

Fall 2007

Service Learning News



Portland Community College

Upcoming Events

October 1-5
PCC Students in Service Recruitment Sessions

October 6-9
International Service-Learning Research Conference
Tampa, FL

November 5-9
PCC Service-Learning Week

April 17-19
Western Region Continuums of Service Conference
Portland, Oregon
We have scholarships to send some faculty

For more information on these events visit:
www.pcc.edu/servicelearning

Inside this issue:

Classroom Presentations 2

Fall Mini-Grant Recipients 3

High School Partnerships 3

Spotlight On: Student Reflection 4

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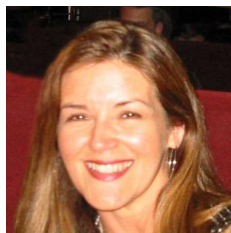
New Coordinators

Cascade Campus

We are looking for a coordinator for this campus. Must be a full-time faculty member with Service-Learning teaching experience. Contact Jennifer for more information.

In the mean time, Elena McGrath is at Cascade full-time as the AmeriCorps VISTA, read more about her and the high school partnerships on page 3. Jennifer will also be spending more time up at Cascade working with faculty in the development of Service-Learning in their courses.

Rock Creek Campus—Carmen Martinez



Many students come to a chemistry class with some apprehension thinking of chemistry as a difficult subject, somewhat abstract with little or no relevance to their personal everyday lives. To that I say: “Chemistry is everywhere!”. And service learning gives them an opportunity to discover that for themselves.

For about eight years now I have incorporated service learning in my classes encouraging students to participate in a volunteer experience that is personally relevant to them and to find a connection/application to the chemistry concepts learned in class.

This year as the Rock Creek Campus Faculty Coordinator I am excited and looking forward to the opportunity to work with and support, interested faculty discover creative ideas to incorporate service learning into their classes. Let’s work together!

Carmen Martinez, Service-Learning Faculty Coordinator for Rock Creek Campus
cmartine@pcc.edu

Sylvania Campus—Vandoren Wheeler



I was a “freeway-flyer” (an adjunct teaching at multiple institutions) when I started incorporating Service-Learning into some of my writing courses; I thought it would be, at worst, a logistical nightmare, and at best a hassle. After one of my students permanently changed her work schedule to volunteer for the remainder of the year at the elderly center we visited, I knew the program was making a meaningful impression. The essay she developed through her experience revealed a level of insight only attainable through hands-on experience. She remarked how different it was to research and write about the “real” world.

Helping students discover and participate in the richness and diversity of the various communities that surround us has been a pleasure, and I look forward to helping you put your ideas for Service-Learning into action.

Vandoren Wheeler, Service-Learning Faculty Coordinator for Sylvania Campus
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Classroom Presentations

One of the most frequent requests I receive from our partners is to come present to our students. I recognize class time is quite valuable and have communicated that to the partners. They have refined their presentations and can get their information out in as little as five minutes. Interested in inviting one to your class? Here are just a few of those who are interested in coming (for contact information, please visit the Service-Learning Database of Opportunities):



[Community Energy Project](#)

Community Energy Project, Inc. empowers people in the Portland metro area to maintain healthier, more livable homes, control their utility costs, and conserve natural resources. We do this through education, hands-on training, and distribution of weatherization, water conservation, and lead poisoning prevention materials. We also provide direct weatherization and water conservation services to seniors and people with disabilities. We deliver these services in partnership with community members and service organizations, utilities, corporations, foundations, and government agencies. We envision a future where all people can afford to live in their homes with dignity, comfort, and safety.

Opportunities for service with us

Seasonal opportunities are available from September through March, weatherizing homes for seniors and people with disabilities (Saturdays often available) and in Spring conducting telephone follow-up surveys.



[Metro Regional Parks & Green Spaces-Amphibian, Bird, Reptile Monitoring](#)

Metro Regional Parks & Green Spaces-Amphibian, Bird and Reptile Monitoring program provides valuable information about Metro's natural areas while offering a unique and in-depth service opportunity for community members. By focusing on indicator species, such as amphibians and birds, volunteers provide data to help Metro's science and stewardship team gauge the progress of its restoration efforts and track the effects of public use on wildlife.

Opportunities for service with us

Metro Regional Parks & Green Spaces-Amphibian, Bird, and Reptile Monitoring program is expanding and offers interesting opportunities like monitoring nesting Western Gray Squirrels in a critical habitat. Volunteers are also needed to monitor populations of frogs, salamanders, turtles, and birds as well as special biological monitoring projects as needed.



