



Center for Service and Social Action Bulletin

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Staff member Tom Reilley discovers desire to help others

Tom Reilley, manager of purchasing and auxiliary services at John Carroll, is busy managing the purchasing office, running the copy and mail centers, and is a dedicated family man.

Amidst all his responsibilities and hectic schedule, he has committed himself to serving others here in the local community and throughout the country.

Two years ago Reilley was approached by one of his work study students to come on an Immersion. Ted Steiner, coordinator of immersions & special programs, caught wind of Reilley's interest and asked him to be one of the FSA leaders on the New Orleans experience in March 2009.

Reilley approached his wife to see if she'd be interested in joining the group with him. Not particularly devout Catholics, Reilley admitted

that "The word reflection scared us!" During the course of the Immersion however, they realized it's simply talking about their day and how it

since been a part of another trip to New Orleans and plan on going again in May 2011.

Reilley explained that for 18 years he did nothing, and now service is such a big part of his life here at JCU. He has been consistently involved with the Streak Week/Cleveland Neighborhood Project service activities, Cultivating Community days, and the Fatima Fun Day during the summer. "We're finally doing something to give back and we're doing something more fulfilling," he explained of his and his wife's service involvement.

Reilley and his wife plan on getting involved in service activities on a weekly basis once they both retire. A potential possibility is working with Theresa Spada, assistant director of alumni relations, to form alumni Immersion experiences abroad.



Reilley led JCU students to help rebuild in New Orleans.

affected their opinion on certain things.

"The residents are so appreciative of the work we do when we're down there, and the stories they tell from Katrina are unbelievable," explained Reilley. He and his wife have

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New OGT program at Fatima Center *Changes Lives*



Fatima Family Center is a recreation center where teens can go to participate in many positive activities, including a Teen Leadership program.

As a component of the teen program, a group of bright students from John Carroll and Notre Dame tutor us for the Ohio Graduation Test every Wednesday. The tutors help us in the subjects we need help in, and some of the tutors even major in these subjects, such as math and science. This made the sessions easy and fun. The tutors were able to help us find ways to conquer our fears of test-taking and master our study techniques. Our tutors even found ways to help us search for the career that best fit our personalities. That was a very helpful workshop.

All of the tutors were smart, energetic, fun and inspiring. They were very eager to help us succeed. There was a particular activity the tutors had us do that I found very beneficial. We had to write our worries on a piece of paper, read everyone's worry aloud, and then the tutors offered advice pertaining to our worries. We then threw our worries away. How cool was that!

Words can not describe how much the students from John Carroll have helped us. The sessions were filled with energetic tutors ready to help us whenever we needed them. This was a great opportunity and I will never forget it. -Gabrielle Jones-

Professor recognized for innovative service-learning courses

The 2010 Ohio Campus Compact David Hoch Memorial Award recognized Dr. Linda Seiter for her outstanding work in service-learning and civic engagement within the local community this past May.

Seiter, an associate professor in the department of mathematics and computer science, received the award because of her innovative use of service-learning in various computer science courses and the significant contributions these efforts lend to the Cleveland community.

“Doing service-learning gives them the sense that what they’re learning in the classroom is real and valuable and that they’re able to provide a service that is pretty specialized,” stated Seiter. The relationship between Seiter’s classes and the partners they assist is seen as mutually beneficial.

One of her courses last semester gave John Carroll

students the opportunity to teach 2-D computer programming to kids at the Shaker Heights Open Doors after-school program. They secretly learned the computer writing language found in professional programs while creating animated games, stories and movies, explained Seiter.

JCU students have also developed Web sites for local community partners using Google Sites, including the Open Doors after-school program and Montefiore Senior Center. Students designed multiple Web options and then allowed the directors to choose the final site design. Students taught the administrators how to maintain the site on their own.

Students in Seiter’s database



course helped improve the Center for Service and Social Action’s service registration database last spring, and a new group of students will continue that work next semester.

“It’s good for students to work with real people with real problems. When they graduate, hopefully they’ll remember how they volunteered their time and services to people and places in need, and will continue to do so,”

said Seiter.

