Progression Through Partnerships

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$100 Solution Provides platform for Service-Learning

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Photo by: Hillary Slaughter
$100 Solution Serves as Tool for Service-Learning in Classes
By: Margaret Harris

Last semester, two student groups in the Honors Colloquia: Community Development Through Service-Learning at WKU used The $100 Solution™ program to address a social need in the area formally known as the Enterprise Zone. Honors College students Alix Mattingly, Poorvie Patel, Alana Baugher, and Brandon Logan, who refer to themselves as the “Stupendous Streckian Scholars,” strived to improve this area by establishing a mentoring program between the community’s youth sports program and the WKU Athletic Department. They hosted a dinner for community and university leaders, in order to spark partnerships between them and launch support for a mentoring program. The other group of students, “Los Nidos,” consisted of Alyssa Stephens, Laura Long, Omar Anaya, Tracy Jo Ingram, Kayla Burke, and Paige Levy. Their goal was to provide protection to home renters in the Enterprise Zone by informing them of their rights and responsibilities. With the help of the Bowling Green Human Rights Commission and Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, they learned about the current needs and difficulties. They then used their $100 to purchase raffles and prizes, which they handed out with bilingual renter’s rights and housing information materials at a local Hispanic church.

The $100 Solution™ is a humanitarian project founded by WKU Scholar-in-Residence Dr. Bernie Strenecky that inspires students to utilize their skills and resources to actively address local or international social needs with just $100. Strenecky, along with co-teachers, taught the Honors Colloquia course last fall. Currently, more than 20 student groups are incorporating The $100 Solution™ as part of their coursework. For more information contact Nadia De Leon, Community Engagement Coordinator, at nadia.deleon@wku.edu.

Nursing Students Utilize Skills Locally and Regionally
By: Margaret Harris

Nursing students actively utilize their nursing skills in the community through Dr. Sherry Lovan’s Community Health Nursing course. Lovan, Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing, sends her students to surrounding communities to assess health needs, help develop possible solutions, and reconvene to reflect on their experiences. As part of the clinical component of the course, they also visit various community agencies under the supervision of registered nurses (RNs). Students participate in health screenings, provide education about health promotion, administer medications and immunizations, accompany community health nurses when making in-home patient visits, and participate in local health fairs.

During the last WKU Health Fair, Lovan’s students provided blood pressure and bone density screenings to faculty and staff. At the annual Agriculture Safety Day last year, students assisted in the event teaching local fourth graders about health and safety. The students also spend time with RNs and Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (APRNs) on the Mobile Health and Wellness Unit. With the Mobile Health and Wellness Unit, the students travel to local businesses and surrounding counties in the region to offer valuable health screenings and education to the public.

"Community Health Nursing offers students a chance to investigate career opportunities beyond the traditional role of the RN in the acute care setting. We are fortunate to work with community nurses who welcome our students and partner in their education. The opportunity for service-learning has proven to be life-changing for many of these students,"Lovan said.
Faculty Incorporate Community into Work

By: Sarah Hood

If faculty in your department participate in service-learning or community-based research, please contact Nadia De Leon, Community Engagement Coordinator, at nadia.deleon@wku.edu for information on being featured in one of our publications.

Dr. Jane Olmsted
Associate Professor - English Department
Director - Women’s Studies Program

For the past five summers, Dr. Jane Olmsted, an English professor and the Director of the Women’s Studies program at WKU, has helped low-income women and their children gain a glimpse of university life at the Women and Kids Learning Together summer camp.

The week-long camp, which Olmsted directs, will take place again this summer during the first week in June. The camp organizers work with the Housing Authority of Bowling Green to address the needs of women from Warren County and the surrounding area, said Olmsted.

"The idea is to introduce people who may not have ever had a university experience to consider life-long education by spending a week on campus,” said Olmsted.

Olmsted most recently taught Multicultural Literature in America and Writing Across the Disciplines. "I am hoping to develop a new course, interdisciplinary, on the general idea of ‘Fractured Lives, Fractured Communities . . . Healing Lives, Healing Communities’.“ Olmsted also teaches other courses in English and Women’s Studies.

Olmsted said that the WKU community has the ability to inspire. "We’re an educational institution. What we can do is give a piece of that—for people who are at a crossroads and need a future." She believes that futures can be positively affected by education. “It shows what’s possible,” she said.

Dr. Courte Voorhees
Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies
Institute for Citizenship & Social Responsibility

Dr. Courte Voorhees moved to WKU last fall from Vanderbilt University to pursue Interdisciplinary Studies with an emphasis on community-based research.

