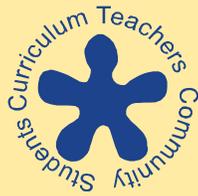




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# Service Learning

February/March 2003 \* Volume #4, Issue 2\* Chicago Public Schools \* Office of High School Development

## CPS Youth Organize for Neighborhood Youth Center

Over three hundred residents, led by the Brighton Park Youth Council (BPYC), gathered on November 12, 2002, to demand a commitment from city and state officials to help bring a community center to Brighton Park. As a result of the action, the youth won commitments from Chicago's Department of Human Services, 14<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Ed Burke, State Senator Tony Munoz, and Congressman Luis Gutierrez. "We worked really hard and the outcome of the meeting was very successful. We are really happy because we have gotten this far," said 18 year-old Lisa Rodriguez, a member of the Brighton Park Youth Council.

According to an article in the Chicago Tribune on Sunday, January 26, 2003, the request for money for the center has received support from these public officials in a tough economic year, despite the fact that "most of the organizers can't vote." "Getting this center built has become my passion," said Curie High School senior Margle Rodriguez, 18, who is among the BPYC members who met with Alderman Edward Burke, head of the City Council's Finance Committee. "We're just asking these elected officials to do their jobs," said Rodriguez.

The fight for a community center started as a youth initiative to combat the negative influences the youth in Brighton Park have to face daily, such as gang violence and teenage pregnancy. These problems have been perpetuated by the serious lack of human services in the area, populated mostly by Latino immigrants. "We need a community center here in our neighborhood, a place where we can participate in programs that would help us stay out of trouble. Other neighborhoods have

community centers for their residents, but we have to travel far away in order to receive the services we need," said 15-year old Jessica Benitez. cont. pg. 4

### What is Service Learning?

Service Learning is a teaching and learning methodology that connects classroom curriculum with identified community issues and needs. Service Learning engages students in projects that serve the community and build their social and academic capacities.

### Why use Service Learning in the Classroom?

A recent story on National Public Radio examined teen attitudes toward civic participation. "Today's teenagers have grown up with two strong messages about government: that politics is messy and politicians can be corrupt, and that every citizen can make a difference in his or her own community. Research shows that the average 20-year old is more likely to sign up as a volunteer than show up at the voting booth." The story's assessment of service experiences among young people is that we may be teaching them the value of demonstrating kindness in their neighborhoods, but we have not yet been successful in helping them examine the social and political roots that undergird the problems they address.

For example, by volunteering to help at a homeless shelter, students may learn that it is important to lend a hand to provide a meal, but they may not necessarily learn that the crisis of affordable housing, insufficient jobs and wages, and a host of other problems lead to homelessness. Our social and political systems can do much to reduce the problem of homelessness. Ideally practiced, Service Learning enables students to encounter the problem, understand its complex dimensions, and then do something about it. A student or student group may still visit a shelter to provide one meal, but through the active engagement with the issues through classroom curriculum and skilled adult guidance, students can come to understand that the roots of the problem need as much attention, if not more, than the symptoms of the problem. That is the true promise of Service Learning.

## Curie and Jones Travel the World without Leaving Chicago

During the past two months, Curie and Jones High Schools participated in the Cultural Kitchen program of the Chicago International Hostel.

Reflections from a Curie teacher and Jones' students are included below.

“The Cultural Kitchen is a program for teenagers who would like to earn Service Learning hours but, at the same time, have fun. The purpose of the program is to learn about a different culture from another country and to meet people from around the world. It is divided into nine sessions, one day per week for one hour, with a culminating event the last day.

We began by learning what a hostel was and taking a tour of the International Hostel. Then we looked at maps and an atlas to decide what country we would study. We divided up areas of concentration like music, food, lifestyle, population, history of the country, and researched our area. We chose Andorra, a little country between Spain and France. Then we researched recipes and created a menu including soup, salad, a main entrée and dessert. We also put together several posters about Andorra for our presentation.

The most exciting part was when we got to cook the meal. People who were staying in the hostel even helped. When we finished cooking, we served the meal and everyone ate. We then presented our reports on Andorra. We also interviewed the hostel guests using questions from our Hostel Passports. There was a woman from Brazil, a mother and teenage son from Morocco, a Canadian man, an Englishman (he was really cute), a Buddhist monk and several people from different cities in the U.S. It was

really interesting learning about their lives. This experience gave us more appreciation for other cultures and made us better cooks as well.”

