



exCEL: The Power of WE!

The Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 3
Spring 2007

SLU Students Help Local Fourth Graders Understand Bullying

by: Elizabeth Burns '07

Inside this issue:

Directors Corner	2
CCEL Courses for Fall 2007	3
“The Akwesasne Semester: A Student’s Perspective”	3
Community Service Opportunities	4-5
“SLU Buddies Hockey Night”	6
“Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites”	6
“Supervised Visitation Program”	6
CCEL Student Staff Positions	7
Community Mentor Reflections	7
Upcoming News & Events	8

This spring eight students have continued the work of a new anti-bullying program on campus called “Don’t Take My Lunch Money.” This program was recreated from a credit-bearing course that took place last spring, Transformational Leadership and Peacemaking, and sends teams of two SLU students into schools in the North Country to present two sessions of anti-bullying programs in fourth grade classrooms. The hour-long presentation, along with the 30-minute follow up, include discussions about the nature of bullying, different roles students play in bullying, and how they can react to it.

In the fall students presented at Edwards-

Knox and this semester students are doing presentations at Colton-Pierrepoint, St. Lawrence Central and other local schools. Due to the implementation of a federal grant to local schools called “Safe Schools, Healthy Students”. SLU students teaching with this anti-bullying program are paid for their work. While the presentations have been slow to start the reaction from fourth graders and their teachers has been positive.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Burn at eaburn03@stlawu.edu or Anne Townsend at: atownsend@stlawu.edu.

Sociology Courses Offers Community Based Learning Experience at CAVA and Renewal House

By Rachel Manchester '09

Students from Sociology 315: Family and Relationship Violence and Sociology 248: Social Service Agency and Advocacy are completing their community based learning at the Renewal House and CAVA both located in Canton. This placement has given them the opportunity to learn more about social service agencies as well as issues in the community concerning domestic violence.

The Renewal House provides emergency shelter for women who are survivors of domestic violence as well as their children. The agency emphasizes self-help and

provides a safe network for the families. CAVA provides counseling services for both survivors of sexual violence as well as family and friends of survivors. Along with counseling, CAVA provides emotional, legal, judicial, and medical support and resources to those in need of their services. Students are able to get a first-hand look at the way that these agencies are run and the services that they provide while assisting employees in a numerous ways and making a difference in the lives of those in need.

Directors Corner

Community Based Learning
Ron Flores, Director

Project Democracy Kicks Off

This month (April), a group of students, most residents of our Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites, will be joined by Canton residents to begin a dialogue over issues that are important to both our campus and the community. The project is an attempt to increase understanding and empathy, which is the goal of deliberative and sustained dialogues. Students, trained by Traci Fordham Hernandez as part of PCA 212A "Doing" Democracy: Theories and Practice of Engaged Citizenship and Intergroup Dialogue which was taught the first seven weeks of this semester, will serve as facilitators for dialogue sessions that will cover topics from child care to political apathy to language. As part of the course, students analyzed theories of dialogue, rhetoric, and communication, examined the role that engaged dialogue plays in the creation and maintenance of democratic society, and learned and executed practical strategies for engaged communication and strategic, deliberative dialogue.

Next year, Project Democracy will become a year long enterprising drawing students from a variety of courses and campus organizations along with community partners to explore issues of personal and social responsibility. Open and honest communication is foundational to healthy democracy and, thus, an essential skill for active citizenship.

We encourage all interested in participating in the Project Democracy programming to contact the Center of Civic Engagement and Leadership at ccel@stlawu.edu or 229-5095.

Leadership Academy
Peg Cornwell, Project Director

One of the distinguishing characteristics of a Community Mentor is her/his ability to provide creative leadership for both students and community partners. The ability to have students see the value of the work they can offer a community while simultaneously being engaged with the community partners on solving issues and concerns to them requires a good balance of leadership skills. It is for this reason that every Community Mentor is required to take the CBL 101B Leadership Development Studies class.

The learning outcomes achieved through this CBL course includes the basic skills of leadership: reflection, listening, understanding oneself, understanding others and in relation to oneself, communication and dialogue with others and in groups, incorporating constructive feedback, and recognizing others. In addition students will gain an initial understanding of the historical perspective of leadership development theory and apply theory to contemporary leadership both globally and locally.

The course goes beyond skill development and reflection. It is about understanding and integrating leadership development theory; developing one's own competencies with the intentionality of integrating those skills to better serve the communities in which they are involved.