Voorhees previously researched the media treatment of race and class in post-Katrina New Orleans, as well as a project titled, The Hidden Costs of Homelessness in Nashville, in which he supervised and mentored undergraduate students.

“This was a rewarding process for me to include these students in the project and co-write a report and manuscript with a student so eager to learn about the research and writing process.”

Voorhees’ research interests led him to work with projects at WKU like The $100 Solution™, which encourages individuals to solve a community problem using only $100, and the Class Legacy Project, which seeks to give WKU students the opportunity to positively affect the Bowling Green community as a class. He also works with an Honors Spanish class, which is conducting research with the Bowling Green Hispanic community. Voorhees began teaching this spring at WKU as the co-teacher in a community-based research course with Dr. Saundra Ardrey, the head of the Political Science Department. Voorhees also co-teaches Public Problem Solving within the Institute for Citizenships & Social Responsibility along with Dr. Paul Markham and Dr. Bernie Strenecky.

Instead, he suggests that it is better for people who want to get involved to understand the community first, then work together to take action and solve problems. “There are a lot of people doing good work.” Voorhees added that a great deal of latent connections exist within the community that are not being energized. His goal is to help change those latent connections into working connections.
Research Measures Human Impact

By: Margaret Harris

Dr. Jason Polk, Assistant Professor in Geography and Geology, plans to establish public awareness about karst environments to help alter devastating behaviors of the community. Inspiration for the project came to Polk while on a trip to Puerto Rico, where karst geography covers a substantial amount of the region. A karst environment consists of caves, sinkholes, and water springs. These areas are especially susceptible to pollution and developmental impact. Polk explained, “The karst environment is unique and fragile, and many of the inhabitants don’t realize how harmful pollution is to the land and resources.” Polk’s plan is to develop an online instructional resource tool and database for implementing the Karst Disturbance Index (KDI). KDI measures the amount of human impact on the caves, springs, and ecosystems and will be available for community use. This website tool will be applied in several parts of Kentucky and Puerto Rico, which have significant karst landscapes susceptible to pollution and development impacts.

Polk created partnerships with organizations such as Mammoth Cave National Park, Friends of Lost River Cave, and Citizens for the Karst (Puerto-Rico) to assess community needs and determine primary goals for the online database. WKU students will be called to help create, maintain, and measure the outcomes of the online database. Undergraduate Honors students and graduate students in Geomorphology classes are also planning independent study research trips to Puerto Rico in the spring of 2011. Polk said his ultimate goal is “to educate people on human impact and change behaviors.”

Research Begins on Education Limitations

By: Margaret Harris

Dr. Sonia Lenk, Assistant Professor in Modern Languages, is conducting community-based research in hopes to discover and help eliminate the limitations of further education in the Hispanic population. Lenk said, “This (Hispanic) population is underserved and underrepresented in higher education; therefore, it is important to have a complete portrait of the target community in this area and their needs.”

Strenecsky, WKU Scholar-in-Residence, and Courte Voorhees, Associate Professor in Interdisciplinary Studies. The team plans on accomplishing their goals by first becoming familiar with the people who are affected by the barriers, primarily Hispanic youth ages 12-19. Next, they will team up with organizations and schools in the area, such as HOPE (Hispanic Organization for the Promotion of Education), Warren County middle and high schools, and private schools, to evaluate the Hispanic population and address their academic needs. A student worker will then oversee the production of a questionnaire that the Honor students in Dr. Lenk’s Spanish class are responsible for creating. The questionnaire will be used to make a profile of the Hispanic population in Warren County.

The final step for Lenk’s community-based research is to create a descriptive document about the numbers, location, characteristics, and needs of the potential Hispanic college students. Her goal is to create a complete portrait of the target population to help aid in developing ways for the Hispanic population to overcome the barriers between them and higher education. Once successful in Warren County, Dr. Lenk plans to expand this project to neighboring counties.

Visit wkualivecenter.com to learn about Community Partnership Incentive Awards.

**Next deadline April 1st**

**Project funding up to $5,000**
Hill House Student Recognized for Work

By: Aurelia Spaulding

Recent recipient of the Outstanding Social Work Graduate Student Award, Christine Serafini, spends her time developing relationships in the community through the Hill House program. Serafini said, “It is nice to know there are other people who think it (her work at the Hill House) is worthwhile.”

