

Service-Learning Update

Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance

Volume No. 2

Issue No. 4

April 2002

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community... and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work, the more I live."-- George Bernard Shaw, Irish Playwright

www.pitt.edu/~psla

Youth-Driven Service-Learning Centers: Centers of Opportunity!

—by Jessica Friedrichs,
PSLA Pittsburgh

How can service-learning become a regular part of a school environment? How can we continue the process of service-learning once a project is finished? For you and your students, the answer may be the creation of a youth driven service-learning center at your school. There are Youth-Driven Students Service-Learning Centers in Pennsylvania. Funding is provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Learn and Serve program.

One of the pioneer service-learning centers was founded at Gratz High School in North Philadelphia with the help of Jan Steinberg. This five-year-old center is a warm, lively room within the school with walls full of service-learning information and opportunities. It is also stocked with computers, a long table for meetings, a fridge for snacks and a children's library for the school's day care center.

The center is used by the "Hometown Team", a group of social studies students who are pairing up with education majors from Temple University to collaborate on service-learning projects. According to Dr. Cynthia Belliveau, Director of the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance, this partnership has challenged both groups of students. Temple students had many of their stereotypes about teaching in North Philly challenged, while working with these students. At the same time, Gratz students had a chance to hear about the experience

of attending college. The center is also used by students to do research for their required service-learning projects, which are a Philadelphia requirement for 4th, 8th, and 12th grade.

When students first began developing community projects through the center, they were able to use it as a meeting place for themselves and the local Nicetown-Tioga Community Group to discuss community issues. This meeting resulted in a dialogue of how the two groups would improve the community. Dr. Belliveau commented, "Community members began to see students as assets and students felt important and useful to their community." Eventually this partnership grew too big for the center!

Turner Middle School in West Philadelphia also houses a service-learning center – a large classroom on the third floor labeled "Cobbs Creek Community Helpers". The 'helpers' are middle school students in Kathy Lee's English and Social Studies classes. They have taken on water testing and other service-learning projects in the Cobb Creek area near their school. The classroom is filled with round tables to facilitate discussion, past environmental project displays, computers for on-line researching, a copy machine and a scanner for putting images into the computer. The students are partnered with a nearby private suburban school, Haverford, to do service-learning projects, such as stream testing, studying deer droppings and visiting a local cemetery.

English teacher, Lee, has integrated service-learning directly into her curriculum. For example, students practice writing persuasive letters and business letters by writing to community agencies and businesses as part of projects. Speaking of

Service-Learning Update

writing in her class, she said, "We do not write research papers, we do Environmental Impact Reports. It's all student-based research." The students' efforts are at work throughout the school in displays such as "Why should we care about our community air and water?" The Turner students have also been featured on the Learning in Deed website, a national advocacy group for service-learning. Check out the feature at www.service-learningcommission.org/turner.html.

What would it take to create a service-learning center in your school? Bring the idea to your students! Issues to discuss include location and available space, computer access, staffing, and the creation of service-learning resources and information. Does the school have an area that could be designated for a service-learning center? Can students write a grant to receive computers for their service-learning center? Can students staff the room during study hall or other free periods? Student initiative can really shine in this project. The result will be a long-term service-learning space in your school and community. Contact the PSLA in Philadelphia or Pittsburgh for more information and ideas on setting up a service-learning center in your school!

For more information about the student service-learning centers in Pennsylvania, contact Dr. Belliveau at (215) 573-6535.

PSLA and PACE to Host Character Education/Service-Learning Institute in July!

**—by Cynthia Wetmiller,
PSLA Assistant Director**

The Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance and the Pennsylvania Alliance for Character Education are excited to announce an Act 48 training opportunity this summer for K-12 teachers. This conference will give teachers an opportunity to learn more about the many connections between service-learning and character education.

The conference, "Pennsylvania Service-Learning/Character Education Institute: Building Character, Serving Communities," will be held July 10-11, 2002 in State College, Pennsylvania. There is no registration fee for this conference and Act 48 hours will be given to teachers in attendance! A continental breakfast and lunch will be provided free of charge at the conference. Teachers are, however, responsible for hotel accommodations and evening meals while in State College. Mark the date! Plan on attending!

