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UA23 Progression Through Partnerships

Aurelia Spaulding

Western Kentucky University, aurelia.spaulding@wku.edu

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PARTNERSHIPS

Building Partnerships to Strengthen Communities



Progression Through Partnerships

Progression Through Partnerships is the quarterly newsletter of the Western Kentucky University ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships

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Students Taught to Use Local Resources to Solve Issues

By: Margaret Harris



Photo credit: Sylvia Reyes

Above, students participate in Warren Elementary School's afterschool program.



In his course, Public Problem Solving, Dr. Paul Markham teaches his students how to work with people and draw on local resources to solve community issues. He wants his students to realize that public work is not something to do in their spare time, but rather implement in all aspects of their lives.

Markham said, "There are more social problems now than we have ever had. Service [alone] is not solving the problems." His solution is to provide his students with the knowledge and tools to actively engage in public work throughout the entirety of their lives.

"It is a holistic approach to service," Markham said. Students enrolled in Public Problem Solving are becoming a part of an ongoing sustainable effort to develop healthy communities.

Markham teaches his students the skills needed to become a coach to K-12 students for a local pilot program called Public Achievement. The students identify a problem and work with the coaches who help them create a solution with local assets. The Public Problem Solving students commit their coaching services to one school for a full academic year. The goal is to "empower young people to solve their own problems," Markham said.

When asked what he hopes to accomplish with this project, Markham said, "Equipping K-12 students with the skills and capacities for citizenship will cause them to see themselves as co-creators of their schools, neighborhoods, and communities – not just consumers of them."

Instructor Gives Different Opportunities to Learn in Community

By: Margaret Harris

Dr. Melissa Stewart and her Translation and Interpretation students apply their skills of translating materials from English to Spanish in the community by volunteering their services to nonprofit organizations. Stewart implements a service-learning component in her course because she believes it provides the students with an opportunity to learn about different areas of the community. "It gives them the chance to do something for the community and make a difference," the WKU professor of 19 years said.

The students have translated documents for local nonprofit organizations such as the public library, Human Right Commission, and Fairview Community Health Center. The Translation and Interpretation students recently translated a toy safety and child care approval document for Child Care Resource and Referral. Their task is to effectively translate technical documents from an array of topics into Spanish. "The students are getting real life experience and preparing for their future careers by working for a client," Stewart said.

Stewart applies a service-learning component to her course because she says, "There is a real need for this information to be available in Spanish because of the large community of Spanish speakers [in our area]." She requires the students to complete a reflection at the end of the course, synthesizing the impact service-learning has had on them as individuals and in the community.



The service-learning component has been a part of Stewart's Translation and Interpretation course for four years and has helped the students apply their knowledge and skills to address social needs.

Faculty Utilize Resources In New Programs

By: Margaret Harris

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. Mary Bennett

Director - School of Nursing
College of Health and Human Services

Dr. Mary Bennett is currently developing a new Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program for the WKU School of Nursing that will integrate hybrid delivery systems. By moving to a digital classroom, Bennett offers a solution to the problem of the school's lack of space to accommodate for the new program.

The School of Nursing is currently working very closely with the Medical Center of Bowling Green. "Our clinical partners work well with the university to provide our students with the clinical experiences they need to become excellent nurses," Bennett said.

Seven years ago, the College of Health and Human Services was formed by bringing together various health-related disciplines to create what is now the largest academic college at WKU. As a nursing professor and Director of the School of Nursing, Bennett has helped nursing become the largest major on campus, saying, "there is so much growth and potential at WKU, and particularly in all of the health science-related areas."

Aside from meeting three to four times a semester, the professors will utilize online methods to achieve virtual face-to-face sessions, class presentations, and clinical demonstrations, to teach the content of their course. In regards to the new DNP program, Bennett said, "This program is aimed at working professionals, similar to the weekend MBA program offered by business." The School of Nursing plans to admit their first group of 20 students in fall 2011.



Dr. William Pfohl

Professor - Psychology Department
College of Education and Behavioral Science

Western Kentucky University's College of Education and Behavioral Science (CEBS) awarded Dr. William Pfohl of Psychology with the 2011 Public Service Award for his involvement in the university and community. Pfohl came to WKU 32 years ago to create the School Psychology Certification program and to aid the Kentucky Department of Education in writing the regulations and procedures for school psychology. Developing the certification program entailed training school psychologists, writing regulations for the state, and creating criteria for emotional and behavioral disorders.

Since then he has been an active member of the Healthy Weight Kids Coalition of Southern Kentucky, which is group of health-related professionals and organizations who collaborate to help prevent and treat the serious problem of childhood obesity. Pfohl's role in the Coalition is to work alongside dietitians and physicians to bring a psychological stance to body image problems in children.

