

# Engaged

## S E R V I C E L E A R N I N G N E W S L E T T E R

### DYNAMIC TRIO TO VISIT LEWIS TO GIVE DAY-LONG IN-SERVICE ON COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING

**\*\*\*SAVE THE DATE: FEBRUARY 28, 2017 ~ SESSIONS WILL RUN FROM 9 A.M. - 4 P.M.\*\*\***

#### Magnifying the Transformative Potential of Community Engaged Learning

Members of the Office of Service Learning (OSL) visited San Francisco in March 2016 to explore best practices there among community agencies and the University of San Francisco as well as explore how community engaged learning (CEL) has developed at St. Mary’s College in Moraga, CA, one of our sister Lasallian institutions. Among the people with whom we networked while there were Carmen Barsody and Sam Dennison of Faithful Fools in San Francisco, and Dr. Marshall Welch, former director of CILSA at St. Mary’s (Catholic Institute for Lasallian Social Action). These three dynamic pace setters in the world of CEL are coming to Lewis on February 28, 2017. We are extremely fortunate to be able to tap their extraordinary experiences and collective wisdom as we continue to develop innovative and transformative CEL at Lewis in cooperation with our various community partners.

Our hopes for the day are many, but here are a few of the outcomes that we have crafted that will give you a sense of the day and ways that it may inform some of your own efforts in the area of CEL:

- Define/describe CEL for Lewis specifically
- Exchange ideas re: curricular and co-curricular CEL with other Lewis participants and area community partner (CP) representatives
- Understand the importance of CP voice, in general and in shaping courses and partnerships
- Begin to imagine CPs as co-educators
- Grow interest & possibilities for CEL curricular innovation
- Articulate our LU involvement with Joliet and Will County as anchor communities

The day will be structured in one-hour and two-hour increments that will allow input and dialogue to benefit administrators, service learning faculty, and staff involved with co-curricular community engagement, as well as a handful of area community agency representatives who will be invited to join us for this opportunity. A detailed schedule will be distributed the moment it is finalized.

It is the hope of the OSL that any and all faculty, staff and administrators will make attending some or all of this in-service a vital priority as Lewis University continues to foster transformative learning, high impact practices, and collaboration with community partners to create stronger, more inclusive and equitable communities.

For more information, contact Dr. Christie Billups, Director of Service Learning,  
[billupch@lewisu.edu](mailto:billupch@lewisu.edu); 815-836-5829.

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN THE CAS

The Chemistry Department is excited to be partnering with Will County and the Warren Sharpe Community Center for an extensive new service-learning curriculum. Majors at all levels will be participating to enhance their content knowledge through applied service learning. We hope the curriculum will not only provide a valuable service to the community, but also motivate the study of chemistry within a critical societal context.

Beginning in the first semester of the freshman year, chemistry majors will be exposed to the history and challenges related to urban farming in Joliet. Aside from addressing fundamental chemical concepts via lead contamination, freshmen will be exploring potential sites by investigating the race and income profiles of the surrounding area. Students will be asked to synthesize the demographic data with a map of nearby food options to reflect on the impact an urban garden might have.

In the junior year, students will be responsible for planning and executing the analysis of soil contaminants such as lead, arsenic, cadmium and chromium. Investigation of the impact of these contaminants on human physiology will enhance understanding for course participants about the societal impact on community members. Students will be accountable to our Joliet partners and will present their results in a professional portfolio.

To complete the integrated curriculum, students will be encouraged to develop their own related projects to respond to a need of our partners for their capstone experience. Projects will investigate topics such as remediation options, contaminant uptake by garden plants, or alternative uses for the land paired with cost and impact analyses.

At all levels, students will be encouraged to get to know the community. The department anticipates that the practical application of chemical knowledge and the regular reflection of their impact in the community will inspire students to continue into service-related careers.

