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The Healing Community

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News From The Center



A publication of the Service Learning Center at Glendale Community College
Vol.3 Special Issue

The Healing Community

by Lin Griffith
Faculty Coordinator

The *Healing Community*, a group of 32 students and their 4 instructors, will be sharing a special experience together for Spring, '97.

The students will take four courses together: Anatomy and Physiology, Algebra, English or ESL, and Volunteerism. The instructors --Joe Beeman, Carol Paxton, Lin Griffith, and Deborah Dentler--have adapted the courses to emphasize the connections between them: algebra problems will have nursing applications and term papers for the writing course will be on health-related topics. For the Volunteerism course, students will be placed in hospitals or clinics and will discuss their service experiences in class and in reflection journals.

Outside of class, students will study Biology and Math together with the help of a peer tutor, and healthcare professionals from the community will be the speakers at occasional lunch meetings. Agency representatives are invited to indicate their interest in speaking to this group by calling Sue Borquez, the Service Learning Center Healthcare Liaison.

By spending lots of time together, the members of The Healing Community have an opportunity to form friendships, support one another and share their experiences.

Gum Drops, Balloons and Vinegar

By Sue Borquez, Program Specialist

This may sound like a strange combination to you but not to the GCC Chemistry Club. Several members of the Fall 1996 Chemistry Club will be sharing their chemistry experiments with three Glendale elementary schools in the Spring 97 semester. The project was conceived by Joy Avedisian, Lala Khachatrian, Hera Dijehanian, Narineh Movessian, Rosalinda Herranz and

Taghred Abutaleb with the assistance of their faculty advisor, Lisa Fridman.

Ms. Fridman provided the students with Wonder Science: fun physical science activities that children and adults can do together. The Service Learning Center assisted the club in contacting the local elementary schools and provided the materials. We had more requests for the project than we could accommodate. At some of the schools, as many as six teachers were interested. Participating schools were Horace Mann, Verdugo Woodlands,

John Marshall and Balboa Elementary Schools. The elementary schools are hoping that this will become a club event each semester.

Agency Focus Groups

All agencies and faculty who work with the Service Learning Center are invited to attend these focus groups where we discuss issues relevant to our relationship, student needs, agency requirements, and the general improvement of our program. If you would like more information or to attend the next scheduled meeting, please call the Service Learning Center.

Service Learning Adds Up

by Lubna Farooq
Student Assistant

Recently, I sat down with Math Instructor Carol Paxton and Service Learning Center Program Specialist Sue Borquez to discuss the service learning project that was incorporated into Carol's Math 101 class.

Lubna: Why did you decide to incorporate Service Learning in your curriculum?

Carol: Service Learning was mentioned in the Summer Institute workshop sponsored by SLC. The reason why I included it in my curriculum was because I knew that students in Junior High are at a critical time in their education in math and need to improve their attitudes towards math at this stage. Also, students in my intermediate algebra class had low self-confidence and teaching someone something they already knew could boost their confidence.

Lubna: What kind of experiences did your students have with this type of Service Learning project?

Carol: Service Learning was very beneficial for those who continued doing it. However, due to some initial problems, the participation in Service Learning dropped. With only a minority of the students in the class doing the service, therefore, it was difficult to measure success.

Lubna: Did the Service Learning accomplish what you were hoping for?

Carol: My intention was for my students to tutor one-on-one. However, when the students showed up at the middle schools, there would not always be anyone there to tutor. Meanwhile, some students were held responsible for tutoring entire classrooms full of students. All of this resulted in a decrease in focus.

Lubna: What feedback did you receive from your students?

Carol: I have not gotten their journals back but the students who I have talked to raved about the Service experience. They enjoyed it very much.

Lubna: Would you do it again?

Carol: Definitely, I will do it again.

Lubna: Any after-thoughts?

Carol: I believe that, if done right, Service Learning can be a valuable experience to algebra students who hated algebra before.

