dinner at the Community Table, Jackson County’s soup kitchen, netted \$500. Among the patrons were WCU Honors College Board members.

Student organizations, including fraternities and sororities, took part in “Sleep-Out for the Homeless” one night on the lawn of the University Center. Although the temperature dropped into the thirties, students ensconced themselves in tents throughout the night. They also collected canned foods and funds to benefit the Community Table and Jackson County Habitat for Humanity.

A representative group of service-learning staff, faculty and students were volunteers for two hours at the MANNA FoodBank in Asheville. The volunteers packed three pallets of boxes with canned foods and other non-perishable items to be delivered to area food pantries and soup kitchens.

MANNA FoodBank is the largest distributor of donated food in the Western North Carolina region.

“It’s incredible how much food they get out of that warehouse everyday,” said Ben Collette, a WCU senior and treasurer of the Campus Kitchen Garden Club of WCU.

The volunteers included Glenn Kastrinos (Faculty Fellow); Rebecca Lasher (Faculty Learning Community); Glenn Bowen, Jennifer Cooper, Jen Nickel and Josh Lively (Center for Service Learning staff); Jennifer Williams (America Reads/America Counts); Mandy Fields (Student Service Corps); and Ben Collette, Neddy Gonzales-Alanis, Krista Robb, Chelsea Miller and Manuela Mendez (Campus Kitchen Garden Club).

Other volunteers assisted Jackson County Habitat for Humanity with closing its Glenville resale store and relocating items to the Sylva store. Habitat resale stores are thrift shops that sell used items, from books to appliances and furniture. Twenty-three WCU student volunteers, including 16 from the Organization of Ebony students, volunteered on the last day of Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. The following day, 21 volunteers, including 14 from the Kappa Alpha Fraternity, lent a hand.

The volunteers helped to move sold items to customers’ vehicles, collected money, cleaned the Glenville store and property, and relocated various large items to a storage unit and the Sylva store. A total of \$1,200 was raised.

“All volunteers did their part to help the cause, and we are deeply grateful to have a partnership in WCU,” said Wynette Wiles, president of Jackson County Habitat for Humanity. “We are looking forward to working with such young, bright and devoted students in the near future. ... Together we can move mountains!”

Josh Lively, program coordinator in the Center for Service Learning, organized events and projects for National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

Honors Students Take Part in Fundraising, Beautification

The Honors College Board of Directors recently delivered a first installment of \$1,000 to the local Red Cross to support its emergency relief projects.

The student board, led by President Shannon Owen, “devised strategies to raise money for the American Red Cross for Haiti relief and will continue this effort through the fall term,” reported Brian Railsback, dean of the Honors College.

The board sponsored “Pedaling for Pakistan: American Red Cross Disaster Relief” on Oct. 6. The event netted about \$260.

The Honors College students hope to hand over another \$1,000 contribution to the Red Cross by semester’s end.

Meanwhile, dozens of students from WCU’s Honors College took part in a community beautification event in the Old Cullowhee Road area Sept. 11. Volunteers helped with various tasks, from picking up litter to landscaping.

What They're Saying...

"Service learning to me is the act of committing oneself to a community program in order to help others and better oneself. The volunteer involved in a community program is rewarded by the satisfaction of helping someone in need and by gaining new skills acquired during the process. Through my experience in the reading partners' service-learning program, I learned a lot and I also had some pretty interesting experiences."

– Valerie Vanpool, WCU undergraduate

"In working with the Surry County 4-H program, I got to see the 4-H program from a different perspective. As a Surry County 4-Her myself, I had participated in the programs before, but never as an adult volunteer. I thought the program was great as a younger child, but working with 4-H as a volunteer helped me to see just how amazing our program is in Surry County. Being able to teach the children skills they will need throughout their lives and just being with them as they had fun showed me what a great thing 4-H is for those kids in the county. ... The whole experience with the 4-H program allowed me to learn more about myself as a future teacher and my strengths and weaknesses as a leader."

– Amanda Smith, former NC-ACTS (AmeriCorps program) member

"Thank you ... for a great symposium. I enjoyed attending the meeting. I was able to make some important connections with people working on my area. Thank you again."