The course will be on Tuesday and Thursdays from 12:40-2:10, for the second seven weeks of the Fall 2007 semester. The course will be taught by Kate McCaffrey and Peg Cornwell. All CM who have not taken this course previously are required to take it in the fall of 2007. Questions should be directed to either Peg Cornwell or Ron Flores.

Volunteer Center
Anne Townsend, Project Director

Spring Break Service Trips

This year, instead of spending their break on a relaxing vacation, two groups worked on two intense and meaningful community service projects. One group of 8 students and 2 advisors went to the St. Francis Inn, a Franciscan living and working community in the inner city of Philadelphia, PA—a favorite service trip for students—to help in the Inn's soup kitchen and women's center.

Another group of 13 students and 2 advisors went to Charleston, S.C. to help build homes for Habitat for Humanity in an area where families make 25-50% of the median income. They put up insulation, new siding, and helped build porches.

Both groups had team-building and informational sessions before departing, including a session with Dr. Ron Flores who led a discussion about homelessness and whether or not having a home is a right or a privilege. Student Life Dean Tolliver also attended and gave the groups a motivating send off.

At each site, students were encouraged to talk to those they worked with to hear their stories and allow them a voice that is often silenced and unheard. They also had opportunities for directed reflections on their experiences after dinner at their respective sites, as well as a more formal session soon after returning to campus. In late April, they will also do power point presentations to educate the campus community about the trips, what they have learned from them, and what advocacy roles might be possible for them and others.

After a thorough application and interviewing process, students were chosen for the trips primarily because of their seriousness of purpose.

Courses Available for Spring 2007 Semester

For More Information, Please Contact Your Advisor

FYP: Making a Difference: Active Citizenship in a Democratic Society

Instructor: Ron Flores & Liz Regosin

1.5 unit

CBL 347 A: Independent Projects in Community Based Learning

Instructor: Ronald Flores

1.0 unit

CBL 101 B: Leadership Development Studies

Instructor: Peg Cornwell, Kate McCaffrey

0.5 unit

PSYCH 443: Clinical Psychology

Instructor: Pamela Thacher

1.0 unit

SSES 320: Coaching Theory

Instructor: Jeff Pier

1.0 unit



The Akwesasne Semester: A Student's Perspective

By Molly Fisher '08

In the fall of 2006, a group of 6 SLU students, Molly Fisher '08, Jessica Sullivan '08, Ryan Arroyo '08, Emily Stanfill '08, Shannon Freire '08, and Douglas Mabee '09 spent their semester abroad studying on the Akwesasne Reservation. Each day started out at the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership. They packed themselves into a St. Lawrence van, and began the trip to Akwesasne.

On Mondays and Wednesdays the van left campus around 11am, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays it was an early departure at 7:30am to make sure we were all at the reservation before 9:00am. Each day the students attended all their semester classes at the Akwesasne Boys and Girls Club. These classes consisted of: Native American Oral Traditions taught by Dr. Randy Hill, Families, Children and Poverty by Dr. Ron Flores, Native American History by Dr. Melissane Shrems, and Ethnography of Schooling taught by Dr. Susan Stebbins. These classes were each 3 hours long and held once a week. Immediately after class at 3:00pm, the Akwesasne Boys and Girls

Club opened right away and all students began their volunteer work. The early departure on Tuesdays and Thursdays gave the students extra time on the given days to take part in their own internships at various tribal agencies.

The students spent most of their time at the Boys and Girls club developing relationships with each person they interacted with on a daily basis. One student describes his experiences as such: "One of the primary reasons why I signed up for the Akwesasne Semester was so that I could learn more about my ethnicity. My grandmother is Mohawk, and I thought that this semester would be a great way to learn some of the things which my grandmother had lost during her lifetime. One of the things which I really wanted to learn was the Mohawk language. There was a small class which we all took on basic Mohawk words, but I formed two friendships at the Boys and Girls Club with high school students who agreed to teach me some extra Mohawk. These two club members taught me what they were learning in their school,

but I was also able to get to know more about them personally. I still see them at the club when I am there with the Akwesasne FYS, and I talk with them regularly. I will never be able to forget these two friendships I have formed, and the Mohawk words which I have learned at the Akwesasne Boys and Girls Club." Another student describes her experience as life changing. She was given the gift to work mostly one on one at the club with a girl who has Downs Syndrome.