The other part of the interview with Sue reflects the issues of working with the school sites that were involved in the project

Lubna: How did you assist Carol in her Service-Learning project?

Sue: Carol told me that she was interested in sending math students to tutor in the schools and we discussed what grade level would be appropriate and other details about her vision of the project. Carol felt that 6th or 7th grade would be appropriate. Due to the summer break and other complications, I had to set up the project with only the help of the middle school principals since teachers were not available. In hind-sight I would have done it differently.

Lubna: What feedback did you receive about the project?

Sue: Some of the students loved tutoring but others were frustrated the project was not working out the way it was supposed to. Some students came to the Volunteer Center and said they loved it. Some of the school teachers complained that the tutors did not show up.

Lubna: How do you plan to solve the problems encountered by both the volunteers and the middle schools?

Sue: Carol wants to do the project in spring so I am in the process of setting up a meeting between Carol, middle school teachers, and my-

self to iron out the problems faced by both sides.

All in all, I think this is a wonderful project if we can solve the problems. Since this was the first time ever for a project of this size, it is not unusual to encounter problems the first semester.

What's New in GCC and K12 Collaborative Programs . . .

By Sue Borquez

Carol Paxton's Math 101, Intermediate Algebra class ventured into new territory--our very first service learning class in the Math department. The students in her class are going to Roosevelt and Rosemont Middle schools to tutor seventh graders in both fractions and pre-algebra concepts. After a rocky start, approximately 15 of her students are participating and the word from the middle schools is that they are terrific. The GCC students provided a certificate to each middle school student who participated.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

Stop By The Service Learning Center

by Sarkis Ghazarian, Counselor

The overwhelming majority of college students do not have a fixed idea of what major they want to study when they enroll. They might have a vague notion of what kind of work they want to do upon completion of their educational goal, but even this is not a firm concept. Most students, even those who initially indicate they have a firm idea of their major and career goals change their minds a few times by the time they complete their educational program.

Answering the question of what I want to be when I grow up is very difficult for most people. Very few people have had the opportunity to explore the various options that are available in the work place while they are students in high school.

Students who were enrolled in a Regional Occupational Program (ROP) during high school had the opportunity to have some type of experience in a work related field while they study. Most high school students' part time jobs will not help them make a future vocational decision other than helping them realize that they do not want to live on a minimal wage salary working at a fast food business or as a sales clerk at a store in the mall.

Glendale Community College offers its students a unique opportunity to combine their academic learning with getting first

hand experience in working in the community to acquire the needed exposure to different types of jobs that are available in the work place.

GCC's service learning component combines the theory learned in the classroom with its practical application as a volunteer in a community agency. Students experience first hand the impact of their classroom knowledge when utilized for solving problems that exist in our community. This community experience is shared by the students and the instructor in the classroom and also in a personal journal kept by the student.

Students enrolled in service learning courses can also gain experience as a volunteer in the community. The GCC volunteer component will place students in different types of community settings to provide a much needed service to the agency, while at the same time the student gains valuable experience in working in an area of interest.

The student's volunteer experience can help in their development of a potential career choice or major area of study. Also, this experience can show the student that this type of work is not exactly what they thought they would be doing and hence this will help to remove this option as a possible career choice. For example, a student is interested in becoming an elementary school teacher and volunteers to work in a school tutoring program. This experience can further reinforce the student's initial interest or convince him that he does not enjoy working with young kids all day long.

Students volunteering through GCC's Service Learning Center will also have access to a counselor to discuss their experiences (positive and negative) in the community and how these experiences have impacted them as people and in the process of making their major and career choices. Individual and group sessions will be held during the Spring 1997 Semester.

For further information about volunteer or service learning opportunities or to speak with me, please stop by the Center in AD 124 or call (818)240-1000 ext. 5789. Sarkis is the designated counselor for the Service Learning Center.

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News From the Center is generally published twice a year, and occasionally with special issues, by the GCC Service Learning Center. Submissions from participating agencies or faculty are welcomed and can be directed to:

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