~ Dr. Teresa Bixby, Assistant Professor of Chemistry



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN THE COB

Kay Bolden's business card introduces her as CEO, Executive Director, and Accidental Farmer – you can also add phenomenal community partner to her list of titles. Kay and her organization, the Warren-Sharpe Community Center, are developing an urban farm and are hoping to sell the produce harvested in the garden to local grocery stores and at area markets. Through the Office of Service Learning, Kay was connected with students from two classes in the College of Business in Spring 2016 for two service learning projects.

The first class was Strategic Management with Professor Jim Krejci in the capstone course of the Business Administration major. It attempts to integrate the concepts students learn in all their courses during their years at Lewis. This spring, the students linked practice to theory when they developed a Business Plan for the Green Sprout Urban Farm. This was the first effort by Warren-Sharpe to use a disciplined, business approach to solve a social problem. Kay's passion and vision for the farm needed to have a structured plan with goals and objectives to satisfy the needs of the customers and shareholders of her organization. Fifteen students developed a Business Plan after analyzing the market and the projected yields from the farm. They completed the process and presented the results to Kay Bolden. The farm has used the document in their pursuit of funding.

As the partnership continues this fall, Kay has asked that the Strategic Management class review and update the plan based on actual yields and several exciting opportunities that the farm has underway. One student who deserves recognition is Samantha Bluemer. Sam was a member of the team and saw a connection between our project and an internship she completed with the Will County Land Use Department. Sam brought Kay and Kathy Pecora, a Conservation and Energy Specialist, together and facilitated a relationship that has led to significant funding for the Green Sprout Urban Farm.

The second class was Marketing Strategy with Professor Jim Oakley. This class was divided into multiple teams that were matched with clients based on student interest in the project proposal. Four students, Agustin Espinal, Colin Donnally, Jamie Drez and Tanner Mathis, engaged with Warren-Sharpe to tackle the branding of this urban farm concept. Starting with the original concept, South Side Urban Farm, and the original mission statement, Organically Grown with Love and Care, the students iteratively developed a series of brand concepts, images, and mission statements that effectively communicated the essence of Kay's vision for Warren-Sharpe's urban farm. The final result is shown here – Green Sprout Urban Farm – with a logo incorporating the warmth of the sun, a variety of diverse children's handprints, and a green sprout beginning its growth cycle in the middle. At the bottom of the image, the new mission statement is incorporated – We Grow the Future. The four students now have experience working with a client on a successful project, and they have materials and stories to share with future potential employers. Warren-Sharpe now has a set of visual elements that represent a branding concept and mission for Green Sprout Urban Farm, and these elements are already in use at Warren-Sharpe.

These are just two examples of what can be accomplished with a great team of students and a great community partner.

~Dr. Jim Krejci, Assistant Professor of Business Administration

~Dr. Jim Oakley, Chair and Associate Professor of Marketing



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN THE COE & CONHP

The College of Nursing and Health Professions is collaborating with the College of Education to fulfill Lewis University's mission through service learning. "Fundamental to its mission is a spirit of association which fosters community in all teaching, learning, and service." This semester, students and faculty have come together with St. Dominic Catholic School in Bolingbrook to teach a Coordinated Approach to Child Health (CATCH) curriculum. CATCH is a program designed to promote healthier lifestyles for kids and communities.

Through this program, we have engaged with students ranging from four to twelve years old. The main topic of the curriculum was incorporating foods and drinks into "GO, SLOW & WHOA" categories. "GO" referred to nutritious options that should be eaten in greater quantities. "SLOW" choices included food and drinks that should be eaten with more caution. On the contrary, choices in the "WHOA" group should be limited due to the lack of nutritional value provided by them. Some of the educational areas we covered included: breakfast, healthy vs unhealthy fat, natural vs refined sugar, fast food, fiber, salt, screen time, calcium and bones.

