Office of Academic Service-Learning and Engaged Scholarship

Note from the Director

"We have more possibilities available in each moment than we realize." - Thich Nhat Hanh

As the director of this office I have spent the last 4.5 years immersed in disciplines (i.e. entrepreneurship, social enterprise, etc.) quite distinctive from my own in communication, performance and theatre. Locating or seeing the possibilities of theatre and academic service-learning were not obvious to me. In Winter 2013 the Fair Housing Center of Southeast Michigan was one of our four participants in our bi-annual community panel. We asked each agency/organization/program to identify some of their needs, dreams and ideas for university/community collaboration. The idea of working with college actors was mentioned as they need ‘actors’ to serve as housing discrimination testers. From that conversation we requested a Michigan Service Scholar from Michigan Campus Compact and from there we began the process of launching an Actors Initiative to provide Fair Housing a consistent source of testers for their program. The more I study, practice, teach AS-L and participate in engaged scholarly/creative activities I see more and more possibilities of its use as teaching/learning and engagement strategy. Acting students can meet curriculum and course outcomes by participating in the Fair Housing Actors Initiative and Fair Housing Center has their need for multi-age, multi-cultural individuals to test housing discrimination. This is equity. This is reciprocity. This is Academic Service-Learning. - Jessica ‘Decky’ Alexander

What’s Happening?

President’s Honor Roll

EMU is once again named to the 2013 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll by the Corporation for National and Community Service. The Honor Roll recognizes higher education institutions that reflect, “the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities.” (Corporation of National Comunity Service)

Information on the Honor Roll can be viewed here: www.nationalservice.gov/honorroll/

Carnegie Classification in Community Engagement  EMU

In 2008 EMU was awarded the Carnegie Classification in Community Engagement in both curricular engagement and outreach and partnerships.

Community Engagement defined by Carnegie: Community Engagemnt describes the collaboration between institutions of higher education and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity.

For the 2015 classification, all of the campuses that received the classification in 2006 and 2008 that are seeking to retain the classification will re-apply through an abbreviated application process. The application will ask for evidence of changes that have taken place on campus (practices, structures, policies) to deepen community engagement and make it more pervasive across the institution. EMU will be re-applying. If you are interested in participating in the re-application process, please contact the Office of AS-L.

For more information on the Carnegie Classification on Community Engagement please visit: www.classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/community_engagement.php
Christine Hume's two ASL classes, CRTW 550: Community Outreach for Creative Writers, a required class for all M.A. Creative Writing students, and CRTW 422: Collaboration and Community Projects, require 30 and 25 hours of service learning. For both these courses, students must match their talents and interests with arts organizations and nonprofits' needs. Thanks to a CAS-L grant, a new website ([http://crtwcommunityoutreach.emich.edu/](http://crtwcommunityoutreach.emich.edu/)) serves as the meeting place between students and organizations. The blog's three parts—Resources and Opportunities, Student Work, and Student Blogs—demonstrate a range of community engagements in the Creative Writing Program. A descriptive list of potential hosts and links to student blogs about their service learning experience makes student work more visible, and will inspire new students as well as help them decide where to apply their effort and skills. It also serves as a recruitment tool for nonprofits and acts as a portal to discover what creative writing students might effectively do for them. In this way, the website is an outreach tool in and of itself.

Student Blogs provide links to logs of student experience working for at least one semester with such organizations as 826Michigan, Washtenaw Literacy, One Pause Poetry at CCMA, Inside-Out Detroit, Hush House Museum and Cultural Center, Hobart: Another Literary Magazine, Huron Valley Women’s Correctional Facility, Oaken Transformations: Poetry and Sculpture Walk, and several local public libraries and schools. The Student Work section of the blog shows public art projects that students executed in a variety of innovative ways around the theme of “community.” Both classes explore the civic role of the artist and the uses of public language through seminar discussions and readings as well as hands-on experience. The website acts as a place where the university and community meet; and, with an eye toward extending these interactions and demonstrating vivid possibilities of exchange, it documents some of those interactions.

The grant also covered expenses for several speakers to talk to students about potential outreach projects; the speakers demystified the process, modeled ways in which outreach and service might function beyond the classroom, and talked candidly about problems and obstacles they’ve encountered in ASL experiences.

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Project Shift has trained almost 20 college positive volunteers (CPV). 9 of those volunteers have received drama training and are now using theatre games and activities to engage 8th graders in positive discussions about their paths to higher education. Project Shift has partnered with Bright Futures and Gear Up at 5 different Michigan middle schools in Taylor, Romulus, and Inkster. They are continuing to train more students as CPVs. Questions on Project Shift? Please contact its coordinators Katie’B Jarvis at kjarvis2@emich.edu or Chartonay Sumpter at csumpter@emich.edu.
The B. Side celebrated its 5th year of programming back in September 2012. This winter we entered into our 11th fall/winter B. Side Basics course. The course began on February 23, 2013 with 9 youth from the surrounding area. We have youth from Lincoln Middle School, Willow Run Middle School, Skyline High School, Willow Run High School, Ypsilanti New Tech High, WAY Washtenaw, and MiWorks Youth Services. Since the course began, 3 more youth have joined, with more still asking to join.