—Maya Kogan and Anayeli Fuentes  
Jones Academic Magnet High School

“Thirty Curie High School students (Drama and World Studies) headed for the Chicago International Hotel on Friday, December 17, 2002. Our



overnight trip was part of a Service Learning project called Cultural Kitchen, in which a group of students focuses its study on a chosen country's history, culture, and cuisine before going to the hostel to cook a four-course meal and spend the night.

Janelle Manno, the Education Director at the hostel, came out to Curie to give a workshop for our students on hostelling, internationalism, and world cultures. We met in the Media Center around a giant map of the world, and both classes had a chance to meet and discuss other cultures. Ms. Manno helped students choose a country of focus for the project.

Our chosen country was Italy; my students studied Commedia Dell-Arte, an influential form of Italian theatre.

Mr. Engstrom's World Studies class studied its history and culture. The students did research on typical, authentic Italian food, and together, they chose our menu: Mediterranean crostini, vegetarian and meat lasagna, blood orange salad, and chocolate Ameretti cake.

When we got to the hostel, we picked up our linens and headed to our rooms. I shared a room with ten girls, some of whom were from my class, and some from Mr. E's class. A chemistry different than that we knew at school was immediately apparent—everyone was friendly and joking around, even though they had just met. We went down to the hostel's giant kitchen to start preparing dinner for the guests at the hostel.

Our group of 30 was split in two: one to cook, and one to complete the Cultural Passports. The passport activity included meeting international travelers, exploring the hostel, and learning about its history. The cooking was a little more complicated. We were split into smaller groups, one for each course. The students handled themselves extraordinarily well in the kitchen, and after a couple of hours, they had created an extravagant four-course meal. Travelers came down for dinner, sat with the students, and we all had a really pleasant dining experience.

After clean up, we relaxed and explored the hostel some more. Some watched movies, some talked with travelers, some played games, and others just hung out. The next morning, we reconvened in the dining room, which, with its huge glass wall facing downtown, afforded us an awesome view during breakfast. The students got to take home Cultural Chicago books, HI t-shirts, and four-year memberships to Hostelling International.”

—Sarah Miller, Curie High School

## Chicago Service Learning Delegation Visits Maryland

The state of Maryland has long been at the forefront of Service Learning in the United States. It was the first state to implement a Service Learning graduation requirement in the early 1990's. Today, it continues to lead states around the country in designing resources and strategies for implementing high quality Service Learning projects across its 24 counties.

On November 25 and 26, 2002, fifteen delegates from Chicago Public Schools visited Maryland in order to better understand how a state and its 24 counties implement a state-mandated Service Learning requirement of 75 hours for high school students. In particular, the Chicago delegation examined:

- ✓ the classroom practice of integrating Service Learning into curriculum,
- ✓ professional development strategies for teachers, and
- ✓ the development of state, county, and school infrastructure to support meaningful service opportunities.

Teachers, Service Learning coaches, students, principals, Area Instruction Officers, community leaders, and central office personnel made up the Chicago delegation. The team was able to visit an interesting mix of high schools in Baltimore and Montgomery County. We were thrilled to visit Montgomery Blair High School, a new school just outside of Washington, DC, where

students played an important role in the architectural design of the school. Students were excited to be a part of the school and their stories of service projects were inspiring.

In addition to the visit to Blair High School, the Chicago team visited W.E. DuBois High School and Woodlawn High School in Baltimore. We also heard from key Maryland State Department of Education leaders who shared dozens of wonderful Service Learning resources and strategies with Chicago.

Following the study trip, one participant wrote: "I learned that Service Learning is a work in progress, not only in Chicago, but elsewhere in the country....I learned that there are many people in the field of education with common goals and there are many more people who are in positions of power who need to understand the value of Service Learning so that it can be a more viable and funded program throughout the nation." Another wrote: "I...learned that we, in Chicago, are on the right path....I am very encouraged about the direction Chicago is taking...."

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### The Greatest Gift of All

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LifeSource Blood Services is partnering with Chicago Public Schools to offer high school students and their parents the opportunity to save lives. A new program titled **Generation-Next Service Initiative**, encourages high school students to learn about the LifeSource blood donor program and its significance to the community. Specifically, the program helps students to:

- discover how volunteer blood donations help save the lives of patients,
- gain first-hand knowledge of social responsibility and the importance of helping others, and
- develop adult leadership skills by organizing and publicizing school blood drives.

"The Generation-Next Service Initiative is an innovative and mutually beneficial program that enriches students, schools and communities while at the same time educating the next generation of blood donors," said Jody McKeown, Vice President of Donor Programs and Hospital Services.