CATCH benefits the students of Lewis University by allowing them to put into practice the skills they have been taught thus far. Through this course, the College of Education was able to practice skills in behavior and classroom management, while also being able to engage with school-aged children. Engagement through this opportunity was important because it represented the COE's standards: social justice advocate, critical transformative educator, and multicultural educator. For the College of Nursing, this opportunity was equally important because the students were able to practice educating their "clients," an imperative nursing intervention. Furthermore, the CONHP fostered leadership and collaboration, demonstrating the values of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.



This opportunity creates leaders who are confident, experienced, and knowledgeable. Roxana Gonzalez, a senior nursing student, stated, "Through this experience I realized that providing education on important topics won't always be an easy concept, but participating in CATCH helped me develop qualities in order to succeed in educating patients in the future." The children we are engaging with are benefiting from this program as well. The CATCH agenda has proven to prevent childhood obesity through various activities that enable children to identify healthy foods and increase the amount of physical activity they engage in daily. The students from Lewis University are so appreciative and feel blessed to have been a part of this remarkable opportunity. Dr. Buss, Special Education Associate Professor, observed, "Partnering with the College of Nursing was a wonderful way to collaborate two kinds of expertise. It was great to see both sets of students working together for the good of the kids in the program."

~Roxana Gonzalez, Student, CONHP with Dr. Jennifer Buss (COE) & Nanci Reiland (CONHP)

## UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF SERVICE LEARNING

### ENGAGE, AN EVENT TO FOSTER COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

On Tuesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, representatives from 25 non-profit, community organizations participated in Engage: An event to foster community connections (formerly the Service Fair). Twenty-five organizations were represented, including seven Lewis University alumni, who shared information about their agencies with interested students, explored possible partnerships with faculty and staff, and networked with each other to consider how to collaborate and support each other's work.

The 8th Fair, which is hosted bi-annually by the Community Engagement Cooperative (CEC), offered new and continuing opportunities for community partners. In addition to inter-agency networking activities and the campus-wide fair, representatives were invited to participate in a marketing workshop, presented by Dr. Jim Oakley, chair of Lewis' marketing program in the College of Business. About 15 individuals attended and had an opportunity to learn more about effective story-telling to enhance marketing in a digital age.

Feedback for the day reflected a positive experience for community partners and also indicated their continued interest in meeting and getting to know faculty members, staff and students. As this event continues to evolve, the CEC will pursue innovative means to support meaningful collaboration with area partners. Additionally, the CEC will turn to the new Community Partner Advisory Board (see page 7 to learn more) to consider how to best connect organizational representatives to the Lewis University community.



### ENGAGING HIGHER EDUCATION:

A DISCUSSION OF READINGS FOCUSED ON ENRICHING OUR UNDERSTANDING & APPLICATION OF COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING

**November 15, 2016, 2-3:30 p.m., Faculty Center (1st Floor Library)**

Marshall Welch, innovator, educator, scholar and author, recently published *Engaging Higher Education: Purpose, Platforms, and Programs for Community Engagement*. In it, he explores history, terms, and best practices at institutions effective at engaging learners with the community.

In an effort to take academic community engagement to the next level at Lewis, we will greatly benefit from the insights and investment of engaged faculty, in collaboration with the OSL, to imagine and chart the way forward. As a discussion group, we will break open the second chapter of Dr. Welch's book and ask ourselves the following questions:

- What are some of the variations and emerging understandings of community engaged learning (CEL)?
- How do we, as educators, ensure that CEL is mutually beneficial to students and community partners alike?
- How might we foster growth and development of CEL across college disciplines and programs in ways that attend to the unique goals and proposed outcomes of each.

Contact Christie Billups at [billupch@lewisu.edu](mailto:billupch@lewisu.edu); x5829 if you have any questions. And please register [here](#), the Faculty Center website.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COOPERATIVE (CEC) NIFB PACK-A-THON

This fall, members of Lewis' Community Engagement Cooperative partnered with the Northern Illinois Food Bank (NIFB) to host a Pack-A-Thon. The 2-hour program engaged 160 volunteers in packing 26,000 lbs. of potatoes that will go to food pantries and meal sites across northern Illinois.

