



Center for Service and Social Action Bulletin

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‘We the People,’ East Cleveland celebrate five year partnership

Of the numerous memories James Rudyk has garnered throughout the years as a “We The People” tutor, one in particular stands out: seeing one of the St. Martin de Porres students he had tutored in the program on John Carroll’s campus doing an internship.

“It really inspired me and gave me the energy and perseverance to continue with the program,” said Rudyk, now a JCU alum, but still active in CSSA’s “We the People” program.

“We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution,” is a service learning program offered through the Center for Service and Social Action that serves as supplemental social studies instruction in East Cleveland’s school system. At the end of each semester, the students partake in a “mock Congressional hearing” at JCU, competing



Kelsey Ott ‘11 and students prepare for the mock hearing.

against other classrooms in their age group. Now in its fifth year, the program has spread to every school in East Cleveland, catering to students as young as fifth grade and into their high school years.

Rudyk began volunteering for the program during its first year, and has tutored in four different age levels.

For him, the program provides a much-needed resource to the East

Cleveland school district. “[John Carroll] students provide positive role models and mentors to the East Cleveland students,” he said. “More importantly, it allows a diversity and enrichment of the existing curriculum that otherwise would not be present.”

Vernillis Chambers, who recently retired as the principal of East Cleveland’s Caledonia Elementary School, praised the program as a fantastic partnership. The relationship between the JCU students and the young fifth graders painted a picture for the children of who college students were, and allowed them to begin thinking about college.

“It was a different type of setting from what the students were used to, and provided a cooperative learning environment,” she said.

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John Carroll hosts Fatima Fun Day on campus

John Carroll senior Tyler Bond learned that Fatima Fun Day was more than just a day of fun.

“I enjoyed that we could give these kids an experience that they couldn't get anywhere else,” Bond said.

Co-sponsored by CSSA and the Office of Mission and Identity, Fatima Fun Day is a service project held every year on John Carroll's campus during the summer. On this day, children of the Fatima Family Center Day Camp Program visit JCU for a Field Day. The morning began with a reflection, and at the end of the day, the volunteers held a reflection.

The young boys and girls, ranging in age from five to 12 years old, engaged in events such as hula hoop contests, rope walking and foot races. Staff, administrators and students all served as volunteers and engaged the children in activities on the Quad throughout the day.

It was Bond's first time partici-

pating, yet as a student planning on working in the field of child psychology, Fatima Fun Day gave him a great opportunity to interact with a large group of kids.

“We talked about going to college and they said they'd like to come to John Carroll. It was a great experience knowing that we affected a lot of these kids in such a positive way.”

Liz Deegan, CSSA's coordinator for school-based programs, enjoyed hanging out with several ten year olds who were “so full of love and energy.”

“I work at an amazing place that allows for this kind of thing to happen and [encourages] staff to take part in it.”

As the day concluded, Bond made



Tyler Bond (top left) and children at Fatima Fun Day.

a decision to take part in helping with the service program next year, even though he will be graduating this semester.

“I was able to learn and grow a lot,” he said.

“I got more out of it for myself than I had expected, and I have always said as long as I walk away learning something, I know that I will have made a difference.”

CSSA celebrates five-year partnership

(Continued from front page)

From a principal's perspective, Chambers said that We the People is a unique program in that it allows the school children to interact with college students as opposed to the professional adults that are typically involved.

It is a great opportunity for the kids to interact with people from other communities and other walks of life, and she remembers the students always looking forward to it each week.

“They were upset [on the weeks when] it didn't occur,” she said. (Laughing,) “They hated JCU's spring break because it didn't coincide with theirs.”

Rudyk also remembers how students showed excitement for each week the John Carroll students came into their classrooms. “We become a consistent and reliable part of their lives,” he said. “The students do learn information about the Constitution and civics but more importantly, they learn about life, about college, and about their future. I am always struck at how attentive the students are to us and our presence in their classroom.”

For a program that only began in a couple of schools in the East Cleveland district, WTP has expanded to include public and parochial schools in Cleveland and East Cleveland, teaching over 400 students on a weekly basis.

Besides educating children about the Constitution and our nation's government, Chambers indicated that it allowed students to become more vocal and assertive, giving the children confidence in speaking in a public setting among other young adults.

Rudyk is certain that We the People has provided a great service to the students, and that it provides a promising future for each child affected.

“[The relationship between the program and East Cleveland] holds hope,” he said. “It holds a promise of a better future and of a public education system that brings out the best in students.”

JCU senior is recipient of prestigious 'Charles J. Ping' award

Senior Catherine Distelrath wasn't sure what to expect with the Charles J. Ping Community Service Award.

