



**ALLEGHENY  
COLLEGE**  
MEADVILLE, PENNSYLVANIA

# Civic Engagement Newsletter



## Allegheny Welcomes First Bonner Scholars

By Jessica Adler  
English 208: Technical/Professional Writing

This year, Allegheny welcomed its first five Bonner Scholars and joined just 26 schools nationwide as a recognized Bonner Scholar school. The Bonner Foundation offers financial assistance to students who commit to a substantial amount of service. The Foundation originally limited the number of colleges it would support to 25. Therefore, Allegheny's acceptance is a great honor and a wonderful opportunity for prospective students.

The Bonner Scholars must commit to eight to ten hours of community service a week for all four years in addition to  
*(See SCHOLARS, page 6)*



For the first time, Allegheny awarded scholarships to some students with extensive community service. This year's Bonner Scholars are Eric Hildebrand and Jessie Badach (standing) and Xun Li, Jimmie Morris, and Jessica Edmunds.



In June 2006, Market Alley will be redesigned to be more welcoming. This project is part of the Mill Run initiative that will showcase the stream that runs through Meadville. Above is a picture that shows how the proposed renovation will look.

## Expert Provides Assistance with Meadville's Revitalization

The Center for Economic and Environmental Development (CEED) is launching an ambitious new project to revitalize our community. Dubbed *Meadville, PA: Not Your Run of the Mill Community*, this project will focus on placing Meadville's natural assets, like the historically significant stream Mill Run, at the heart of community and economic development efforts. Through this initiative, organizers hope to turn Meadville into a model of economic, ecological and social sustainability.

CEED invited community builder Dr. Jody Kretzmann to Allegheny College and to Meadville for two days of meetings and talks on November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005 to lend his expertise to the Mill Run initiative.

Kretzmann, co-director of the Asset Based Community Development Institute (ABCD) at Northwestern University, has helped rebuild communities. He has published *Building Communities from the Inside Out: A*

*(See MILL RUN, page 14)*

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 Greg Gaudio, '07

## Learning By Doing

Technical/Professional Writing students scoured the campus asking questions, then collected quotations, penned articles, and thoroughly revised their work in order to produce this *Civic Engagement Newsletter*.

Professor Ann Bomberger's class explored the challenges associated with writing for a publication by creating one. Students encouraged one another to reorganize, fine-tune, and double-check their articles. We hope you enjoy the result of their hard work.

Some students opted to write promotional material for other organizations on campus and those in the broader community. These include:

- A Profile of Mohamed ElBaradei for *Peace Psychology*
- An Allegheny Student Government Newsletter called "Read This."
- *Allegheny Literary Review* Publicity
- WARC Promotional Materials.



*Back row, standing:* Norma Yocco, Emily Warner, Stacy McCullough, Kevin Shober, Jason Kolcun, Todd Derby  
*Front row, standing:* Jessica Adler, Katie Reed, Amy Warnick, Christine Dersi, Jessica Butchy, Rosemary Mooney, Brant Garda, Cate Todd.  
*Kneeling:* Laura Cavagnaro, Lauren DiMaria, and Prof. Ann Bomberger  
*Missing:* Jessica Smeltz

Other documents written this semester include a brochure on parenting resources offered by the Center For Family Services, a brochure showcasing the College Republicans, and another describing Hurricane Katrina relief efforts at Allegheny. ◇



Allegheny College, a selective liberal arts college of nearly 2,000 students in Meadville, PA, is one of the ten institutions to participate in Project Pericles, a national project of the Eugene Lang Foundation, committed to instilling in students a sense of social responsibility and civic concern.  
<http://www.projectpericles.org>

# Fall Political Fair 2005: Not an Off Year for Politics

By Brant Garda  
English 208: Technical/Professional Writing

After a presidential election year, many students and citizens tend to think of the next three years as “off-years.” In conjunction with various organizations on- and off-campus, the Center for Political Participation (CPP) is spreading its message: the years before the 2008 presidential election are anything but off. The CPP Fellows used their fall political fair to spread this message with a new level of intensity.

CPP Fellow and event organizer Silas Russell, called the political fair a “multi-partisan event.” College Republicans, College Democrats, local party offices, and single-issue organizations on campus have participated in past years. “Any group that has a political agenda central to its message has been invited,” Russell said.

Dr. Dan Shea, CPP Director, re-affirmed

(See FAIR, page 4)



The Center for Political Participation (CPP) hosted a political fair, inviting all of the student political organizations and Crawford County candidates running for public office.

## Voting: Why Bother?

By Jessica Smeltz  
English 208: Technical/Professional Writing

Sean “Puff Daddy” Combs created the slogan “Vote or Die!” to inspire America’s youth to vote in the 2004 presidential election. The Center of Political Participation (CPP) has a catchy saying of its own: “Why Bother?” Last year, CPP Fellows Sara Schmitt, ’06, and Adam Fogel, ’06, created a program titled *Why Bother? The Importance of Voting in America* for high school students.

A narrated PowerPoint presentation, complete with rock music and a question and answer session, comprised the program. Last year, the focus was on increasing voter turnout for the 2004 presidential election, but this year it shifted to promote voting in local government elections.

The first slide was titled “Voting Creates Change,” and it explained how high school students in Seattle, Washington overturned a local ordinance that restricted teens under the age of 18 from attending a dance or concert with more than 150 people present. Working together, the students managed to vote the mayor out of office, and they chose to support a pro-music candidate. The revised ordinance was approved and signed into law in 2002 by the newly elected mayor. This shows young people that politicians will listen to them and that voting really can create change.

Next, the presentation informed students of how local elections affect their lives and what the elected officials do.

For example, school board elections have a direct impact on students. School boards ensure that sports teams, marching bands, and after-school programs receive funding, and they keep good teachers in school districts. School boards also set the school dress code, grant approval for field trips, and determine whether or not renovations are necessary.