As a graduate assistant living at the Hill House, Serafini along with students Hilda Owusu, Phuong Vu, and Mo Zhang conduct applied/community-based research and develop community projects in the area. Serafini’s work includes research on different interventions that other communities can use to connect to their neighbors. She and the other students at the Hill House work on different community projects, such as working with the Historic Reservation Board to learn how to conduct surveys of neighbors to administer to residents in homes that can be preserved. All of the students are working on a series of film screenings and community discussions based on movies such as “Sicko,” “Super Size Me,” and “Kite Runner.” From the movies, discussion will include topics of universal healthcare, fast food, immigrants, and culture.

The four students will finish their year at the Hill House in May. New students will be selected as a graduate assistants to live at the house for the fall. Any interested students can attend the Hill House Informational Meeting on Wednesday, April 13th at 4:00pm in DUC 340. For more information, contact Nadia at nadia.deleon@wku.edu.

(Left) Christine Serafini, makes door hangers for the homes in the neighborhood around East Eleventh Street. The students used the door hangers to promote the community compost bin.

Forum Set for Community-Based Research

When Dr. John Green, Director of the Institute for Community-Based Research at Delta State University, visits Western Kentucky University on April 20 and 21, the University will host its first Forum on Community-Based Research. This forum welcomes audiences throughout the region and state for sessions arranged for faculty as well as students and community. Dr. Donielle Lovell, Assistant Professor in Sociology, began plans in the early spring to bring Green to Western Kentucky University. He brings with him a background in planning community-based experiences that are enriching for community organizations and student groups.

“As a new Sociology faculty member in the Elizabethtown area,” Lovell said, “I’ve been trying to find ways for students to link the skills they are learning in the classroom to their local community. In order to do this, I feel the pump has to be primed for organizations to understand that we have resources to offer to help them do the research needed to benefit their group. We need to build a network of organizations that want to partner with students.”

Two-day activities at the Elizabethtown campus include:

April 20, 2011 - This day will be reserved for students to interact with Green. During a session from 2:00-5:00pm EST, Green will present on Community-Based Research. This session will be open to WKU students in Elizabethtown, Owensboro, Glasgow and Bowling Green. The session will also be available through IVS to include students who are unable to travel to Hardin County.

April 21, 2011 - This day will be reserved for exploring community/university partnerships. The morning will be spent with WKU hosting a volunteer fair to show students the volunteer opportunities in Hardin County. Community organizations may set up tables for students to freely browse the opportunities. In the afternoon, the Elizabethtown campus will host a session that focuses on the potential of community and university partnerships and research. Green will present on his Institute, how it works, and the responsibilities of each party. It will be an opportunity for WKU to explore how we can better serve Hardin County. The event will be open to WKU and ECTC faculty and students as well as other universities around the region.
Partners Join to Engage Students in Volunteer Week

By: Aurelia Spaulding

During April 25-29, 2011, Western Kentucky University, through the coordination of the ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships and Leadership & Volunteerism, will celebrate National Volunteer Week. This week of activities will provide a diverse set of activities for a wide range of students, while also incorporating ways for faculty, staff, and community members to be involved.

National Volunteer Week is part of a list of National Days of Service celebrated across the county in different communities, campuses, and with countless service organizations. This year WKU plans to expand the number of partnerships and promote community engagement with the activities. The projects will include partnerships with Community Action of Southern Kentucky, HOTEL INC, American Red Cross, GreenToppers, Boys & Girls Club, American Cancer Society, and more.

Tentative events currently include:
April 26: A Poverty Simulation
April 27: CANstruct for a Cause
April 28: Ultimate Lift: Bowling Green Beautification
April 29: Kick It With the Kids field day
April 30: Relay for Life

If you are interested in donating to or participating in the volunteer week projects, visit www.wku.edu/alive for a list of details regarding the week. Online registration is also available to individuals or groups interested in the homeless simulation or CANstruct for a Cause.

Recipients Recognized For Presidents Volunteer Service Award

By: Kayla Tyson

The WKU ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships, in conjunction with the U.S. President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, will celebrate its 2010 President's Volunteer Service Award recipients with a Recognition Reception on Thursday, April 14, 2011, at the WKU Faculty House at 7:00pm. The reception is open to recipients and their guests.

"It is very important to recognize volunteers, both on campus and in our community, because they need to know that what they are doing matters," ALIVE Center Office Associate, Brittany Ryan, said. "Volunteers are an integral part of what makes Bowling Green a wonderful place to live."

The President's Council on Service and Civic Participation was created in 2003 to recognize citizens' volunteer efforts and encourage more people to serve their communities. The President's Volunteer Service Award was created to acknowledge those who have gone above and beyond the call of service and completed a designated amount of volunteer hours within one calendar year.

