



The Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1
FALL/SPRING 08-09

A Tribute to Our Leader By: Danielle Rhubart '10

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As a Community Mentor (CM) for the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership, Dr. Flores's announcement of his leave of absence left me, along with my fellow CM's, in a state of disbelief and concern about what it would mean to not have Dr. Flores as a part of St. Lawrence University. It was in the proceeding weeks that we realized that every student who had ever known Ron (as we all called him), shared our restlessness to know that future students of St. Lawrence would not have the privilege and opportunity to have their lives impacted by him.

Ron's students can only describe him as an asset to any institution as his level of knowledge, dedication, solution-based empathy and exemplary citizenship and leadership skills are qualities that are rare to find even among the most esteemed scholars. In the classroom, Ron holds your attention in a way no other professor can. He brings issues of social justice, inequality and inequity to the forefront of your attention while indirectly showing you the role you play in such systems. I have never left his classroom or office without a strong passion and desire to further my studies and research and stay engaged in the community. In essence, Ron represents the true meaning of a Liberal Education.

Ron has created multiple opportunities for students especially those from the North Country or minority backgrounds. He has assisted and supported countless students who have faced financial, social and cultural challenges by encouraging them to maintain confidence in their identity and background and to find the resources to allow them to continue their education.

Ron has also stood as the Co-Director for the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership for 4 years and the Director for the Community-Based Learning Programs since the summer of 2003. Inarguably, Ron has been a key player in not only the Center's growth and the numerous partnerships it has built with the community, but also in the integrity and respect in which the Center has earned. When we, as Community Mentors, travel to conferences it never ceases to amaze us how well known and well respected both Ron and our CCEL are in the field of service

learning and civic engagement. Our Center has surpassed the degree and depth to which other institutions practice and promote active citizenship and what we call, Community Based Learning. However it must be noted that the Center's growth is also a direct result of Ron's confidence in students and commitment to the mission of the CCEL. Each time a Community Mentor, student or I approached him with an idea of how to become engaged with a new sector of the local area or how to create a stronger relationship with the community, he always supported, guided and encouraged us to pursue that passion. And I believe that this is also why the Center has become what it is today.

Ron is a key reason why St. Lawrence University has such a strong partnership with the local community and why so many St. Lawrence students now see civic engagement as a part of their lives. And as difficult as it is to see such an amazing individual leave this institution, I believe that we must look for the pieces of him that have been instilled and embedded in the framework and atmosphere of St. Lawrence University and the surrounding Community. It is in these that we will find the dedication and passion to continue the work he has begun.

Best of luck in Connecticut, Ron! Keep in touch. We will carry all you have taught us into the future!

My Path: Volunteer to Community Mentor

By: Lauren Stemler '12



Starting out this year, I received some e-mails about a new program called "The Next Step". It sounded interesting, so I decided to apply for the program and after an interview with Danielle Rhubart '10, I was accepted. There was a small group of other students that also joined the program and we all were partnered with a high school student at Norwood-Norfolk Central School. Beginning the program was exciting, but there were some difficult times over the first semester because it was a brand new program. This was understandable, but sometimes as a volunteer I felt like there were more things that we could do.

My chance to bring my ideas for Next Step came right before Thanksgiving break, when Danielle and Kari Elliot "I asked if I would be interested in becoming a Community Mentor and working with Next Step while Danielle was Abroad in Kenya. Of course, I jumped at the chance to become involved even more with Next Step, especially since I would be able to help put all of my ideas into action.

After the semester break, Kari and I began working together and getting the program off its feet a little more. We met with a few staff members on campus to learn more about financial aid and the HEOP program so we could explain these issues to our high-school students. We also collaborated and worked on making a solid group of worksheets and "how-to" guides for the students to use in the program and beyond. We found career interest surveys, and compiled lists of websites with great information about colleges, careers, financial aid, finding jobs, and just about everything else they will need. We even attempted to have a Hockey-Night, but for various reasons, it didn't work out as well as we would have liked. But the important thing is that we tried and we know what to do differently for next year.

The program started transforming in front of my own eyes as I looked at it from the eyes of a volunteer and the eyes of a Community Mentor. As a volunteer, I was excited that we were going to start talking about some new ideas and how to help our students start to think about the future. As a CM, I was thrilled to be working on the "behind the scenes" aspects and working with Kari to provide a plethora of information to our high-school students. From either point of view, I was thrilled to be a part of a program that allows me to have a personal relationship with a student that is in the same place I was two years ago – thinking about my future and becoming overwhelmed by all the different options and opportunities. Our job as Next Step volunteers is to help those students that may feel overwhelmed by the heavy weight carried when making decisions that will affect the rest of their lives. To me, being able to help ease the stress off of this process is an excellent opportunity, and I hope that our program here at St. Lawrence will inspire other universities to make similar programs so high school students will have an easier time thinking about the future. After all, the most important aspect of this program is helping the students – that's really what we're all about.

