

Center for Community-Based Learning and Action

EVERGREEN

THE EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE
OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON

2009 Fall Newsletter



*Seminar II E 2125, Olympia Campus; 2700 Evergreen Parkway NW; Olympia, WA 98505;
(360) 867-6137; cbcla@evergreen.edu
www.evergreen.edu/communitybasedlearning*

**CCBLA is Evergreen's Service Learning Center.
We address social issues while strengthening
and enhancing student experience
by supporting our communities' ability
to meet critical needs.**

Come Together in Coalition

Director, Ellen Shortt Sanchez

*Students learned about cord masonry and put it to practice
at The Harmony Hill Retreat Center in October.*

PROGRAMS

- **Gateways for Incarcerated Youth** - Since 1996, Gateways has served to educate, empower and support young people with innovative cultural diversity and learning programs that build self-esteem, confidence and the ability to pursue dreams.
- **Students in Service** - Tuition awards for community work, an AmeriCorps program for students. (WA Campus Compact).
- **Work-study positions at community organizations** - Building links between TESC and the community at large (HECBCSP).
- **High Demand Math and Science** classroom support positions at local high schools.
- **Tutor Project** - Tutors for high poverty elementary schools in Olympia (Youth in Service).
- **Sustainability Action Days** - Providing community engagement opportunities for campus residents.
- **Project Planning** - Supporting students and faculty looking for community connections.

How can CCBLA best support organizations and engage students during the economic downturn and budget cuts? We have received more requests for student involvement in community organizations and more students are also eager for work and tuition support. The effort to find out more about our community needs and what students could learn from the current situation led me to the places organizations gather together.

Partnerships, roundtables and coalitions bring organizations together for common work and shared resources. Coalitions of organizations are exciting models of collaboration. By visiting coalitions, we learn about multiple organizations and their innovation, resource sharing and advocacy. This fall many coalitions have heard about CCBLA supporting Evergreen students and faculty community engagement. Participating organizations have shared their programming, passion, partnership and projects that we can bring back to the campus.

Some of the most vital coalitions in our community include: Be the One Mentor Coalition, Thurston County Environmental Education Technical Advisory Committee, Hispanic Roundtables of Thurston & Mason Counties, Thurston County United Way Agencies meeting, and the Mason County Chamber of Service. Each coalition of organizations

addresses different issues and has member organizations that may tackle very different community needs with different strategies. Another great example of this collaboration is The Coalition for Low Income Power (CLIP), which was a long standing alliance that gave organizers the chance to talk about big picture anti-poverty work in our community.

Higher education has a role in supporting community coalitions and gathering examples of how organizations can work together. Through Student Originated Studies: Community Based Learning last fall students working in diverse internships met weekly. Questions emerged about how umbrella issues pulled organizations together. Students, faculty and CCBLA staff organized a panel on campus to hear about coalitions. As students investigate how organizations work and how they can contribute to our community they practice collaborative learning. These real-life examples of local coalitions will guide the next generation of coalition builders.

CCBLA and Gateways Staff

Director: Ellen Shortt Sanchez
VISTA Community Partnership Catalyst: Hilary Hacker
CYS AmeriCorps Tutor & Mentor Coordinator: Brian Fligner
AmeriCorps VISTA Work-Study Coordinator: Andrea Robbins
SIS Coordinators: Andreas Keodara & Yoshi Nagata
AmeriCorps Gateways Cultural Group Coordinator: Samantha Franks
AmeriCorps Gateways Challenge Program: Aaron Lee
Gateways Faculty: Tony Zaragoza



Despite Challenges, Gateways Thrives

Tony Zaragoza, Evergreen Gateways Faculty



Staff of Green Hill, Maple Lane, Naselle and Gateways gather at the Longhouse at Evergreen for a training retreat in November.