"I knew very little about it," she says. "Dr. [Margaret] Finucane asked me if she could nominate me for the award and, of course, I said yes."

She's probably glad she said yes.

Distelrath was named one of 14 recipients of the 2010-2011 Ping award, which is given by Ohio Campus Connect to recognize students for their contributions to service and service-learning opportunities in their communities and campuses.

She competed with other nominated students across participating Ohio colleges and universities.

Some of her favorite service experiences came from the Heights Emergency Food Center, in Cleveland Heights, and tutoring GED students at the Thea Bowman Center, which serves Cleveland's impoverished Mt.

Pleasant neighborhood.

"I went to each of these sites a couple times a week, and I always looked forward to going with great anticipation," she said.

In their nominations, students needed to be active in community service or service-learning opportunities during their undergraduate years.

They also needed to demonstrate that they contributed to a real need in the community and fully met the need.

Finucane, the director of the Center for Service and Social Action, along with JCU President, the Rev. Robert Niehoff, S.J., and other CSSA staff members nominated Distelrath for her love of service. She currently enjoys working in the office for the Center for Service and Social Action in many capacities, assisting with data-entry and special projects.



Distelrath was one of 14 recipients of the Ping award.

Distelrath was also an Ohio Campus Compact Summer Associate for CSSA's Community Garden.

For students who are lukewarm about getting involved in service opportunities, Distelrath says that you won't know how you like the experience unless you try it.

"I think it's important for everyone to try it once and really commit to the experience. [You] may be pleasantly surprised, because of it, the world will look a little bit brighter for everyone involved."

John Carroll Named to President's Community Service Honor Roll

This past spring, John Carroll University's strong service ethic grabbed the attention of the White House.

JCU was once again named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a college or university can receive for its commitment to service, civic engagement and service learning.

Launched in 2006, the Honor Roll recognizes institutions of higher education each year for their commitment to community service. An honor the University has now achieved four years in a row, the Honor Roll recognized JCU service programs such as the Hough Neighborhood Partnership and JCU Homeless Initiative, among others.

Margaret Finucane Ph.D., the director of CSSA, said this honor speaks of John Carroll's ability to connect with the campus and the community.

"It speaks to the University's accomplishments and engaging our students in the mission of John Carroll and a Jesuit education, along with the commitment to leadership, learning and service," she said.

Service is evident in the University's mission, as more than half of the students performed a total of over 54,000 hours of service during the 2010-2011 academic year.



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CSSA Appoints two new positions

This summer, an associate director and coordinator for school-based programs became the service organization's newest additions. Read on to learn a little more about Maryellen Callanan and Liz Deegan, and what they're doing to enhance CSSA's role at JCU and within the community it serves.

The Center's Maryellen Callanan's project management skills are a key factor as she fulfills her position as the Center's associate director.



Callanan will be assisting CSSA Director Margaret Finucane in the day-to-day operations of the Center, supervising the coordinators, helping with the budget and overseeing the Public Relations coordinator.

Callanan—whose diverse background includes an accounting degree, along with experience in corporate communications, investor relations and office management—describes her most recent experience at Gesu Church as a good example of honing her skills in project management.

"I was involved with a capital campaign at Gesu that included renovating the parish office, where the priests had previously lived," she said.

"The parish office was in poor condition so the entire structure was gutted to reconfigure the space for parishioners. It was rewarding to be involved with this project from start to finish and see the impact it made on the parish."

In addition, Callanan was chairperson of Gesu's Social Concerns Commission, the church's body that organizes outreach and service in the community.

Now at Carroll, Callanan notes that there are commonalities between John Carroll's partnerships and Gesu's, including 2100 Lakeside Men's Shelter and the Thea Bowman Center. She hopes that with her new position, she can aid in the growth of CSSA.

"Dr. Finucane has done such an amazing job growing the Center during her time here, and I think when you have growth, there's also a lot of opportunity," she said.

"I am truly grateful to work with such inspiring students and co-workers and look forward to each and every day."

When it comes to partnering with school-based programs, Liz Deegan is the go-to woman. Her former roles as a high school teacher, volunteer and non-profit consultant were just three pieces of the puzzle that made her the ideal candidate for CSSA's newest position, coordinator for school-based programs.



Within the Center, Deegan will be in charge of working with CSSA's signature programs, We the People and Carroll Reads, as well as working with the OGT Tutoring program and training the student tutors in a better way. The job description bodes well for Deegan, who said she's always tried to remain involved in education in some way.