[Markham Elementary School](#)

Markham Elementary enjoys a consistent record of high student achievement. An experienced principal and staff support the work of 11 classroom teachers and eight education specialists, which bring an array of teaching expertise to the Markham community. The curriculum provides a well-rounded education with special emphasis on reading, math, writing and analytical thinking. Students learn in a cooperative, team-based environment that accommodates different learning styles and encourages social development.

Opportunities for service with us

We have volunteer opportunities every day (M-Thurs) from 8-8:30 and from 3-4, as well as during the lunch hour. Volunteers can help out with tutoring, mentoring and after school classes. Assist with homework club, chess, dance, art, cooking, rock climbing and/or fitness programs (T-Thurs, 2:15-3:15). Right down the street from Sylvania! Background check required those who do not pass the background check will not be able to volunteer (fingerprinting is required if task will involve being alone with children). Must commit to at least 10 hours (prefer 20).



[Mercy Corps-Youth Internet Exchange](#)

Mercy Corps, the highly respected Portland based relief and development agency, works amid disasters, conflicts, chronic poverty and instability to unleash the potential of people who can win despite nearly impossible odds. Mercy Corps has learned that communities recovering from war or social upheaval must be the agents of their own transformation for change to endure. It's only when communities set their own agendas, raise their own resources and implement programs themselves, that their first successes result in the renewed hope, confidence and skills to continue development.

Opportunities for service with us

Mercy Corps invites you to join in a ground breaking youth internet exchange connecting students in the Middle East with their American counterparts. This exchange will facilitate rich cross cultural conversations offering opportunities to build mutual understanding, empathy and respect while challenging misconceptions and stereotypes. These exchanges will be based on learning activities developed collaboratively between Mercy Corps staff and educators in Portland and Mercy Corps' partners in Lebanon, Gaza and Iraq. In Iraq, Mercy Corps' community mobilization program is establishing over 30 computer centers which open doors to the world for students, teachers and communities. Mercy Corps' supports similar opportunities in Gaza and Lebanon. Mercy Corps believes that offering opportunities for youth to enter into dialogue via the information revolution — and benefit politically, socially and economically from the proliferation of information and technology — is essential to the world's peaceful development.

Fall 2007 Curriculum Development Mini-Grant Recipients

Each term, the Service-Learning Program awards \$500 mini-grants for curriculum development. The \$500 is compensation for curriculum development. The idea is to re-design an existing courses to include a Service-Learning component. Most instructors re-design a single assignment or unit of the course to include Service-Learning as an option for students. We had six applicants for the two grants this term. Criteria for selection includes: uniqueness of project, how well thought out and realistic the proposal, if it is distinctly a service-learning project versus work experience, and if the proposal comes from a faculty in a discipline new to Service-Learning. The recipients of the fall term grants are:

Laura Smoyer teaches MTH 60, Introductory Algebra, at the Rock Creek Campus. Laura learned about Service-Learning at an inservice workshop last year. She decided to apply for a mini-grant after meeting with her campus faculty coordinator. Laura's students will arrange and carry out tutoring sessions at an elementary or middle school in their community in order to deepen their understanding of math concepts and improve their confidence in their own ability by explaining previously learned math concepts to younger students. Students will reflect on their experience through journals and meeting with Laura to discuss their experience.

Dana Leighton teaches PSY 239, Abnormal Psychology, at the Sylvania Campus. Dana has connected with a national non-profit which collects data from screenings nationwide to report prevalence of a variety of mental health disorders. Dana's students will conduct screenings at PCC with faculty, staff, students, and the public in conjunction with the PCC Counseling Center and the Women's Resource Center. Students will run the project, working on publicity, sponsorships, reporting data, and more. Reflection will occur via a short paper at the end of the process.

To learn more or to get an application worksheet, visit www.pcc.edu/servicelearning and click on "faculty". Or you can contact the Service-Learning Faculty Coordinator for your campus.