The WKU ALIVE Center is one of over 28,000 organizations able to certify individuals so that they can receive this award. For more information, go to www.presidentialserviceawards.gov or contact the WKU ALIVE Center at (270) 782-0082 or www.wku.edu/alive.

List of Recipients

Gold Medal
Karen McGinnis
Eve LeBlanc
Rick Williams
Pat and Jennifer O'Rourke
Kristen Peterson
Dick Webber

Silver Medal
Greg Lake
Tonya Carr
Regina Priddy
Ed Schwab
Sonny Spillman
Richard Knapp
Donnie Firkins
Sandhya Bhoyar
Danny Fleenor

Bronze Medal
Paul Jones
Mike Dowell
Greg Turner

(Above) A WKU student volunteers helping Kalaysia Davidson with her math homework at the Boys & Girls Club.
Student Takes Every Opportunity to Serve

By: Amandea Ridley

Run, walk, ride, drive, or skip--Derek Irvin will do whatever it takes, in order to serve. Derek Irvin, a senior Broadcast News major, provides some form of community service more often than many students.

“The feeling that I get when I help someone else out is equal to or greater than the feeling that they get when they’re being helped,” Derek stated while walking two huge huskies one cold weekend at the Bowling Green/Warren County Humane Society.

Elizabeth Cooper, Humane Society Adoption Specialist, said, “We would not be able to function without the help of volunteers, especially young people who help exercise and walk the dogs.” Irvin volunteers at the Humane Society most weekends and sometimes during the week.

Through one of his organizations, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Irvin serves in many different programs, such as the Project Alpha and A-Phi Buddies. Project Alpha helps to provide education, motivation, and skill-building on issues of responsibility, relationships, teen pregnancy, and sexually transmitted diseases for young males between the ages of 12-15. This project was created to provide young men with current and accurate information about teen pregnancy prevention through a series of workshops and informational sessions. A-Phi Buddies is a program set up for the members to talk within the high schools to students about going to college.

Irvin’s organizational advisor, Joshua Hayes, said, “Dedication is only one of several terms that describes Derek and his love for service. His creativity, limitless investment of time and willingness to leave a legacy for others allows him to work in various capacities. Whether working with animals, youth, or lyrics, his overall vision is to help better others.”

In addition to participating in youth programs with his fraternity and volunteering with the Humane Society, Irvin serves through Adopt-A-Highway clean-ups, tutoring at the local Boys & Girls Club, and other opportunities when they arise.

“I just like giving back to the community,” Irvin said.

Irvin, along with students Trent Dunn and Maria Tibbs, (using the group named Disciple Nation), coordinate an event titled WKU Idol. The event highlights talented students at WKU and offers them publicity and cash prizes.

In the midst of Irvin’s service to the community and campus involvement, he manages to reach high academic standards. Irvin has been recognized on the Dean’s List several times during his academic career, and he considers academics his first priority.
Women’s Team Outreaches the Goal
By: Kailee Viehland

The Lady Topper basketball team does more than play ball—they dedicate themselves to community outreach. They are more than student athletes. They are caring ambassadors for Western Kentucky University. For years, the women’s basketball team has been giving back to the community in the form of service. They work with several organizations in the area such as The Center for Courageous Kids, Warren County Public Schools, Bowling Green/Warren County Humane Society, and the Salvation Army.

Another organization the Lady Toppers work with is the Boys & Girls Club. Last summer, in the off-season, the players went to the Boys & Girls Club and hosted a camp for the youth. They played games and did drills with the kids, but most importantly, they simply hung out and interacted with them. There was no hidden agenda. The Lady Toppers were just there to spend time with the kids for the day.

The team constantly looks for new ways to get involved in the community. One new event was the “Spread the Red” Education Day held last month in Diddle Arena. All third through sixth graders in Warren County were invited to enjoy a boxed lunch and a game at no cost. The atmosphere at Diddle Arena was infused with energy and Hilltopper spirit. It was also a record-breaking game for the Lady Toppers. They broke their attendance record with 7,100 in attendance and went on to to beat South Alabama with the support of their pint-sized fans.

In addition to the Spread the Red Education Day, the Lady Toppers also had a Pink Game to honor and recognize those who have breast cancer or have survived it. In January, they had a Critter Classic game where they asked fans to bring in a type of cleaning supply to be donated to the local Humane Society in exchange for a free ticket to the game.

Even though some of the events do bring people to the games, the women and coaching staff do not participate in community involvement or host events to receive recognition or get a job-well-done pat on the back.

