A Note from the Director

The Office of Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) at EMU was launched 20 years ago by Dale Rice, a professor in Special Education. AS-L or service-learning was a fledgling teaching strategy just beginning to get traction in college and universities.

Dale Rice along with colleagues Kathy Stacey and Georgea Langer (the first academic service-learning fellows) wrote one of the first manuals in the United States for faculty to integrate academic service-learning into courses. This manual provided a framework that still continues to assist faculty in shaping an AS-L experience into their courses and/or curriculum.

AS-L is still a critical tool in higher education with significant research equating retention of first year students to courses with a community component. AS-L’s place in higher education seems quite stable and newer movements in civic professionalism, (an approach to transforming educational practice – through the intersection of formal knowledge, vocational exploration/development, and a commitment to the common good– Imagining America) or developing civic competencies through curriculum, courses and co-curricular activities.

AS-L continues to be pedagogical launch pad inspiring faculty to innovate their teaching, engage their scholarly and creative work and realize that university teaching is less about the dissemination of information and more about cultivating or sculpting a culture of learning.

Knowledge is malleable and exploring and experimenting ways to share, transform, teach, give, and live that knowledge has been the gift for 20 years of the Office of AS-L. - Jessica ‘Decky’ Alexander, Director Office of AS-L

“For what has been missing from this entire story is the obvious yet profound realization that education is not the transfer of information, but the transformation of knowledge.” - Dan Butin

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826Michigan Expands Library

826Michigan is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping children age 6-18 improve their reading and writing skills. By using one-on-one focused tutoring and lessons, students work with a variety of volunteers around their own personal interests to generate fun learning experiences and even some chances at publishing their work.

Recently, a group of 826 volunteers identified some gaps in the literature library for the Ypsilanti population. That’s when Dr. Ramona Capenegro decided to take that initiative even further by creating an Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) project with her Honors Children’s Literature class (CHL 208).

African American, Asian & female protagonists

Dr. Capenegro organized an Academic Service-Learning project in Fall 2015, where students were asked to compile a list of multicultural literature that could fill the gap to better relate to the current population that 826Michigan serves. 826Michigan staff and volunteers discovered a need for more books that feature: African American, Asian, and female protagonists, as well as books on LGBTQ communities, differently abled persons, and single-parent families, which are critical to the encouraging youth to read. Students were required to select at least three books in the: folktale, picture book, non-fiction, series, or poetry genres, and created a detailed criteria for evaluating and justifying selected books.

CAS-L grant provided up to $500

Once these lists were created, students sought donors to help fill the void. The CAS-L grant provided up to $500 to purchase books from their lists, however the list proved to exceed the availability of funds, so not all books were able to be purchased from the lists. However, now future volunteers and donors are able to obtain and utilize the list to continue to meet the ongoing needs to provide (continued)

No Limits Conference

On May 20th, The B. Side will host the first No Limits College to Career Conference. No Limits is not your average career conference. At No Limits, high school age students will explore and experience the college-to-career pathways taken by many current college students and recent Alumni of Eastern Michigan University.

Looking through the lens of entrepreneurship, No Limits will focus on high demand career fields through interactive breakout sessions and storytelling. Some examples of career pathways that may be explored at the conference are arts, business, health and technology.

The purpose of No Limits is to give each and every student a personal experience. That is why every student will be placed into small groups, led by a current EMU student, where they will have multiple opportunities to discuss and hear about their EMU student leader’s story. In addition, the breakout sessions will be led by recent EMU alumni, who will share their journey from graduation to their career and really help students (continued)
No Limits Conference (continued)
understand the pathway that they are looking into.

With this being the inaugural year, the conference is limited to 250 high school age students. This is a FREE event for students and chaperones, with lunch being provided for all registered attendees. If you have any questions or are interested in being an event sponsor, please contact Jack Bidlack at jbidlac1@emich.edu for more information.

At No Limits, we believe all students can create their own success story through college, to the career of their dreams.

826Michigan Expands Library (continued)

multicultural literature to the 826 library across the state of Michigan. Student also created reading recommendation cards to “entice young readers.”

The 826Michigan children’s library received over $500 worth of multicultural books to add to their collection, thanks to the service efforts of Dr. Ramona Capen negro and her students. The overall academic service-learning project had the students identify resources, create evaluation criteria, complete book reviews, and present their justification with the class.

At the end of the project, students wrote reflection papers about their experiences in the project. If the students could speak as a whole, their reflections combined would say “Selecting books for ‘real’ children and teenagers to read, drove home the importance of having a variety of texts available to young readers.” - CHL 208 Class.

Students were able to learn through this service exercise by researching, reflecting, and engaging in classroom conversations. Conversations revealed the need to engage more people in “issue topics” to expand the depth and choices available to students. - Dr. Ramona Capenegro

GEAR UP Saturday Academies

Going to college is one thing, paying for it is another, but The Business Side of Youth (The B. Side) have taken steps even further to engage high school students in their communities by explore the ideas of entrepreneurship. Approximately 25 students from various Southeast Michigan high schools attended a once-a-month business academy at EMU’s College of Business. The academies are sponsored by EMU’s GEAR UP program.