As part of the program, blood donations and donor management may be integrated into the curriculum through a number of subject areas. For example, art class students may develop posters for school blood drives or biology and chemistry students can study and describe the science of blood and the human circulatory system.

"Chicago high school students have always answered the call for blood donations," McKeown remarked. "Now, students will have the opportunity to learn more about this life-saving mission. This partnership will save the lives of people throughout the Chicago area."

For more information, please contact Frenchee Liddell at (847) 803-7978 or [fliddell@itxm.org](mailto:fliddell@itxm.org)

## Hyde Park's Team-Up Celebrates King's Legacy with Chicago Cares



As a member of Hyde Park's Team-Up for the last two years, I have truly come to understand the meaning of service and helping the community. On January 18, 2003, Team-Up participated in the Martin Luther King Celebration of Service sponsored by Chicago Cares and Target. Hyde Park's Team-Up and 1000 other high school students and volunteers joined together for a rewarding day of service, celebrating the life and legacy of King.

The day kicked off at Lane Tech High School where we viewed a presentation on Dr. King's dream and an inspiring talk regarding service by Arne Duncan, CEO of Chicago Public Schools and the CEO of Target. Later, we went in small groups to volunteer at locations around the city.

Teaming up with Chicago Cares was a great opportunity and experience. We were bussed to the Chicago Connection, a school that helps refugees with their transition to the United States. Chicago Connection has an adult literacy program that teaches computer skills and English as a Second Language, in addition to the school for refugee children.

Team-Up, along with 20 other volunteers, painted the halls and murals on classroom walls at Chicago

Connection. Repairing and upgrading classrooms for refugee families was a sight to see. We were given an empty room with a blank wall and ten buckets of assorted paints. We drew and painted pictures of keyboards in the computer lab, alligators with alphabets on them in the children's room, and the Chicago skyline in the children's room.

It felt really good to do something that would be appreciated. We wanted to help refugee families, who are struggling with stability, to forget their troubles. I personally feel that we accomplished our goal. If you were to walk into one of the rooms we painted, your troubles would disappear and tears of joy would fill your eyes. I hope the families appreciate and love the paintings as much as I did.

—*Ericka Evans, Sophomore*  
Hyde Park High School

## CPS Youth Organize for Neighborhood (Cont. from pg. 1)

The Brighton Park Youth Council is a group of students and youth leaders who are working to make a difference in their community. By organizing campaigns, BPYC seeks to create a lasting and systemic change in Brighton Park. The process that these students have taken—identifying problems in their neighborhood and then crafting a solution—embodies the very essence of Service Learning. BPYC's student leaders have put in a lot of hard work to make a community center a reality. Though they haven't achieved their ultimate goal, they have made a great deal of progress and have, no doubt, learned incredibly valuable lessons in the nature of democratic participation.

## Juarez Students Host a Turkey of a Dinner

It was a cold November day, but on Thanksgiving Day, 2002, volunteer students and Peer Leaders of Benito Juarez Community Academy helped bring warmth, light, and food into the Pilsen community. Combining their efforts with the Mexican American Veteran's Association and the *Asociacion Por Derechos Obreros*, plates of steaming hot turkey, dressing, potatoes, and pies were served to over 400 people in the community, many of whom would have had no other place to go.

Countless community businesses donated food, beverages, kitchen supplies, and other items to the event, which is now in its third year. But the ones who supplied the heart, kindness, and warm smiles were the volunteer students from Juarez. Fifty-two students, along with Service Learning Coach Russ Kaminski and fellow faculty members gave up part of the day that is usually spent with family and friends. Yet the event's chief organizer, Russ Kaminski, said that there was actually a surplus of student volunteers.

"A lot more of the kids wanted to volunteer," said Mr. Kaminski. "I had to turn students away." Those who did come opened their hearts to others and demonstrated that education at Benito Juarez can mean far more than just reading, writing, and homework.

Mr. Witter

Article adapted from *El Aguila*

## Art Students Pony Up for the Community

Local group homes for teenage mothers and their children will be the lucky recipients of high quality original artwork created as part of Mather High School's "Art for the Community" Service Learning project.

Every Friday afternoon, under the direction of Art teacher Jennifer Krauser and with the help of funds from an Illinois State Board of Education Learn and Serve Grant, students earn service hours by creating art for the community. Artwork is donated to neighborhood shelters, group homes, hospitals and the local library.