Pfohl is also the founding member of the National Association of School Psychologist's (NASP) National Emergency Assistance Team, which provides resources and counseling for the families, teachers, and students involved in school violence. Pfohl trains school psychologists for NASP and was the recipient of their Lifetime Achievement Award in 2010.

Pfohl recently became a consultant for the PBS network show, Sesame Street. He is a member of the advisory panel that helps kids develop resiliency. "By teaching resiliency to kids, we are helping them press on in tough circumstances," Pfohl said regarding his role as a consultant for the TV show.



Hill House Student Research Helps Future Students

By: Aurelia Spaulding



Hill House students host Sunday dinners each month for the community. Featured above, students communicate during the Vietnamese-themed Sunday dinner. Photo credit: Phuong Vu

Graduate student Mo Zhang's research on utilizing self-disclosure to build neighborhood trust not only served as a community-based research project but a great tool for future Hill House students.

For the 2010-2011 academic year, the four graduate students living and working at the Hill House chose from two different tracks--community-based research and community development. Both tracks involved the students developing relationships with families in the community living around the Hill House, which is located at 1133 East 11th Street.

Zhang found that most people in the community like when others take an interest in them and show a genuine concern when others undergo hard times. In addition,

commonalities like children, spirituality, yard work, and renovations provided neighbors the opportunity to get to know each other more.

To compliment Zhang's self-disclosure findings, graduate student Christine Serafini researched other neighborhoods to find what connects them or generally binds them together.

Both students interviewed a number of community members, and Serafini found that two of the best neighborhood activities included the Walking School Bus and annual meetings. With the Walking School Bus, one parent volunteers to walk a group of youth in the neighborhood to school each day for a week. Then, another parent volunteers the next week. Annual meetings include block parties and neighborhood watch meetings.

One neighbor said that the best activities for making connections are "probably just when we get together at somebody's house and chat." One of the neighborhood gatherings that graduate students Hilda Owusu and Phuong Vu organized was the Sunday dinners. The dinners provide the opportunity for neighbors to get to know each other better and discuss current topics. Other community development projects include the block party gathering and historic preservation activities.

New students are selected for the Hill House each summer and will begin in August. If a student is interested in being a graduate assistant at the Hill House, applications are due on June 10th to nadia.deleon@wku.edu.

Applied Research Addresses Custodial Grandparents' Needs

By: Aurelia Spaulding

Visiting Assistant Professor in Social Work, Dr. Tina Peterson, said that despite the 2.5 million custodial grandparents in the nation, there is little information on grandparents serving as the primary caretakers in rural areas.

Peterson and Dr. Dana Sullivan began research in the spring in rural areas of Warren County and surrounding counties. Peterson said they have developed a needs assessment instrument, and they will provide a web-based survey to school teachers, counselors, administrators, and family resource and youth service center coordinators.

The goal of the research is to find out the perception of school officials regarding the needs of custodial grandparents. Thus, Peterson said they partnered with three school systems to complete the assessment in hopes to share their findings and suggest intervention programs upon completion.

In Tuscaloosa, Alabama, Peterson worked with a community-based support group for custodial grandparents while finishing her doctorate. She would like for the end result of the research to also open opportunities for support groups in Western Kentucky University's regional area.

Partnership Projects Funded Through CPIAs

By: Leah Ashwill

Dr. Michael Ann Williams, Department Head of Folk Studies & Anthropology, received \$1,000 from the ALIVE Center's Community Partnership Incentive Awards (CPIA) program for a service-learning project entitled, Gardner House Restoration Project Open House. Williams is partnering with Hart County Community Scholars, Friends of Mammoth Cave, Horse Cave Theater, Preservation Kentucky, and Landmark Association.

When the Upper Green River Biological Preserve was created in Hart County, Kentucky, the Preserve directors responded to local community concerns that one of the oldest structures in the county, located on preserve land, might be destroyed. The Department of Folk Studies and Anthropology was contacted by Drs. Albert and Ouida Meier, professors in Biology, and a partnership was formed to implement various archaeological and preservation activities at the Gardner House, including the listing of the house on the National Register of Historic Places. The house has been stabilized, and although the restoration is hardly complete, it is now ready to be shown.

The aim of this project is for the Gardner House to serve as a center for the interpretation of the local history and culture of Hart County. Various groups have already visited the site, including the Hart County Community Scholars, a group of local individuals who are trained to document their own history and culture through the Kentucky Folklife Program (an interagency program of the Kentucky Historical Society and the Kentucky Arts County).



Top photo: Open house visitors inspect exhibit on local song birds created by students in the Museum Procedures class. Above, Folk Studies graduate student Rachel Hopkin (right) assists local basket maker Charlene Long at the Gardner Open House.