Being able to see the world through someone's eyes so differently was a challenge at first grew into such a personal bond between us because we never gave up. Even though we came from completely different cultures, mentally we see things very differently, we are different ages, and we like different things, we still bonded, grew, learned to love and grow together instead of separately. This experience as a whole for the entire group was moving, emotional, and memorable. Collaboratively we grew as a group and as individuals.

Community Service Opportunities Through the CCEL

Department of Social Services Mentoring Program CM: Valerie Kelly '07

The Department of Social Services and the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership have worked together to create a Mentoring Program for adolescents in St. Lawrence County. Case workers identify young boys and girls who are at risk for substance abuse, dropping out of school and teen pregnancy. Responsible SLU interns are identified through various Community-Based Learning courses such as Community Psychology. The interns serve as a stable and positive role in the lives of these adolescents. Many of these youths are survivors of sexual abuse, neglect, trauma, poverty and are in foster care. SLU interns are often required to drive as far as Watertown weekly or DSS will arrange transportation for the adolescents to come to campus each week. The nature of the work is unpredictable and emotionally challenging, however the bonds that are created through this arduous program are deep and long lasting. Interns have a tendency to grow as much, if not more than the adolescents through the process. If you are looking for a challenging but extremely rewarding experience during your time at SLU and are interested in the DSS Mentoring Program, please contact Valerie Kelly, at vnkell03@stlawu.edu, or Kathy Rhinebold at (315) 379-2195.



Canton Culture Club CM: Neil Coutinho '09 and Sahiry Rodriguez '07

"Through exploring more of our physical world do we learn more about ourselves." This is the very aim of the Canton Culture Club, who through a partnership with the Canton Central school district, expose and delve into various cultural backgrounds and beliefs with the students of both the elementary and middle schools. Through various expository mediums and exercises such as food, dress, language, song or dance these children are exposed to a variety of customary beliefs and traditions. Students and volunteers involved in these programs need not be of a different cultural background, but may also present their experiences in various cultural traditions gathered through study abroad programs or time spent in a different traditional setting. This program has been successful in the past and in its continuation we hope and aim to not only give something back to the community but more especially give something to America's younger generation. In a country known to be a melting pot of different cultural backgrounds, learning and respecting diversity is an ever-growing need in today's society.

For more information about this program, please contact Neil Coutinho at nkcout05@stlawu.edu or Sahiry Rodriguez at scrodr03@stlawu.edu.

Canton Day Care CM: Sahiry Rodriguez '07

Established in 1977, Canton Day Care Center provides a positive learning environment for children in the area. The community based Center strives to enhance the development and health of local children. The Center has services for toddlers, pre-school and school age children and encourages each child to be individual. The Center hopes to incorporate education within the community and the world. The curriculum focuses on the physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of each child.

Each semester students, as part of Community Based Learning, step off campus and get involved in the Canton Community. Canton Day Care is a Community Based Learning site. Students work in conjunction with Canton Day Care's staff to gain real life experience in the field of education and civic engagement. SLU students serve as role models for children in the Center as well as participating in service projects on site.

For more information about serving at Canton Day Care, please contact Sahiry Rodriguez at scrodr03@stlawu.edu.

Community Service Opportunities Through the CCEL

Free Will Dinner Program CM: Kelly O'Malley '08

The Free Will Dinner Program, located at the Methodist Church in downtown Canton, NY, was established four years ago. Starting out, it only provided one hot meal a month to the local community. Now with the help of many individuals in the community (including the Lawrence University students), it continues to flourish, grow, and expand, touching the lives of all those who participate.

The dinners occur every second, third, and fourth Wednesday of every month, from 4:00pm-6:30pm. Activities range from preparing or serving dinners, or just really sitting down and engaging with the members of our local community. The dinners are open and free to the public, allowing everyone to come enjoy a hot meal with the members of community that they live in. This program provides a wonderful opportunity to you to serve, reach out, connect and ultimately help many people in the community.

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 Kelly O'Malley at kmoma04@stlawu.edu for further information.



Meals on Wheels CMs: Neil Coutinho '09 & Rachael Manchester '09

The Meals on Wheels Program in Canton, NY is a division of the Office for the Aging and provides elderly people, 55 and over, hot meals throughout the year. Everyday both lunch and dinner are prepared in the kitchen and served in the senior housing development on Riverside Avenue as well as delivered to those seniors around St Lawrence County unable to prepare their own meals.