For more information on the Next Step Mentoring Program, please contact the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership at ccel@stlawu.edu or x5095.

Community Mentor Reflection

"As a senior this year at SLU, I was given the opportunity to be a Community Mentor for the CCEL. I have volunteered for SLU Buddies Central all four years here and am now the liason for the program which gives me great pleasure as I am able to help manage a program I have taken so much interest in. As a learning experience, I am hoping to take away skills that I have fostered as a CM that will be useful to me in my future career working with volunteer organizations or NGOs."



Elise Fitzgerald '09

Community Mentor's are students who work with local agencies and organizations to develop, implement and coordinate community-University partnerships designed to address unmet needs as defined by the community. For more information on this unique job experience, please go to www.stlawu.edu/ccel/communitymentor.html.

Courses Available for FALL 2009 Semester

PSYC 443A: Intro to Clinical Psychology

Instructor: Pamela Thacher

T/Th: 10:10 - 11:40am

Pre-req: PSYC 317

PSYC 480A: Special Topic: Working w/ Vulnerable Populations

Instructor: Jennifer MacGregor

M/W: 1:40 - 3:10pm

SOC 247A: Special Topic: What's So Bad About Aging?

Instructor: Lia Rohlfesen

T/Th: 12:40 - 2:10pm

Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites

by: Grace Bogosian '11

In the Fall of 2006 the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership (CCEL) worked with Student Life to create the Civic Engagement and Leadership suites for individuals who were involved within the community. The goal of the Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites is to create a residential space where individuals could create campus communities revolving around their work within the community in hopes that they would be able to encourage other residents to get involved with a program they were working on or other programs the CCEL offers. Some of the programs that individuals who live in the Civic Engagement and Leadership Suite work with are the Ogdensburg Boys and Girls Club, Free Will Dinner Program, Reading Buddies, work at Bittersweet Farm, Pray Road Stables, Meals on Wheels and many, many more. In addition, the students living in the Civic Engagement and Leadership suites are required to take a .5 unit course during one of their semesters to discuss such issues as what it means to be civically engaged, the idea of citizenship and what the needs are in the North Country. Depending on the size of the suite, almost all suites include separate bedrooms, a common room with furniture, bathroom, kitchen with stove, sink, full fridge and freezer,

cabinets and a common closet. Besides the Townhouses, suites like the Civic Engagement and Leadership ones are the closest to an off-campus living accommodations available at St. Lawrence.

Quotes by students living in Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites:

“Living in the CBL suites has been incredible. Not only are we more easily able to get to our placements, we are rewarded for our efforts in the community.”

“I get to live with other students who feel the same passion towards community involvement. It's nice to have that option and be able to stay connected.”

“The students I have met through the CBL program have remained some of my best friends through my years at St. Lawrence. I am not sure we would have met if it weren't for the community service suites. We are all very different people, involved in very different things on campus. Our common interest for our community has made us realize that we are incredibly a like when it comes to the basics of who we are. It's rare that you find friends like that.”

“I had never done community service

until I got involved through my roommate who asked if I would live in a suite with her and her friends. Before living in a suite I wasn't given opportunity to volunteer or know about programs in the community.”

“Living in a leadership suite is awesome! I wish I had applied to do this way earlier.”

In order to live in a Civic Engagement and Leadership Suite, students must apply with their tentative suitemates. Suites have already been filled for next year, but for future academic years, students can find more information, including the application, about the Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites on the CCEL's website, <http://www.stlawu.edu/ccel/ccelsuites.html>. The application process includes two recommendations, one from an on campus member and one from an off campus member, as well as a short cover page essay describing the student's work within the community or the students interest in helping the community. For more information, please contact the CCEL at ccel@stlawu.edu or x5095.

Community Service Opportunities Through the CCEL



Birdsfoot Farm

This year, St. Lawrence University students continue to serve at Birdsfoot Farm located on the outskirts of Canton. This organic farm and sustainable community not only produce the majority of its sustenance needed for the year, but also provides fresh vegetables to the farmers co-op and farmers market. In the fall semester, students from SLU assisted in a variety of activities ranging from picking tomatoes and beans to harvesting beets and celeriac. They have also assisted in preparing vegetables for the farmers market and planting for next season. The students have helped in extensive physical work and have built relationships with the Birdsfoot Farm community. They also were able to thoroughly integrate these experiences into their community-based learning First Year Program. If you have any questions or comments on the Birdsfoot Farm program please contact the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership at ccel@stlawu.edu or x5095.