Visit wkualivecenter.com to learn about Community Partnership Incentive Awards.
Next deadline July 1st
 Project funding up to \$5,000

Dr. Barbara Kacer, Associate Professor in the School of Teacher Education, and Victoria Gottfried, part-time faculty in Social Work, received \$2,355 from the ALIVE Center's CPIA program for a community-based research project entitled, Cross-Cultural Transitions: Burmese Refugees in America. Kacer and Gottfried are partnering with the International Center in Bowling Green, Holy Spirit Catholic Church, and the local Burmese population.

The aim of this research project is to learn about the life experiences of local immigrants from the Myanmar Republic, formerly known as Burma. More specifically, the aim is to gain in-depth understanding of their experiences as refugees: how they were forced from their homes in Burma and why they chose to leave; where and how they lived prior to emigrating; how they attained refugee status; and what their lives are like since moving to this country. The results of this study will be shared with campus and community groups through multiple venues so that Bowling Green and surrounding communities have a better understanding of how to serve the local Burmese population effectively, as well as how to help them better assimilate to the area. This study will also inform future quantitative studies of Burmese refugees/immigrants.

Freshmen to Kick Off Semester with Big Red's Blitz

By: Kayla Tyson

"Ready? Set! Go!" These are the words screamed through a megaphone by Blair Silliman, Coordinator of First Year Student Programs and Residential Education with Housing and Residence Life, to over 300 participants in WKU's annual day of service for incoming students: Big Red's Blitz. Students participating in M.A.S.T.E.R. Plan travel to one of about twenty different nonprofit organizations in Bowling Green to perform community service. "Blitzers" are able to sign up to work with whichever organization they choose. Wherever students end up depends on how fast they run after Silliman shouts the signal.

Planning has already begun for 2011 Big Red's Blitz, with Potter Children's Home, Habitat for Humanity, and The Salvation Army confirming their participation. Lost River Cave is a proud yearly participant, and they always welcome new students with open arms. Operations Supervisor, Annie Holt, expressed, "Not only do the students provide much-needed assistance, but we feel like community ambassadors for those new to Bowling Green."

Students receive four volunteer hours to kick off the school year, a free "I'm a Blitzer!" t-shirt, and a sense of belonging. Freshman Diamond Davies recalls her day as a Blitzer, explaining "Not only did I get to meet new people, but I also got to give back to the community. I went to the Boys and Girls Club, and when we got there,

we ended up organizing a huge closet of donated items. It wasn't what we expected, but I had fun!"

The 2011 Big Red's Blitz will take place on August 25th. For information on serving as a project site for Big Red's Blitz, contact Aurelia Spaulding at (270)-782-0082 or aurelia.spaulding@wku.edu.



At Big Red's Blitz in 2010, students selected one of 22 different project sites to volunteer. Featured above, students prepare to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity building homes.

Lost River Cave Offers Youth Volunteer Opportunities

By: Kayla Tyson

What are you doing this summer? Going to camp? Hanging out with friends? Lounging on the couch? Why not be a Junior Tour Guide for the summer? Lost River Cave and Valley wants YOU to get involved this summer by becoming a Junior Tour Guide. Every year, Lost River Cave gives kids the chance to become experts in all things Lost River while having fun!

All you need to get started is a Junior Tour Guide booklet, which is provided for free in the Lost River Cave Visitor Center. You can choose to do three of five activities: taking a cave tour, leading your family on a hike, interviewing Park Guides, teaching others about Lost River Cave, or showing pride in the park. After you complete three of these activities, take your booklet back to the Visitor Center. Then you will receive a Junior Tour Guide certificate and a Lost River Patch. You can also buy a Junior Tour Guide t-shirt in the Gift Shop. This is a great way get out of the house, learn new things about a natural and historical resource, and share those new things with other people.

So, when you are sitting on the couch trying to decide what to do this summer, just remember that Lost River Cave is giving YOU the chance to make a difference and become a Junior Tour Guide.



Student Known for Philanthropic Work in Community

By: KaiLee Viehland

Jessica Paulsen is the epitome of a philanthropic woman. She is a senior Corporate Communications major who is not only active on campus but in the community as well.

Paulsen is a member of Alpha Delta Pi sorority and has served on the Philanthropy committee helping to organize several events. All money raised by her sorority goes towards the Ronald McDonald House, which helps house families who have sick children. Paulsen is also a Spirit Master, serving as Vice Chair this past year, as well as the Scholarship Chair for Lambda Pi Eta Communication Honor Society. Paulsen does a lot of meet-and-greets and internship-interest panels for both organizations.

In the community, Paulsen serves in the infant nursery at Living Hope Baptist Church and volunteers at the local Humane Society. At the Human Society, she typically spends time walking the dogs.

"I like to serve because I enjoy giving back to the campus and the community that has become my home over the past four years. I like to brighten someone's day and help others," Paulsen said.

