



exCEL: The Power of WE!

The Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1
Spring 2006

Community Spotlight: Canton Day Care ~Evelyn Gatawa

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It's approaching 5:30pm and the Canton Day care is almost deserted except for three teachers with six kids waiting to be picked up. Patience, the preschool teacher does the final clean up while waiting for the parents of the remaining three preschoolers. As I help her out, she talks about the day's earlier events, a preschool boy had slapped her in the face while she tried to talking to him. When that happened, she had asked Gina, the toddlers' teacher, to talk to him while she attended to the other kids. "Sometimes it's not easy," she says, "when something like that happens, you just need to be patient and tactical without abandoning other kids while you figure out how to talk to that one child." She smiles as she appreciates the help that is readily available for her from the other members of staff and the volunteers and interns. "Sometimes you just need someone else to talk to the kids while you continue to attend to the other kids. It can be a hassle", she admits.

But what gives Patience the zeal and enthusiasm that she shows in her work? "There are days when I leave here at 5:30pm, and am back the next

morning at 7:30, tired, but as soon as the kids start coming in at 7:30 I am on the run and there is a lot of activity going on with the kids running around." Parents start to leave their kids as early as 7:30 in the morning on their way to work and some are only able to pick their children later on in the day after 5:00 when they finish work. "The kids love doing a lot of things like painting and it's just amazing what they can do with a piece of paper and paint." Patience shows me some of the preschoolers' circle paintings which are now decorating the walls. "They (kids) get excited about it that sometimes it seems like they are never going to stop and you need to supervise them and lead them in the right direction."

So what makes Patience love her job as a pre-school teacher? "You know what? The nicest thing about the day care is how I now actually get to see some of the kids that I taught five years ago. Like the other boy who is now in 5th grade at the Canton School and is in the school program was in my preschool class. That is so exciting!" concludes the smiling Patience. "Sometimes when I am in public places like at the grocery store, I hear a child shout out Patience and they just start running to me to say hello or to give me a hug! The kids just get so excited when they see me, and it's the joy of watching these kids and talking with their parents after

that makes me love the day care."

Most parents know Patience as their kids' friendly teacher who keeps them updated on the daily activities of their children at the day care. Patience has been working with the day care for the past five years. At 21, she was the youngest staff member at the day care but today she is one of the long serving staff. She remembers one of the 5th grade boys at the Canton school who was only three when she first started working at the day care.

Patience also likes the conversations that she has had and continues with the parents when they come to pick up their kids at the end of each day. "Some of the parents are actually writing letters of recommendations and assessments for one of the programs that I am currently doing." As we just finish the clean up, the parents of the remaining kids arrive and as usual, she updates them on their children's activity. It is once again, the end of another fun and action filled day for Patience.

Special points of interest:

- New Campus Community Connections
- Community Mentor Reflections and Projects
- Volunteer and Leadership Opportunities

Community Based Learning Programs

Civic Engagement and Leadership Suites For 2006-07

Residential Learning Communities and the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership are cosponsoring a full year living/learning experience where students will work collaboratively with local community partners developing University-Community partnerships designed to address a community defined needs while bringing those experiences into their residential life. Suite residents will be affiliated with the CCEL and will work closely with its staff on partnership development. They will also work closely with members of RLC to integrate their community service and academics into residential programming that includes students enrolled in next year's Brown college. Program participants will be encouraged to share their experiences with students and professionals from across the nation through conference participation. Funds will be made available for conference travel.

Since this is an academic/residential experience, all participants will be expected to participate in courses that complement both their community service and their residential experiences. Students will be required to take one CBL course per semester, one of which must be CBL100: Introduction to Civic Engagement or CBL101: Leadership Skills. Other CBL course options will be announced during the pre-registration period of each semester. Participation in an independent community based research project will meet a one semester academic requirement.

Ron Flores
Director, Community Based Learning Programs

Directors Corner

Leadership Academy

Students are the heart of the leadership academy at St. Lawrence. The proof is in the record number of students, 151, that attended the 6th Annual Student Leadership Conference on February 4, 2006.