The initiative was the result of a growing relationship with NIFB which serves over 50 pantries and meal sites in Will and Grundy counties. Given the growing number of organizations they serve in the region, the Food Bank is hoping to open a South Suburban Center in the Joliet area during the summer of 2017. Since these centers require large numbers of community members to assist in packing and preparing food for distribution, the Pack-A-Thon was meant to raise awareness about the new Center and generate interest from people who may want to serve. In 2015, NIFB had over 155,000 hours of time donated by volunteers, the equivalent of 75 full-time employees. Lewis is pleased to support their continued growth to serve hungry neighbors in our community.

~ Laura Wilmarth Tyna, Community Partner Liaison



## UNIQUE COLLABORATION AIDS EFFORTS OF GUARDIAN ANGEL

Over the summer, I was approached by a man serving life at Stateville Correctional Center, Marcos Ramirez, with an idea for collaboration between Stateville prisoners and the Lewis community. He wanted to collect toiletries and other items available to men in the prison commissary that might be helpful to women and families being served by Guardian Angel in Joliet, a social service agency focused on supporting people impacted by domestic violence. Sabrina Poulin in ministry agreed to help reach out to Lewis community members to pool resources from people on campus as well. We managed to collect a van full of items thanks to the initiative of Marcos and the generosity of dozens of people inside and out. We are left with the reminder of the power of compassion and solidarity in action.

~Dr. Christie Billups, Director of the Office of Service Learning



## COMMUNITY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

### COMMUNITY PARTNER ADVISORY BOARD

This summer, members of the Community Engagement Cooperative hosted the first gathering of the Lewis University Community Partner Advisory Board (CPAB). The group, whose purpose is to “serve as a working partner in guiding the University’s curricular and co-curricular community engagement activities by representing the voice of the community,” brings together an array of partners who are engaged in Joliet and Will County. CPAB will meet three times yearly with the intent of sharing information about community engagement at Lewis and seeking feedback and guidance from individuals who know the region. The group will help Lewis to become a more intentional contributor to Will County and the Joliet community through curricular and co-curricular efforts as we continue to develop a culture of community engagement at Lewis.

Members of the inaugural advisory board include:

Tempie Bates, Harvey Brooks Foundation  
Kathy Batistich, Valley View School District  
Kay Bolden, Warren-Sharpe Community Center  
Mike Hennessey and Sarah Oprzedek, United Way of Will County  
Ryan Lawrence, Heart Haven Outreach (H2o)  
Marilyn McSteen, Community Foundation of Will County  
Alfredo Melesio, City of Joliet Neighborhoods Division  
Kathy Pecora, Will County Land Use  
Amy Sanches, Unity Community Development Corporation and the Joliet Unity Movement  
Pam Terrell, Catholic Charities

Lewis Community Engagement Cooperative members include:

Dr. Christie Billups, Office of Service Learning  
Michelle Hoehn, Student Development & Leadership  
Mary Myers, Career Services  
Tiffany Nguyen, Office of Service Learning  
Sabrina Poulin, University Ministry  
Mariza Rocha, Multicultural Student Services  
Laura Wilmarth Tyna, Office of Service Learning



## SERVICE LEARNING DESIGNATION

PLEASE NOTE THAT COURSE SYLLABI SHOULD INCLUDE:

1

Twenty (20+) service learning hours expected of students within the semester.

2

Community engagement provides applied learning of the course content.

3

Assignments & evaluation process that provides for effective reflection & integration of learning experience & other course material.

4

Course content objectives, assignments, and service learning outcomes align.

5

Indication that this service learning course helps meet needs in the community as co-determined by faculty member and community partners.

To be considered for designation, syllabi must be submitted to Dr. Christie Billups by November 1st.

<http://lewisu.edu/servicelearning/overview.htm>

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