Ohio Campus Compact, a non-profit membership organization of 46 Ohio colleges and universities with strong community service, service-learning, and/or civic engagement programs on their campuses annually recognize outstanding college faculty service leaders. This award is named for the late David Hoch, the University of Toledo’s Dean of Honors, who served as the director of service-learning from 1999 – 2005.

Running a marathon with a mission

The 33rd Annual Cleveland Marathon took place this past May with more than 10,000 runners raising approximately \$12 million for the Cleveland community. John Carroll was represented at the race with 18 runners participating with the “Living Person” group.

The “Living Person” group began in 2005 after Father H. Paul came back from Madagascar, an island off the southeast coast of Africa. During

his visit, Fr. H encountered many children and families suffering from poverty and hunger.

“The children I held, sang and played with were not just suffering Africans we often watch on TV. They became my siblings I saw every day in my prayers, so I wanted to do something for them,” explained Fr. H.

He left Madagascar wanting to remember the children he met on a daily basis and somehow give back to them. He realized running a marathon would be a great way for the local community to get involved, and was an easy way to raise awareness and funds from family and friends.

January 2010 marked the “Living Person VI” and the first year Fr. H recruited runners from John Carroll for the marathon group. Originally 30 people expressed interest in joining the cause; students, faculty and administrators all ready to confront the 26.2 mile challenge.

After a four-month training journey, 18 dedicated runners remained. Freshman Patrick Levandowski, a wrestler in high school, had open-

heart surgery in 2009. After a long recovery, he wanted to do something to prove himself to others and his doctor recommended running for his heart. He joined “Living Person VI,” trained and ran the full race.

“It was extraordinary to watch him keeping the faith, fighting well, and finishing the race,” said Fr. H.

The “Living Person VI” group raised \$3,120 for Cleveland children at the Fatima Family Center and the



Fr. H awards LaJean Ray, director of Fatima, donations raised from Cleveland marathon.

children of Madagascar. “It was an important part of the training and running because we were not just running for ourselves. The goal to help others motivates runners and reminds us that we are keepers of

our brothers and sisters in need around the world,” explained Fr. H.

He delivered half the money to Madagascar last summer and the other half was donated to Fatima during the Cleveland Neighborhood Project that took place in August. The money was used to provide local families a turkey and all the fixings for this Thanksgiving holiday.

Fr. H is beginning to recruit members for the “Living Person VII” group to begin training at the end of January. The Cleveland Marathon takes place on May 15, 2011, one week before graduation. Since 2005 45 “Living Person” members have finished the race and raised a total of \$14,275.

“It is your time to join and to keep the faith. Welcome,” says Fr. H. To join, contact Fr. H at hpaul0920@hotmail.com.

John Carroll University

Student addresses food security during a summer of service

More than 1.4 million Ohioans receive emergency food assistance each year, according to the “Hunger in Ohio 2010” study released by the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks.

Ohio food pantries, soup kitchens, and other assistance agencies have experienced a 78 percent increase in clients served, many struggling to choose between food and other basic necessities.

Catherine Distelrath, a recent AmeriCorps Summer Associate at John Carroll University, served as the key coordinator for JCU’s community garden, a new initiative to confront food security in the local community.

Distelrath and six faculty volunteers tended the garden all summer; donating fresh produce to the Heights Emergency Food Center located in Cleveland.

After generating 106 pounds of produce, Distelrath realized the people served by the center were unsure how to integrate the fresh food into their daily meals. She began a nutrition program for the food recipients, educating them on how to cook the fresh vegetables.

Distelrath’s work with the food center has helped her see the effects the recession and poor economy has had on the local community.

“Working at the center really teaches you that you can’t judge someone by only looking at them. Different people are going through different times in their lives, you just never know their story,” she said.

Even though Distelrath’s summer of service has ended, she still volunteers with the food center on a weekly basis. She serves as the youngest member on its executive board and is in the process of planning a 5K run fundraiser for the spring.

Bike co-op promotes healthy lifestyle and clean environment

The Environmental Issues Group in cooperation with the City of University Heights and JCU Student Affairs has developed a bicycle co-op, hoping that people will stop using their cars and start riding bikes.