The five hour Saturday conference was held in the student center and was considered to be a tremendous success by those that attended. The first half of the conference consisted of 11 workshops divided between two sessions. The topics ranged from "Change and Your Organization" to Time Management to "The Democratic Imagination", which was presented by our very own Ron Flores. The second session had topics on diversity, setting vision and mission statements, group dynamics and yoga. The third session was facilitated by Don DiPaulo and it was entitled, "A Conversation that Matters". Students worked in dialogue circles focusing on conversations that matter. The closure allowed time for students to share what they learned about themselves in regards to their leadership and what changes they were willing to commit to as a result of the conversations.

Students came away from the conference with new leadership skills and having met other leaders on campus with who they have much common. Leadership on the St. Lawrence University campus is about students working together to create change around a common topic. The leadership conference got us all off to a great start in learning how to communicate more intentionally with other leaders around campus.

Peg Cornwell
Project Director, Leadership Academy

Volunteer Center

The Volunteer Center will sponsor three spring break trips this year:

A Habitat group of 20 will go to Slidell, LA, to help people directly affected by Hurricane Katrina. They will work on clean-up and building projects in the city where 85% of homes and businesses were damaged as a result of the hurricane.

Another group of 10 will go to the St. Francis Inn, a Franciscan living and working community in the inner city of Philadelphia, PA, to help in its soup kitchen, women's center, and thrift shop.

The third group of 11 will go to Los Angeles, CA, as the culmination of their class, EDUC 348B: "Transformative Leadership, Peace Making, and Non-violent Communication." In L.A., they will receive training in experiential learning models related to peace making, which they will subsequently use to work directly with youth in L.A. inner schools. The group will return to campus with a service project on anti-bullying which they will implement at the Canton Middle School.

Anne Townsend
Project Director, David Garner Center for Collegiate Volunteerism

Philadelphia	Slidell	Los Angeles
Joe Tebo	Shannon Boyntn	Daniel Auerbach
Theresa Kelso	Justin Brodowski	Jon Cardinal
Scott Brooks	Drew Crawford	Lauren Coakley
James Cox	Mel Danielson	Chelsea Falcetta
Emma Gibbs	Morgan Ford	Erin Mallory
Rachel Lim	Katrina Franz	Laura Rabinow
Dennis Morreale	Sarah Friedman	Sahiry Rodriguez
Malinda Ricketson	Meg Howard	Danielle Weaver
Kelly Saelak	Kendall Landers	Jesse Wingate
Matthew Spearing	Quinn Laya	Joy Wyman
	Kyle Littlefield	
	Wendy Matthews	
	Ryan Moore	
	Kevin O'Connor	
	Elisa Prescott	
	Katie Spring	
	Joey Webb	

New Campus-Community Connections

Akwesasne Reservation

This semester, SLU students are learning about Native American children while attending class on the Akwesasne Mohawk Reservation. Students will work closely with Mohawk children in programs that attempt to counter the devastating effects of poverty and scarce resources on the wellbeing of children. Students will research and work to secure funds for the creation of a recreation center for Akwesasne youth.

Senior Buddies

This new program matches SLU students with residents of United Helpers Canton Nursing Home. Visits can fit easily into students' schedules ranging from morning to evening.

Please contact Kacey Anderson '08 at kbande04@stlawu.edu for more details.

Canton Culture Club

This new program introduces Canton Banford Elementary School students to different cultures. SLU students volunteer to talk to the students about other cultures. These kids learn different customs, traditions, typical dances, food, holidays, etc. from other countries.

Please contact Sahiry Rodriguez '07 at scrod03@stlawu.edu for more details.

Community Mentors

Kelly O'Malley '08
Free Will Dinners



"...my buddy has a memory problem, but since I have been going in one day a week, she has started to realize more and more who I am and why I am there and it is quite an amazing thing! This is just one of the positive experiences I have had with this program. ...Senior Buddies is one program in which students truly have a chance to make a difference in the community where volunteer numbers are quite small."