“We do it as a means to give back. They’re obviously here to play ball, but they’re also here to give back and help the community. By getting out there and being involved in the community, the girls can touch people’s lives. They can also serve as role models. Whenever we went to the Boys & Girls Club last summer everyone was running up asking for their autographs. You could tell that the children were so excited for them to be there,” said Julia Reed, Women’s Basketball Graduate Assistant/Travel Coordinator.

Reed said the team is currently working on becoming involved in a mentoring program. They hope to go in and read to students. At some of their events there is not always a lot of time to sit down and talk to all the children and tell them how they arrived at the collegiate level. They hope to be able to do this with the mentoring program, since it is important for children to relate to the athletes and see that they can play at the collegiate level too.

Between being on the road and balancing class schedules, it is hard to arrange times for everyone to be available to participate in the community outreach events. However, it is important to Western Kentucky University, the coaches, and the player.

When asked if the community outreach had any effect on the players, Reed said, “The girls will come in and ask if there is anything they can do or anyone they can help out. They really do care about the community and giving back is important to each and every one of them.”
As thousands of students gather with friends and families before each home football game, they may see the WKU Recycling trucks come around handing out blue recycling bags. Western Kentucky University's Office of Sustainability is striving to promote a culture of sustainability in the campus community by integrating principles of ecological integrity and social equity into academics, practices, and partnerships. While the idea of sustainability has been around for some time, the focus for Western Kentucky University to be a leader has recently become more evident.

Currently, the WKU Office of Sustainability has several opportunities and programs in which the community and students on campus can get involved. These programs include: competing in Recyclemania, planning Earth Day, converting to a single stream system, and offering a student run garden.

Recyclemania is a nationwide competition where colleges and universities have the opportunity to participate in a friendly "game" that helps promote waste reduction. This program lasts 10 weeks, and during those weeks each school representative will report solid waste and recycling weights. Schools are then ranked according to who collects the largest amounts of recyclables in a variety of different areas and the least amount of trash per capita. As the awareness of sustainability increases on WKU's campus, the University has begun the uphill climb.

For the upcoming Earth Day, April 22nd, the WKU Office of Sustainability will try a new approach. This year, the Sustainability has added a student garden at the WKU Farm. This garden is offered to all WKU students who want to learn more about growing their own herbs and vegetables and maintaining their own garden. Students can enroll in a one-hour sustainable gardening class offered through the Institute for Citizenship and Social Responsibility (ICSR 301) to participate. Volunteer days will also be offered throughout the growing season. By adding these opportunities, the Sustainability office is hoping students take this experience with them after college.

When asked about her interest in cleaning up the campus and ultimately going green, Cristin Lanham, Coordinator for Recycling, said that she became passionate about the issue through working with plants and in nature. Lanham began to realize how many were truly endangered and slowly disappearing. “Being able to research and learn about where things actually come from really opens your mind. Resources aren’t as renewable as we thought they were.”

Lanham also mentioned how much trash there really is, and said that most individuals do not think about it in their everyday routines. “Trash is ‘out of sight, out of mind’ until the landfill is in your backyard. If we don’t change our habits, we’re in trouble.”
BRIDGES Holds Youth Accountable

By: Leah Ashwill

It is an important concept to learn that all of our actions have consequences, and we should each be personally responsible for those consequences. The Work Restitution Initiative (WRI) in Elizabethtown, KY does just that.

Partnering with the Lincoln Trail Area Development District and the Lincoln Trail Workforce Investment Board through a recent grant, the BRIDGES Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Council, with Hardin Fiscal Court, is beginning a unique program to reach out to Hardin County juvenile offenders to help them pay back what they owe and get them started on the right path for the future. The project is funded by the Kentucky Education and Workforce Cabinet and the Lincoln Trail Workforce Investment Board with WIA Title I funds, which consist of approximately $430,000 in funding for operations and a scholarship pool for successful juveniles to earn up to $8,000 in scholarship money and/or a $1,000 cash reward for maintaining full-time employment.

For juveniles who come to court on delinquency matters, some consequences are financial and often become the burden of the family or parents rather than the juvenile offender. It is the intention of WRI to hold the juveniles personally accountable for the financial consequences of their actions by matching offenders up with local businesses to work and earn the money to repay victim’s restitution (such as medical bills or property damage), to pay their court costs (usually $129 per case), and to re-pay their parents for attorney fees (usually a few hundred dollars)--keeping responsibility where it belongs.

In this innovative program, a juvenile will be hired by a local business partner, earn minimum wage based on the hours worked, and have half of the net income garnished for restitution and costs. The other half would be paid to the youth employee to offset his costs of transportation to work and to learn the value of money. Mentoring, tutoring, financial skills, and job skills are all wrapped into this grant project.