"I have worked with facilitating student workshops, which drew me to this [position] initially," she said. "And the opportunity to relate with teachers on a one-on-one basis and create relationships with the schools is great as well- I think I can bring a lot to the table with that."

It is this go-getter attitude that has already placed Deegan ahead of the game, for all the right reasons—the number of students involved in school-based partnerships isn't small—of the 800 students who were involved in weekly service activities in Fall 2010, 400 went into the schools. Her to-do list includes obtaining more resources to have a better library for the tutors, along with finding ways to better prepare JCU students to make their tutoring session more effective each time. Overall, Deegan is looking at CSSA's mission and specific activities that will make JCU students better prepared to fulfill that mission when they go into the schools.

Already Deegan has fallen in love with the John Carroll service ethic. "I have met many amazing students, even students who have graduated but still want to participate in service projects," she said. "I am very impressed so far."

John Carroll student works for change

Sophomore Kayla Shelley makes JCU a more active campus in the fight against injustice

This past summer, sophomore Kayla Shelley participated in an Oxfam experience called the CHANGE Initiative.

She traveled to Boston in order to work with the program, which trains college students to become more actively engaged with Oxfam America's work. The goal of Oxfam America is to broaden perspectives, inspire positive action and shape global citizens.

While Shelley was in Boston, she and 49 other CHANGE leaders learned ways to en-

gage their respective campus and community and to plan and host events.

Currently, Oxfam is focusing on a "Right to Know, Right to Decide" campaign which supports food extractive industries, as well as a second campaign called the "GROW" campaign which supports food sustainability.

"Learning about these two social justice issues really helped me get a better understanding about [the] injustices our world faces," said Shelly. "A great thing about Oxfam is that it is an incredible network of people working to make the world a better place."

Shelley has found a solid support system to help her with projects this year.

"I loved all the people I met in Boston and am teaming up with other student [leaders] from The Ohio State University and Ohio University this year," she said.



Shelley (far right) with other young women who participated in the CHANGE Initiative.

She first found interest in Oxfam America through JCU's Arrupe Scholars program and through previous CHANGE leaders.

"After hearing about how incredible their experiences were, I just decided to apply and that is where my Oxfam journey began."

In the spring of last year, Shelley also helped put on the Oxfam Hunger Banquet with the Arrupe Scholars in order to help raise awareness on issues such as hunger, poverty and injustice.

Shelley affirms that participating in the CHANGE initiative affected her in many ways.

"It has shown me that service will forever be a part of my life," she said.

Learning about the GROW campaign in particular peaked her interest in food sustainability, and has inspired her to organize events for the campaign on JCU's campus.

Shelley plans to remain an active

part of Oxfam America and to work on its campaigns for the rest of her life.

"This experience has broadened my outlook on poverty and injustice in the world and makes me want to do everything I can to raise awareness and take action to make things change for a better tomorrow."

More information regarding Oxfam America can be found at oxfamamerica.org/whatyoucando/take-action/student-action/change. Contact Dr. Margaret Finucane if you are interested in the Oxfam CHANGE Initiative for Summer 2012.

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Thank you to our community partners

Churches: Church of the Covenant, Our Lady of Lourdes **Community Centers:** Boys and Girls Club of Cleveland, Fatima Family Center, Goodrich-Gannett Neighborhood Center, St. Martin De Porres, Thea Bowman Center **Hospitals:** Marymount Hospital, The Free Medical Clinic of Greater Cleveland, Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital, South Pointe Hospital **Non-Profit Organizations:** Boys Hope Girls Hope, Cleveland Food Bank, Cuyahoga County

Juvenile Detention Center, Domestic Violence Center, FAMICOS Foundation, Family Promise, Greater Cleveland Immigrant Support Network, Heights Emergency Food Center, Jewish Federation of Cleveland, Jewish Family Services Association, Koinonia Homes, La Providencia Hispanic Senior Center, L'Arche, Lutheran Metropolitan Ministries(2100 Lakeside), Malachi House, Mayfield Adaptive, Medwish International, Montefiore, Quantum LEAP, Richmond Heights Public Library, US Together,

and Youthability. **Schools:** Buckeye-Woodland, Buhner, CHAMPS Program, Caledonia, Canterbury, Chambers, Collinwood, E-Prep, Gearity Professional Development, Heritage, Holy Name, The Intergenerational School, John Adams, JFK, Lutheran East, Many Villages, Mayfair, Miles Park, Monticello, Open Doors Academy, Prospect, Shaw, St. Adalberts, St. Francis, St. Martin de Porres, St. Thomas Aquinas, Superior, Warner Girls Leadership Academy, and 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."