The program concluded with information about the ease of voting. It showed the two most common types of voting booths: the old lever-style voting booth and the new electronic voting machine. The program guided students through the voter registration process. In Pennsylvania, the Department of Transportation asks individuals 18 and older if they are registered to vote, and it offers to register them through the Motor Voter program. Many high school civics and political science classes also provide students with registration forms. Some schools will even submit voter registration forms for students.

Students at more than seven different high schools in Pennsylvania viewed the program, and it was well received by all. It keeps students’ attention by addressing issues that are important to them. Many high school teachers enjoyed it so much that they expressed an interest in other CPP outreach programs.

The success of the program continues to grow. On Nov. 5, 2005, four CPP Student Fellows conducted a presentation about *Why Bother?* at Harvard University. Students

(See VOTING, page 12)

# Russian Delegates Visit Meadville

Eight Russian leaders crossed the globe to spend a week in Meadville in October. Allegheny College hosted the delegation, so that the Russians could learn about local governance and so that Allegheny students could learn about Russia.

The visit was sponsored by the Open World Leadership Center at the Library of Congress. This initiative brings together local political and civic leaders from participating countries with their counterparts in the United States.

The delegates got a taste of small town local government by, among other things, meeting with Mayor Richard Friedberg and attending a City Council meeting. To start to get a cultural understanding of rural America, they participated in Make a Difference Day and visited the Crawford County Historical Society.

The Open World Program aims to build mutual understanding between visitors and hosts, as well as to provide ideas for local governance that visitors can take back to their home towns ◊



Russian delegates met with local officials, college representatives, and other community leaders during their visit to Meadville.

## FAIR

*(Continued from page 3)*

this idea. "I want [students] to remember that the CPP is non-partisan," he said.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair of the Allegheny College Republicans, Jasmine Carreon, agreed with Shea wholeheartedly. "I think it's a great idea," Carreon said, "that all parts of the political spectrum on campus get to show up in one place and let everyone know what they stand for."

Even students who are not particularly politically active are encouraged to attend. The political fair "is mainly meant to encourage awareness and education about poli-

tics," Russell said. "How can you support one party or the other if you don't know either of their platforms?"

Students frequently register to vote for a party simply because their parents are registered into it. At the political fair, students were given information to help them understand not just who, but what they are supporting when they cast a ballot or join a campaign.

Russell said that the political fair helps to create "a stronger link between the community and the campus," noting the CPP's invitation to candidates from Meadville area. Candidates David Miller, Stu Rothman, Leslie Petasis and Harmony Hickernell spoke at the fair.

City Council candidate, Christopher Soff, and George Wright of the Libertarian Party were also in attendance.

Enthusiasm was high among all attendees at the political fair. "[Political organizations] see it as a good time for membership recruiting," Russell said. "People who aren't affiliated with any party could end up on both sides' email lists. It's a great educational opportunity all around."

Speakers and raffles increased attendance at this year's fair. "It was great," said Corey Shemelya, '08. "I only had a few minutes to stop by, but I got to meet some people and have a good time with my friends who were there." ◊

**Submit your work to**

**French Creek:**

***The Journal of Under Graduate  
Environmental Writing and Art***



*Based at Allegheny, French Creek is an online journal that publishes original essays, poetry, fiction, and artwork focused on place-based or environmental subject matter.*

*To read past issues or learn how to submit your work for review, go to*

***<http://frenchcreekjournal.allegheny.edu>***

# Allegheny Students Volunteer in New Orleans

By Norma Yocco  
English 208: Technical/ Professional Writing

You saw it on the news, read about it in the papers, and heard commentary about it on the radio. As Hurricane Katrina moved through the gulf coast, it cut a path of destruction that left many of us wondering what we could do to help.

This question puzzled Allegheny students Jen Holtzman, '07, and Neil Simpson, '06. After pondering what skills they would have to contribute to relief efforts, they decided to assemble a group to help out in New Orleans. Simpson contacted the college's interim chaplain, Aaron Kerr, and they eventually settled on working with an organization called UMCOR (United Methodist Committee On Relief). Holtzman and Simpson joined the group effort in New Orleans called Team Goodness or The Goodness Project.

Once major plans were finalized, they selected the rest of their team. Allegheny students Evan Sheppard, '08 and



Five Alleghenyians spent fall break volunteering in New Orleans: Kat Brigant, Neil Simpson, Jennifer Holtzman, Evan Sheppard, and AmeriCorps VISTA Leader Kim Harmon.

Kat Bregant, '07 decided to spend their fall breaks in New Orleans with Simpson and Holtzman. AmeriCorps VISTA Leader Kim Harmon also represented Allegheny in New Orleans.

After the twenty-plus hour van ride to Louisiana, the group's first stop was Victory Church in New Orleans. It served as their shelter and their first volunteer location. Allegheny's team put together relief packages of food, toilet paper, diapers, and other essentials. But the crew didn't just stop there; they helped distribute the boxes they made to the hurricane victims around the shelter.

To get what they needed, victims drove to Victory Church and told volunteers exactly what to put in each relief package. If it weren't for volunteers like the Allegheny students, this process would not have been as successful. "We



Weeks after Katrina, wreckage still remained.

worked the cars and filled [the victims'] orders," Sheppard said. "It gave a sense of fulfillment." He also commented on how it was especially helpful that victims got to pick exactly what they needed.

At the church, volunteers also served hot meals. Lunch was typically the busiest meal of the day; following lunch most victims went to the package station to get other food and supplies.

This wasn't the end of the Allegheny group's effort on their eight-day journey to New Orleans. The volunteers began to focus on mucking local homes and businesses.

Mucking meant taking everything out of the buildings stripping them to the wooden frames. This expedited the rebuilding process. Victims' possessions were removed from their homes because of water damage and black mold.

Holtzman recalled the first "mucking" job at the home of an elderly woman. After the team successfully cleaned out the elderly woman's home, the woman's daughter Darlene pulled Holtzman aside and asked her to stay a bit longer to talk. She agreed and stayed to talk to Darlene for a while. Holtzman said that she didn't know if she would rather throw all of her possessions away herself or have the help of others.