Little River Community School

This year, first year students from St. Lawrence University served at the Little River Community School located just outside of Canton. This alternative school educates local children from grades K-12 in small class sizes with the approach that children should help in the process of directing their own education. St. Lawrence students have been assisting in tutoring and working one on one with students. They are also given the opportunity to teach lessons to the Little River Community School students on something they may be passionate or knowledgeable about. If you have any questions or are interested in this partnership, please contact the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership at ccel@stlawu.edu or x5095.

Reading Buddies



Reading Buddies is one of the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership's newest programs; created by alumni Lucy Hannington '08 and headed up by Community Mentors, AJ Jensen '09 and Grace Bogosian '11. The

program was created to improve elementary students' reading skills. Reading Buddies is an after school program, where St. Lawrence student volunteers are paired up to work one-on-one with 3rd or 4th grade students from local elementary schools in Canton. The goal of the program is to show students at a young age that reading can be fun and interesting, in hopes that students will instill good life long reading habits.

Engaging activities are incorporated in the program such as book making and word related games, where the SLU students make reading enjoyable and teach that not all reading has to be from a book.

Bree Buckley, a SLU student volunteer comments on her experiences with the program saying, "Reading Buddies has allowed me to become more connected with the local community members and gain a greater understanding of some of the challenges that are faced in the North Country. Every week I looked forward to seeing [my buddy], having fun reading with her and helping her as she tackles her own difficulties reading. SLU students should get involved in programs like this and become closer to the town they're living in."

The Reading Buddies program would not be possible without the help of the SLU student volunteers. For more information on the Reading Buddies Program please contact Grace Bogosian '11 at gabogo07@stlawu.edu.

For more opportunities, please contact:

Community-Based Learning Programs:

Brenda Papineau
bpapineau@stlawu.edu
 X5255

Volunteer Program:

Stacey Sommerfield
ssommerfield@stlawu.edu
 x5135

Community Service Opportunities Through the CCEL

Free Will Dinner Program



The Free Will Dinner Program, located at the Methodist Church in downtown Canton, was established four years ago. Starting out, it only provided one hot meal a month to the local community. Now with the help of volunteers, it continues to flourish, grow, and expand, touching the lives of all those who participate with dinners occurring every second, third, and fourth Wednesday of every month, from 4:00pm-6:30pm. Students who volunteer not only to prepare food, but also to serve it and provide company for local residents who attend. The Freewill Dinner Program is open to anyone in the community and is not limited to only those in need. Rather, it is a place for people from all walks of life and all class levels to sit and have a hot meal together on Wednesday nights.

Often, students are able to build relationships with patrons, both young and old, who attend the meals on a regular basis. Community members come to expect and look forward to seeing familiar faces and embrace the opportunity to sit and talk with St. Lawrence students. Most conversations begin in the same way...where are you from? What brought you to St. Lawrence? How do you like the weather up here? And of course...what are you going to do when you are done with your college career?

If you would like to lend a helping hand to serve the dinners, an open ear to be a great listener, or just a smile to brighten someone's day, then serving at the Free Will Dinner program is the place for you. Please contact the CCEL at ccel@stlawu.edu or x5095 for more information.

Next Step Mentoring Program

The Next Step Mentoring Program is currently finishing up the pilot year at Norwood-Norfolk Central School. This program is designed to pair St. Lawrence University Students with local high school students in a mentoring and skill building relationship. Local students will have the opportunity to explore multiple post-graduation careers and develop long term goals while also working with trained mentors to gain the necessary skills to attain such goals. The SLU students attend training sessions with our Admissions Office, Financial Aid Office, and Career Services office. They use this knowledge to work one-on-one with their mentee based on the high school students individual goals and interests. We are looking to expand to another school for next year, so if anyone is interested, please contact Kari Elliott '11 at kgelli07@stlawu.edu or Lauren Stemler '12 at lestem08@stlawu.edu.

Girl Scout Program at SLU

Every other Thursday a group of SLU students stand in front of the bookstore waiting for 20 girls in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grades. They are a dedicated group of individuals known as Girl Scout leaders. They help to plan meetings, field trips, and other events for these and other local Girl Scouts. It is not hard to become a volunteer for this organization. The commitment is as little as one day a week. Working with a troop, either on campus or off, provides an opportunity to influence young girls in the area.

For more information, please contact Nicole Shaffner at ndshaf07@stlawu.edu.