Cascade Campus High School Partnerships Update

I am the High School Partnerships Coordinator for the Cascade Campus Service-Learning Program. Since winter term, 2007, I have been working with faculty to develop a strong service-learning partnership between PCC and Jefferson and Roosevelt High Schools. In winter and spring terms we sent classes over to Jefferson High School to work with students inside and out of the classroom. Students helped with the college application process in the Demo College Center and helped provide one-on-one attention to students in special education classrooms. Students also volunteered alongside Jefferson High School-ers to staff a Special Education field day in the spring. At the same time, our program made steps towards developing a similar partnership at Roosevelt High School. This fall I intend to send more students to work at Jefferson and recruit even more faculty for the high school cause! I would like to see two more classes engaged in service at Jefferson by winter term.



High School Partnerships Options

The Cascade Campus is working on strengthening its partnerships with local high schools in a number of ways. In the fall, Elaine Beal will send service-learning students to work in Jefferson's Demo College Center and wants to also send tutors to Roosevelt's ASPIRE Program. Cascade math faculty members like Shane Horner are also interested in working with Project Return's Credit Recovery Program for homeless and transitional youth in their math classes. On October 27th, the Service-Learning Program will host a national day of service for PCC students with the help of the Community Energy Project. (See their website, <http://www.communityenergyproject.org/>) Our hope is to include Jefferson students in this project as well. If you would like to involve your class in this community weatherization project, and teach your students about service to the community, please let me know. Also, Jefferson and Roosevelt have a number of programs that would love volunteers. For example, Jefferson High School is hosting a World AIDS Day Event in December and wants PCC students to help give presentations and take part in the event. The Jefferson volunteer center is always looking for people to work in their CommUnity Room, providing a welcoming face and a listening ear to students, neighbors, and staff. Roosevelt's ASPIRE Program also constantly recruits tutors. If you would like to talk about ways that Jefferson or Roosevelt could serve as a means of incorporating service into your classroom, please get in touch with me, Elena McGrath. My office is in SSB 209 and my phone number is 503-978-5165.

PCC Service-Learning Program

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Comments on the newsletter?

Send them to
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BUTTONS! BUTTONS!

Do you have students doing service-learning this term? If so, let me know how many and I'll send you a PCC button for each of them to wear while they are out doing their service!

Spotlight on Student Reflections...

"Reflecting back to when I first walked in the door to now, I had no idea that I would become genuinely so interested in these students....This experience has shown me that there are so many rewards with getting involved in the community. I think that this service-learning option was better than any research paper I could have ever done. This service is what really matters these students are what really matters. My official time at the Demo Center might be over but I will be back on my own time next term."

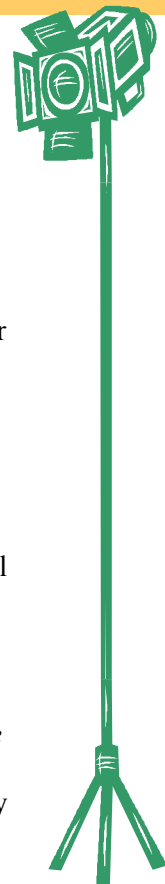
-WR 121 Student at the Jefferson High Demo Center

"Volunteering at Markham Elementary School was a valuable and memorable experience for me....It also saw the challenges public schools face with overcrowded classes, underpaid teachers, and educationally slighted kids. However, I also experienced the positive outcomes society can provide by volunteering in the community."

-WR 121 Student at Markham Elementary School

"When I first learned about this project, I was overwhelmed. I had never been a volunteer before even though I had always wanted to. I'm not glad this was a requirement for this course. My children, when they were smaller, were a part of a program similar to this one and I was able to give back to the community in that regards."

-SOC 205 Student at the Beaverton Housing Community



Thought to Ponder...

Portland is #6 in the country for volunteering!

Each year, the Cooperation for National and Community Service conducts research on the volunteering habits of Americans. The 2007 report ranked Portland #6 in the country for Volunteer Rate. (Seattle is #5). On average, Portland had approximately 557,000 volunteers, who served 79.4 million hours per year between 2004 and 2006. Portlanders also volunteer an average of 52 hours per year (compared to the average of 50 for the US). Educational/Youth Service is the top choice (32.9%) followed by Faith Based (26.7%). Who puts in the most hours? Those aged 75 and up put in an average of 200 hours per year!

For more detailed information on volunteering, go to www.nationalservice.gov.

Reflection Idea:

One way to get your students thinking about their service is to ask them what changes would they recommend to their service site? Ask students to be clear about why they suggest them and how the changes would benefit the organization. Students come up with very creative ideas. Ask your students to share their reflection papers with the organization.

