



SERVICE-LEARNING CENTER at CENTRAL PIEDMONT COMMUNITY COLLEGE FALL 2010

CPCC instructors help CMS students build math skills

Math may not be every middle school student’s favorite subject, but two volunteers in Charlotte have helped students at Eastway Middle School see how math can be fun by linking it to booking concerts and producing music videos. CPCC Instructors Elvira Johnson and Sonya “Rudy” Johnson have been teaching students through Citizen Schools, a nonprofit organization that runs afterschool programs at Eastway Middle School and Martin Luther King Middle School. The organization mobilizes hundreds of Charlotte volunteers to help improve student achievement by teaching skill-building apprenticeships after school.

Since September, Johnson and Johnson have been meeting with a group of sixteen students one afternoon a week to teach

mathematics. But this is no ordinary math tutoring session. These math lessons have been intertwined with a project where students have created their own music production company. Students have been building and



adjusting budgets that include line items such as booking artists, securing venues, selecting cell phone carriers and arranging travel.

The students have been plugging away at the numbers and working towards

production of a music video that was revealed at a red carpet ceremony on December 9th at Eastway Middle School.

Jerquavias Stewart, an 8th grade student at Eastway Middle School and Citizen Schools participant said, "It helps you understand math better and I like that we can make a music video and write our own lyrics."

Johnson and Johnson, who have been volunteering with Citizen Schools since 2009, teach ACA and Math 070 courses, respectively and currently run a learning community together. “It is so awesome to see students showcase the math they are learning without the pressure or fear of failure,” said Sonya Johnson. “We hope that the everyday math we are using to plan and budget our Math Rap Video will also increase the college and career readiness of each Citizen School student.”

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Student shares experience working with local non-profit

As a Community Service Work-Study for the Service-Learning Center, I have been fortunate enough to work with Birthday Blessings, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose mission is to bring “joy and support to homeless children.”

The programs of Birthday Blessings bring positive emotional experiences to homeless children and their families by lifting spirits, boosting confidence, broadening horizons, and supporting basic needs.

Birthday Blessings was founded five years ago by Amy and John

Cervantes. The growth this organization has experienced in these five years is tremendous. John and Amy Cervantes wanted a family service project in which they could teach their children about giving and helping those in need. What started as a monthly birthday party at one area shelter has now blossomed into an all-volunteer run organization servicing fourteen shelters in three different counties!

As a work-study student at Birthday Blessings, I have met so many wonderful people in our community. Volunteers are in and out of the office during operating hours, helping make the shelter parties huge



Danielle at "Halloween Story Time with Toot & Puddle" in a Birthday Blessings event.

successes. Church, school, girl/boy scout groups, companies, and individuals contribute to the organization and community by assembling the candy necklaces and goody bags that the children receive at parties.

Aside from the Shelter Party program, Birthday Blessings also has a Gift of Literacy program, which ensures that homeless children receive fun & educational books in their gift packages. In addition, the Student Birthdays program allows homeless children to be “givers” for a change. Not only does the birthday child get an anonymous backpack of gifts and care items, their classmates all receive goody bags too from the birthday boy or girl.

In my role with Birthday Blessings, I attend events at area shelters and businesses, greet visitors and volunteers, handle administrative duties, as well as capture stories and photographs for our blog, newsletter and Facebook page. I am blessed to have this opportunity to learn so much from such a great team of people! I am learning so much and am truly inspired!

—Danielle Swan

Hello to Mary!

Our office would like to formally welcome Mary Mozingo as the new Service-Learning/Student Life Coordinator. Mary comes to us from the Midwest, where she grew up in Chicago and studied in Iowa at St. Ambrose University, receiving both her undergraduate degree in Marketing & Public Relations and her Master’s Degree in Organizational Leadership. Mary is married to her husband Brian, a Matthew’s based chiropractor, and enjoys living in Uptown Charlotte.

Welcome Mary!



Mike Dong receives Community Impact Student Award



(L-R) Dr. Lisa Keyne, Mike Dong, and Bud Berro celebrate Mike's achievements while at CPCC.