In the midst of all of her community outreach and volunteer efforts, Paulsen still manages to maintain high academic standards. Recently she was awarded the prestigious honor of Greek Woman of the Year and a full graduate assistantship from the communications department here at WKU.



Paulsen received the Greek Woman of the Year award at Western Kentucky University in 2011. Featured above, Paulsen stands with Charley Pride, Director of Student Activities and Organizations.

Tyson Shows Versatility in Providing Service to Humanity

By: Aurelia Spaulding

During their college career, not many students are as versatile in making a difference as graduating senior and Big Sister, Kayla Tyson.

Tyson became a Big Sister to an eleven-year-old through Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Kentucky in September 2010. She and her Little Sister play basketball, do homework, play outside, and talk about life.

"I feel like you can change the world one person at a time," Tyson said.

In addition to being a Big Sister, Tyson also serves as a mentor at Dishman-McGinnis Elementary.

Tyson remained actively involved in the community much of her time at WKU. In her first years at WKU, she participated in all four phases of the Dynamic Leadership Institute (DLI) and graduated from DLI and the LeaderShape Institute coordinated by Leadership & Volunteerism. DLI proved beneficial as she moved on to hold the president position in the campus chapter of Gamma Sigma National Service Sorority and the office of Ivy Leaf Reporter in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

As her senior year approached, Tyson volunteered as an intern for Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Kentucky (BBBS). Then, she started working for the ALIVE Center in the fall of 2010. At BBBS, Tyson helped raise in-kind donations for the Spirits in the Cave fundraiser. At the ALIVE Center, Tyson assisted in coordinating and promoting volunteer programs and the advisory board throughout the year.



"Everyone needs encouragement and needs to believe someone is on their side. If I can be that person for someone, it is an amazing thing." Tyson said.

Student Reflects on a Community of Translators

By: Morgan Eklund



While I write poems, my brother tries to make the world a better place. But a few weeks ago I decided to leave my writing cove to venture out with him into the real world where there are more problems than my ever-troubling spelling errors and line break issues. I joined my brother for a networking night hosted by his employer, a nonprofit organization called Making Connections. Like their name suggests, their mission is to communicate, and their networking nights are for starting conversations about ways to make positive changes in Louisville neighborhoods.

Representatives from Making Connections, leaders from other local nonprofits, and residents from the neighborhoods of Phoenix Hill, Shelby Park, Smoketown, and California attend these events. Residents can begin to network for job opportunities, job training, and financial aid for college among many other services.

That evening I found myself in a room where people raised their hands when asked the question, "Who here knows someone who has been killed by gun violence?" At dinner I ate with three former felons who spoke earlier in the evening about Kentucky House Bill 70 that would

restore their right to vote. I suddenly found myself needing a translation, like the

ones in my favorite poetry collections of Federico Garcia Lorca. The recto would tell me who these men are now; the verso would explain how they became who they are today. We all call Kentucky home, but it was obvious that night that we were worlds and languages apart. But with Making Connections as translator, I was able to read their lit faces, anxious to make changes for themselves, their families, and I was able to see the contagious energy surrounding everyone involved.

Nonprofits like Making Connections are the translators in our communities. Sarabande Books, where I am an intern this semester is also a community translator with a national presence. As a nonprofit literary press in Louisville, Kentucky, Sarabande Books is dedicated to providing a real home for writers and their work. Through the publication of poetry, short fiction, and creative nonfiction, they create a real conversation in the literary world. Literature creates translations similar to those

Student Reflects on a Community of Translators

(Continued from page 8)

found at Making Connections. Both bring together people with different backgrounds and asks them to tell their stories.

I have never thought of myself as bilingual. I never succeeded in French or German classes; I can only read my favorite Spanish poet in translation. But I admire my brother because of his skills in talking to people with different backgrounds and wanting to know their stories. He understands so many different experiences; the unique language of the individual. But as I learn the language of independent publishing in this rare exposure to the inner workings of a press, I too find myself engaging in a larger world conversation. Literature and the work of literary presses provides this connection. A nonprofit literary press like Sarabande works especially hard in engaging the community through educational material and public readings and through the diversity of the writers they publish. One writer will tell his story in his own way; another will tell hers differently. Through verse, prose, fiction, and nonfiction, stories are being told. Publishing books creates conversations between reader and writer.

Now into the third month of my internship I am learning a new language and engaging with the diverse culture Sarabande supports. One of my main tasks as an intern has been scheduling author tours. Working with Neela

Vaswani and her book *You Have Given me a Country* has sent me to the phone calling bookstores from New York to California. Doing this is like being an advocate for the author and her work. I am acting as an executive to get her words out into the world, so her voice can be heard. It has been important for me to read her work so that I can know how to sell her book to the appropriate venues. Reading her story of growing up in a biracial family with an Irish-Catholic mother and Sindhi-Indian father makes me care about my own story, like sitting at a table at networking night with three strangers makes me know myself better.