Tenth grade students gathered together one Saturday a month for three months to learn about the principles of operating a business, and envision how entrepreneurship can help solve some of the problems in their communities. Having the courses held on EMU’s campus gives the students a different mind-frame to engage in the work and hopefully spark their interest in attending college. The B. Side Director, Jack Bidlack stated “We are trying to get them interested in the various things a student can do at college, entrepreneurship is the platform to help them explore those various pathways of life.”

(continued)
GEAR UP Saturday Academies (continued)
Many connections were made during the course of training between entrepreneurship and going to college such as: setting personal and professional goals, writing a mission statement and a college entrance essay, and even developing a personal and professional budget. Students also received teamwork experience with different peers, presentation skills, and a chance to foster positive relationships with current college students and adults.

Students were organized in groups of 4-5 members to collaboratively come up with a business idea that solved a community problem. Students brainstormed and selected the community problem and business solution themselves, and their business could either be organized as a for profit or a non-profit entity. Groups were facilitated by College Positive Volunteers (CPVs), who were hired through a Michigan Campus Compact grant awarded to the Office of Academic Service-Learning. CPVs were provided training on how to generate conversations about going to college and future career possibilities.

The end of the business academy sessions is April 18, however the end of entrepreneurial planning and development for many of these youth may not end. Youth were provided with resources, and a detailed outline on how to start and maintain a business, which they may ultimately pursue in the immediate months, years to come, or even share the resources with their parents.

One high school student mentioned that he was going to share what he learned with his parents who were starting a bakery business. While there is no limit to how these students will utilize the information provided through this limited opportunity, The Office of AS-L and The B. Side are planning events and future sessions to enable opportunities for these youth, and many more youth to become engaged in their own communities, know-how-to-go to college, and have the information required to make the best decisions for their own well-being. - Micala Evans, AS-L GA & CPV Coordinator

College Coaching Corps
Planning for the future can be a very daunting task. Some people want to save up their paychecks to buy a new car, save for a vacation, or save for a down payment on a new apartment or house.

But what about those high school seniors who are trying to plan for their future post-secondary education? They have to find the university that offers their program of interest, tour the universities, apply, try and gain scholarships, and apply for their FAFSA. All of which can be overwhelming if done alone or for the first time. (continued)
facilitate a Monopoly style game entitled “College Knowledge: The Financial Aid Edition.” Futurez pick a card with a 10th grade scenario and move forward or backward based on the decision made on that card. Students travel around a game board solely comprised of colleges, universities, with a few F.Y.I spaces.

A huge thanks to ours College Positive Volunteers (CPVs) for their commitment to mentorship and college readiness!

In the fall semester we are looking forward to enhancing our curriculum and hiring more outstanding College Positive Volunteers! - Chartonay ‘Cece’ Sumpter, CPV Coordinator

**AS-L’s IMPACT**

- Faculty Fellows Trained
  - 1995-2015 = 213
- AS-L Courses Taught
  - Avg. per year = 79
- Community Partners & Organizations = 27
- Grants Funds Raised
  - Since 2006 = 1.35 mil

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**College Coaching Corps (continued)**

Eastern Michigan University, with a partnership from the Michigan College Access Network (MCAN), the Local College Access Network (LCAN) called Washtenaw Futures, and the school districts, has found a way to help those students in Washtenaw County prepare and get excited about their future endeavors.

The College Coaching Corps from Eastern Michigan University found three graduate students that are in the fields of Counseling and Higher Education/Student Affairs to help guide low-income, first-generation students through the post-secondary enrollment process.

This corps has been leading the way for an increase in post-secondary admissions and FAFSA completion over the past year. The three graduate students of the College Coaching Corps have been placed in two schools in Washtenaw County to help improve their post-secondary planning and atmosphere. Jessica Hendricks has been working and helping Ypsilanti New Tech, and William Horton-Anderson and Amber Hawkins have been helping Milan High School achieve greater retention for post-secondary education, as well as improving the college-going atmosphere.

Each of these individuals were offered a full time Graduate Assistantship position in the department of AS-L, that pays for 18 graduate credits per year and professional development opportunities to further their education to help these students. With the help of the AS-L Department Director, Jessica ‘Decky’ Alexander and Ashley Kryscynski, the coordinator of Washtenaw Futures, the College Coaching Corps program has had a very successful first year!

These college advisers have felt proud for the work they have put into their schools, and enjoyed the opportunity to work with school counselors and administrators to help the students. Amber Hawkins, Milan High School stated, “Every student has a different family background, and being able to provide them with guidance has been an awesome experience.”

Hawkins’ statement is the greatest explanation about what we do as College Coaches. While showing high school seniors and juniors that post-secondary education is important can be exhaustive and challenging, that is what makes our job so great. We are showing students that college can be obtained, and it is a great experience to achieve future goals and belong to a learning community.

The College Coaches are passionate about helping their students and committed to creating an atmosphere that is positive for post-secondary education. EMU’s College Coaching Corps is helping pave the way for incoming college students to be successful in their future education, and making sure they are more prepared than ever before. - William Horton-Anderson, GA College Coaching Corps
EMU Community & Beyond!