By the end of the trip, the Allegheny group had successfully "mucked" three houses and one coffee shop. In such a short amount of time, the team left a lasting impact by helping the victims of New Orleans. ♦



**KATRINA KARE  
KONCERT**

**Friday, Dec. 9, 2005  
2:00 p.m. - 11:45 p.m.  
Wise Sports & Fitness  
Center**

# Scholars

(Continued from page 1)

two summers in a service leadership position. One leadership experience must be done in the Meadville community and the other in another location.

This year, a handful of eligible Allegheny applicants were contacted with information about the program. They submitted essays and completed an in-depth interview process.

"We have been hoping to become a Bonner Scholar school for a long time," said Dave Roncolato, Allegheny's Director of Community Service and Service-Learning. "Finally, there is a scholarship that recognizes students for who they are as persons." Though he did not expect this year to go perfectly, he's pleased with the way things are going thus far. In addition to their individual service contributions, the Bonner Scholars will also be expected to initiate community involvement among other students.

Roncolato praised Allegheny College President Richard Cook for his effort in bringing the program to campus. "This really was the president's project," said Roncolato. "Without Richard Cook's belief in the program, this would never have happened." Cook worked alongside Roncolato and other members of the Office of Community Service and Service-Learning to bring the program to Allegheny.

"I began my correspondence with the Bonner Foundation over ten years ago because I respected its vision and mission," Cook said. Bertram and Corella Bonner estab-

lished the Bonner Foundation with the hope that their support would greatly impact communities throughout the country. The Bonner Scholars Program was not only designed to provide scholarships to students but to provide them with a reason to immerse themselves in the community. "Mr. and Mrs. Bonner deeply believed that one of the most important responsibilities and joys in life is that of giving of one's talents and work to others. This culture of caring and volunteer service permeated the Bonner Foundation and the Bonner Colleges," Cook added.

Allegheny's first five Bonner Scholars are Jessie Badach, '09, Jessica Edmunds, '09, Eric Hildebrand, '09, Xun Li, '09, and Jimmie Morris, '09. The Bonner Scholars come from very different backgrounds, but they are bound by their commitment to service. All of them were exceedingly active in high school and competed with well over twenty applicants for the scholarships. Each student is currently exploring the service sites in the Meadville community to find the area in which he/she wants to focus.

Xun Li plans to tie his service site in with his major. "I will probably go to Meadville free clinic," Li said. "There is no program set up yet, though, so I'm probably going to have to set one up on my own."

Jessie Badach's had a very different philosophy when it came to choosing her area of service. "I feel very called on to help the elderly," she said. "I figure they've given their whole lives for me in a sense, and it's the least we can do to make sure they aren't sitting alone and bored in hospitals."

Even though 8-10 hours of service per week (approximately 300 hours per semester) may seem like a daunting task for the average student, the Bonner Scholars are excited and well prepared. "I really don't think that 300 hours will be that much because I have so much free time," said Li, who is already planning an American Medical Students Association chapter at Allegheny. "In high school I had classes all day and I did 150 hours. Here I only have class for one to four hours a day."

Though this is the first year for Bonner Scholars, Allegheny has been involved with the Bonner Foundation for a number of years. In fact, Allegheny was the very first Bonner Leader school, and it is home to upperclassmen that make similar community service commitments: the Bonner Leaders. Unlike the Bonner Scholars, Bonner Leaders do not receive financial assistance from the college.

"[The Bonner Foundation] became convinced that Allegheny College represented the very essence of what the Foundation was hoping other colleges would embody," Cook said. "Our being named the first Bonner Leader college and now being invited to join the respected list of Bonner Scholar colleges demonstrates the depth of our commitment and the effectiveness of our students and staff."

For more information on the Bonner Foundation and corresponding programs, visit: <http://www.bonner.org>. ♦

"Our being named the first Bonner Leader college and now being invited to join the respected list of Bonner Scholar colleges demonstrates the depth of our commitment and the effectiveness of our students and staff," President Richard Cook

## Funding for Civic Engagement Course Application

This Application should be submitted to the Dean of the College. The entire application should not exceed two single-spaced pages. You should address the following items:

1. What is the name and number of the course? Will this be a new or existing course?
2. Please describe in some detail the scope of the planned innovations. That is, how do you intend to incorporate a civic engagement dimension in the offering?
3. Please discuss the impact that this new material will have on student learning.
4. Are there any ways that this material will affect the community? If so, please explain.
5. Please describe your mode of assessment. That is, how do you intend to gauge what students and/or community partners got from the course?
6. Please provide a detailed budget justification. Keep in mind that funds are generally made available for your time, travel, books, equipment and other related expenses.

# Students Serve Through Davies Program

By Katie Reed  
English 208: Technical/Professional Writing

Each academic year, Allegheny student volunteers perform 30,000 hours of community service in Crawford County and the surrounding area.

The Davies Community Service Leader program is one of many opportunities available to Allegheny College students who wish to provide service to the organizations in the greater Meadville area. The Davies program also offers students experience in professional settings, resume tips, and a chance to earn money while going to school.

Lew Davies, '40, graduated from Allegheny with a degree in business and economics, and he went on to

serve in the U.S. Navy during World War II. The Sharon, Pa. native returned to Meadville after the war, and he founded the Meadville Area Industrial Commission and Active Aging. Davies was a trustee of the College, and he received the Raymond P. Shafer Award for community service in 1996.

The Davies Service Leader program began when Davies' wife and children sought a means to preserve his legacy after his death in 2003. "This program is made possible because of the tremendous generosity of the Davies family," said Davies Program Co-director, Dave Roncolato. "It brings together Lew Davies' love of Meadville with his love for Allegheny College. It is a tremendous legacy to his commitments."