While I make calls to schedule Neela's readings, my brother spends his time lobbying in Frankfort for among many issues, Kentucky House Bill 70. We both may be cultures apart, but through our involvement in nonprofits we can get closer; through reading we can move closer. Through listening we grow closer. I am amazed at the discoveries that are made inside a good book and around a table of strangers.

Eklund is a spring 2011 graduate of Western Kentucky University. Her reflection won first place in the writing category for the WKU ALIVE Center's Engage & Exchange Challenge.

Engage & Exchange Challenge Revamped for New School Year



Austin Anthony
Writing Category, Second Place
Multi-Media Category, First Place

Alix Mattingly
Multi-Media Category
Second Place



Nathaniel Hovee
Multi-Media Category
Honorable Mention



Morgan Eklund
Writing Category
First Place

The Engage & Exchange Challenge (EEC) highlights student engagement activities and shares the impact WKU students make in the community. The goal of the challenge is to engage students and exchange ideas on how they can make a difference. Students share service efforts for the challenge through writing, still photography, and multi-media.

In an effort to increase student participation and share community engagement activities to a larger audience, the ALIVE CCP plans to revamp the challenge to an online opportunity to share engagement experiences

during 2011-2012 academic year. Students will be able to post their photos, writing, and videos online. Viewers will have the opportunity to show their support for each submission through comments and sharing. The online feedback will be incorporated into votes for the best pieces in the People's Choice category.

Look forward to more information coming this fall online at wkualivecenter.com. Visit www.youtube.com/wkualivecenter to view the multi-media winners from the 2011 Engage & Exchange Challenge.

ALIVE Center Connects Campus with Community

By: Aurelia Spaulding

The ALIVE Center for Community Partnerships (ALIVE CCP) connects students, faculty, staff, and community members to community resources and opportunities for meaningful service and engaged scholarship. Though it proves challenging to offer all of the ALIVE CCP services to individuals throughout WKU's 27-county service region, the Center is devoted to supporting community development locally, regionally, and abroad through campus and community partnerships. In an effort to expand our reach and develop relationships throughout the greater region, ALIVE CCP staff welcomes the opportunity to meet with new partners and organizations to learn more about the region, develop connections, and provide more partnership opportunities.

In the first half of 2011, the Center staff facilitated its first biannual Campus & Community Network, which provided the opportunity for campus and community individuals to network and resulted in work groups formed to address mutually agreed upon social issues that continue to challenge our community: English as Second Language instruction for adult internationals, transitional housing, economic development in the neighborhoods formerly known as the Enterprise community, refugee and immigrant family issues, and Hispanic resource development.

In addition, the ALIVE CCP has provided funding to a number of campus and community partnership projects through the Community Partnership Incentive Awards program in 2010-11. Funding available in three different tracks, ranging from service-learning to community-based research, was awarded for projects such as an effort to improve access to higher education for the regional Hispanic community through applied research, an international assessment tool and research to measure anthropogenic effects on karst environments, environmental service learning awards for K-12 instruction, service-learning in Belize, a Hart County Gardner House restoration project and open house, and a cross-cultural research project with Burmese refugees in Bowling Green.

A smaller yet equally impactful funding opportunity offered by the ALIVE CCP is the \$100 Solution Program™, which has taken off in 2010-11 and proven to be an extremely effective service-learning tool for faculty. Seventeen \$100 Solution™ projects were completed by WKU students this spring, creating small but sustainable solutions for local residents and organizations. Projects ranged from a mentoring program and educational software purchases for kids struggling academically at Boys & Girls Club to the creation of a recycling club at a local high school to address the need for student and faculty education on sustainable communities. While these projects created helpful solutions to many, it is the process, the learning, and the application of course content that makes this program so ideal for students and classroom instruction.

The ALIVE CCP begins the new fiscal year with a summer workshop series designed to create connections amongst individuals and engage participants in an interactive

professional development experience. A workshop participant of the May session on working with diverse communities said, "This topic is meaty...this was time very well spent." Workshop participation is free and open to the public, and registration is available online at wkualivecenter.com a month prior to each workshop.

Additional resources added to the Center's services this year include a Hispanic version of the Community Resource Guide, created by WKU students in a service-learning course. The Hispanic resource guide has already been distributed to hundreds of local Hispanic residents, and it is also available to service providers upon request. A Language Resource List of volunteer interpreters and translators is also available to utilize or to consider as a volunteer opportunity. It is because of input from our constituents that such resources are available, and we encourage our partners to continue to communicate with us to determine how we can best serve the community.

