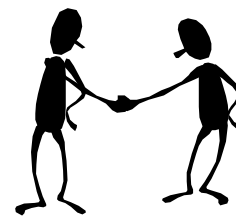


Together



A Service-Learning Newsletter for the University of Akron



Know someone who uses service-learning?

Let us know about it and we could highlight them in our next newsletter!

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Students Decide Service-Learning is Fun!



UA students cleaning soap barrels for the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank

"It's one thing to talk about it and think about it, but actually going out there and doing it, you get a feeling of accomplishment and you know you've made a difference in someone else's life," said **Anthony Filippi**, a student from Karen Padrutt's Group Decision Making class.

This past summer, University of Akron lecturer Karen Padrutt incorporated service-learning into her group decision making class. Her class toured the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank and brainstormed ideas on how to help the organization. Using group process and incorporating theories learned in class, students developed solutions for

recruiting volunteers, seeking donations and raising community awareness.

"The group presentations were not only thorough and reasonable, they were immediately implementable," said

Laura Tinney, vice president of fund development for the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank.

"This project model has tremendous potential for helping other area nonprofits and also the Food-

bank to garner additional ideas for mission programming and to expose university students to the social service agencies in our community."

Padrutt's teaching with service-learning not only cultivated student solutions, but also taught methods by which to reach those solutions, including that the process by which a group arrives at a conclusion is just as important as the conclusion itself.

After completing the project, students reflected on their experiences through group discussion, group feedback and an individual follow-up paper amplifying core academic concepts of their experience.

"I learned while working in a group you need every individual group member's input and help because everyone has many different strengths and creative ideas that all contribute to success when you put them all together," said student **Amin Kabir**.

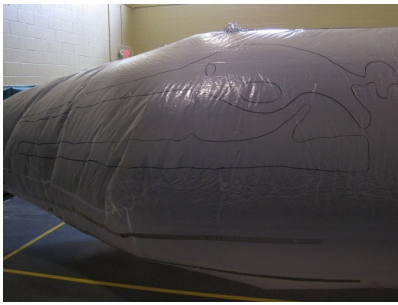
Upon completion of the class project, a number of students volunteered at the Foodbank. Some students were so inspired they are currently working on getting student groups involved with the Foodbank.

As an instructor, Padrutt says, "Seeing students integrate what they have learned into a real-life situation is exciting and challenging as an educator."

Laura Tinney was so impressed with the work of Padrutt's students that she hired one in September!

UA students after a tour of the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank





Above: Harmony's skeletal markings were accurately portrayed by UA students



Above: Whale questions were answered by UA students

Below: Faculty, Nick Frankovitz helps with whale construction



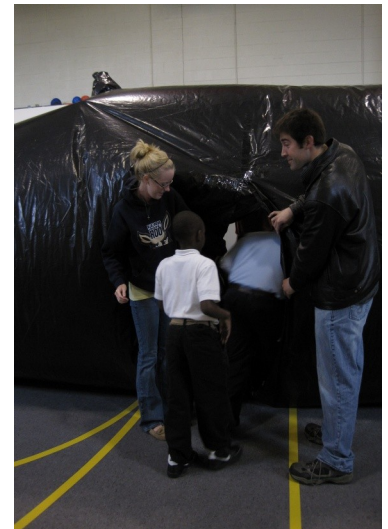
A Whale of a Tale: UA Oceanography Class Builds Life-Size Whale for Elementary Education

Twenty five graduate and undergraduate students in Dr. Nick Frankovits' oceanography class built a life size (56 feet long, 7 feet wide and 8 feet tall) humpback whale for local elementary school children to learn about oceanography. Students named the project 'Harmony' because of the humpback's special ability to sing. Constructed out of 4 miles of clear and black plastic and packaging tape, this backpack sized lump of plastic inflates into a mammoth humpback whale with a standard house fan.