“I hope this program is going to help students in whatever career path they’re choosing.”

Dr. Donielle Lovell, Assistant Professor in Sociology at WKU Elizabethtown and member of the BRIDGES Juvenile Delinquency Council, is offering a community-based research opportunity to WKU students as part of the program. She is also responsible for organizing a component called WKU Mentors, which will consist of recruiting and organizing WKU student and alumni mentors to mentor youth in the work restitution project.

When asked what she hoped WKU students would get out of this experience, Lovell stated, “I hope this program is going to help students in whatever career path they’re choosing...a lot of the students involved will be going into Social Work, have a degree in Sociology or Psychology, or a Minor in Criminology. This direct, hands-on experience will give them a little more insight into what their job is going to be like...it’s going to give them something really good to be able to tell potential employers. To be able to do the research on this program is something that is going to be really marketable for our students.”

Dr. Lovell summed up her thoughts about the project by sharing that she is “just really excited that WKU is going to be able to be involved, emphasizing exactly what a true community partnership this really is...its education with WKU, judges, prosecutors, public defenders, community businesses, the juveniles...it is a true community collaboration.”
Five Work Groups Set to Tackle Issues

By: Aurelia Spaulding

Western Kentucky University Junior, Emily Powell, introduced herself at the Campus & Community Network (CCN) as a “concerned student.” The group participating in the CCN smiled after her introduction, but each of the 35 individuals in the room who attended the workshop on February 17th also were interested in discussing ways to work together to address community needs.

The WKU ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships organized the Campus & Community Network as a result of two previous workshops with campus and community members to discuss ways to work together to address community needs. From those discussions, the staff at the Center narrowed down challenging community needs for the CCN to address five areas: English as a Second Language (ESL), Hispanic resources, youth development, transitional housing programs, and economic development in the Enterprise Zone.

“Today was instrumental in identifying resources that players in the community were not aware of and also identifying major hurdles to overcome to be able to access available resources,” local volunteer in the school system, Lisa Goldy, said. Goldy and Powell both participated in the work group formed during the meeting in the ESL area. Powell studies English, and she currently participates in the ESL Certificate Program at WKU.

Each of the individuals created a name for their work group, and some of the groups developed titles for initiatives discussed. “As a result of the event, we established Amigos Resource Network, which will help to bridge the gap between resources available in the community in the interest of the Hispanic Community,” Orasi Consulting Group bilingual mediator, Luis Ore, said.

The work groups established at the Campus & Community Network used five principles for creating partnerships to address community needs. The five principles included working hands-on with other community members and identifying resources available. If anyone is interested in participating in one of the work groups, please contact the ALIVE Center Community Engagement Coordinator, Nadia De Leon, at 270-782-0966 or nadia.deleon@wku.edu.

Full details are available at wkualivecenter.com
See work groups below:

English Language Service Cooperative
Contact: Pat Stewart at pat.stewart@warren.kyschools.us

Economic Improvement Group
Contact: John David Ryan at jdryan@broadwayunited.org
Next meeting: March 17th at 9:00am at the ALIVE Center

Transitional Housing Group
Contact: Karen Myers at Director@hotelincbg.com
Next meeting: March 7th at 9:00am at the ALIVE Center

Amigos Resource Network
Contact: Luis E. Ore at luis.ore@orasicg.com or 270-799-2314

Youth Development: Successful Transition to Adulthood
Contact: Erick Gregory at egregory@insightbb.com
“Something happens when you volunteer here,” Barbara “Bobbie” Strickler said. “It’s very satisfying, and you see that you’re making a difference.” Strickler has been a volunteer at HOTEL INC for around 20 years and would not have it any other way.

HOTEL INC, an acronym for Helping Others Through Extending Love In the Name of Christ, was founded in the early 1980s by Derryck McLuhan, David Kelsey, and a group of people from First Free Methodist Church of Bowling Green, with the sole desire of helping the under-resourced in the community. However, they soon discovered more than just a few people and began inviting the homeless to live in their homes and church. Bill Moore, a local businessman, saw the need for a more effective, permanent housing solution and donated a 55-room hotel located on the corner of Adams Street and 8th Avenue, which was sadly lost in a fire before the nonprofit could move into it.

HOTEL INC has always relied heavily on having active and involved volunteers. Because of volunteers, HOTEL INC grew in 1984 to include a food bank, clothing center, and place for counseling. In that same year, HOTEL INC moved into its current location, an old church building on the corner of Boatlanding Road and Pearl Street. Also during this time, HOTEL INC established its mission to “develop effective ways to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of individuals and to break free from the cycle of poverty.”