The program provides students with internship opportunities in non-profit organizations in Crawford County, and it introduces them to the Meadville community. It also aims to improve relationships between the college and community by dispelling stereotypes. "I think that these positive, productive interactions between Allegheny students and Meadville citizens will eventually lessen the tension that exists between the college and the community," said current Davies

The Davies Leader Program "brings together Lew Davies' love of Meadville with his love for Allegheny College," Dave Roncolato, Director of Community Service and Service-Learning

(See *DAVIES*, page 12)

## Students Taste the Bounty of Crawford County



Brooks Dining Hall: Students serve up Buffalo Chili at the 3rd Annual "Taste the Bounty of Crawford County" local foods dinner. On Wednesday Sept. 21, 2005, Brooks Dining Hall served 935 dinners during regular dinner hours. Ground buffalo provided by the Wooden Nickel Buffalo Farm of Edinboro, Pa. was just one of the many locally produced foodstuffs enjoyed at this dinner. The dinner is the result of successful collaborations between student volunteers, dining services, administrators, faculty, and local producers. ♦

## Model Campaign USA Brings Politics to Area High Schools

English 208: Technical/Professional Writing

If you're too young to vote but want to express your political views, the Model Campaign USA program at Allegheny College can help.

Model Campaign USA is a program of Allegheny's non-partisan, Center for Political Participation (CPP) that aims to educate high school students about American politics. Model Campaign USA coordinators visit classrooms and teach students effective campaign strategies and techniques over the course of ten weeks. The program culminates with a daylong competition that challenges students to organize and implement a campaign strategy for a mock congressional candidate.

Model Campaign USA coordinators are required to take a two-credit independent study course to familiarize themselves with a variety of campaign strategies. It is challenging for college students to learn to teach high school students how to "create powerful campaign slogans, provide effective speeches, target specific audiences, gather and interpret polling data, and write press releases" remarked former coordinator, Katy Lazar.

At the second annual Model Campaign USA competition, teams from seven area high schools (Commodore Perry, Fort LeBoeuf, Franklin, Meadville, Northwestern, Union City and Villa Maria) spent the day at Allegheny to test their knowledge of politics in a competitive environ-

(See *CAMPAIGN*, page 15)

# Internship Opportunities

## Project Vote Smart

Students from across the nation and around the world come to our high tech research center in the Montana Rockies for ten weeks to help American citizens educate themselves about elected officials and candidates. By providing this information in an easy and accessible manner, Project Vote Smart believes that citizens can better defend themselves from the political hype and misrepresentation characteristic of present day political campaigns.

Interns live on-site at the Project's Great Divide Ranch and scholarships pay for all living costs, including room and board.

Positions available:

- National Political Awareness Test Assistant
- Research and Hotline Assistant
- News Assistant (only offered during election years)
- Publications Assistant
- Membership Assistant
- Information Technology Assistant
- Facilities and Recreation Assistant
- Lodge Assistant

For more information and an application go to

[http://www.vote-smart.org/program\\_internships.php](http://www.vote-smart.org/program_internships.php)

## Leadership Series: Managing Others

**Wednesday Dec. 7, 2005:  
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.**

**Saturday Dec. 10, 2005:  
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Campus Center Room 301**

## Visions in Action

Volunteer in Africa or Mexico with Visions in Action, an organization providing hands on educational experiences where participants make a real difference in the developing world. Volunteers not only learn a different language and culture, but also have a chance to work with local communities and professionals in the development field.

Visions in Action is an international nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC. Visions in Action provides six and 12 month volunteer programs in Africa [South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda] and Mexico. Positions are available with nonprofit development organizations, research institutes, health clinics, community groups, and the media.

The program features a three to four week orientation, followed by a five or 11 month volunteer placement with a local organization. There is also a seven week summer program available in Tanzania which involves working with children in an orphanage.

Volunteers are normally housed in urban areas in co-ed volunteer group houses located in a supportive community. Some rural placements are available. Program fees cover housing, health insurance, medical evacuation insurance, orientation, local staff & in-country support, program administration, and a guaranteed stipend of at least \$50 a month to assist with daily living expenses. Airfare is not included. The average fee is \$4500 (\$8000-10000 including airfare and spending money). Many volunteers raise the funds for some or all of their program costs. Visions provides tips and support to assist you with fundraising.

**For more information and an application go to <http://www.visionsinaction.org>**

## Community Energy

Position includes energy education and home installations such as compact fluorescent light bulbs, door sweeps, weather-stripping, showerheads, etc.

Interns should have good communication skills and be self-motivated. They will be out in the community visiting homes of low-income and the elderly. They will need some telephone skills as they will be scheduling their own home visits. They need some basic carpentry skills--how to use a drill, install a door sweep, weather-stripping, showerhead, compact fluorescent light bulbs, etc.

Contact Information:

Conservation Consultants, Inc.  
64 South 14th Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15023 USA  
(412) 431-4449  
Daved@ccicenter.org

<http://www.ccicenter.org/>

## Conservation Education

Interns at the National Aviary will assist the Education Department in teaching our hands-on, award winning conservation education programs, in house as well as in the community.

Other responsibilities will include guiding tours, conducting outreach programs, developing curriculum, and presenting professional development workshops for teachers. We are looking for interns who can educate as well as entertain visitors to the National Aviary. Training will be provided. The national Aviary is America's only independent indoor nonprofit bird zoo.

<http://www.aviary.org>

# VESA Program Builds a Bridge: Over the Atlantic

By Jessica Butchy  
English 208:  
Technical/Professional Writing

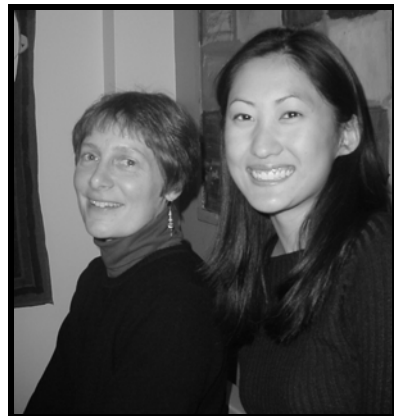
Since 1999, The Values, Ethics, and Social Action (VESA) minor program at Allegheny College has incorporated many disciplines of study and experiential learning in order to explore social issues and ethics in the Meadville community. VESA minor students learn how to take social action and evoke change for a common good through community service projects. While this minor is relatively new to Allegheny, the concept of experiential learning is not. Colleges and high schools across the United States incorporate aspects of community service aspect into their curricula.