Eastern Michigan University has a commitment to work with and in our community. EMU’s Office of Academic Service-Learning (AS-L) is creating a Community Work-Study Initiative to create, manage, and record the amount of students working in the community as well as the impact being made. AS-L is championing this initiative in collaboration with the Office of Financial Aid.

All schools with Federal Work-Study must use at least 7% of its allocation to employ students in community service jobs. We are finding that Eastern’s commitment to community is strong and that many students are currently working in the community, but one of the issues we’ve stumbled upon as an institution, is a system to keep track of this work and ultimately keep track of the impact EMU is providing as a whole to the Ypsilanti/Ann Arbor area and beyond. This is where the new Community Work-Study Initiative will come into play.

The overall goal of the initiative is not only to be compliant but also to create amazing opportunities in service for current EMU students and to provide capacity building for some of the great organizations surrounding our campus. To date, AS-L has collaborated with 13 different organizations to create work positions for eligible work-study students. These positions are currently posted on Handshake for the 2015 Summer and/or Fall semester. Our other goals include recording the work students are doing in the community through other departments and offices as this data is extremely useful information for the Office of Financial Aid and the university as a whole. If we have the minimum amount of work-study students participating in community work-study positions we would be putting approximately $70,000 into the community and countless work hours while building meaningful relationships with not only the organizations but the people and families that these organizations serve.

What can I do to help?

You may be asking, “What can I do to help?” Firstly, discuss these opportunities with your students. Many students don’t know that Handshake exist. Second, you can advise or mentor students in anyway or have a brief discussion with them about work-study. If they have been awarded work-study, (continued)
EMU Community & Beyond (continued)

let them know that these opportunities to work in the community are available and then refer them to our office.

Lastly, if you do any work in the community with your work-study students or with regular students, please reach out to us and let us know Having this information will not only help our initiative get off to a strong start, but is extremely important information for the Office of Financial Aid and the university as a whole. This is an exciting mission that we’ve accepted and with help from staff, students, and the community, EMU can make a great impact in our community and beyond! - *Shavonne Coleman, GA Community Work Study*

handshake

This new system allows both the campus and the public communities to post job openings for EMU students. Join Handshake today at [app.joinhandshake.com/register](app.joinhandshake.com/register) and look for your work study or other job postings.

AS-L’s Xavier Kimbrough

As my undergraduate years are quickly coming to an end, I wanted to do a little reflection of the amazing journey that I’ve had being involved in the Office of Academic Service-Learning (AS-L). My first encounter with Jessica ‘Decky’ Alexander was through her improvisational acting course in the spring of 2012.

At that time, I was an unorganized sophomore that wasn’t involved in anything on campus or in the community. After taking the course, I was invited to train to teach students about college through theater via the AS-L’s CPV Program. It was pretty intimidating at first, but I quickly got the hang of teaching students.

Three years later, I’m still teaching at Romulus Middle School and Romulus High School, in partnership with Bright Furtures and CrossTown Theatre, and while my students have grown so have I. I believe that having the opportunity to teach students aided in my growth as both a student and a community member by forcing me to become more thoughtful and responsible of needs that are not always immediately my own.

After two semesters of teaching in Romulus, I really wanted to become more involved in Ypsilanti. I asked Decky if there were any openings for me to work in the office as a student employee hoping that it would get me closer to the community involvement that I was seeking. It certainly did. The office work that I’ve done while being employed through AS-L has been so inspirational to my day-to-day life. While there have been days where I felt like I was simply making a thousand (continued)
AS-L’s Xavier Kimbrough (continued)

printouts for a meeting with a lot of staff and faculty that were unfamiliar to me, I quickly learned how much time and work Eastern’s employees put into making sure there is a bridge between community engagement and the university.

I had the great opportunity of working with 826Michigan and tutor some of their students. 826Michigan is such a wonderful program and Frances Martin and D’Real Graham are exemplary role models for what it looks like to be active in the community. While they have made huge strides in after-school tutoring and strive to create engaging environments for youth to learn outside of their schoolwork, they also genuinely care about the well-being of the community as a whole. I remember one day while I was tutoring students one day at Beezy’s on Washington Street, looking out of the window and seeing D’Real doing chalk graffiti across the street at a long-vacated building. Not only did the chalk lighten up the dull appearance of the building but the positive messages and symbols that were written underneath the buildings awning would be inspirational for anyone that came in contact with it. Similarly, I believe that this spread of positivity is what 826Michigan does with its volunteers, students, and community partners across the board.

I also had the great fortune of working with one of AS-L’s social enterprise programs, Art Around Town. It was such a rewarding experience to help plan auctions, scavenger hunts, and other events alongside other AS-L staff. Knowing that we were combatting budget cuts to the arts programs was a huge motivational force.

It’s been an honor to be able to serve my community through the Office of AS-L. I have learned so much about myself and all of the different people and communities around me in the process. I’m certain that I’ll find the professional experience that I’ve gained here will be extraordinarily useful to me as a I graduate on move on to the next phase of my life and for that I will be eternally grateful for that.

### Department of Academic Service-Learning

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