The Gateways for Incarcerated Youth program offers Evergreen students the opportunity to be peer learners with incarcerated young men in two maximum-security institutions. Through our Challenge Program we offer one-to-one peer mentoring for incarcerated students with college students and community members. We believe that every person has knowledge and talents, and we strive to encourage each other to find and develop our gifts.

Despite numerous challenges (grants ending, tuition increases, budget cuts, losing staff, and others), Gateways continues to thrive.

Last school year, Gateways paid the 2-credit tuition for a total of 72 credits aiding a total of 24 students. This year we anticipate further growth. Last year 32 Evergreen students worked in college classes and with cultural groups. Through the efforts of Samantha Franks over 20 incarcerated youth had one-on-one educational partners and over 20 community and student volunteers worked as educational partners. This year Aaron Lee continues this great work. Thanks to the leadership of Emily Sladek fifteen performers came to Maple Lane and Green Hill from July 08-July 09. Performances range from Aztec Dancers to a Jewish Klezmer band to a Filipino Drill Team. Over 1200 youth attended these performances. The Cultural Evenings began at ML and Green Hill in 2003 and until this year performances have been held every month for the last six years! Despite the fact that Cultural Evenings have been cut, Gateways was recently able to bring internationally known poet and author Luis J. Rodriguez out to both Green Hill and Maple Lane.

Tony Zaragoza has worked full time as the faculty for Gateways for the last two years, and five faculty have committed to work in the yearlong college class over the next years. Look to the Gateways newsletter for a list of these faculty. The program was able to acquire two AmeriCorps positions for this year. Samantha Franks is working with Cultural Groups and helping with fundraising while Aaron Lee will be the Challenge Program Coordinator. Emily Sladek continues to work with the program as a volunteer.

The Gateways 2010 calendars are available. The calendars feature drawings and writing by incarcerated youth. These were made possible by generous contributions of numerous local businesses. You

can get yours at the CCBLA.

Despite the setbacks we have experienced and any others that may befall us, Gateways will continue in its mission to provide educational opportunities and strengthen notions of self and community through cultural awareness and empowerment. You too can become part of this. If you would like to volunteer as a Challenge partner contact Aaron Lee at 867-5633. And for information on how you can get involved or how your donations can help our work please contact the Gateways office at 867-5633.

Many Thanks to Jacob Berkey!

Ellen Shortt-Sanchez, Director



"Originally, Jacob Berkey, my first SIS counselor explained to me about the opportunity to work with SIS at Evergreen. I have been so grateful for this service experience and for the opportunity to receive financial help for my college. This has been the reason that I was able to continue at Evergreen- because of Jacob

Berkey. I am a mother of 3 children. This SIS work is so important to me."

~Sarah Nishioka

We would like to acknowledge the many years that Jacob was involved with the CCBLA as a student and project staff. Jacob joined CCBLA as the first coordinator of the part time AmeriCorps program Students in Service. As a work study student he developed outreach strategies that brought students knocking on our doors. As an MPA intern Jacob helped us better track data to support our work. He brought fun to data collection. For the past year Jacob was our Learn and Serve Program manager and High Demand work study coordinator. He convened regional discussions on Community Based Service Learning and mentored new higher education programs to use service learning and connect with WA Campus Compact. His rapport with students and interest in education helped us start the first year of the Millennial Math and Science Teacher Explorers work study project. This summer he worked to support Evergreen and Lewis County Growing Places Farm and Energy Park collaborations.

The CCBLA welcomed **Brian Fligner**, CYS Youth In Service AmeriCorps member, As the **Tutor and Mentor Coordinator** in September of 2009!



"I'm excited for the chance to connect students with youth in the community. My own experience working with youth has been an invaluable part of my education."