This winter course provides two unique opportunities. The first is the Young Women for Change “Pitches of Promise”. This is the first time that this organization has offered this competition which focuses on social entrepreneurship endeavors that benefit young women in Washtenaw County. The top prize is $1,000. The second opportunity is one that we have been participating in for 5 years – the Generation E Institute’s business plan conference in Battle Creek. This day allows budding entrepreneurs the opportunity to sell their goods and compete with their business plans. The prizes range from $250 to $1,000 for winners.

The B. Side original efforts were to link local youth to self employment opportunities. Through our course work and by presenting and participating in events, like the ones mentioned above, we continues to bring youth to the edge of the water, hoping that many will drink, and even a few will jump in.

The B. Side’s Digital Inclusion (DI) has been involved with the Hamilton Crossing community development for almost a year now. Last June we installed a computer lab for the residents. The lab offers 6 computers, a printer/fax/scanner, a 32” instructor’s monitor and a mobile instructor’s computer cart. Digital Inclusion maintains and updates the computer lab to date.

Over the last 2 months DI has continued to move forward with our commitment to Hamilton Crossing by providing 30 complete computer systems with software and wireless connectivity for those residents most in need of access to technology in their homes. This provides many of those residents with the technology necessary for children to do homework, for teens and adults to complete or pursue their educational goals and find job opportunities, and many other benefits that come with being connected to the web.

Along with providing the computers, DI EMU student trainers have provided 3 classes on basic computer knowledge and web navigation to 16 residents. This has been very helpful to those residents, who typically have very low computer literacy. This is a great opportunity for our students to interact and directly support their community.

Over the next few months, as Hamilton Crossing continues to fill up, DI will provide 20-40 additional complete computer systems for residents and provide additional instructional classes.
Upcoming Events

End of Year Celebration
On Friday, April 19th, the Office of Academic Service-Learning and the Nonprofit Leadership Program will be co-hosting an End of Year celebration. This is our chance to honor the relationship between the University and the community.

Date: Friday, April 19th, 2013
Time: 11:30 am - 1:30 pm
Location: EMU’s Lake House
RSVP: vtomalia@emich.edu

CAS-L Grants Deadline
The deadline to apply for a CAS-L grant is April 15, 2013.

“Community and Academic Service-Learning” or CAS-L grants support programming expenses related to an innovative AS-L class programs or projects at EMU. Grant amounts range from $500-$2000. Funds can be used for a variety of expenses, such as supplies, materials, or transportation. Visit www.asl.emich.edu to apply.

Faculty Fellow Seminar Deadline
The deadline to apply for the Faculty Fellow Seminar is April 5, 2013.

What is Faculty Fellows?
AS-L Faculty Fellows attend a weekly development seminar where they learn the theories, implementation, and assessment of academic service-learning to integrate AS-L methodology into their courses. Seminars are offered every fall and winter semester.

How to become a Faculty Fellow
All full-time, tenure-track faculty will receive application materials. The Office of Academic Service-Learning supports release time for a group of AS-L Faculty Fellows each fall and winter semester. Visit www.asl.emich.edu to apply.

AS-L Acting Projects

Academic Advising
How can acting and performing work within AS-L courses or be used to serve or meet community need? This winter The Office of AS-L is piloting two AS-L projects involving acting classes, students and/or the art of acting and performing. CMTA faculty member Jen Graham, working with students from CTAR 150, launched an AS-L acting project in collaboration with EMU’s Office of Academic Advising. Acting students engaged in role-playing as they sought to identify both strengths and challenges to academic advising. A series of scenarios are being presented to the office in late March. Professor Graham, in collaboration with another CMTA faculty member will be piloting other secret shopper acting initiatives in order to assist campus processes and offices in improving their services and programs. Students participating in this project also received LBC credit.

Fair Housing Center of Southeast Michigan
Michigan Service Scholar Monica Kozakiewicz is working with the Fair Housing Center of Southeast Michigan to launch an EMU Actor’s Initiative. The actors involved in this initiative will serve as testers as they seek to uncover housing discriminations. The Fair Housing Center will be hosting an information meeting on: Tuesday, March 19th in Rackham 220. Stop by anytime 12-4 p.m. Students, staff and faculty are encouraged to participate. Training for those serving as testers and part of the Actor Initiative will be held Friday, March 22nd.

If you are interested, please contact Monica Kozakiewicz at mkozakie@emich.edu or visit the Fair Housing Center of Southeast Michigan website at www.fhcmichigan.org.