SLU Buddies Mentoring Program

A lot of people say being a mentor means giving love, attention, a listening ear, and time. However, it is a lot more. As a mentor, you are receiving at the same time.

SLU Buddies is more than volunteering, it is a chance to share yourself with an unexpected recipient, an elementary or middle school student. The time spent with your buddy can be the highlight of your week.

SLU BUDDIES is a school-based mentoring program whereby St. Lawrence University students are paired one-on-one with Canton Central or St. Lawrence Central elementary and middle school students.

SLU BUDDIES meet 1 day a week at the School.

SLU BUDDIES are matched with each other based on interests, needs and likes.



For more information on SLU Buddies, please contact:

Canton Central Schools:
Stacey Sommerfield at ssommerfield@stlawu.edu or x5135

St. Lawrence Central Schools:
Julie Johnson at jjohnson@stlawu.edu or x5095.

Faculty Spotlights

Mary Hussmann

by: Grace Bogosian '11



Mary Hussmann is teaching a new community based learning course this semester called "Going Localvore," an interdisciplinary study course of English and Environmental Studies.

The course explores the new phenomenon of local food and teaches effective ways to communicate environmental issues. The course content includes books such as *Omnivores Dilemma* by Michael Pollen and *Animal, Vegetable and Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver. The course commonly has expert guest speakers such as Sue Rau, the head of North Country Grown Co-Op, to discuss some issues of local farmers with their relationships with colleges and restaurants, as well as the environmental factors. The class also plans a field trip to a local organic farm called Food for Thought located off of route 25, to further study and explore

the content they've been learning in class.

One of the more interesting aspects of Mary Hussmann's course is the community based learning component. By the end of the semester each of her students are required to have served 40 hours at Bittersweet Farm, a local organic farm run by Ann and Brian Bennett located in Heuvelton, New York. The students work at the farm helping prepare for the spring growing season, aid in daily chores, clean the greenhouse, split wood for fire and help with the animals, especially the new baby pigs. Mary also conducts four classes from the farm in a cabin that was built specifically for St. Lawrence students through generous donations from SLU alumni.



Brian Bennett sits in on these classes and provides direct input about class discussions or about course books in relation to his farm and his experiences.

Mary says that the time spent on the farm is extremely valuable and closely ties the classroom work with the student's hands on interaction they have on the farm. She states that many of her students fully enjoy working with the Bennett's on their farm because it gives them an opportunity to do or learn something they might not have been able to prior to her class.

During finals week the class plans to go around to local farms, collect local food and use the skills learned throughout the semester of how to prepare and cook to make a meal for the farmers who provided the food and to the speakers who have been invited to class. Make sure to check out Mary Hussmann's classes for next fall because she does plan to continue community based learning classes just as exciting and entertaining as this one.

Paul Graham

by: Bridget Heaton '11



Professor Paul Graham, an Assistant Professor in the English Department, has been teaching at St. Lawrence University for the past six years.

Professor Graham has taught numerous classes from creative writing to upper-division literature classes as well as First Year Programs and First Year Seminars. However, his expertise lies in the mediums of non-fiction and fictional writing.

This semester he is teaching a First Year Seminar called *Food For Thought: Gastronomy and Hunger in American Literature and Culture*, which involves a

Community Based Learning component. He began teaching classes with CBL components when he was teaching active writing to his students. He said that he wanted his students to find ways to write from experience and he wanted to give them something different to write about, something of substance. The idea for the current FYS he is teaching comes from his interest in food in the North Country and the unfortunate issues of farming; sustainability, hunger, and health were all social justice issues that he has been interested in studying because it is such a huge part of the life up here.

Professor Graham has lived in St. Lawrence County for the last six years, and over this time he has gotten to

know a lot of the local farmers and people in the community. His desire to help these community members as well as his desire to see students more involved in the community is also what prompted his teaching of CBL courses. He feels that his work with CBL has been a great success and he wants to continue it in the future. He says that he is committed to it now and he will always teach at least one section that uses a CBL component.

"It is a very challenging way to teach, it is a text that is always changing," Professor Graham says of teaching courses with CBL components, "you never know what to expect."

New Service Opportunity!

Pray Road Stables: Equine Assisted Therapy Barn

What is Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP)?

Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy is a creative form of counseling that gives people a chance to enhance self-awareness and make positive changes in behavior, feelings and attitudes. Clients interact with the horses in a number of ways including: just getting acquainted, handling, grooming, riding and care.

How can someone benefit from Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy?