On the other side of the Atlantic, Roehampton University and the University of Surrey in England have also designed programs that incorporate similar issues. Previously, this method of service-learning had not received as much attention overseas as it did in the United States. The Centre for Applied and Professional Ethics (CAPE) at Roehampton offers students in all fields of study an opportunity to learn about ethics. Issues that could arise in real-world settings are applied to the different disciplines including pharmacy, business, religion, government, and media. Topics like tolerance and responsibility in the changing

and expanding world are also addressed.

In its third year, CAPE recently sponsored an international conference at Roehampton University entitled Teaching Applied and Professional Ethics in Higher Education. The conference took place between Aug. 30 2005 and Sept. 1 2005.

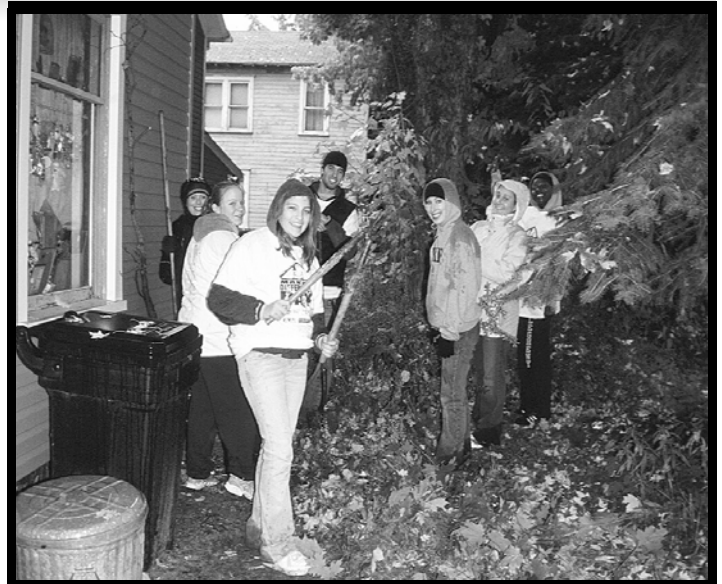
VESA Professor Elizabeth Weiss Ozorak and VESA minor Amy Warnick, '06, represented Allegheny College at the conference.



VESA Professor Elizabeth Ozorak and VESA minor Amy Warnick traveled to London to present papers on Service-Learning. Warnick was the only undergraduate in attendance at the conference.

Both presented papers on service-learning.

As the lone undergraduate attendee, Warnick brought a unique perspective to the conference. "I presented on the benefits of community-based-learning in higher education," Warnick said. "It was interesting to hear responses from European educators about creating



## Make a Difference Day 2005

1303 volunteers braved the wet weather to participate in this year's Make a Difference Day. The groups completed 113 projects this year, ranging from repairing roofs to building wheelchair ramps to raking leaves.

Make a Difference Day is the result of a partnership between many organizations and individuals in Meadville, the lead partners being Allegheny College, *The Meadville Tribune*, the United Way of Crawford County, and the Meadville Medical Center.

Realizing that these kinds of projects were needed all year long, last year the French Creek Valley Community Improvement Center (FCVCIC) was formed to organize those efforts.

similar programs at their universities."

Ozorak hoped that Warnick's presentation inspired educators to include more presentations by undergraduates in future conferences.

This conference marked the beginning of a working relationship between Allegheny's VESA program and CAPE.

VESA hopes to sponsor a non-violence week in conjunction with Raise Your Voice Week, a week of events designed to initiate student involvement in communities through volunteering and civic action. Ozorak is very excited about the possibility of students and faculty from Roehampton traveling to Allegheny to participate in this project. Poetry readings, movies, and speakers are among the events tentatively scheduled for April 2006.

Both schools have already benefited from the relationship forged at the conference, and this new connection with England has provided Allegheny students with an additional international opportunity. This partnership will work alongside the experiential learning terms and study abroad sessions to strengthen service-learning programs at Allegheny and abroad. ♦

# Helping Meadville Residents Decrease Energy Costs

By Amy Warnick  
English 208: Technical/Professional Writing

**COLD and SNOWY.** These are two words that come to mind when describing Meadville winters. Every year, residents prepare for the worst by bundling up in heavy coats, buying extra blankets, and turning up the heat. But this year, residents may think twice before they reach for the thermostat.

National Fuel estimates a 40 percent rise in price in natural gas costs from last year. The higher cost is due to increased demand and the disruption of natural gas production caused by the Gulf Coast hurricanes.

Rising costs are especially harmful to northwestern Pennsylvania because the winters are harsher and the incomes are lower. In Meadville, per capita income is just below \$11,000, and per capita energy expense is about \$2,000 per year. Energy costs account for almost 20 percent of an individual's personal income.

"I sometimes spend around \$300 a month on gas bills during the winter," said Allegheny student and Baldwin Street resident, Melani Gasper, '06. "When that happens, I have to cut way back on other expenses, like food and clothing." Faced with similar situations, more and more



Allegheny student Ben Mourer places a MCEP sign on a homeowner's lawn after a completed energy audit.

residents are trying to find a way to cut their energy costs.

Even before the projected increase in heating costs, the Meadville Community Energy Project (MCEP) worked to promote energy efficiency and renewable

energy in northwestern Pennsylvania. MCEP is a non-profit, community-based organization committed to protecting the environment and keeping money in the local area.

The program grew out of several Allegheny College courses that investigated the role of energy consumption in the local economy. Students found that cutting energy costs in Meadville by only 10 percent could save the community \$3 million annually. These savings would fuel \$6 to \$9 million annually in increased growth in the local economy.

When homeowners save money on energy costs, more money stays in the community, instead of going to utility companies outside of the area. As co-director Kathy

Greely puts it, "Energy saving may not be as flashy as wind turbines or solar panels, but it's a win-win situation. It saves you money, it's good for the environment, and it supports the local economy."

MCEP has two major programs for homeowners: home energy ratings and loans. An energy rating is a measurement of a home's energy efficiency. After MCEP workers inspect the home, they create a list of energy-efficiency improvements, along with the costs and savings of each measure.