For more information, visit the PSLA website: www.pitt.edu/~psla or the PACE website: www.pitt.edu/~pace after May 1st. Online registration will be available!

**Questions? Want to present a workshop?
Call Cathy at (412) 648-1440.**

PSLA Staff Serve as Service-Learning Congressional Liaisons

**—by Cynthia Wetmiller,
PSLA Assistant Director**

The PSLA is once again keeping up with service-learning efforts on the national level! Fellow PSLA staff member Joe Greene and I have volunteered to serve as congressional liaisons for the National Service-Learning Partnership. What does this mean? Well, as congressional liaisons we will be doing everything we can to make sure that Pennsylvania's elected officials know more about service-learning and keep the funding for Learn and Serve alive!

As a part of our duties as congressional liaisons, we are to spread the word about important service-learning news. From time to time we will be sending out a service-learning action alert for all of our teachers and service-learning supporters to read and hopefully take action. Here is the action alert for this month:

The time to act is now!

The Bush Administration has unveiled its guiding principles and recommendations for

Service-Learning Update

new federal policy for national service and service-learning. On Tuesday, April 9 and Thursday, April 11, Les Lenkowsky, the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National Service, testified before the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and the House Education and the Workforce Committee respectively. Service-learning advocates must seize this critical moment to speak up as Congress prepares to develop new legislation.

What You Can Do and When to Do It:

Please call and write (via fax) your Senators and Representatives, especially if one of your members serves on an education committee and urge them to take up the cause of service-learning and the agenda of the National Service-Learning Partnership. It is critical to send this message by April 30, 2002. Even if your members of Congress are not on the education committees it is still very important to contact them and ask them to talk with the chairman and ranking members of the committees with the message below.

Here's the Message:

Service-learning and the Learn and Serve America program often go unnoticed and unmentioned during congressional hearings on national service. Make sure your members of Congress understand that service-learning is alive and well in your community and state. Urge your members of Congress to show interest in and support for service-learning during upcoming congressional hearings by:

1. Including a service-learning advocate or practitioner in the panel of witnesses in upcoming hearings on national service.
2. Asking questions specifically about the Learn and Serve America program to initiate discussion on service-learning during upcoming hearings on national service.
3. Supporting the greater inclusion of young people in citizen service by doubling the Federal investment in Learn and Serve America, the only Federal program dedicated to promoting and supporting service-learning.

PSLA Summer Service-Learning Symposium Series

**—by Cynthia Wetmiller,
PSLA Assistant Director**

The Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance at the University of Pittsburgh is pleased to offer a series of professional development symposia designed for K-12 teachers. No experience with service-learning is necessary to participate—just a desire to learn more about this exciting teaching methodology!

Space is limited to 20 teachers for each symposium. There is no cost to teachers who wish to participate. The following symposia will be offered this summer at the University of Pittsburgh William Pitt Union:

Symposium Series #1

Monday, July 15th through

Friday, July 19th

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

15 Act 48 hours will be given to teachers who attend all five sessions!

Three symposia will be offered:

Symposium #1

Service-Learning 101:

An introduction to service-learning. From what service-learning is, to how it works in the classroom and community. This is the perfect seminar for teachers new to the methodology of service-learning! The PSLA's REACH Chart will be the foundation for this seminar.

Facilitator: Joe Greene, PSLA

Symposium #2

Curriculum Integration:

Connecting service-learning to the curriculum. This is one of the most important elements of service-learning. Teachers will be engaged in activities that help them learn how to connect service-learning to a variety of curricula and how to assess the service AND the learning!

Facilitator: Eric Hartman, PSLA

Symposium #3

Funding Service-Learning: How to Write a Grant and Where to Look for Money!

There are many funding sources for service-learning. Teachers will learn how to write an educational grant and develop a strategy for funding.

Facilitator: Cyndi Wetmiller, PSLA

Symposium Series #2

Monday, July 29th through

Friday, August 2nd

9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

15 Act 48 hours will be given to teachers who attend all five sessions!

Two symposia will be offered:

Symposium #1

Service-Learning and the IEP

Special Education teachers in Pennsylvania have been working with the PSLA for a number of years and great strides have been made to integrate service-learning into the IEP of students with disabilities. Special Education teachers will be introduced to the service-learning methodology and will explore how service-learning can meet IEP goals and objectives, as well as serve as an important strategy for inclusion.