Shengboa Mike Dong of Central Piedmont Community College received the fifth annual North Carolina Campus Compact *Community Impact Student Award* during the Compact's Student Conference held at Johnson C. Smith University Saturday, November 6. Thirty-four college students across the state received the award for making significant, innovative contributions to their campus' efforts to address local community needs.

Bud Berro, the Piedmont Regional Director for the Office of the Governor, and the Compact's Executive Director, Dr. Lisa Keyne, presented the award to Dong before an audience of more than 250 college students and guests representing 33 higher education institutions.

Dong is a sophomore political science & economics major and is a former Service Club Co-Chair and current SGA Representative. To date, Mike has served over 100 hours through numerous college programs and is also an active member of the Minority Male Mentoring Program (3MP). He will begin studies at UNC-Charlotte in the spring of 2011.

CPCC Student receives national recognition for service



June Furr sorting donations at the Capitol Area Food Bank in Washington, DC during CPCC' Alternative Spring Break.

Seventy students from universities and colleges across the U.S. are recipients of the Pearson Prize for Higher Education, a new award from the Pearson Foundation that recognizes and supports exemplary students who are distinguishing themselves through local public service efforts while still completing their undergraduate studies.

June Furr, former CPCC Student, was one of the seventy students selected after the rigorous application process. June was a former America Reads Work-Study tutor through the Service-Learning Center, former NC-ACTS! Educational Award recipient, and avid attendant of Service in Action events. June is currently a student at UNC-Chapel Hill.

The Pearson Prize reflects Pearson's commitment to students, colleges, and their communities by raising awareness about the importance of student service and leadership. It specifically provides assistance to those who may have been bypassed by the traditional scholarship system, whose off-campus achievements outshine their academic performance, or who may have discovered their direction or engaged their real passion after their freshman year.

Pearson Prize Fellows were chosen through an application process that included submitting a transcript, an essay, and recommendation letters. Students who were selected after the preliminary application created personal videos. Over 10,000 applied for the Pearson Prize, which was administered in 2010 by the National Society of Collegiate Scholars.

—Stacey Finkel
www.pearsoned.com

“Math skills” continued....

There is a growing worry among educators across the country as U.S. students fall behind their peers from other developed countries in math achievement, outscoring only four of 30 OECD countries on the 2006 PISA assessment [Source:



Highlights from PISA 2006 (NCES 2008-016)]. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, referred to the Nation’s Report Card, only 33 percent of Charlotte students were classified as at or above the “proficient” level in mathematics in 2009.

“We know that we need to do better at preparing our students and that starts with getting kids engaged in learning,” said Jerri Fatticci, Executive Director of Citizen Schools North Carolina. “Citizen Schools aims to get students excited about academics through hands-on learning experiences where they see firsthand the relevance of what they are learning

and how it may be applied in their future work and careers.”

Apart from their own volunteering, Johnson and Johnson also have lead the change in getting their own learning community students to organize and plan a Math Bowl with the 7th grade children, to help all the students involved improve math and study skills. By doing this, these dedicated instructors are not just telling their students service-learning is important, but showing them as well.

—Cassie McIntyre
Citizen Schools

Elvira Johnson (second from left) and Rudy Johnson (sixth from right) are pictured with Citizen School students after the December 2010 Math Bowl at CPCC.

Creek ReLeaf strikes again in the Belmont Neighborhood

On November 20th, over 500 volunteers planted trees in the Belmont neighborhood just north of Uptown Charlotte during the Creek ReLeaf tree planting event. This planting is the fourth in a series of large-scale plantings planned by the Creek ReLeaf committee and the Charlotte Public Tree Fund since January of 2008.

Volunteers from CPCC, UNC-Charlotte, JC Smith University, Queens University, Boy Scouts, Mecklenburg County offices, as well as local Belmont neighborhood residents eagerly arrived on a brisk Saturday morning wearing ratted jeans and work gloves, ready for a day of hard work.

These volunteers’ morning tasks would to gently place and pack in trees the size of twigs into the earth. These twigs (after many decades!) would eventually become

the trees that provide shade and life to the local wildlife along the Little Sugar Creek Greenway.