Coordinating and promoting service continues to be a priority of the Center with projects and programs like Big Red's Blitz, Project Affect, and WKU Respond underway this year. Watch for updates and additional information on our upcoming programs and events, and stay connected with ALIVE CCP through email, the website, the Spirit of Engagement blog, Facebook, and Twitter. Visit or call the Center at 270-782-0082. ALIVE CCP programs and service opportunities can be found online at www.wkualivecenter.com.

Summer Workshop Series

Major Gifts and Capital Fundraising

Date: June 15

Time: 12:00pm-1:30pm

Location: WKU ALIVE Center

Speakers: John Paul Blair, Suzanne Vitale, and Laura Holderfield

Grant Research

Date: July 20

Time: 11:00am-1:00pm

Speaker: Carrie Barnette

Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

Date: August 17

Time: 11:30am-1:00pm

Facilitator: Aurelia Spaulding

Panel: Laura Simpson, Mike Hall, Mindy Johnson, and Eileen Cackowski

Free Registration!

Humane Society Reaching Out to Community

By: Kirsten Wohadlo



Photos provided by Hannah Pepin and obtained from www.bgwchsky.org

In an effort to increase community awareness and involvement, the Humane Society is planning several events to promote animal adoption and fundraise for their programs. A 28-year-old nonprofit organization created to serve as an animal shelter, the Humane Society uses events like FurBall, Puppy Paddle, Paws for a Cause, and Bark in the Park to raise awareness and spark adoptions.

Recently, the Bowling Green/Warren County Humane Society hosted its third annual Bark in the Park. It was held at the Hot Rods Baseball Park to give community members the opportunity to come out and enjoy the game but also to help the Humane Society. Two weeks prior, the Humane Society 12th Annual 5K was held. As one of their largest events, the 5K usually generates a great response from community members. This year the event resulted in a \$20,000 net profit and more than 10 adoptions.

The Humane Society also held an event for Mothers Day at the WKU baseball stadium where community members were encouraged to bring items off the wish list and received free admission. These items consist of: bleach, non-clumping litter, and Clorox wipes. They will also host events on Saturdays at the Tractor Supply and Petco.

Another way the Humane Society is active in the community is by speaking engagements and facility tours. These include speaking about the Humane Society and the different types of volunteer opportunities that are available. They also offer tours to elementary schools.

When speaking with Hannah Pepin, Adoption Center Director, about her experience with the Humane Society, she said that she started volunteering at the adoption center, and it had such an impact on her life that she knew she wanted to work there. She also spoke about how they see the number of volunteers increase when weather is nice outside or when the end of the semester is near because so many students are trying to get service hours.

Students and community members are encouraged to come out to the adoption center to volunteer. She said having volunteers makes all the difference for the animals and the center as a whole. The Humane Society accepts volunteers to walk the dogs and spend time with the animals at the shelter. Walking the dogs helps keep dogs housebroken at the shelter. Volunteer opportunities are available for adults and youth. By going on the Humane Society's website or visiting their Facebook page, you can find out more about volunteer opportunities.

Learn more
on the Humane Society's website
www.bgwchsky.org



Photo Credits: Aurelia Spaulding

Plarn Provides New Way to Make a Difference

By: Austin Anthony

Residents of Bowling Green ranging from second-graders to senior citizens have found a new way to make a difference in the community.

They are doing it through plarn, a yarn made from plastic bags that is then crocheted into a mat or rug for homeless to sleep on.

The project is led by Community Action of Southern Kentucky who has distributed 36 mats to the area's homeless since the project began in October 2010.

What began as a way to recycle plastic bags, according to Mike Hall, Project Director of the Retired Senior Volunteer Program, has now become a way for several generations of Bowling Green residents to combine forces to make a difference.

Leslie Talley of Community Action says the process of making the plarn is easy enough that her elementary school-aged child can help her, while the actual crocheting is left for the more skilled seniors in RSVP.

The process of making the plarn begins with folding a plastic bag twice over itself into a rectangle, cutting it twice to make four strips, then tying those strips together using square knots to form a string. Volunteers continue this process until they have balls of plarn ready to be crocheted.

It takes about 500 bags worth of plarn to make one mat, Talley said.

Megan Wright, a resident assistant (RA) in Bates-Runner Hall at WKU, said that making plarn is a relaxing activity to do while watching television in the evening. Wright organizes 'Plarn Parties' on Tuesdays in Bates where students watch the show Glee while they cut and tie plastic bags. Attendance varies based on the popularity of the episode.

"It is hard to see the effects of the mats due to the transient nature of the homeless community," said Alyssa Stephens of Community Action. "But the people involved still know they're making a difference."

Stephens believes that the participation of the senior community in RSVP is also an important factor in the plarn movement, along with helping the homeless.

"They still want to be involved in the community, and it's something different that they can call their own," Stephens said.

Anthony is a student at Western Kentucky University. This article won second place in the writing category for the WKU ALIVE Center's Engage & Exchange Challenge.