The loan program helps homeowners pay for energy-efficient improvements such as new furnaces, insulation, and air sealing. Loans are open to homeowners and landlords of all income levels in Crawford and Erie Counties.

To set up an appointment or to get more information, call 332-2986 or visit MCEP's website at <http://welcome.to/mcep>. ◇

## *Energy Saving Tips*

Some energy efficiency improvements, such as heating system replacements or insulation, require sizeable investments. Here are some simple, low-cost ways to save on utility bills this winter:

### **Heating Savers**

- Turn down thermostat at night or when you're not home.
- Close storm windows during the winter.
- Tape heavy-duty plastic to the inside of window frames if you don't have storm windows.
- Replace furnace filters once a month.

### **Appliance Savers**

- Shut off lights when you leave a room.
- Turn off TVs and computers when they're not in use.
- Install fluorescent bulbs in lamps/ceiling fixtures that are frequently used.

### **Hot Water Savers**

- Turn down the water heater to 120 degrees.
- Install a low-flow showerhead to cut down on hot water use.

# “Connections” Builds Character and Bridges Communities

By Emily Warner

English 208: Technical/Professional Writing

Laughter is loud, kickball is sacred, and life lessons are learned in “Connections,” a mentoring project between 2<sup>nd</sup> District Elementary and Allegheny’s Values, Ethics, and Social Action (VESA) program.

“Connections” began when Donna Triggiani, the elementary guidance counselor, shared her character-education program plan with VESA Professor Elizabeth Ozorak. Already itching to work with local schools, Ozorak was thrilled. Her VESA service-learning course provided mentors, and Triggiani’s dream took flight.

The base curriculum tied the “character traits: courage, loyalty, respect, hope, honesty, and love” with children’s books that illustrate these virtues. Derek Caplan, Sarah Grudevich, and Angela Wells pioneered the program last spring as the first mentors, meeting twice a week with six 4<sup>th</sup> grade students. Reading and discussion soon clashed with the children’s short after-school attention spans, so mentors bounced back with more flexibility, incorporating role-playing games and even kickball.

There was much to learn in that first semester. “Some traits are easy to portray. Others are too abstract,” Ozorak explained. “Loyalty was the most problematic value,” said Grudevich, “as they didn’t have much life experience with it.” “Even courage,” she says, “was a challenge.” “The kids ridiculed a handicapped character, not empathizing with him or getting the message.” The mentors, however, weren’t deterred. They gave the kids handicaps with blindfolds and earplugs and by tying arms and preventing knees from

bending. “I’ve never seen such frustrated kids,” Grudevich exclaimed, “but it taught them what it’s like to have a disability and what strength (i.e. courage) disabled people must have.” Though the program’s start-up was bumpy, Caplan assures, “It was neat to have an impact on how it got shaped from the beginning.”

This year, “Connections” is again in full force, led by Lydia Gearhart, Brandy Bridge, and Jen Holtzman. According to Gearhart, games designed to teach and reinforce character values have almost entirely replaced the formal curriculum. “We’re trying to instill learning in a fun way, and we roll with what they bring to the table,” laughs Bridge. To practice teamwork and positivity, teams used jump ropes, mats, and other props to race a sidewalk’s length without touching the concrete. “They had to work together,” explains Gearhart, “and any negative words sent the whole team back to start.”

Since the start, mentors have been positively addressing challenges. Grudevich explains, “it was hard to not be authoritative at times, but we didn’t want to say, ‘You should be this way.’ Rather, we tried to practice the values: to be friendly, so they would want to be like us.” Gearhart was “at first discouraged by some kids’ negative attitudes,” but now “they’re really embracing the ideas, and it’s much better than them going home to watch TV alone.” Caplan grins, “Watching what you’re doing impact the lives of the kids is a rewarding experience.”

“Mentors tend to not realize what the kids can teach them,” states Bridge. She says of a “difficult-to-manage” boy, “he has phenomenal potential, but you don’t see it at first.” Bridge loves “getting to know who the kids really are, not just seeing they don’t have the best home or tons of money.” Grudevich, who plans to return in her last semester, adds, “I compared my childhood with theirs, and I learned from them about poverty and its effects. This project was my greatest learning experience in working with the community.” This awareness, asserts Bridge, “is how we bring together the town and the campus.”

All those involved have high hopes for “Connections.” Ozorak aims for expansion and continuity, as she says, “All kids, from all backgrounds, need more adult presence in their lives,” and “my students learn more from the experience than anything they could learn from a book or from me.” “Continuity is important when talking about loyalty and teamwork,” says Ozorak. “To be a constant presence,” Gearhart adds, “teaches more than anything else we do.”

“The goal,” says Bridge, “is for adults to listen to kids’ thoughts, to give them that opportunity.” She adds, “We hope these kids walk away with one thing to help shape who they are and that they will promote positive situations in their homes and lives.” Gearhart hopes the children will “have greater expectations and personal motivation.”

With such passionate aims, “Connections” is here to stay. Says Ozorak with a quiet smile, “Little by little, step by step, each semester we get a little bigger, a little better.” ♦

## Allegheny Professor Elected to Crawford County School Board

Professor of English David Miller recently was elected to the Crawford County School Board. His campaign emphasized the need to maintain small neighborhood schools instead of building a new, larger elementary school. Leslie Petasis, who teaches in Allegheny’s FS program; Stuart Rothman; and incumbent Ross Prather also campaigned in support small schools and also won seats. They join Associate Professor of Economics Asuman Baskan on the School Board, another supporter of neighborhood schools. ♦



## VOTING

(Continued from page 3)

from five different colleges attended this conference at Harvard, and its purpose was for students to share ideas on how to increase turnout among younger voters.

The Allegheny students discussed the creation of *Why Bother?* Students from Harvard and the University of Rochester expressed interest in collaborating in the future.