Facilitator: Cyndi Wetmiller, PSLA

Symposium #2

Keeping in PACE with Service-Learning

Service-learning is a great activity to promote character development in the classroom! The symposium, sponsored in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Alliance for Character Education, will introduce teachers to activities that can connect service-learning and character education.

Facilitator: Joe Greene, PSLA

Online registration for the Summer Service-Learning Symposium Series will be available after May 1st! If you don't have online capabilities, call Cathy at (412) 648-1440 to register!

**Service-Learning
Tips and Ideas for Alcohol
Awareness Month**

**—by Cynthia Wetmiller,
PSLA Assistant Director**

Alcoholism is an illness that can easily be researched and become the focus of many service-learning projects within a variety of curricula. This month, in an effort to promote Alcohol Awareness Month, consider getting your students involved with organizations that address alcohol awareness, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving or Students Against Drunk Driving organizations. There are many things that students can do with these organizations that can help other students and community members become more aware of issues related to alcohol abuse. Here are a few ideas for students to address alcohol awareness via service-learning:

- ✓ Create a pamphlet that highlights issues related to binge drinking.
(Curriculum Connection: Computer Science and English)
- ✓ Sponsor an alcohol awareness seminar in the community.
(Curriculum Connection: Health)
- ✓ Team up with the local police and EMS departments to educate the community about drunk driving laws and the dangers of driving under the influence. **(Curriculum Connection: Civics and Health)**
- ✓ Create a website for the community that highlights alcohol related illnesses, information about 12 step programs and links to organizations that help people with alcohol addiction.
(Curriculum Connection: Computer Science and Health)
- ✓ Organize and promote alternative activities to drinking for young people in the

Service-Learning Update

community (movie night, pizza party, athletic games, etc.)

**(Curriculum Connection:
Health and Physical
Education)**

For more service-learning inspiration to help you connect a service-learning project with the curriculum, visit any of these Alcohol Awareness oriented websites:

Consumer Awareness and Education
<http://www.beeresponsible.com/>

Just Say No!
<http://students.resa.net/stoutcomputerclass/4justsayno.htm>

Mothers Against Drunk Driving
<http://www.madd.org/home/>

National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse
<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/>

Celebrate the Service of a Student: Nominate someone today!

The President's Student Service Awards and Scholarships recognize young Americans for outstanding community service while encouraging more young people to serve. It is not too late to nominate one of your service-learning students for one of these awards! To learn more, visit this website:

www.student-service-awards.org

Website Review: Digital Divide Network

—by Stephanie Gundry, PSLA Pittsburgh

www.digitaldividenetwork.org

What is the digital divide? Where can I find statistics to support statements made about the digital divide? Who is helping bridge the

digital divide? What are they doing? What can I do to help? Where can I find current research about digital divide issues? Is the digital divide an international problem?

When exploring digital divide issues, you may have encountered many of these same questions. The Digital Divide Network is an excellent place to start looking for the answers. The site contains the latest research, funding opportunities and issues facing the digital divide. It hosts discussion forums and publishes online newsletters about a variety of digital divide concerns.

The site also offers information pertinent for teachers. For example, it mentions facts about how the divide affects K-12 students and the importance of inclusion. In the *Literacy* section, there are articles about what schools are doing to prepare K-12 students for a computer age and how teachers can creatively use computers in their classrooms.

The Digital Divide Network site has a very comprehensive page of links to other digital divide web sites that may be useful. If you are searching for any information concerning the digital divide, this website is a good starting point!

News You Can Use: Current Events That Can Inspire Service-Learning Projects!

**—by Cynthia Wetmiller,
PSLA Assistant Director**

This month, the news is all about Health as we gear up for Spring, better weather and a new opportunity to get outside, get healthy and get involved with the health of our communities!

Gas Prices Up 8 Cents

<http://www.usatoday.com/money/energy/2002-04-07-gas.htm>

Service-Learning Project Idea: Health students can promote driving alternatives (public transportation, walking, biking, carpooling, etc.) within the community to

Service-Learning Update

encourage people to save gas, money and precious natural resources! Get the Science students involved and throw in some information about how fossil fuels harm the Ozone layer!