Harmony is equipped with skeletal markings, recorded sound effects, and a developed curriculum about whales and their environment that teachers can use in the classroom. "The look on the kids faces when they saw Harmony was priceless. They really participated in the learning process and were so excited to walk through it

and find out more," said Blossom Frank, graduate student in education at UA. Frankovits, who has always included service-learning as part of his teaching, included creation of the whale in his Spring 2010 class. His previous classes have done lead testing, radon testing, and designed educational equipment to benefit classroom teachers. Next year's plans for service-learning may include creation of a life-size blue whale which is twice the size of the humpback whale. University of Akron students used core academic concepts learned in oceanography class to create this visual hands-on tool to teach children. The students shared their experiential learning tool with Springfield School District, Medina Schools, Woodridge School System, and the Edge Academy. "It allowed the students to interact with the community at large, and to indicate that

the students of The University of Akron have a dedication to give back to their community." – Dr. Nick Frankovits



UA students helping elementary students tour the inside of the whale

Nutrition Professor Promotes Growth in Students and Community with Service-Learning

Dr. Deborah Marino loves to include service-learning in her Community Nutrition classes because it provides a richer learning experience. "Being able to apply what they learn in the classroom within the community allows students to become more realistic about the possibilities and challenges of their chosen profession and helps them to expand their horizons personally and professionally," says Marino. Real life situations can help keep community nutrition students motivated and ac-

countable. Marino assigns groups of students to work with nonprofit organizations to write grant proposals for nutrition-related projects. Students are required to work with community partners for 20-25 hours during the semester for collaborative planning and implementation of a specific nutrition project.

At the end of the semester, each student group presents their project to the class. This year, students learned about philanthropy and used their presentations to convince classmates

how grant money should be distributed. The class then engaged in a group decision-making process to award real funds to local nonprofit organizations. Service-learning has been a part of Marino's nutrition classes for about 15 years. Marino feels confident that her students are more connected to the community through these projects and are helping to meet community needs. She plans to continue this effective teaching strategy for years to come.

Ecology Center Maps Out a New Course with Service-Learning

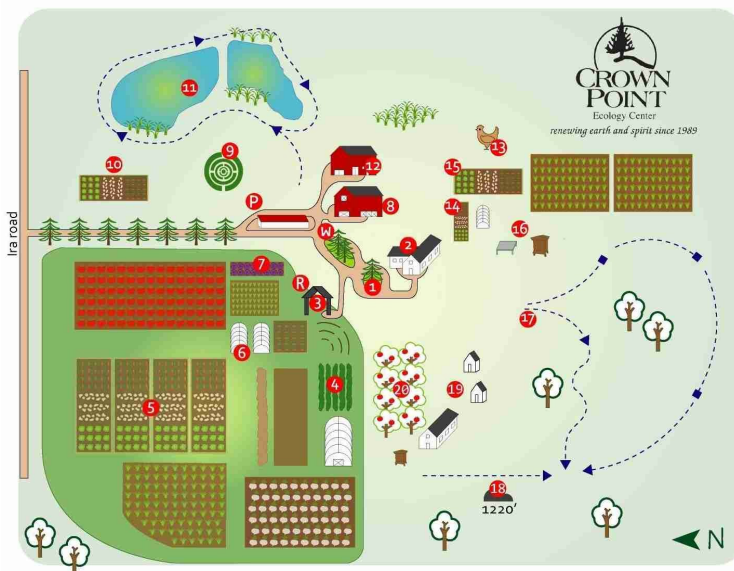
Community Partner Quote:

“[Service-learning] provides many wonderful opportunities for community organizations to get the support they need while providing real-world experiences for students. I would highly recommend this experience to anyone!”

Amy Berens, Education/ Volunteer Coordinator for Crown Point

Prior to the Spring of 2010, Crown Point Ecology Center had only a hand drawn site-map for self-guided walking tours of the property.

Dr. Theresa Beyerle, of the Institute for Teaching and Learning fostered a partnership between Crown Point and Dr. Shanon Donnelly, visiting assistant professor from the department of Geography and Planning. Crown Point needed a map, Donnelly was teaching students how to make maps, and a service-learning project was born. Donnelly's two graduate students assigned to the project worked in close partnership with staff members at Crown Point to create a map that fit the needs of the Ecology Center. The final product was a colorful, user-friendly



map with graphics to represent buildings, farmland and other natural and man-made features.