Large scale re-forestation efforts especially along Little Sugar Creek are so important in order to preserve the creek and keep the flood plain, this according to Rosemary Seymour, CPCC instructor for Sustainability Technologies. “Planting trees helps mitigate the effects of flooding on the urban environment,” states Seymour, which is evident in the loss of tree canopy in Mecklenburg County since 1985, which has decreased over 33%



One brave volunteer gets ready to plant a tree along the steep banks of Little Sugar Creek.

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Executive Director of the Center for Sustainability at CPCC Ernie McLaney helps volunteers at Creek Releaf 2010.

“Creek ReLeaf” continued...

through 2008 (source: American Forests).

Furthermore, planting these trees allows the reduction of using storm drains, which can be costly for taxpayers. Increased costs resulting from the 33% change alone is \$503,578,789.00. Charlotteans are noticing the urban sprawl, which has helped to get more people out to volunteer at the events such as these. Just ask volunteer Jason Prescott who said he decided to participate in order to “help the environment and make it greener.”

So far though Creek ReLeaf efforts, over 9,000 trees have been planted. For more information, please visit creekreleaf.com.

—Breannon Wills
CPCC Journalism Student

Registration still open for P.A.C.E. Conference

North Carolina Campus Compact is hosting the annual Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement (P.A.C.E.) Conference again, and registration is still open! This year’s conference will take place at Elon University on February 9th. Any CPCC faculty member with an interest in service-learning is encouraged to attend and registration costs & transportation are covered by the Service-Learning folks.

This annual conference provides participants with valuable information and skills that can be utilized in civic engagement initiatives. Workshops presented by faculty, staff, and community partners provide "how to", "best practice" and "research and theory" information and resources for any aspect of civic engagement, including curricular and co-curricular courses, projects and programs and capacity-building and institutionalization efforts.

To learn more or register, email dena.shonts@cpcc.edu.

MLK Challenge returns January 17th for its seventh year

The 7th Annual MLK Challenge is fast approaching! On January 17th, 2010, students, faculty and staff from all CPCC campuses will come together to honor Dr. King and what he meant for civic engagement and civic responsibility!

Volunteers are asked to come to campus at 8am in the Time Warner Cable/Bojangles Student Commons to register for a team. Once assigned, students will enjoy a dialogue & opening ceremony facilitated by Mobilize.org. After this, the teams will come together with their team leaders and grab their packet to see what the challenge is for the day! It could be cooking a meal for a local shelter, repairing cages at an animal adoption facility, or painting a classroom at an elementary school! Students have five hours & \$100 to complete their project and make it back in time to enjoy pizza and cake and finish the day!

This year we have ten agencies—but, shh!—we can’t reveal the projects until January 17th...all apart of the challenge!

To sign up, please email dena.shonts@cpcc.edu or visit cpcc.edu/service-learning/mlk-challenge for more information.



Phi Theta Kappa President Ivan Herran at the 2010 MLK Challenge. Ivan was assigned to the group that cooked a meal for the Men’s Shelter of Charlotte.



Service-Learning Center
Overcash 257
PO BOX 35009
Charlotte, NC 28235
704.330.6445 /fax - 704.330.6442

Check us out on the web!
www.cpcc.edu/service-learning

Service-Learning Connections

Service-Learning Staff

Mark Helms
Dean of Student Life and
Service-Learning

Dena Shonts
Director of Service-Learning

Cassie Moore
Service-Learning Coordinator

Mary Mozingo
Service-Learning/Student Life
Coordinator

Terry McMicking
Executive Administrative Assistant

Things happening around us....

- The Service-Learning Center is proud to announce new partnerships with **Horsin' Around Therapeutic Riding Center, Project Challenge, City of God Ministries, Residential Support Services & McGill Rose Garden.**
- Service-Learning is in the process of establishing a **new paperwork** system which would dramatically decrease the amount of printed documentation for service-learning students. Students from Felesia Stukes's CTS 289 class created a new system for us and our goal is to have this system in place starting in the summer of 2011. More details to come!
- Seven CPCC service-learning students attended the NC Campus Compact **Student Conference** at Johnson C. Smith University in November. Students attended workshops on planning Alternative Spring Break trips and being aware of their "carbon footprint" when traveling. Students plan to use the skills and practices outlined during the workshops for their own service trips and activities.