Students Add to Pepsi Grant to Help Youth With Academics

By: Aurelia Spaulding



When Kristina Bell's \$100 Solution group in her Group Decision-Making class met with staff at the local Boys & Girls Club, they found that one of their primary concerns was academics.

"They're just passed along from grade to grade despite their ability to learn the required material. Our end result is 10-12 year olds who can't read or write correctly or have difficulty with basic addition and subtraction; it's heartbreaking," Director, Pay McIntyre, told the student group.

The Boys & Girls Club received a Pepsi Refresh Grant last summer to help revamp their technology lab, but they only had the basic Microsoft Office software programs.

According to Abbey Kitchens, Program Coordinator, the lab previously held 6-8 donated computers, and the Pepsi grant allowed them to purchase 20 computers to replace the older machines. Volunteers for United Way's Day of Caring painted the lab, and Design Builders made countertops. Houchens Industries donated money to pay for additional resources needed.

Kitchens said that there are 125 youth that attend the Boys & Girls Club, and now each of the youth classes are scheduled in the lab 3-4 times a week. All of the computers have the basic Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, and students visit the lab to participate in national programs like internet safety and myclublife.com.

The students in Bell's \$100 Solution™ group decided to use their \$100 to buy reading and math learning software. Bell proposed, "By choosing mediums that are exciting, and entertaining for these children, we can hopefully make learning fun rather than a struggle."

On Thursday, May 5th, Bell, along with students Erin Bloss, Kameron Fraizer, Robert Cabaniss, and Maria Estes presented the software to the children. Items purchased included Cluefinders Reading Adventures, Reading Blaster, Cluefinders Math Adventures, Math Blaster, Mighty Math Carnival Countdown, and Reader Rabbit Personalized Kindergarten.

The \$100 Solution™ program allows individuals to apply for \$100 to make a difference in the community. The ALIVE CCP offers the \$100 Solution™ program for campus organizations and classes as a service-learning tool.

Summer: A Great Time to Start Recognizing Volunteer Service

By: Aurelia Spaulding

Community organizations are halfway through the year, and it is a great time to start thinking about your outstanding volunteers. The ALIVE CCP recognized 20 volunteers in April for their more than 3,000 volunteer hours served during 2010. If you work with or know youth or adults that will volunteer at least 100 hours in 2011, please submit their information for the President's Volunteer Service Award (PVSA).

The ALIVE CCP is a certifying organization for the United States PVSA program, which was started by President George W. Bush. Recipients of the award receive a gold, silver, or bronze medal. Volunteer categories are kids, young adults, adults, families, and groups. The President's Call to Service Award is available to volunteers who have served more than 4,000 hours.

Featured to the right, volunteer Eve LeBlanc receive the gold medal at the President's Service Award Reception for her service to Community Action of Southern Kentucky's Retired Seniors Volunteer Program.



Light of Chance offers 5th Annual Aspire Event for Youth

Light of Chance
July 23-24, 2011
WKU Downing University Center
Start time: Saturday -10:00am; Sunday - 3:00pm

Light of Chance Inc. presents its 5th Annual Aspire Weekend July 23-24 in Bowling Green. Aspire is an exciting and entertaining weekend packed with a series of empowering, mentoring, family-friendly community events that any and everyone can take part in.

Aspire Weekend will begin on Saturday, July 23 with a free teen summit for all middle and high school students and will be held on the campus of Western Kentucky University at the Downing University Center. The summit is from 10 a.m.-5 p.m. with registration beginning at 9 a.m. In addition, pre-registration is available at lightofchance.org. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. The Teen Summit is a day of mentoring and empowerment consisting of interactive sessions including Improv and Photography, Music and Spoken Word, Sex & Healthy Relationships, Dance and Stepping, Influence of Media and Pop Culture, and College Preparation.

Saturday evening at 7:30p.m., there will be a concert featuring local and regional artists at Van Meter Auditorium including Noizejoi, Darnell Levine, Damien Horne, former American Idol contestant Kendra Chantelle,



and more. The concert is open to the public. Tickets may be purchased in advance for \$7 at lightofchance.org, or for \$10 at the door.

Aspire will culminate on Sunday, July 24 with its Gospel Explosion, a community-wide, non-denominational praise and worship service, featuring ministries from 11th Street Missionary Baptist Church, Stoney Point Baptist, and more. The Gospel Explosion will be held at State Street Baptist Church at 3:00p.m., located at 340 State Street, Bowling Green, Ky, 42101.

For additional information, visit www.lightofchance.org or contact Eric Logan at (270) 339-0717 or eric.logan@lightofchance.org.