Crown Point Ecology Center is a non-profit organization that is a biologically

diverse living laboratory which serves to demonstrate practical applications of ecology.

Reusing and Recycling for Service-Learning

Students in Carrie Tomko's Honors Colloquium presented a recycling workshop for elderly and disabled Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA) residents last spring. Tomko's students taught residents about recycling metal, paper, batteries, technology, plastics, and even organ donation. Each student provided information about a particular topic and designed her or his presentation to engage the residents. At the end of the project, students unanimously decided the

experience was fun and enriching. They learned about local community residents with special needs, and gained a better understanding of nonprofit organizations.

This was Tomko's first time incorporating service-learning

as a part of her Honors class, but she intends to continue to use projects that create "win/win" scenarios for both students and the local community.

"Thank you for organizing such an informative and in-

teresting presentation! The students did a great job- please pass on my thanks to them as well! I plan to follow-up with the residents to see about organizing a group effort to recycle or at least find some ways to

encourage individual recycling!"
Amy Marsteller, AMHA staff member



Students in Carrie Tomko's Honors Colloquium



"I felt teaching with a service-learning project in mind added some 'real-ness' to the classroom."
Faculty Lecturer, Carrie Tomko.



Congratulations to ITL Service-Learning Mini-Grant recipients — Fall 2010

Class	Faculty Member/Instructor	Project
Health Promotion and Behavior Change	Dr. Judi Juvancic-Heltzel and Melissa Smith; Sports Science and Wellness	Active Aging and Wellness Fair
Movement Experiences for Children	Dr. Mary Jo MacCracken; Sports Science and Wellness	Advocating for children's physical activity
Equity and Excellence in Ed.	Dr. Huey-Li Li; Educational Foundations & Leadership	Sharing experiences to teach the lessons of Service-Learning
Minority Engineering Seminar	Dr. Julie Zhao; Engineering Dean's Office	Science and Math Expo for middle school students
Family Life Management	Dr. Baomei Zhao; Family & Consumer Sciences	Understanding families in need
Intro to Linguistics	Litsa Varonis; English	Connecting linguistic students with international community members
Methods of Art History	Dr. Kevin Concannon; Art	Making art history current
Foundation Drawing	Mark Soppeland; Art	Creating interactive art works
New Media Writing	Dr. Val Pippis; Communication	Supplementing community news stories with new media
Family Law	Tracy Thomas; Law	"Helping Men Become Better Fathers."
Basic Chemistry/Student Success Seminar: Math	Lori Kraft; Engineering and Science Technology, Dr. Janet Thompson	Evaluation of Water Quality
Student Success Seminars: Exploratory	Laura Monroe, Gail Tankersley, Chris Tankersley, Carly McNutt	Exploring service with research, communication, planning, budgeting, and teamwork.
Student Success Seminar: Adult	Laura Conley	Philanthropy project
Student Success Seminars: PASSAGES	Aiesha Miller-Motley, Ronda Williams	Philanthropy project

Pay It Forward: Strengthening Communities through Student-Led Philanthropy

“[Becoming] personally involved in a service-learning project definitely produced a ‘cool factor’ in learning that I would challenge other instructors to explore.”

~University of Akron lecturer, Karen Padrutt.

The University of Akron was recently awarded a **Pay it Forward** grant for \$10,500 from Ohio Campus Compact.

Karen Padrutt (Group Decision Making—Fall 2010) and **Dr. Deborah Marino** (Community Nutrition II—Spring 2011) will each receive \$5,000 for class projects. Students in these classes will learn about philanthropy and service-learning. They will identify community organizations serving the issues of children and youth; neighborhood development and revitalization; and hunger, homelessness, and health issues. Students will then issue Requests for Funding Proposals (RFPs), evaluate grant proposals, and finally, award funds to local nonprofit organizations. Students will also complete service-projects with the organizations.

“The Pay it Forward grant will help develop a new generation of philanthropists through a course-based service-learning environment by engaging college students in hands on philanthropy, grant-making, and volunteer service while providing community nonprofits with much needed assistance in the current deflated economic environment.” Ohio Campus Compact



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