



UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Omaha

SERVICE LEARNING ACADEMY P-16 INITIATIVE

Culinary Masters Took Over

By Nver Hasratyan

The Culinary Arts students from Blackburn Alternative School and Dr. Lyn Holley's "Programs and Services for the Elderly" Gerontology students launched the "Food for Thought" service learning project in September.

The project aims at meeting an identified community need by serving food to the north Omaha senior citizens at Adam's Park Community Center on Wednesdays. Many seniors joined the Adam's Center after the nearby North Omaha Senior Center was shut down due to unforeseen budget cuts. The work has eased the transition of these elders and provided a rare and valuable learning opportunity for students this year.



"I have been on many, many field trips and adventures throughout my many years of teaching, but never have I been so blown away by the pride and accomplishment of our students."

- Blackburn teacher

The Blackburn students used the opportunity to understand how their classroom learning can be applied to a real life situation, as they practice culinary and food

handling skills and learn about the seniors' dietary restrictions in order to promote healthy options.

UNO students engaged in an intergenerational dialogue with the seniors to learn about life experiences, especially in respect to socialization, health, nutritional opportunities, and happiness. Students have reflected on their service learning experience before and after the event. Students recorded reflections through journaling, videotaping, presentations, and academic papers.

Strong partnerships were formed and effective learning has taken place as a result of this well-planned and implemented project.

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For more information, visit us at
www.unomaha.edu/servicelearning

School Sprouts

By Sarah Hanify

Friday, October 22, 2010 was not a typical school day for the 30 middle school students working in the sunshine at the City Sprouts Community Garden. These students were able to gain real-world experience outside of the classroom and learn about the activities that are involved in creating and maintaining a community garden. The service learning project, "School Sprouts," is a partnership between Mrs. Tingelhoff's

continued on page 2...

School Sprouts continued...

Lewis and Clark Middle School class, Mr. Gregorio's King Science and Technology Magnet class, Ms. Bird's Nathan Hale Magnet Middle class, Dr. Rolf's undergraduate Social Work class, and City Sprouts Community Garden.

The overall goal of the project is to assist the middle schools in creating a community-school garden at their individual schools, based on the preferences and needs of each school's students, staff and teachers. The garden work day was designed

to give the students an idea of what their community gardens might look like in the future. They were able to assist in a variety of activities to prepare the garden for winter, including laying dirt around the beds, transplanting strawberry plants

"I like gardening because you get to see the stages of growth, and the flowers are really pretty."

- Lewis and Clark student

and planting seeds in preparation for next spring.

The students also learned the

history of the community garden movement in Omaha from City Sprouts' co-director, Jeannie Dickes, and assisted with composting.

In addition to their time in the garden, the middle school students were able to come to UNO's campus and work with Social Work students to learn about focus groups and survey techniques, including web resources such as survey monkey, that they can facilitate in their own buildings. Each of these tools will be beneficial in helping the students evaluate their schools' gardening needs.



Senior Words of Wisdom

By Fontenelle Elementary Students

The "Senior Words of Wisdom" project started with third grade students in Mrs. Driessen's class at Fontenelle Elementary School learning about the lives of senior citizens residing at the Royale Oaks Assisted Living and House of Hope Alzheimer's Care. Students met with the residents four times and interviewed the residents about their childhood, education, family, and career. One third grade student exclaimed on the walk back to school, "They listen to the same kind of music as us!" Back in the classroom, students were fascinated to discover

"their lives are not very different from our lives!" One student noticed "talking about their childhood makes them happy!"

These interviews were the basis for a biography project aligned with the Nebraska Third Grade Writing Standards. Students worked in their classroom on the writing process: developing interview questions, learning how to write a topic sentence, organizing the details, and writing a closing sentence. Dur-

"The more you revise and edit the more fun it gets to write."

- 3rd Grade Student

ing the writing process, students travelled by bus to UNO to meet with Dr. Troy Romero's Thompson Scholars during an Autobiographical English Class.

During these work sessions, UNO students helped the third grade

students edit their work. According to one third grade student, "The UNO students helped us correct our mistakes nicely." UNO students helped with spelling and writing, asked questions, and gave students good pointers. "We like being with college students. They are fun," one student said. Students in Mrs. Driessen's third grade class not only learned how to write biographies, but they also formed a positive relationship with senior citizens, got exercise as they walked eight blocks to the Royale Oaks Assisted Living, bonded with UNO students during an Autobiographical English Class, and received memorable college visit experiences. "They brought so much energy with them and used it to work hard," said one UNO student.

The project supported the 40 Developmental Assets as students

continued on page 3...