Spirits in the Cave benefits Big Brothers Big Sisters of SOKY



10th Annual Spirits in the Cave
Benefiting Big Brothers Big Sisters
Thursday, August 11, 2011 at Lost River Cave and Valley
Start time: 6:00pm

As the nation's leading mentoring organization, Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) provides children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported, one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever. The "Big" and "Little" matches participate in activities either at school or throughout the community. BBBS is proven to increase children's odds of succeeding in school, behaving nonviolently, avoiding drugs and alcohol, and breaking negative cycles. BBBS has been impacting South Central Kentucky for

the past 38 years, and in 2011 is striving to serve over 400 matched children ages 6 to 17 in Warren, Allen and Barren counties.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Kentucky is a private, donor-driven and volunteer-supported nonprofit organization with the majority of funding generated from fundraising efforts such as Bowl for Kids' Sake and Spirits in the Cave. BBBS will host their 10th annual Spirits in the Cave on Thursday, August 11th, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at picturesque Lost River Cave. The event features an extensive food show, where patrons savor tasty samples from many local restaurants, as well as sip wine, beer and sodas from local distributors. While enjoying the delicious cuisines and beverages, patrons can also enjoy live music from popular band, Exit 4. The event also includes an unparalleled silent auction, which features something for everyone.

While Big Brothers Big Sisters is currently in the planning stages of Spirits in the Cave, they are eager to hear from anyone interested in sponsoring this event, making a donation to the silent auction, inquiring about being a vendor, or requesting ticket information. Tickets are \$40 per person and will be available for purchase in early July.

For more information about Spirits in the Cave, volunteering, or making a donation, contact the local Big Brothers Big Sisters office at (270)781-1180 or visit www.bbbsky.com.

American Cancer Society Relay for Life



2011 Relay for Life of Warren County
Benefiting the American Cancer Society
Friday, June 3, 2011 at Bowling Green High School
Start time: 6:00pm

The American Cancer Society Relay for Life is a life-changing event that gives everyone in communities across the globe a chance to celebrate the lives of people who have battled cancer, remember loved ones lost, and fight back against the disease. At Relay, teams of people camp out at a local high school, park, or fairground and take turns walking or running around a track or path. Each team is asked to have a representative on the track at all times during the event. Because cancer never sleeps, Relays are overnight events up to 24 hours in length.

The above information was taken from http://main.acevents.org/site/TR?fr_id=29030&pg=entry.

Hearing Loss Association of American

June 7, 2011 at Greenwood Mall
Health and Wellness Center
2625 Scottsville Rd, Suite 608
Bowling Green, Ky 42104
Start time: 4:30pm

A nonprofit self-help organization dedicated to education, support, and advocacy for people who do not hear well and those around them present the Telecommunications Assistance Program (TAP) and the the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (KCDHH).

Have you experienced problems hearing on the telephone? Representatives from KCDHH will describe TAP and how you may qualify for a free specialized telephone, such as "CapTel," from the state of Ky. In addition, they will describe KCDHH's role in Frankfort and how they not only assist you but advocate on your behalf.

Hearing Loss Association meetings are free and open to the public. The meetings will be real-time captioned by Barton-Thomas Reporting.

June - August Nonprofit Events Calendar

- 06/01 Lost River Cave *Junior Tour Guide program* (every day)
- 06/02 *Hershey's Track and Field Meet*
- 06/03 American Cancer Society *Relay for Life*
- 06/03 Bowling Green *Gallery Hop*
- 06/03 American Red Cross *Blood Drive* (every Friday)
- 06/04 Bluegrass Draft *Horse and Mule Championship*
- 06/04 Bowling Green League of Bicyclists *23rd Annual Tour de Cave*
- 06/04 Chaney's Dairy Barn *Kentucky Proud Festival*
- 06/06 Greenwood Health and Wellness *Tai Chi class* (Mondays and Thursdays)
- 06/10 Franklin-Simpson *Renaissance Summer Nights Concert Series* (every other Friday)
- 06/16 Hot Rods *Proceeds Night benefiting Big Brothers Big Sisters*
- 06/16 Community Education *Stand for Children Day*
- 06/17 Vision Multi-Agency Council *monthly meeting*
- 06/18 Bicycle Bowling Green *Tour de Town: Lost River Cave Ride*
- 07/02 Bowling Green Parks and Recreation *Annual Dirt Bowl Tournament*
- 07/15 Vision Multi-Agency Council *monthly meeting*
- 07/16 Bicycle Bowling Green *Tour de Town: Water Park Ride from Preston Miller Park*
- 08/11 Big Brothers Big Sisters *Spirits in the Cave*
- 08/12 *Bowling Green Gallery Hop*
- 08/13 Bicycle Bowling Green *Tour de Town: Bike to a Ball Game from Kereiakes Park to Hot Rods Game*
- 08/19 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

Support ALIVE Center Programs

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.

Donate



Just select the "Other" option and type in the ALIVE Center!



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