Fast forward a few years. HOTEL INC has just celebrated 30 years of providing “faith, food, and funds to the hungry and homeless in Warren County.” Karen Myers, HOTEL INC Director, explained that a few things have changed, but the mission is the same. There are now 33 church partners and many individuals that help to financially support HOTEL INC and its cause. HOTEL INC still sees many people in the community that are hungry and struggling to make ends meet. They currently have Manna Mart, a food bank where people can come three times a week and receive food for three meals each time. In addition, they provide rent and utility assistance, taking applications on the first and third Tuesday of every month. For every $10 that they provide in financial assistance, they ask that the client then pay back one hour by volunteering at HOTEL INC, going to Life & Bible classes or volunteering with one of HOTEL INC’s eight local partners. Myers says that there is nothing more fulfilling then “when a client who has finished ‘paying back’ continues to volunteer” because it shows that what HOTEL INC is doing is effective.

In addition, Strickler says that when she volunteers she feels like she is “paying God back for all that he has done for me. I feel like God’s hands.” This passion has kept her...
coming back year after year and made the past 20 years of volunteering at HOTEL INC worthwhile.

Manna Mart continues to support the community exponentially. In 2010, 23,389 items of food were distributed to 2,198 people. The meals are balanced and come with recipes and menus. In addition, Panera Bread graciously donates bread and bakery items to supplement the shelf-stable meals. However, Manna Mart would not exist if it were not for the continued help of volunteers. And they can always use more help. Recently, HOTEL INC has been approved by Feeding America to be able to purchase food for $0.19 per pound, which will allow Manna Mart to be able to reach even more people in this next year.

In addition to financial assistance, Manna Mart, and Life & Bible classes, HOTEL INC is also the meeting place for Piecemakers, a group of women who make quilts, baby blankets, and coverlets to donate to people in the community.

While HOTEL INC continues to help the community in these various ways, there is a new direction in which it is moving. The staff and Board of Directors at HOTEL INC recognize the need in the community for a transitional housing program. After hearing story after story about those in desperate need for a place to live, who cannot seem to make ends meet, who have stayed their 30 days at the local emergency shelter, and who are working as much as they can only to be able to live in a hotel for $44 a day and therefore cannot afford deposits for an apartment, the people of HOTEL INC decided it was time to do something.

WKU students and HOTEL INC’s Board of Directors partnered together to research the most effective transitional housing program. The program they are going to use develops homeless people into self-sufficiency, and the records show that 85% of these people remained self-sufficient after five years.

Currently, HOTEL INC is in desperate need for someone to donate a building so the transitional housing program can get off the ground. The need has been identified, the program has been decided, and the volunteers are willing. All that is left for HOTEL INC is that an adequate building be secured.

If you would like more information about HOTEL INC, including how you can volunteer or more information regarding the transitional housing program, please contact Karen Myers at director@hotelincbg.com or call the office at 270.782.1263.
Run & Walk for Children benefits the Family Enrichment Center

Total Fitness Connection’s Run & Walk for Children
Benefiting the Family Enrichment Center
Saturday, March 26, 2011 at Basil Griffin Park
Start time: 7:30am

There were 6,427 reports of abuse/neglect from July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010 in the Barren River Area Development District of South Central Kentucky. Of these reports, 2,174 were investigated and involved 2,942 children. From these reports, 982 children in our ten-county area were confirmed to have been abused or neglected. We think you will agree that this number is unacceptable. Child abuse is a dirty little secret that no one wants to talk about, but ignoring it will not help the child who fears the very person who is supposed to protect him or her. Child abuse and neglect is usually the result of a parent who has reached the end of their frustration and does not have the skills or support system to help them deal with their problems. It is our job to give the parents the tools necessary to make good decisions during these difficult times. By providing parents with parenting classes, in-home education, affordable daycare, adoptive/foster parent support, and opportunities to visit with their children in a safe environment, we will have taken an important step towards child abuse prevention.

The above information was taken from www.familyenrichmentcenter.com/runwalk.asp.

Visit
www.familyenrichmentcenter.com/runwalk.asp
for more information, to volunteer or to register.