◇

### ***Attention Non-Profit Organizations:***

#### ***Allegheny Students Available to Write Drafts of Documents***

My students can learn much more about writing when they have the opportunity to write documents that will actually be used. By working with them, you would have the opportunity to get some writing projects started that you've perhaps put off because of more immediate needs. If you have a number of writing projects, a writing intern might be most appropriate; for a document or two, I can assign it as a short term project for someone enrolled in my class.

#### ***Kinds of Documents:***

Brochures	Instructions
Summaries of Complicated Material for non-specialists	
Grants	Press Releases
Meeting Minutes	Web Sites (sometimes).

### ***Attention Students:***

#### ***Writing Internships Available for College Credit.***

Develop a professional writing portfolio and get concrete experience in the workplace by interning at a local non-profit organization during the semester (Prerequisite: English 208)

**Contact Ann Bomberger** for more information.

- work (332-4334)
- home (333-6472)
- email (ann.bomberger@allegheny.edu)



Deanne Dunbar recently joined the Center for Political Participation. She serves as the CPP's Program Coordinator. Dunbar graduated from Allegheny in 2001,

## DAVIES

(Continued from page 7)

leader, Eileen Gallagher.

The Davies program encourages participating agencies in the community to develop projects for the Davies leaders. "The program provides students with an opportunity to build practical life skills, while earning money and contributing to the local community," said co-director, Jim Fitch.

"This Program has helped students develop and grow, and I must admit, I have developed and grown from being involved," Roncolato said. "Specifically, I've seen the potential of ACCEL to help students clarify career goals while meeting community needs."

All Allegheny students are eligible for this program, but just five spots are still available. After receiving applications, Fitch and Roncolato interview each student. Accepted students are then matched with agencies in Crawford County, and they receive training throughout the semester. This training helps students meet personal goals as well as those set by the agency and the program.

Students typically work 8-10 hours per week during the academic year, and some continue their Davies duties as summer interns. Gallagher works with the Chamber of Commerce, and she will remain there for the remainder of the academic year. "I have enjoyed the time I have spent working at non-profit agencies through the Davies Leader program," Gallagher said. "It is definitely something that I would consider being involved in for the rest of my life." ◇



## Getting to Know The Neighborhood

By Christine Dersi  
English 208: Technical/  
Professional Writing

Northwest Pennsylvania is farm country, and the city of Meadville has the right idea when it comes to marketing all of the great things the farms in Crawford County have to offer. Members of the Meadville Area Local Growers (MALG) sell fruits, vegetables, flowers, herbs, eggs, poultry, dairy, and fresh baked goods at the historic Meadville Market House on Saturdays from May through November. And it all comes right from the town's backyard.

In November 2003, local farmers met with cooperative development specialists to learn about starting a cooperative.

Erin Kirk, co-director of the Local Foods Network, said that specialists facilitated the monthly meetings and brought in speakers to educate the group about becoming a cooperative. "There was power in numbers, so a cooperative was worth looking into," she added.

In February 2004, the group took a producer survey that identified potential market venues for products. In March 2004, the Meadville Area Local Growers was officially established, and they secured their first venue: the historic Meadville Market House.

Members of the 33-producer collaboration have reaped numerous benefits since they formed the cooperative. David Vines of Fresh from the Vines Farm has supported MALG from the start. "You meet new people every day," he said. "You also share good information on how to grow and what to grow."

## Fresh From the Vines on Saturday Morning



David Vines of Fresh From the Vines Farm explains the intricacies of high tunnel construction to a group of Allegheny students.

Vines sells produce at the Meadville Market House, and he participated in the third annual Taste the Bounty of Crawford County at Brooks Dining Hall earlier this fall (see related article, page seven).

Originally a resident of Phoenix, Ariz., Vines moved to Crawford County about 10 years ago or as he said, "from fire to the freezer with no cooling in between." After many years in the workforce, Vines retired and devoted all of his energy to farming. Vines has had a garden for about 15 years, but he just recently finished his first commercial year. He sold 72 varieties of vegetables. "You name it, we probably got it," he added.

Vines recently added a second high tunnel, a growing system that enhances crop quality, growth, and yield, to his 80-acre farm. Like heated greenhouses, high tunnels extend the growing season into the fall and spring. Students from Allegheny

College assisted the Vines family in the construction of the high tunnel.

The addition of a second high tunnel exemplifies Vines' dedication to sustainable farming. According to the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Foundation (SARE), "sustainable agriculture encompasses diverse methods of farming and ranching that are more profitable, environmentally sound, and good for communities." Vines keeps composts on his land, and he does not use chemical fertilizers, pesticides, or herbicides on their vegetables.

"Our vegetables are all really good" said Vines. "And thanks to MALG, we are all able to enjoy them."

For more information about MALG, including service opportunities, visit:

<http://malg.allegheny.edu>  
<http://ceed.allegheny.edu>  
<http://www.sare.org> ♦

## Project partners for *Meadville, PA: Not Your Run of The Mill Community*

- Allegheny College (Center for Economic and Environmental Development [CEED], Allegheny College Center for Experiential Learning [ACCEL], the Center for Political Participation [CPP], the Values, Ethics, and Social Action Program [VESA], and the Civic Engagement Council [CEC])
- the City of Meadville
- the Center for Family Services
- French Creek Council of Governments
- Crawford County Commissioners
- Crawford County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Crawford County Solid Waste Authority
- Economic Progress Alliance
- French Creek Environmental Advisory Council
- French Creek Project
- Meadville Area Local Growers
- Meadville City Council
- Meadville Community Energy Project
- Meadville Council on the Arts
- Meadville Area Chamber of Commerce
- Meadville Medical Center
- Meadville Public Library
- Meadville Redevelopment Authority
- the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation



Mill Run currently runs under Water Street; the proposed surface treatment for this parking garage could become a community mural site.

## MILL RUN

*(Continued from page 1)*

*Path Towards Finding and Mobilizing A Community's Assets* and several workbooks.

Kretzmann met with Allegheny students; local and regional business and economic development leaders; members of local government and planning commissions; social service agencies; and the Allegheny community on using local assets as community and economic development tools.