The Meals on Wheels Program is constantly looking for volunteers not only to deliver the food with a certified driver, but also to aid in the kitchen cooking and serving food. There is a great need in this area for the Meals on Wheels program and it wouldn't be possible without volunteers to get the food to the people in need. Volunteers in this program speak notably of the bonds and relationships they forge with the elderly residents they interact with on a daily basis. These visits, to many of the elderly, are a high point in their daily lives as they look forward to conversing with those that deliver their meals as these volunteers are sometimes the only few people they interact with. The moral rewards of being a part of this program make it a project worth supporting.

For more information, please contact Barbara McBurnie at the St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging, (315) 386-4730.

Senior Buddies CM: Kacey Anderson '08

The United Helpers Nursing Home is located in Canton. This is the third year the Senior Buddies program has been offered to St. Lawrence students. The program matches up students with one or two senior buddies. The student then goes and visits their buddy on a weekly basis. Students can select from a variety of different activities to do with their "buddy" when they visit. They may participate in organized activities held by the nursing home. These include bingo, dancing, music, games, and other social events. Students may choose instead to watch television, work on a puzzle, or just sit and visit with their buddy. The time spent at the nursing home is a unique experience that is both rewarding and enjoyable. The nursing home residents look forward to the visit each week with their buddy. It is a great way for students to become involved in the community.

Since it originated, the Senior Buddies program has grown into a popular organization that students are choosing to become involved in. Students are sometimes placed in the program through a CBL Course. Others decide to become a volunteer on their own. The Senior Buddies program is a great way for students to participate in a rewarding experience in the Canton community. For more information, please contact Kacey Anderson at kbande04@stlawu.edu.

SLU Buddies Hockey Night 2007

By Candina Harmer '07 and Alex Daly '10

On February 16, 2007, the stands of Appleton Arena came alive as 68 kids from Canton Central and St. Lawrence Central School came to cheer on the skating Saints as they took on Rensselaer. Planning for the event began last semester with the SLU Buddies board deciding on a tentative date and discussions with the counselors at both schools. Excitement began to build up in the kids as permission slips went home to parents approximately two weeks before the game and SLU students talked to them about attending the game.

Several donations were made during the game that made for a more enjoyable time for the kids. Brenda O'Brien and the rink staff first offered

reduced ticket prices for the students being seated in the General Admissions section and SLU Act! made a donation of \$200 to SLU Buddies to help cover the cost of tickets. The students received thundersticks and media guides (courtesy of Glenn Peters and Mrs. Marsh) as well as the opportunity to meet the Saints after the game to receive autographs. Approximately 20 students were able to stay after the game for the 'Meet the Saints' session and obtained their autographs as well as group pictures. A big "Thank You" goes out to Coach Marsh, Randy LaBrake, and the entire Men's Hockey Team for taking time out of their busy schedules to make this event memorable to the buddies. Almost a

month later, the kids still talk about how much fun they had and how cool the Men's Hockey Team was.

Programming like *Hockey Night* and *Parents Night* and the upcoming *End of the Year Barbeque*, are an important part of what makes the program as effective as it has been over the past four years and will be for the next four years. These are such meaningful events to the students from both schools that the SLU Buddies Board would love to keep offering these opportunities in the future. The SLU Buddies Board would like to thank everyone who helped in the planning of *Hockey Night* and for the donations offered to the students, everything was greatly appreciated.

Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites

By Neil Coutinho '09

In my short time spent assisting in the Civic Engagement and Leadership Suite program, the one lesson I have learned is that leadership, though defined numerous though grandiose terms and classified by various attributes, is a trait difficult to fully possess. We redefine it constantly and try to model its various aspects through key individuals who we believe possess that "je ne sais quoi". However, how we bring that out in people is the very goal

that the liberal arts education program tries to instill. The leadership suite program is one such means whereby various students, who through classroom training and exercises as well as community service activities, try to mold and reinforce the ideals of leadership not only within themselves, but in other individuals involved in the program as well. The program aims not only to get the participants involved in community service activities, but more

importantly to play a transformative role in these activities addressing and tackling underlying key issues through a leadership role. Only through the meshing of both classroom and hands on experience can leadership qualities be fully brought in the individual such that their notion of a leadership role is clearly instilled within them.

For more information, please contact Ron Flores or Peg Cornwell.

Supervised Visitation Program

By Allison Freeman '07

Someone once told me that donating you time to a noble cause is the most effective way to contribute to civil society. It is in this spirit that The Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership operates. Each semester CCEL offers many opportunities for students to participate within the community. The CCEL continues its partnership with the Department of Social Services here in Canton to provide the staff and the space to

conduct supervised visitations for families who have been separated. Each week local families depend on this service to spend time with their children in the comfort of our center. This semester students have also begun to work directly with DSS to supervise visits at their Judson Street location. In the fall our service will continue both on campus and directly at DSS providing students with the chance to actively engage in change in the Canton

community.