Annual Fundraising Event for Babies Set For This April

March of Dimes March for Babies
Saturday, April 30, 2011
Phil Moore Park
7101 Scottsville Rd.
Alvaton, KY  42122

Walk Distance: 3.5 miles
Registration Time: 9:00am
Start Time: 10:00am
Chapter: Greater Kentucky
Phone: 270-746-5411

When you walk in March for Babies, you give hope to the more than half a million babies born too soon each year. The money you raise supports programs in your community that help moms have healthy, full-term pregnancies. It funds research to find answers to the problems that threaten our babies. We’ve been walking since 1970 and have raised an incredible $2 billion to benefit all babies. This year, more than 7 million people will join their family, friends and colleagues in 900 communities across the nation. Our volunteers and staff will encourage and support you in your efforts to raise awareness and funds. No matter if this is your first year or your 25th, you can expect the event to be fun, compelling and rewarding.

Visit http://www.marchforbabies.org/ for more information or to register.

The above Information was taken from www.marchforbabies.org.
Engage & Exchange Challenge

Audience: WKU undergraduate students
Submission deadline: March 18, 2011 at 4:00pm
Location: WKU ALIVE Center

Nearly 40 students registered to participate in the 2010 Engage & Exchange Challenge, and the ALIVE Center hopes to receive at least 50 submissions this year. Students may submit pieces for the Engage & Exchange Challenge until 4:00pm on March 18, 2011.

This challenge to students to highlight their engagement experience is an effort to exchange ideas on how to impact the community. Students submit work in writing, still photography, and/or multi-media, reflective of their experiences or experiences of their peers in community involvement. Any instructors with coursework related to service-learning or community engagement are encouraged to share this information with their students who may be interested. Prizes are awarded for first, second, and third place in each category ranging from $100-$300. We would like for students to take this opportunity to reach beyond volunteerism and be able to demonstrate significant community impact or public problem-solving. To download official rules, visit www.wku.edu/alive.

Categories and Prizes
Still Photography - Writing - Multi-Media
1st Place $300
2nd Place $200
3rd Place $100

Service-Learning Workshop
Effective Principles & Practices of Service-Learning

Tuesday, March 15, 2011
2:30am-4:00pm
at WKU’s Downing University Center Room 349

Wednesday, March 16, 2011
4:30pm - 6:00pm
at the WKU ALIVE Center

Are you a WKU faculty member considering developing a service-learning component for your class? Have you tried using service-learning and are looking to bring it up a notch? Do you have years of experience in service-learning to share with others?

Join us to learn more about Effective Principles and Practices of Service Learning. Workshop content will include: discipline-specific service-learning, curricular connections, collaborative service-learning, partnership and reciprocity, community development through service-learning: empowerment and sustainability, and transforming experience into learning: tools for reflection. You will also have the opportunity to share your own experiences and learn from other faculty who utilize service-learning in their courses.

Learn more about the workshop and RSVP at www.wku.edu/alive/servicelearningworkshop.html.

March - May
Nonprofit Events Calendar

03/01 Kentucky Museum Very Special Arts Exhibit (runs through 3/21)
03/04 The Center for Courageous Kids Spring Family Weekend Retreats (through April 17)
03/05 Junior Achievement Penguin Plunge
03/06 Riverview at Hobson Grove Timeless Manners for Children classes
03/10 Community Action Foster Grandparent Program Chili Cook-Off
03/11 American Red Cross Blood Drive
03/12 Big Brothers/Big Sisters Glasgow Bowl for Kids’ Sake
03/18 Vision Multi-Agency Council monthly meeting
03/18 ALIVE Center Engage & Exchange submission day
03/19 Hope Harbor Safer B.G. Door-to-Door Campaign
03/25 Total Fitness Connection Run/Walk for Children Pasta Party benefiting the Family Enrichment Center
03/26 Total Fitness Connection Run/Walk for Children
03/29 American Humanics 4th Annual WKU Nonprofit Award Reception and Silent Auction
04/01 American Red Cross Blood Drive
04/15 Vision Multi-Agency Council monthly meeting
04/15 Warren County Public Library Southern Kentucky Book Fest and Children’s Day (through April 16)
04/24 WKU Volunteer Week begins
04/26 ALIVE Center CANstruct for a Cause
04/29 WKU Relay for Life
04/30 Area 5 Special Olympics Track & Field Competition
04/20 March of Dimes March for Babies
05/06 American Red Cross Blood Drive
05/20 Vision Multi-Agency Council monthly meeting

For a full listing of nonprofit community events, visit www.wku.edu/alive/events.html
Western Kentucky University
ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships
1906 College Heights Blvd. #21095
Bowling Green, KY 42101-1095

Donate

Support WKU ALIVE Center programs and services that enhance student learning and benefit communities locally and abroad. For more information, contact Leah Ashwill, Director, at 270-782-0812.

Just select the “Other” option and type in the ALIVE Center!