Health Events Focusing on Minorities

<http://www.post-gazette.com/healthscience/20020406health4.asp>

Service-Learning Project Idea: Health students can lend support to local health initiatives that strive to address health issues of minority populations. In addition to learning more about some of these issues, students can really lend a hand by helping advertise health events in various ethnic and minority communities!

ABsurd

<http://www.philly.com/mld/philly/living/2990704.htm>

Service-Learning Project Idea: Piercing belly buttons and other trendy things relating to the midriff region of the body can be very risky for your health! Health students can help educate fellow students and youth in the community about the dangers of body piercing and the hygiene related to body piercing and tattoos.

Alcohol Use During Pregnancy

<http://www.cnn.com/2002/HEALTH/04/06/alcohol.pregnancy.reut/index.html>

Service-Learning Project Idea: Many pregnant women do not get prenatal care, because they do not have health insurance and do not know where they can turn for assistance. This month, Health students can help educate women in the community about risky pregnancy behaviors such as smoking and drinking and advertise the free health services available to low-income women who are pregnant in the community.

Training Events with the Staff of the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance

The PSLA has a lot of great service-learning workshops planned for the next few months! Note the dates and register soon!

Pittsburgh

To register online for any of the workshops in Pittsburgh, go to:
<http://www.pitt.edu/~psla/PSLA/WesternPennsylvania.html>

"Classroom Arts Documented in Scrapbooking and Electronic Portfolios" (Act 48)

Riverview IU Center in Clarion

Tuesday, May 7th

8:30 Coffee

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Hands on scrapbooking and electronic portfolio skills. This will include scanning and saving photos, newspaper articles, student artwork and projects. Please bring items for your projects to make one scrapbook page and one electronic page. Plan on networking with teachers who will be showcasing their arts and crafts projects from their classrooms. There is no cost to attend, scrapbook materials will be provided. Lunch will be served. Deadline to register is April 30th. Sign up online at:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~psla/PSLA/BeaverValley.htm>

Service-Learning Documentation Part II: "The Service-Learning Scrapbook"

May 9th

University of Pittsburgh

Thursday, May 9th

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Free!

This is the second in a two-part series on service-learning documentation. Workshop participants will be given an opportunity to create their own "service-learning scrapbook." PSLA will supply the scrapbook necessities (scrap book, paper, markers, stickers, etc.) and participants will supply the photos, student artwork, and other service-learning project memories!

Lunch will be served! This workshop is limited to 20 teachers, register today!

Deadline to register is Tuesday, May 7th!

Sign up online at:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~psla/PSLA/WesternPennsylvania.html>

Service-Learning Update

"Service-Learning: A Roadmap for Special Education" (Act 48)

University of Pittsburgh

Tuesday, May 14th

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Free!

This conference, designed for special education teachers by special education teachers, will be an opportunity for special education teachers to learn more about the exciting and dynamic service-learning projects that have been successfully implemented by special education teachers in Western Pennsylvania. Whether you are new to service-learning in the special education classroom or a veteran, this conference will help you develop special education service-learning projects and a plan for incorporating service-learning into your special education curriculum and/or the Individual Education Plan of your students.

Deadline to register is May 1st!

Sign up online at:

<http://www.pitt.edu/~psla/PSLA/WesternPennsylvania.html>

For information and details about these events visit the PSLA website:

www.pitt.edu/~psla

For information and details about PSLA workshops and training opportunities in Philadelphia, call Dr. Cynthia Belliveau at (215) 573-6535 or go online to

<http://www.pitt.edu/~psla/PSLA/EasternPennsylvania.html>

Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance Contact Information

To learn more about the efforts of the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance, contact the offices of the PSLA in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia:

Philadelphia:

[Cynthia Belliveau](#), PSLA Director
(215) 573-6535

PSLA Philadelphia Fax: (215) 573-1134

Pittsburgh:

[Cynthia Wetmiller](#), PSLA Assistant Director
(412) 648-1673

PSLA Pittsburgh Fax: (412) 648-1404

The "Service-Learning Update" is the intellectual property of the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance at the University of Pittsburgh. Comments and suggestions regarding the "Service-Learning Update" should be forwarded to Ms. Cynthia Wetmiller, Executive Editor at (412) 648-1673. All rights reserved.