The Coburn Bicycle Co-op kicked-off in September to encourage the JCU community to “Enjoy the environment around them and to commute in a manner that won’t hurt the world around them,” said Raymond Chahoud, former EIG president.

He explained that too many people hop in their car to buy groceries or pick something up at Target. The EIG believes people should slow down and realize there are other ways to run errands. “We want people to change their *We want it now* mentality. We’re also trying to promote a healthier, sustainable campus,” stated Chahoud.

The 18 bicycles for the co-op were donated by the service and police departments from the City of University Heights. Donations from campus and community members, a grant from the Student Union, and funding from Student Affairs provided financial support for helmets, locks, and replacement parts.

Dr. Chris Shiel, a faculty advisor for the EIG, trained members of the group on how to repair the donated bikes by using salvaged parts.

The co-op is named in honor of Dr. Miles Coburn, a former member of the biology department, who was an avid cyclist and keen environmental advocate. Coburn worked at JCU for 26 years before being killed by an SUV while cycling.

For more information regarding the Coburn Co-op, rental policy and bicycle availability, contact EIG President Alex Valigosky at avaligosky12@jcu.edu.

Carroll Reads program continues to expand

The Carroll Reads program expanded to three tutoring sites this fall and continues to experience growth into the spring semester.

Carroll Reads began as a pilot program last spring after AmeriCorps VISTA Kathryn Terrell researched literacy programs and assessed their viability at John Carroll.

After conducting her research, Terrell chose to pursue implementation of the America Reads program.

The Carroll Reads model includes meeting with key staff at potential sites, asking their tutoring needs, and creating an individualized program schedule based on the goals they have for their students. Current tutors assist in general homework help, math tutoring and reading tutoring, either one-on-one or in small groups.

The program is currently offered to public and parochial schools and after-school homework help centers run by the Cuyahoga County Public Libraries.

“Having additional tutoring help in classrooms and libraries allows students who are in need of one-on-one attention an opportunity to work with someone who is there just to support them. Outside of tutoring, our volunteers also serve an important mentoring/role modeling function,” explained Terrell.

Junior Matt Doss, a middle childhood education major, is a second year Carroll Reads tutor at St. Adalbert’s Catholic School.

He explained that the students he works with are in the most need of help and usually don’t receive the academic attention they deserve. The tutors help the students realize their academic struggles, watch their progress, and recognize their achievements. The students then feel accountable for their progress and tend to be more

motivated to succeed.

“This has been a real eye-opening experience. It’s mutually beneficial for both the server and the one being served. You learn so much – you feel so much. It’s an overall positive experience,” said Doss.

Sophomore Lisa Reichert is also a second year Carroll Reads tutor serving at the Richmond Heights Library. She is truly dedicated to serving Cleveland youth; she currently tutors with three weekly programs this semester, and volunteers with the many one-time service projects CSSA offers.

Reichert enjoys working with the Carroll Reads program because she feels the kids really want to participate in the program and the parents are very supportive and engaged in their child’s learning.

“Most people think the kids that attend tutoring are usually behind. These kids are already pretty efficient, they’re just trying to perfect themselves,” explained Reichert of the students she works with.

Both Doss and Reichert expressed the reason they continue to do service is because of the meaningful relationships they forge with the students they serve.



Doss helps tutor students at St. Adalbert’s through Carroll Reads.

New Immersion destinations for spring expand students' horizons

CSSA is sponsoring two new Immersions in January that will take students to exciting locations rich with learning opportunities.

The first destination is Rwanda, a small country the size of Maryland, in the heart of Africa. The experience will focus on understanding the impact of the 1994 genocide and analyzing the country's rise from ashes to a nation with great potential. Students will learn how the Rwandan government is responding to the perpetrators of the genocide. They will visit genocide memorials and local organizations aiding the rebuilding and reconciliation process.

To prepare, students are participating in a fall class, *Rwanda in Comparative African Perspective*, that will help them examine the politics, culture, and history of Rwanda and compare these aspects to other countries in the region.