– Ricardo B. Contreras, assistant professor, Department of Anthropology; coordinator, Nuevo South Community Research Initiative, East Carolina University

"Thank you for your hospitality and interesting contributors to service learning and civic engagement ... I enjoyed the [service-learning/civic engagement] conference."

– Martin Fowler, faculty member, Elon University.

"Students see the connection between elements in all three Community Health Nursing courses – theory, clinical and intervention project. They use statistical databases with greater ease, and are capable of brainstorming up to four potential projects with demonstrated need. After their service-learning project, we have instituted a poster presentation for project sharing at the end of the semester similar to those at conferences. Students are indicating that this is an excellent preparation for professional presentations and graduate-level research projects. None of this would happen without the conscious and planned experience required for meeting a real-world community need."

– Barbara St. John, associate professor of nursing

"In terms of engaged learning, students take an active role in their education, working in collaboration with faculty members and oftentimes with their classmates or community, to achieve the educational goals they seek. ... Scholarship of Application or Engagement promotes advancement through the collaborative sharing of disciplinary expertise. ... Service, by its nature, should be work done for a greater good, be it in terms of a unifying belief, a valuable cause, or the well being of a community. Too often university service can be seen as a chore, busy work, or a means of satisfying a category on a tenure check-sheet."

– Erin McNelis, chair of the faculty, in Faculty Forum (a WCU Faculty Commons publication), Sept. 2010

"I just want to compliment you on a beautifully run [service-learning/civic engagement] conference. All your communications were informative and timely. ... I enjoyed the sessions and found [the lead presenter] informative and inspiring. So, thank you for your hospitality and the opportunity to attend an inspiring conference."

– Kathleen Stacey, professor, Communication, Media & Theatre Arts Dept., Eastern Michigan University



fresh perspective:

Faculty Fear Loss of Control when Students Venture into Community

By Glenn Bowen

Over the past six years, there has been a significant increase in faculty interest in service learning at Western Carolina University. Prompted by curricular reform embodied in the Quality Enhancement Plan, or QEP, much of this interest has been translated into exemplary service learning-enhanced courses.

The implementation of the QEP – “Synthesis: A Pathway to Intentional Learning” – is already causing fundamental shifts in the approach to teaching and learning, with greater emphasis on active, integrative student learning and attention to holistic student development. The QEP (in which service learning as a major component) is designed to promote and support engaged learning. Service learning is an approach – and by no means the only one – to student engagement in the learning process, and engagement in the community beyond the campus.

At WCU, service learning is defined as “a teaching and learning strategy that integrates community service with academic instruction and structured reflection in such a way that students gain further understanding of course content, meet genuine community needs, develop career-related skills and become responsible citizens.” Here, service learning is broadly defined and includes such diverse experiences as a one-week community-based research project, a semester-long social work field practicum or engineering capstone, and a yearlong middle-grades education

internship. However, to be regarded as service learning, the practicum, capstone and internship should include a civic dimension – the element of the experience that is focused on addressing social problems or community issues.

“Despite a large body of evidence of the effectiveness of service learning as a pedagogical approach, faculty resistance remains. For some faculty, the shift away from a traditional paradigm and epistemology is difficult.”

The theoretical underpinnings of service learning are found in John Dewey’s educational and social philosophy, which encompasses learning from experience, reflective activity, community and democracy. Connection to the curriculum differentiates service learning from community service (i.e., voluntary or mandatory service). The community

service project implemented as part of a service-learning experience should be relevant to the goals and content of the course, and ultimately should be meaningful to the student. High-quality service is desirable; high-quality learning is of paramount importance.

And that’s where the role of faculty becomes crucial. Faculty members should see themselves as facilitators of learning and motivators of learners. In this regard, students taking courses that have a service-learning component should not be turned loose in a community and be left to their own devices. Rather, with guidance from faculty, students should be active learners while rendering valuable service to the community. Furthermore, faculty should stimulate deep reflection so that students intentionally make the connection between theory and application – between what they learn in the classroom and what they practice in the community. Accordingly, faculty should guide students in navigating the complexities of higher-order thinking and integrative learning inherent in effective service-learning pedagogy.