Ideal Self

By Tess Larson

Mrs. Cathy Nelson with Blackburn Alternative High School and Dr. Tory Romero's Goodrich Program students worked together to create "Ideal Self," a project that tackled big issues, such as "Who am I now? Where do I want to go? How do I get there?"

Both OPS and UNO students submitted two poems to the Omaha City Libraries' Intergenerational Poetry Contest, which explored where the students were in their lives, where they imagined them-

selves at 65 years of age, and what goals they wanted to accomplish. Four of the poems submitted received honorable mention and one won 2nd place. The students also worked together to gather information about achieving goals for college access.

"I feel more comfortable on campus now. Attending UNO seems possible."

- Blackburn student

The teens provided questions, while UNO students helped provide answers. Students interviewed faculty from Undergraduate Admissions, Financial

Aid & Scholarships, the Goodrich Program, compiling the results and information on a DVD. OPS student, Jalessa Roberts, said, "Don't be afraid to ask questions because you're not supposed to know the answers." Students wondered how effective social media might be to access college information. Using Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr, they compared the quantity (and quality) of information gained through social media versus information from personal interviews. Dominique Patton, UNO student, stated, "It's always better to talk to someone one-on-one. They can tell you exactly what you need to know."



continued from page 2...

developed compassion for their senior partner, students felt valued in their community as they helped others, and students realized the possibility of attending college. At a final reflection, one student commented, "Working with the senior citizens and the UNO students helped us do better than we could have done alone!"

Lewis and Clark Book Club

By Kristin Hassett

At the first Lewis and Clark Book Club meeting, UNO's Dr. Imafedia Okhamafe asked Mrs. Adora Greene's Lewis and Clark eighth graders how many of them would like to have been married at age nine.

The students looked confused

as Dr. Okhamafe explained that for many young girls living in Yemen being married by age nine is the norm. Dr. Okhamafe then asked the students to open the book they would be reading for the duration of the book club: *I am Nujood: Age 10 and Divorced*.

The Lewis and Clark students partnered with Dr. Okhamafe's Autobiographical Reading and Writing class to explore autobiographies and to learn how to write their own stories. The book club used *I am Nujood* to learn about social customs in Yemen as well as to talk about why writing an autobiography is important.

Through the story of a courageous nine-year-old girl who became the youngest girl ever granted a divorce in Yemen, the book club members discovered that they too have significant

stories to share.

The Lewis and Clark Book Club met once a month at UNO for lunch and a discussion of *I am Nujood*. Mrs. Greene said, "My kids LOVE the Book Club! They came back from their last meeting just in time for 8th hour chorus and they

"The students learned about another culture while learning about themselves."

- Kristin Hassett,
Graduate Assistant

were so excited that original students who dropped the Book Club asked if they could be back in!"

The Lewis and Clark Book Club made a video lesson on how to write an autobiography and shared it with Girls Inc.



SERVICE LEARNING ACADEMY P-16 INITIATIVE

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Greetings! It has been a busy semester for us in the P-16 Initiative in the Service Learning Academy at UNO!

We are excited to partner with P(re)K-12 schools and UNO faculty members to develop quality service learning curriculum that meet course learning outcomes and community-identified needs. This year we re-launched our Service Learning Seminar, and had 27 participants develop 24 service learning courses. We have seen great leadership from several schools and instructors that are highlighted in this newsletter and on our website. Check them out—they are great examples of learning through service!

We are excited to continue to partner with schools to develop service learning experiences. Our next seminars are scheduled for March 21-25 and July 11-15. These are open to P(re)K-12 and UNO faculty interested

in learning how to develop a quality service learning course. Each participant will leave with a co-developed course plan developed with a PK-12 and UNO instructor. The training is extremely interactive and involves a service experience, application activities, and community partner exploration. Reserve your spot at www.unomaha.edu/serve!

If your school or department is interested in exploring service learning as a pedagogy, we are also happy to partner! Contact me at jdierberger@unomaha.edu to set up a time to visit your school and learn about your needs.

We are looking forward to partnering with you in service and learning in 2011!

Julie Dierberger
P-16 Coordinator
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Service Learning Academy

Seminar Schedule 2011

March 21st-25th & July 11th-15th
Monday-Thursday: 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

"The workshop has been fabulous! I feel that the opportunities are endless and I am so thankful for the UNO partnership!"

"The five stages of Service Learning were enacted in this training! What a great way to learn through application!"

"I hope to be able to educate more people about community needs and enlist the power of Service Learning to engage students in exploring the important issues of our time."

"The feeling of community was overwhelming. Thank you for the great connection and ideas."



BUILDING
FUTURES

All training sessions will be held
at the Thompson Alumni Center