CEED is using Kretzmann's advice to create a series of related initiatives that will demonstrate sustainable solutions to local and regional problems, resulting in a healthier environment, environmentally friendly business development, a downtown that encourages pedestrian traffic, and a strong community arts program.

Kretzmann's visit was sponsored by the Luce Foundation and Allegheny's CEC, CEED, ACCEL, CPP, VESA, and the Dean of the College.◊



Dr. Jody Kretzmann, a nationally known expert on community building, met with local officials and Alleghenians to discuss Meadville's revitalization efforts.

## SENIOR PROJECTS

(Continued from page 16)

tion into a handbook of environmental resources available for area churches. She will include information on reducing energy and water consumption, improving recycling and landscaping practices and the benefits of buying local foods.

In the long run, her suggestions will save the churches money, which can then be used for other programs. "There are tons of websites, books and articles out there, but bringing all that information into one place allows churches to fully access the information and move toward instituting it," explained Klingensmith. The pro-

### Stream Science

Creek Connections Project Assistant, Nicole Scatena (pictured below), is taking the lead on a project set to determine whether stream restoration on Mill Run at Meadville Medical Center has had any effect on the aquatic macroinvertebrates in the stream. Her work is part of the



larger initiative *Meadville, PA: Not Your Run of the Mill Neighborhood*.

She is taking macroinvertebrate samples and testing the chemistry at three sites on Mill Run (the hospital site, one upstream at Shadybrook Park, and one downstream near the library). She also tested a site on Church Run in Titusville and a tributary to French Creek in Cambridge Springs. Right now, she's learning a lot about how to set up a field investigation as well as how to identify aquatic macroinvertebrates. ♦

ject has an even larger aim: if churches introduce some of the suggestions, Klingensmith hopes the congregations will take notice and try some of the practices in their own homes.

For certain kinds of topics, civically engaged senior projects are a natural. For other topics, some students may not think to build the community into their projects. Professor Ozorak hopes students realize that a civically engaged project is a "strong, viable option for students who wish to give back to the community."

Kristel Bastian's senior project combines photography with the environment. She hopes to show through pictures and writing how children living in urban areas interact with nature. She is targeting lower income families in Meadville because they have limited "green spaces," and she wants to see how this affects their play.

Bastian explained, "Part of the inspiration behind this project is my experience working with lower income residents who are amazing people, but most students will never get the chance to meet them." She wants the rest of Meadville and Allegheny to understand who these children are through picture. "If I can, in some small way, help build community with this project that would be a great added benefit." ♦

## CAMPAIGN

(Continued from page 7)

Representative Phil English attended the event, giving a powerful speech and challenging teams to earn his endorsement. "We need to get young people involved in politics," he proclaimed. Students were judged on various aspects of campaigning and the creativity and effectiveness of their overall campaign strategy.

The second annual Model Campaign USA competition proved successful for students and faculty. Model Campaign USA "definitely raises the level of awareness," said Bob Saxton, a teacher at Northwestern High School. "I like how much it has evolved since last year," added LeeAnn Yeckley, one of Saxton's students.

The third annual competition is scheduled for April 2006, and the CPP has invited even more high schools to participate. CPP Fellow Sara Schmitt '06 hopes the program can be expanded to reach students on a national scale.

For more information visit the Center for Political Participation website: <http://cpp.allegheny.edu>. ♦

# Senior Projects Focus on Crawford County

By Laura Cavagnaro  
English 208: Technical /Professional Writing

"I never have any idea what's going on in the real world, said Leslie Dean, 07. "I don't watch the news, and I hardly ever leave the brick paths of campus." Dean is not alone; many Allegheny students feel disconnected from the rest of the Meadville community.

The Civic Engagement Council, an umbrella organization for civically engaged groups on campus, is trying to fix this problem. Last year the council offered a \$100 prize to the student with the best civically engaged project; Emily Ross was the first recipient. This year the council plans to do the same.

Council member Elizabeth Ozorak explained that a civically engaged project is one in which "real community needs are being addressed in conversation with the appropriate community members and all academic goals of the student are met."

A good project ends when both the student and the community are improved. Students who undertake civically engaged senior projects often obtain a better quality of learning. "They receive hands on experience working in the community and get an honest and compelling kind of education that cannot be duplicated even with the best textbooks," Ozorak said.

Alicia Haley, a Psychology and Women's Studies double major, is one of this year's seniors completing a civically engaged project. Haley will



Katie Klingensmith, '06, will combine her passion for nature with the senior project requirement as she drafts environmental resource handbooks for area churches.

be studying the verbal abilities of children enrolled in the Meadville Cooperative Preschool and the Meadville Head Start program. After an initial test of the children's verbal skills, Haley plans to meet with the children individually twice a week for five weeks, working on a verbal skills improvement program she has designed.

"Children with lower verbal skills tend to test lower and start out behind other children when they begin elementary school; they always seem to be trying to play catch up," says Haley. She will give all results to the preschool, the Head Start program and local elementary schools.

"I am not looking at these kids as research projects or as an experiment; I want to see if I can make a difference and help improve their skills. The biggest thing for me is I am giving back to the community. I've lived in Meadville for four years and now I can give something back, especially because I have the time and resources to do so."

College students may not feel they have very many skills to offer yet, but Professor Ozorak believes the opposite. "Sometimes all an organization needs is for someone to do some research or writing," Ozorak explained. Since these skills are heavily emphasized at Allegheny, most students could make a real contribution.

Professor Eric Pallant sees the senior project as a final transition from college to life after college. "It is a chance to integrate all the skills students have learned over the years and apply them, a final way to put all that education to work. No one should do a senior project without passion behind it," said Pallant. A civically engaged project can spark enthusiasm sometimes lacking in other assignments. "Seniors who choose to do civically engaged senior projects know their work is going to be useful to someone else. This is an incredible motivator; they work harder and push themselves for a better end result."

The majority of civically engaged senior projects are local or regional. Katie Klingensmith, an environmental science major, plans to compile informa-

(See SENIOR PROJECTS, page 15)

Centers for Civic Engagement  
<http://civicengagement.allegheny.edu>