BENEFITS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

Demonstrable benefits accrue to all service-learning stakeholders – faculty, students, communities and institutions of higher education. For faculty, service learning provides a good alternative to the traditional lecture-discussion format and makes a course of study more interactive



and student-centered. Service learning enriches and enlivens pedagogical practice. It often “brings books to life and life to books,” adding new insights and dimensions to class discussions. For students, service learning provides an avenue for the practical application of knowledge and skills in real-world settings. Many researchers have documented the contributions of service learning to students’ cognitive and affective development. There is much evidence of the positive impact of service learning on the development of students’ critical-thinking, problem-solving and ethical decision-making skills. Several studies have provided evidence that students who complete thoughtfully organized service-learning projects are more likely to feel positively about the course and the instructor. However, faculty should be aware that the academic advantages of service learning do not necessarily manifest themselves immediately.

Communities benefit by their access to university-based resources, including the time and energies that students contribute to help nonprofit organizations and small businesses achieve their goals. Indeed, at its best, service learning is an embodiment of Boyer’s scholarship of engagement (interlocking the scholarships of discovery, integration, application and teaching). Through the scholarship of engagement, the university makes its rich resources available for solving the pressing social, civic and ethical problems faced by communities. The university obviously

benefits by its positive image as an “engaged institution” and a good institutional citizen, responsive to the needs of the region and its constituent communities.

CHALLENGES FOR FACULTY

Despite a large body of evidence of the effectiveness of service learning as a pedagogical approach, faculty resistance remains. For some faculty, the shift away from a traditional paradigm and epistemology is difficult. Bear in mind that service learning reflects a paradigm shift from teaching (delivery of instruction) to learning (discovery or construction of knowledge). It seems that some faculty members are so set in their ways that they do not readily or willingly accept change and its challenges. What’s more, many professors fear loss of control when students venture into the community without their direct supervision. Understandably, some prefer to give lectures and offer simulations rather than let their students “take risks” in an authentic community context.

Now, let’s be clear: Although it can be incorporated into any course, from anthropology to zoology, service learning is not appropriate for every course or every professor. For example, some courses require extensive classroom work to explore the theoretical foundations of a discipline. And, to be sure, faculty enamored with an “information-assimilation” style of teaching and learning could not care less about service learning.

A major complaint from professors is that service learning takes too much time – too much time for them and for their students. Clearly, the effective integration of service learning into a course is time-consuming and, in some respects, challenging. Service learning requires more effort than it typically takes to organize a traditional class. Coordinating and structuring service-learning activities, including reflections, demand much more attention to process. Building reciprocal relationships with community partners also takes time. No one said service-learning practice is easy or is meant to be easy. In reality, it is not; nor is it meant to be. The same can be said of effective teaching and learning.

WCU has a variety of resources to assist faculty in infusing service learning into the curriculum. Faculty who care deeply about their students – and most WCU faculty do – should take advantage of opportunities to promote active, integrative learning by embracing service learning as a pedagogical approach. Through service learning, students can be better prepared for productive roles in the workplace and in society. In the final analysis, the benefits of service learning far outweigh the challenges.

This is an edited version of the article “Service Learning in the Academic Setting: Benefits vs. Challenges,” published in a recent issue of Faculty Forum, a publication of the Coulter Faculty Commons at WCU. Bowen is director of the WCU Center for Service Learning.

SENTINEL

Anippets

VOLUNTEERISM: The number of Americans who volunteer grew last year at the fastest rate in six years, defying the popular notion that hard economic times suppress civic participation. According to a report released recently by the Corporation for National and Community Service, 63.4 million adult Americans – nearly 27 percent of the population – volunteered to help charitable causes last year. That’s an increase from 2008 of approximately 1.6 million volunteers, the largest single-year jump since 2003. In total, 2009’s volunteers donated about 8.1 billion hours of service, valued at nearly \$169 billion, says the report, which is based on annual and monthly surveys of roughly 100,000 Americans age 16 or older, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



APPOINTMENTS: The publisher of the Asian Journal of Educational Research and Synergy has appointed Glenn Bowen, director of the Center for Service Learning, to the journal’s international editorial advisory board. Bowen was appointed also to the international editorial board for a special issue of the Quality Education Forum, to be published by the University of the West Indies in Kingston, Jamaica.