Jen Ziemke from the political science department, Tamba Nlandu from the philosophy department and

John Ropar from the Counseling Center will accompany the students on this Immersion.

The second destination is Guatemala. Students will visit a small village, San Juan La Laguna, home to approximately 100,000 Tz'utujil people, one of the 21 Mayan ethnic groups that still exist.

During the visit, students will have the opportunity to complete maintenance projects at a local school, Nuevo Amanecer (New Dawn). Any assistance to the school is important because only 55 percent of Guatemalan people are literate. The population of Guatemala is the least-educated in Central America.

Students will also visit a Fair Trade Coffee distributor, a church youth group, and a ministry for disabled children.

Both Ted Steiner from CSSA and Mary-Michelle Coleman from the Tim Russert De-

partment of Communication and Theatre Arts will accompany the group.

For more information on Immersions, contact Ted Steiner at tsteiner@jcu.edu.



Lindsay Smetana laughs with a young boy on a 2010 Immersion to Nicaragua.

Building relationships and citizenship skills through the *We the People* service-learning program

We the People, a service-learning program based on the Constitution and the rights of American citizens, has more than tripled in size since 2008-2009.

In the fall of 2010, 80 JCU tutors visited 21 classrooms at 12 different schools, reaching almost 500 youth in the Cleveland area. When the program began four years ago, a small group of JCU tutors visited three classrooms at Caledonia School in East Cleveland reaching approximately 75 youth.

"With each visit, valuable connections within the Cleveland community are built. JCU tutors strengthen the bonds they have established

with their tutees, and help to build bridges between their tutees and the world of higher education. It is truly a serving and learning experience for all," explained Miriam McGinn, the graduate assistant for CSSA who helps coordinate the program.

JCU partnered with the Ohio Center for Law-Related Education in 2006 to bring *We the People* to Cleveland area schools, the only higher education institution to implement a model in which college students act as tutors teaching the material.

Tutors strive to prepare the community's children to become active citizens in the 21st century. During their weekly visits to 5th, 8th, and high school classrooms across the

East Cleveland and Cleveland school districts, JCU tutors lead students in interactive simulations and exercises that reinforce learning about the Constitution and its role in society.

As they learn about the Constitution and their own rights as American citizens, students are encouraged to form their own opinions and to think critically about the past, present, and future of the U.S.

For more information on the *We the People* program, contact Miriam McGinn at mmcginnmoorer09@jcu.edu; 216.397.2024.

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A special thank you to our community partners

Churches: Church of the Covenant, Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Monica, St. Paul's, **Community Centers:** Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland, Fatima Family Center, Goodrich-Gannett Neighborhood Center, Hijos De Borinquen Spanish American Center, Rose Mary Center, St. Martin De Porres, Thea Bowman Center, **Hospitals:** Huron Hospital, Marymount Hospital, The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland, Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital, **Non-Profit Organizations:** Boys Hope Girls Hope, Cleveland Food Bank, Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center, Domestic Violence Center, Interfaith Hospitality Network, Koinonia Homes, L'Arche, Light of Hearts Villa, Malachi House, Mayfield Adaptive, Montefiore, Quantum LEAP, Richmond Heights Public Library, South Pointe Hospital, Ss. Robert and William, Youthability, **Schools:** Boulevard, Buckeye-Woodland, CHAMPS, Caledonia, Canterbury, Chambers, E-Prep, Fairfax, Gearity Professional Development, Heritage, Holy Name, Intergenerational, Many Villages, Mayfair, Monticello, Noble, Open Doors- Cleveland Heights and Shaker, Oxford, Prospect, Roxboro Elementary and Middle, Shaw, St. Adalbert's, St. Francis, St. Thomas Aquinas, Superior, Warner Girls Leadership Academy, Wiley

Center for Service and Social Action Mission Statement

The Center for Service and Social Action seeks to educate for justice by offering opportunities for learning through service. Growing from a rich Catholic intellectual tradition, we promote service that inspires a deeper commitment to those most in

need. The Center connects the campus with the local, national, and international communities through sustained partnerships that enable John Carroll community members to become "men and women for and with others."