-Candina Harmer '07

"Through participating in the Free Will Dinner program, I was given the chance to disregard certain stereotypes I previously held about poor or less fortunate people, and developed new perspectives in which to view life and the essential, basic need for food and compassion. Donating my time helps bring a hot meal and friendship to many people, I found that in the end, I personally grew and benefited from the program. Programs like the Free Will Dinner really help put many of life's challenges into perspective. This program allows the community to reach out with a helping hand to give some people a little hope and companionship."

-Kelly O'Malley '08

Elizabeth Burns '07 and Lora Wu '07



I look forward to working as a Community Mentor in the future and to seeing how much we can accomplish as we move onward and upward.

-Lora Wu '07

Melina Cruz '06, Eliza Doton '06,
John Gursky '07, Val Kelly '07



Jenn Shauger '08



"Strictly speaking, Community Mentors were to inspire students to join in community service and facilitate lasting connections between the Canton community and surrounding areas to St. Lawrence. Though, behind that great façade I began to see something more. I have observed the other CM's from the beginning and watched them grow into amazing leaders; becoming stronger and more confident in their beliefs, ideas and actions. It is their growth and change that has been the driving force behind this new organization."

-Jenn Shauger '08

"This semester I plan on organizing a fund raiser to sponsor Senegalese children living in rough conditions in a small community of Keur Massar, Senegal. I was there for three weeks in January as a Community Mentor through the Community Based Learning Center for Dr. Erin McCarthy's January Term Course: Senegalese Cultures, Tradition and History CBL class. I interned at the alternative medicine hospital of Keur Massar and the affiliated school for ill children. These children sleep on steel cots with torn foam and ripped wool blankets every night. For my project I would like to introduce this small community to Saint Lawrence students and start fund raising efforts to improve the living conditions for these children."

-Val Kelly '07

"I am also looking to get involved in fighting hunger in the area surrounding SLU, by holding canned food drives at hockey games and starting a chapter of the Walk Against Hunger in the spring. Please look for more information about these and other events where you can help. It only takes one person to make a difference and you could be that person. Get involved!"

-Jessica Klauzenberg '08

Upcoming Events

**THE CENTER FOR
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
AND LEADERSHIP**

Hulett-Jencks Common Area
Canton, NY 13617

Phone: 315-229-5095

Fax: 315-229-7462

Email: ccel@stlawu.edu

Spring Break
Reflection Sessions

Habitat Group
Sunday, April 2, 5-7 pm,
Hulett-Jencks Common Area

St. Francis Inn Group
Sunday, April 2, 5-7 pm
Newman Center

LA Group: TBA

Volunteer
Appreciation Reception

Sunday, April 30
4-5:30 pm
Sykes Formal Lounge

CCEL Pilot Project:
The Akwesasne Semester
Fall 2006

The Akwesasne Semester is a quasi-off campus learn and serve experience that will accept 8 to 10 St. Lawrence University students to take a semester of courses on the St. Regis Mohawk Reservation while participating in a number of experiential learning settings. The project is a collaborative effort between the Akwesasne Boys and Girls Club, the Center for Civic Engagement and Leadership and the Native American Studies program at St. Lawrence University and SUNY Potsdam. The courses taught on the reservation will address primarily Native American issues with a focus on Mohawk life and culture. The students will serve in the boys and girls club primarily as tutors and role models. They will also participate in internships within the local tribal governance structure. During the semester, there will be a series of road trips that will include visits to other reservations and sacred native sites in New York State and the Mohawk reservation in Canada (just outside of Montreal). We also hope to bring speakers/artists to the campuses and the reservation to work with both our students and the children of the ABGC.

Community Mentors

Kacey Anderson '08
Stacey Banfield-Hardaway '08
Elizabeth Burns '08
Charlotta Chung '08
Lauren Coakley '06
Drew Crawford '08
Jessica Faiella '09
Evelyn Gatawa '08
Candina Harmer '07
Valerie Kelly '07
Theresa Kelso '07
Chris Kerr '07
Jessica Klauzenberg '08
Kelly O'Malley '08
Sahiry Rodriguez '07
Jennifer Shauger '08
Lora Wu '07

<http://www.stlawu.edu/leadership>



<http://www.stlawu.edu/cbl>

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 Director, Community
Based Learning Programs,
Newsletter Editor

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.