SPECIAL NEEDS: Students in “Physical Education for the Exceptional Child,” a course taught by Bob Beaudet, program director, recently spent a total of 325 hours working with students with special needs at Cullowhee Valley Elementary.



COMMITTEE: Jeanne Dulworth, assistant professor and director of the undergraduate program in the Department of Social Work, is serving on the program selection committee for North Carolina Campus Compact’s 2011 PACE (Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement) Conference. The conference will be held Feb. 9 at Elon University. PACE provides participants with valuable information and skills they can use in their civic engagement work. Workshops presented by faculty, staff, students and community partners provide “how-to,” “best-practice” and “research and theory” information and resources for various aspects of civic engagement work, including curricular and co-curricular projects and programs, as well as capacity-building and institutionalization efforts.



SMALL TOWNS PROGRAM: A group of WCU faculty and staff held talks with representatives of four Western NC towns participating in HandMade in America’s Small Towns Program on Dec. 1 in the University Center. Participants included Judi Jetson, the Small Towns Program director; Jerry Kilpatrick, board member, Andrews Valley Initiative; Pat Hegstrom, volunteer, Town of Andrews; Brad Walker, Mayor, Bryson City and chairman, Bryson City Tourism Development Authority; Karen Wilmot, executive director, Swain County Chamber of Commerce; Rob Tiger, president, Clay County Communities Revitalization Association (Hayesville); Sandy Nicolette, secretary, CCCRA; Ron Guggisberg, board member and trails chair, CCCRA; Rick Davis, executive director, Graham Revitalization Economic Action Team (Robbinsville); and Beth Fields, also from Robbinsville.



WELCOME WEEK: Representatives from the Center for Service Learning participated in the Week of Welcome and other events marking the start of the 2010-11 academic year. New and returning students turned out in large numbers at orientation events and information fairs across the WCU campus. Village Palloozza, the Student Employment Fair and the Cat Fair were among the events. Valley Ballyhoo was canceled because of poor weather. “At the Cat Fair, representatives of the Center for Service Learning received a high volume of inquiries from students interested in performing community service,” reported Josh Lively, program coordinator. “Students received information about an array of community service projects and volunteer opportunities.”



Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of the Center for Service Learning, was the guest speaker at a recent meeting of the Cullowhee Daybreak Rotary Club. She gave an overview of service learning at Western Carolina and highlighted notable partnerships and projects. Here Cooper (right) receives a gift from Lois Petrovich-Mwaniki, Rotary Club president and director of International Programs and Services at WCU.



IN OUR LIBRARY

FACEBOOK: The Center for Service Learning currently has more than 230 Facebook fans. Facebook allows students, faculty, staff and community partners to learn about the center's activities across the campus and in the wider community. The center's Facebook page, <http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/WCUservicelearning>, features photos of students, as well as faculty and staff, participating in service-related events. Program Coordinator Josh Lively manages the center's Facebook page.



HERITAGE DAY: The Center for Service Learning coordinated volunteer participation in Western Carolina University's 2010 Mountain Heritage Day, Sept. 25. The annual festival celebrated traditional mountain culture with a variety of music, dance, crafts, folk arts, contests and activities.



AIDS QUILT: The Center for Service Learning coordinated volunteer participation in the AIDS Quilt Display at WCU in November. Volunteers guarded sections of the quilt during the exhibit.

The university displayed nine of the more than 40,000 blocks of the AIDS Memorial Quilt in the Fine Arts Museum. The AIDS Memorial Quilt, founded in 1987 and facilitated by the NAMES Project Foundation, serves as an educational tool to promote the awareness of AIDS and the devastating impact of the disease. Each 12-foot block of the quilt is made up of panels that memorialize the life of a person lost to AIDS. Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of service learning, served on the organizing committee.