The current project involves some 50 students hard at work sanding, priming and painting kid-sized rocking horses, stools and chairs to be donated to the

4 group homes. According to Krauser, each piece takes at least 25 hours over a period of 3- 4 months to produce from start to finish. That doesn't seem



to daunt the commitment of these spirited volunteers, however.

"I'm happy that a child will keep this. That makes it special," says Anna Naumova. "They will not judge it from an artist's point of view, but from a kid's point of view. I'm glad that kids are going to smile while looking at my artwork."

"It's fun to express our creativity and share our art with kids," agreed Roselyn Delapena and Geri Ritual.

Earlier this year, the students created and donated hand-painted mobiles for the children's rooms at the group homes.

—*Renee Aloma*, Mather High School

## Young Leaders Unite at Manley

During the fall of 2002, Young Leaders United's (YLU) Phyllis Glink proposed to Umoja Student Development Corporation Executive Director, Lila Leff, that their organizations join youth and adults together from African-American and Jewish communities, for a day of relationship-building activities, service and discussion. Leff immediately jumped at the opportunity.

Not only would two communities end the day with new relationships, but Umoja, a student development organization housed at Manley Career Academy, would also receive two freshly painted offices. The combination of YLU and Umoja's mission provided the ideal medium for Service Learning, and the project would also help student volunteers acquire valuable CPS Service Learning hours.

Young Leaders United joins the African-American and Jewish

American communities through service projects, while Umoja Student

Development Organization provides social, academic and leadership support for students at Manley Career Academy High School. Since North Lawndale

has strong ties to both the African-American and Jewish communities, students and volunteers were able to explore their shared history while building new relationships together.

At 9:00 a.m., on Saturday, January 18, 2003, over thirty students and twenty volunteers arrived at Manley. But before the paint cans and brushes were handed out, all participants took part in an introductory exercise, learning about one another's personal histories and investigating and discussing relevant themes, such as



how one is perceived and would like to be perceived by others.

At the conclusion of the exercise, students and volunteers split into two groups, each supervised by Umoja and YLU staff. Everyone was eager to learn proper painting techniques from the YLU instructors and quickly absorbed the information. Soon, what began as rooms draped in plastic, with paint-chipped walls, became glowing reflections of a successful partnership.

—*Amanda Roach*, Umoja Student Development Corporation

## Teens Teach Tots to Read!

Have you always wanted to be a big brother or sister? Have you wanted respect and admiration? Through Family Reading 101, a literacy program for babies, toddlers, and high school students, students at Senn High School are earning respect and admiration as they earn Service Learning hours by reading to neighborhood children. Students participating in Family Reading 101 are encouraging an educational bond between children and teenagers that is both rewarding and fun.

Why read to babies and toddlers? Children have many needs. In many ways, children have the same needs as teens, just in different shapes and forms—academic, social, and emotional. By encouraging teens and parents to read to their children or younger siblings, the baby will develop stronger reading and communication skills for the future. Babies love the attention and the positive feedback that students provide. This powerful and entertaining interaction helps babies and toddlers feel more secure.

By participating in a wonderful reading experience throughout the year, the growth and positive change that these children experience will impact positively on their environment and behavior. Renee Cargerman, GATE Coordinator, said, “Each baby will grow up with a positive attitude and strong self-esteem, two characteristics that are necessary for success in our world.”

The little ones aren't the only ones who benefit from Family Reading 101. Students at Senn High School, excited about the skills and valuable communications skills they will acquire through the program, are experiencing the satisfaction of helping babies communicate while they research how babies “learn and thrive.”

Students receive training on how to create a reading space that allows them to carefully determine the appropriate and most enjoyable method of teaching. Service Learning training for teens who read to children has had a positive impact on the academic development of students and the community. Students are supported for spending time in the community working on an issue that is both important to community members and their families. Jose, a student participating in the program stated: “The program allows me to express my social self, toward becoming a person who is a part of society.”

Throughout the school year, this opportunity for teens who read to children will increase the teens' awareness of the fascinating world of child development and help them understand their own development as young, mature, responsible adults.

## ARC Sponsors Kid Safety Day Trainings

The American Red Cross of Greater Chicago (ARC) is inviting elementary schools to participate in ***Kid Safety Day on Wednesday, April 30, 2003***. Kid Safety Day is an opportunity for students in grades K-6 to learn about Home Alone and Water Safety. Kid Safety Day presentations are **FREE** and can be done during a class period (each presentation is **only** 30 minutes).