EFP places the client in a fun, non-threatening environment that facilitates the exploration of feelings and thoughts and the discovery of healing solutions. After treatment clients frequently report that they have gained new insights for relationship building, increased their self-esteem, and found new metaphors to work through personal issues. EFP helps people overcome their natural resistance to change and unlocks hidden resources that the client can draw on for strength.

For more information, or to volunteer, please contact Morganne Wheeler '10 at mewhee06@stlawu.edu. You can also visit www.prayroadstables.com.

MEET OUR HORSES!



Al is fourteen years old, and is currently being half leased. He is very trusting and enjoys his job. He is quite a talented boy.



Gracie is affectionately known as the "pocket pony", as she is one of the most friendly horses at the barn. She is only four years old, so she is still learning how to be a therapy horse. She is very athletic, chestnut, quarter horse, mare.



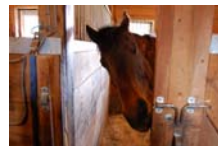
Righteous is our other four year old in training. This handsome boy is showing some real potential and talent. He is doing well under saddle walk, trot, canter. He is a tough guy that loves to play.



Gene is "Mr. Personality". He loves to be groomed, pet, and loved. While he is no longer able to go for rides, he is still a valued member of the Pray Road family, and always needs attention.



Splash is our gorgeous Arabian. She is seven years old, and still in training. She can be shy, but she is always sweet. She is the smallest horse in the barn.



Clancey is an eleven year old Thoroughbred gelding. Always preferring the mares as his friends, he is a real ladies man. Former dressage competitor, he now gives beginner-intermediate lessons.



Susie is by far the biggest horse in the barn. Don't let her huge size intimidate you-she is also one of the sweetest horses here! Susie is a nineteen-year old Belgian cross. She enjoys giving beginner lessons, and working with clients.



Qodi is our friendly appaloosa. He is eight years old, and gives beginner lessons and works with clients. His easy going nature makes him a frequent favorite.

**Attention SLU Faculty:
Course Development, Community Partnerships, and
Logistical Support**

**THE CENTER FOR
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
AND LEADERSHIP**

Whitman Hall, Room 166
Canton, NY 13617

Phone: 315-229-5095

Fax: 315-229-7462

Email: ccel@stlawu.edu

Web: www.stlawu.edu/ccel/

Do you know what Community Based Learning (CBL) is?
Are you interested in learning how to incorporate CBL into your course curriculum; but need help with syllabus design, classroom reflection activities and identifying community agency connections?
Have you already used CBL and are interested in utilizing it again?
If you answered yes to any of these questions, please feel free to contact the Community Based Learning Programs office. Our office will set up an individualized meeting to help support your course from planning to implementation.

For more information, or to set up an appointment, please contact us:

Ron Flores
Director, CBL
rflores@stlawu.edu or x5228

Brenda Papineau
Assistant Director, CBL
bpapineau@stlawu.edu or x5255

Meet our Staff

Ron Flores
Director, Community Based
Learning Programs

Stacey Sommerfield
Director, David Garner Center for
Collegiate Volunteerism

Brenda Papineau
Assistant Director, Community
Based Learning Programs

Linda Acker
Assistant to the Director
David Garner Center for Collegiate
Volunteerism

Julie Johnson
Center Manager/Project
Coordinator, CCEL
Newsletter Editor

News and Events:

Reading Fair

Canton Park and Public Library
Saturday, April 18, 2009

For more information, please contact
Lucinda Hannington at
lhannington@stlawu.edu or x5096

**Tennis Tournament to Benefit the
Canton Neighborhood Center**

SLU Outdoor Tennis Courts

Friday, April 17, 2009

For more information, please contact Elise
Fitzgerald '09 at ecfitz05@stlawu.edu

Community Mentors

Nazeema Baboolall '09
Elise Fitzgerald '09
Sarah Friedman '09
AJ Jensen '09
Rachel Lim '09
Rachael Manchester '09

Amelia Erdem '10
Danielle Rhubart '10
Courtney Tennant '10
Morganne Wheeler '10

Grace Bogosian '11
Kari Elliott '11
Bridget Heaton '11
Alan Martino '11
Epiphany McGee '11
Nicole Shaffner '11

Taylor Moon '12
Lauren Stemler '12

The mission of the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership is to increase and enhance opportunities for students to be agents of positive social change both on and off campus. The Center combines academic and co-curricular activities within a living-learning community where students work together with community partners to develop and direct community projects that address locally identified needs. The emphasis of the programming is to develop citizenship and leadership skills through: community based learning including course work, independent studies, participatory action research and dialogue training; volunteerism, where students, faculty and staff support and enhance community initiatives that address community needs; and, leadership training, practice, and reflection.