FUNDRAISING: Hunter Library staff member Serenity Richards has been helping to raise money for nonprofit organizations through "Firefly" fandom. Richards serves as CEO of the Southeastern Browncoats, a nonprofit group that works to better the lives of children through fandom and promoting Joss Whedon's critically acclaimed television series "Firefly." The show premiered on Fox in 2002. The series was set in space in the year 2517 and followed a renegade spaceship crew of nine veterans from the losing side of a civil war. Despite airing for only one season, the show developed a strong fan base and eventually was the basis for a major motion picture released in 2005. By fundraising at science-fiction and popular culture conventions, the organization known as SEBC helps "Firefly" cast, crew and fans support national charities. "In 2005, we gave everything to the Salvation Army for Hurricane Katrina relief," said Richards. "The hurricane hit just as Dragon Con was starting, and the entire organization – fans, celebrities, everyone – pulled together to do what we could." However, the SEBC's main focus is children's charities.



FLC: The Faculty Learning Community for Service Learning is continuing its focus on community-engaged scholarship. The FLC is an interdisciplinary group of faculty members who engage in an active, collaborative, yearlong program focusing on service learning as a pedagogical approach and as an avenue for scholarly work.



"A" FOR SULLIVAN: The Asheville Citizen-Times gave a grade of "A" on Oct. 22 to Shanée Sullivan, a Western Carolina University senior, who has won a Community Impact Student Award from N.C. Campus Compact. The award recognizes students who have shown exceptional student leadership and innovative approaches to volunteering and community service, the newspaper noted.

TITLE:

Creating Our Identities in Service-Learning and Community Engagement

EDITORS:

Barbara E. Moely, Shelley H. Billig and Barbara A. Holland

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SYNOPSIS:

In this volume in a series on Advances in Service-Learning Research, top researchers present recent work studying aspects of program development, student and community outcomes, and future research directions in the field of service learning and community engagement. The volume features efforts in research and practice to support and expand service learning and engaged scholarship in higher education as well as in K-12 institutions. Models of effective partnerships between institutions of higher education and their community partners are developed in chapters looking at relationships between campus and community in terms of partnership identity or in terms of shared understanding by campus and community partners. Outcomes for students engaged in service learning are the focus of several studies reported in the book. In the last section, chapters address service learning and community engagement as a coherent research field with a distinct identity, reviewing current work, and proposing directions for future research.

LOOKING AHEAD >>>

Two Days of Service to Honor MLK

The Center for Service Learning in collaboration with the Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Committee is planning two days of service in January.

MLK Day is designated as the third Monday in January. In 2011 the day will be Jan. 17.

Days of Service projects on Monday, Jan. 17, and Saturday, Jan. 22, will be supported by a \$500 grant awarded to Western Carolina University by North Carolina Campus Compact.

Jennifer Cooper, assistant director of service learning, has been named project manager at WCU.

Service projects will be held in several counties in Western North Carolina.

WCU is one of 20 colleges and universities awarded an N.C. Campus Compact grant.

"We appreciate your enthusiasm for this opportunity and are ready to assist you, and the other participating institutions throughout the state, in any way that will help you accomplish your goals," said

Leslie Garvin, associate director of N.C. Campus Compact.

The university has received \$300 in "enhancement grants" from N.C. Campus Compact over the past three years.



the SENTINEL

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Glenn Bowen, Ph.D., *Director*
Jennifer Cooper, M.A., *Assistant Director*
Josh Lively, M.S., *Program Coordinator*
Jennifer Nickel, MBA, *Administrative Support Associate*

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

Carol Burton, Ed.D.
Assistant Vice Chancellor

273 Belk | Cullowhee, NC 28723
828.227.7184 tel | 828.227.7179 fax
servicelearning.wcu.edu

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A student talks with a WCU service-learning community partner at last year's fair.

Service-Learning Fair 2011 Set for Jan. 25

Western Carolina will be holding its seventh annual Community Service-Learning Fair on Tuesday, Jan. 25, in the University Center Grand Room, starting at 11 a.m.

The highlight of the event will be displays featuring the programs and services of nonprofit organizations from Western North Carolina. Agency displays will focus on children and youth, environmental issues, food and hunger, health and wellness, along with disability issues and elderly care.