If your school has a Red Cross Club or a group of high school students who would like to be trained to help the American Red Cross teach these classes in the elementary schools, please contact Jacinda Beason, Community Outreach Coordinator - City of Chicago, at 312/491-7011.

## CALENDAR

### **New Faces...New Programs—Service Learning in Illinois**

Annual Statewide Service Learning Conference, March 21, 2003  
Holiday Inn Select Hotel & Convention Center, Tinley Park, Illinois  
Contact: Jim Zabel, 847/803-3535 or Gary Greene, 312/814-7043

### **Weaving the Fabric of Community: A Celebration of Service Learning**

National Service Learning Conference,  
April 23 – 26, 2003, Minneapolis, Minnesota  
[www.nylc.org](http://www.nylc.org)

### **Service Learning Strategies for Success**

Third Annual CPS Service Learning Conference, May 1, 2003, 12:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
Location to be determined

## Student Reflection

"I am very good in the subjects of history and political science. This is how my love for law grew. Since freshman year, I wanted to become a corporate lawyer so that I could make the big bucks. I really did not think about helping others or having a career that helps others. Ever since I volunteered at the Boys and Girls Club, I feel I am a different person. I still want to pursue a career in law, but now I want to be a lawyer to help those who sometimes cannot afford a lawyer. I want to protect those who need it the most, even if it may require me to work for free. You may ask how my experience at the Boys and Girls Club caused this change.

*I want to be a lawyer to help those who sometimes cannot afford a lawyer...*

At the Boys and Girls Club, I worked with kids, tutoring them, playing games, and even offering advice to some children. At first, I really did not want to complete the hours. The first couple days were the hardest for me. Then I decided not to have such a negative attitude towards volunteering. That is when I started becoming more involved with the kids and paying more attention to them than to just the clock. As I became more involved with the children, I started getting a satisfaction, a happiness within myself that no person or thing can give me. I started feeling really good about myself and for the first time in a long while, I felt truly happy that I can make a difference in somebody's life.

I started realizing that the kids would look forward to coming to the Boys and Girls Club just to talk and play with me. Through this experience and happiness within myself, I decided that money can buy me things, but it cannot buy me happiness. It cannot buy me the feeling I get when I look into the face of someone who I have helped. I have decided to combine my love for law and helping others into practicing law for those who cannot defend themselves."



—Amelia Larrazolo  
Jones Academic Magnet High School

## Strategies for Success

### CPS 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Service Learning Conference

Plan now to attend the Third Annual Service Learning Conference, scheduled for Thursday, May 1, 2003, from 12:00 – 5:00 p.m. The theme for this year's conference is **Strategies for Success**. The conference will feature three strands:

1. Successful Teaching Strategies
2. Successful Service Projects
3. Successful School-wide Implementation Strategies

As Chicago Public Schools moves to integrate Service Learning projects with classroom practice, this conference will provide many of the tools that teachers and coaches need to develop and sustain successful strategies at their own schools.

We are requesting that each school send a team of five to eight individuals to the conference this year, including teachers, students, administrators, and Service Learning coaches. Multiple workshops will be offered within each strand so teams can choose to attend workshops together or attend separately and share information at the end of the conference.

Two features of this year's conference will be a roundtable discussion, within each strand, that will enable participants to discuss burning Service Learning issues, and youth breakout sessions that will enable students to explore leadership, service and activism in their own communities.

Registration materials are already in the mail for this conference. If you did not get registration materials, or if you are interested in presenting a workshop at the conference, please contact the Service Learning Initiative at 773/553-3425. See you on May 1, 2003!

## **Pilot Project Wave II Applications Available Soon**

Wave I of the Service Learning Pilot Project Initiative is in high gear. Dozens of teachers from Wave I pilot schools have integrated numerous creative classroom-based Service Learning projects. Many of these projects will soon be posted on the Service Learning website at [www.servicelearning.cps.k12.il.us](http://www.servicelearning.cps.k12.il.us). Through the Pilot Project, teachers have received professional development, curricular resources, personalized support, access to community projects, and networking opportunities in addition to financial resources. The range of successful projects is astonishing. Now it is time to look forward to Wave II during the 2003-04 academic year.

Applications for schools interested in becoming a Wave II pilot school will be mailed out to all schools in early March with final decisions in late April. Your school should consider applying if it is ready to either begin integrating service projects into classroom practice or if it wants to strengthen its capacity to do so. Your school will need a cadre of interested teachers, an inspiring coach, and a principal who will support the Service Learning efforts of classroom teachers.

## **The Service Learning Initiative**

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