The success and quality of this program depend on volunteer and Community Based Learning students. CCEL looks for committed and conscious people to become supervisors and leaders and meet weekly with a family to provide stability and a positive environment for family's weekly interactions. If interested, please contact Brenda Papineau at bpapineau@stlawu.edu.

CCEL Student Staff Positions Available

The Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership is Now Accepting Applications for *Community Mentor*.

Do you like working in the community? Do you believe in positive social change? Do you see yourself as a leader? Do you work well independently as well as part of a team? If you answered yes to most of those questions, then we want you to be a part of our team.

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. 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, Volunteerism, and Leadership**. We are looking for student leaders who empower their fellow students and work continuously to address community identified needs. Community Mentors work independently and as a team to develop programs in collaboration with community partners, faculty, staff, and fellow students to meet need identified by our community partners.

Informational Session

An informational session will be held on *Wednesday: April 4, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.* in the Hulett and Jencks commons. All interested candidates should submit their applications by Friday: April 9, 2007. The selection committee will review materials and conduct interviews for all eligible candidates.

For more information about the CM program, please visit: <http://www.stlawu.edu/ccel/communitymentor.html> or contact Brenda Papineau at bpapineau@stlawu.edu or x5255.

Community Mentor Reflections

In the past two years, I have worked as a Community Mentor for four different projects: Clinical Psychology, United Helpers, Department of Social Services (DSS) Supervised Visitation Program and the Department of Social Services Mentoring Program. Each of the programs involved St. Lawrence students who were enrolled in a Community-Based Learning course. This gave me opportunity to share service learning experiences and develop meaningful relationships with a wide variety of students I may not have otherwise met.

All of the affiliated agencies with the programs I supervised have had a great impact on my understanding of communities outside of campus. It is very easy attend St. Lawrence and be unaware of the hardships citizens of St. Lawrence County face everyday. Becoming an engaged in local agencies has given me perspective and appreciation for the privilege we have on campus. I am grateful for my Senior Buddy, the families of DSS and the girl I mentor for sharing their lives with me and helping me grow as a person. When I graduate in May I know the most meaningful learning that will stick with me from St. Lawrence has been through my work with involved students, Dr. Ron Flores, Anne Townsend, Peg Cornwell and Dr. Cathy Crosby-Currie, and the community.

Valerie Kelly '07

The CM position has been great. As a previous volunteer I was unaware of the stress that accompanies the position. As a volunteer, I showed up to my visit and waited for my family. I find, as a CM, once 4 pm approaches and a family has yet to show up, I get worried. I begin looking for phone numbers of all the people to call to find out what happened with the visit. Whenever it is my day to work, one of the first things I worry about is whether the volunteers will show up or whether the families will show up. The saddest thing to witness is a child or a parent waiting for someone to show up and no one does, especially when it is because of transportation issues. This has been a great experience for me. Being able to reunite families, if only for a few hours a week, is quite satisfying. This position has helped me realize that there are broken families everywhere and we need to do our best to reunite those families because everyone needs to have a past.

Nazemma Baboolall '09



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Student Conference:

Summer Institute on Philanthropy and Voluntary Service

June 9—August 4, 2007
Georgetown University,
Washington DC

<http://www.dcinternships.org/ipvs>

Meet our Staff

Ron Flores
Director, Community Based
Learning Programs

Peg Cornwell
Project Director, Leadership
Academy

Anne Townsend
Project Director, David Garner
Center for Collegiate Volunteerism

Brenda Papineau
Assistant Director, Community
Based Learning Programs

Julie Johnson
Assistant to the Directors, CCEL
Newsletter Editor

Christine Akin '08
Office Assistant



Community Mentors

Elizabeth Burns '07
Allison Freeman '07
Candina Harmer '07
Valerie Kelly '07
Sahiry Rodriguez '07
Lora Wu '07

Kacey Anderson '08
Ryan Arroyo '08
Molly Fisher '08
Kelly O'Malley '08

Nazeema Baboolall '09
Neil Coutinho '09
Rachael Manchester '09

Alex Daly '10

Positions Available

Community Mentors needed for Fall 2007

For job description and application
information, please visit the CBL website at:

www.stlawu.edu/cbl/communitymentor.htm

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.