



Service-Learning Newsletter

Fall 2013

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
Office of Service-Learning



Campus and Community Breakfast and Award Celebration

In late September, the Office of Service-Learning had their annual breakfast and award celebration. The event is held to honor the students, faculty/staff, and community partners who make service-learning grow and prosper each year.

Dr. Diane Anderson, Vice President of Student Affairs, Randy Ott, Director of the Center for Academic Success Programs, and Bob Miller, Vice President of Community Outreach all presented at the breakfast and acknowledged the importance of service-learning on Western's campus.

Carlos Daniels, a senior at WMU and a service-learning student scholar also presented and shared his involvement with service-learning throughout his time at Western. He expressed how service-learning has greatly influenced what his aspirations are for the future.

Presented with the Excellence in Service-Learning Award were Dr. Michael Nassaney, the Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center, and Rasheeda Jenkins. They have each shown their dedication to service-learning and have engaged and encouraged others to create positive interactions in the community.

Dr. Michael Nassaney is a professor of Anthropology at Western Michigan University and the principal investigator of the Fort St. Joseph Archaeological Project, a large service-learning project here at Western. Dr. Nassaney works with anthropology students to excavate, interpret, and preserve the material remains of Fort St. Joseph, a trading post occupied from 1691-1781 by French and later British traders.

Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center is a horseback riding center built especially for the purpose of serving those with special needs. They focus on what individuals can accomplish, not on what they cannot. Cheff works with students from several disciplines, providing opportunities for Western students to engage with riders and their families, assist with the horses, and walk along with the horses to keep riders safe.

Rasheeda Jenkins, a senior at Western, has been involved with service-learning since she participated in Spring Staycation. Sheeda instantly felt a connection with service-learning and expanded her involvement by taking part in Building Bikes, Building Community this summer. Sheeda is currently a service-learning student scholar, managing projects for two disciplines. Sheeda contributes her leadership and project management skills while serving a community partner whose philosophy is in direct line with her own.

Fall Service-Learning Courses

Fall 2013 has kicked off to a great start with service-learning courses! There are many service-learning courses across the university from many different disciplines.

Some of the instructors of service-learning include: Brian Gogan, Cheri Bales, Zoann Snyder, Richard Szwaja, Darrell Harden, and Leah Omillion-Hodges.

Our students are working on some great service-learning projects with wonderful organizations across Kalamazoo county. Some of the projects include: writing health related brochures, creating public relations campaigns, serving clients through public education, assisting activities for mental illness support groups, and creating project plans for safer routes to schools.

Some of our community partners include: the Veterans Administration, Advocacy Services for Kids, Recovery International, Oshtemo Fire Department, Cheff Therapeutic Riding Center, Togetherness Group, Kalamazoo Neighborhood Housing Services, Eastside Neighborhood Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Parent to Parent, Alternative Middle School, Douglass Community Center, Lakeside Academy, Milwood Elementary School and Lakeside Academy.

We are excited to see the amazing work our students produce and some amazing connections they will make with the community!

Service-Learning Student Scholars

Beginning this fall, the Office of Service-Learning implemented the Service-Learning Student Scholars Program, selecting four student scholars. Scholars assist with community engagement and maintain professional connections with students, faculty/staff, and community partners.

Leah Alexander, Carlos Daniels, Rasheeda Jenkins, and Heather Kunath are working with the office, supervising service-learning projects at various locations in Kalamazoo, creating and maintaining positive relationships. Student scholars also serve as liaisons among service-learning students, site supervisors, and the instructors. Scholars gain project management skills from inception of the project to evaluation, leadership practice, professional networking, and community involvement.



Rasheeda receiving the Excellence in Service-Learning Award



Rasheeda, Carlos, and Leah at the Staycation Reunion



Carlos and Dr. Dunn at the Staycation Reunion



Heather preparing for fall 2013 courses



Heather assisting at the Building Bikes, Building Community event

Leah Alexander is senior majoring in Communication Studies and double minoring in non-profit leadership and ethnic relations. In the future, Leah would like to help people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds learn to communicate better. She became involved with service-learning during Staycation 2012. As a student scholar, Leah hopes to gain a better understanding of the relationship the university has with the community and how this relationship affects students.

Heather Kunath is a junior studying general psychology. Heather enjoys helping others and watching people reach their full potential. She hopes to join the Peace Corps after college and wants to gain further knowledge on all aspects of service-learning and how to effectively use outside resources.

Carlos Daniels is a senior majoring in organizational communications and minoring in psychology. Carlos would like to be a social entrepreneur and use the principles of business to solve social issues. Carlos has been involved in Spring Staycation and other service-learning projects and hopes to learn best practices to engage the community and non-profit community as a whole.

Rasheeda Jenkins, a senior at Western studying Interdisciplinary Health Systems, has been involved with service-learning since her involvement with Spring Staycation and Building Bikes, Building Community. Sheeda would like to be more involved in health education in the future and is applying her creativity and interpersonal skills as a student scholar.

Office of Service Learning News

We are preparing for the annual fall data collection for various service-learning award applications. We will be contacting all chairs on campus starting the beginning of November to retrieve pertinent data for our submissions. Our office is excited to see how far we have come over the past year and we appreciate your help in assisting us with data collection.

Our office is currently working with two graduate students to develop a plan for evaluating service-learning courses and best practices. We are thrilled to create a more effective way to evaluate and enhance our service-learning courses on campus. We hope this will provide us with information to better serve our students and campus and community partners.

Office of Service-Learning
www.wmich.edu/servicelearning

Service-Learning is an office within the Center for Academic Success Programs

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I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.