Advocacy Training for Latina Women

Sandi Thompson-Royer, Evergreen Student & SafePlace Education & Training Coordinator

“Now that I know my rights, I’m not afraid,” said Luci, one of the participants in a recent Evergreen training on immigrant women’s rights. Luci was one of local 25 women who attended SafePlace’s all Spanish volunteer training in the Spring of 2009. The training was funded by a Student Activity Grant and much support from CCBLA, Alice Nelson, CIELO, Inmigrantes Unidos de Shelton, POWER, Planned Parenthood, and other individuals and organizations in the community who are concerned about the rights of immigrants. This was the first ALL Spanish volunteer training provided by a County domestic violence/sexual assault program in the state of Washington. Most of the Latina women had been attending a Spanish speaking support group at SafePlace for the past three years. They were ready to organize in their communities. Our job as advocates is to empower people. It is our belief that they know within themselves what the best solutions are. Yet often they don’t know the resources, laws, and ways to navigate the system. Domestic violence and sexual assault often leave survivors in isolation from their family, friends, and community. Just imagine what that can be like for an immigrant. Luci’s statement was just one affirmation that the 50 hour training was a success. Since the training, half of the women have become volunteers at SafePlace and two Latina women have become paid employees.



Women gathered at the SafePlace Advocacy Training

Another exciting outcome of the training was the creation of MIJAS (Mujers Improving Job Abilities and Skills). These women can cook some of the best food you’ll ever eat! They have decided to create a restaurant and catering business that will be a “stepping stone” employment center for women who have experienced domestic violence. Many of them know too well that economics are a primary reason women don’t leave abusive relationships. “MIJAS hopes to be a place where a new future can be imagined and built together.” SafePlace is honored to work in partnership with these amazing women and to have been a part of MIJAS’ birth is awesome! On October 24 MIJAS served dinner to over 150 people in Olympia! Luci welcomed the crowd thanking them for their sup-

port! Thank YOU Luci for your incredible strength and willingness to step out! Thanks Evergreen, CCLBA and all who supported these women and SafePlace.

As Paulo Freire writes in Pedagogy of the Oppressed, *“It is only when the oppressed find the oppressor out and become involved in the organized struggle for their liberations that they begin to believe in themselves.”*

Community To Community, 2009

Hilary Hacker, Community Partnership Catalyst



Students show off their potatoes with Don Leaf of The Kiwanis Food-bank Garden, Brian Fligner, and Evergreen’s provost – Don Bantz

In September of 2009 we organized Evergreen’s 20th Annual Community to Community Day, which happens during orientation week as a way for freshman and new students to get to know the greater Olympia Community and the ways in which they can be a part of it. This year we collaborated with The United Way and the Volunteer Center of Lewis, Mason & Thurston Counties to expand the impact of this service day by combining the efforts of Community to Community Day and United Way’s Day of Caring. This year there were over 160 students and staff at 16 different organizations from Evergreen alone.

Participating organizations included Books to Prisoners, POWER, Camp Quixote, Bread & Roses, Woodland Trail, The Thurston County Food Bank Gleaning Project, The CIELO Project, Circle Hawk Farm, The Flaming Eggplant, Growing Places Farm and Energy Park, Left Foot Organics, Lincoln elementary School Garden, Stonewall Youth, Kiwanis Food Bank Garden, Terra Commons & Water Resources.

The CCBLA welcomed **Andrea Robbins, Community Partner Catalyst, AmeriCorps VISTA** In September of 2009!

“The Center for Community-Based Learning and Action is a rare and unique place, Evergreen wouldn’t be the same without it. Every day I get to connect with amazing organizations in Olympia and support students in applying theory to practice.”



Iraqi Student Solidarity Committee

Andrea Robbins, AmeriCorps VISTA



Hudson Munoz, Andrew Birwari, Andrea Robbins & Ashley Harrison of the Iraqi Student Solidarity Committee hanging out in Red Square

In fall of 2007 a friend of mine named Hudson Munoz approached me in red square. At the time he was coordinating the student group formerly known as SESAME (Students Educating Students about the Middle East). Hudson invited me to be a part of a project that the group wanted to develop to have a student who had been displaced from their education in Iraq finish up at Evergreen for free. Two years, 7 committee members, and an additional 250,000 Iraqi refugees later, a tuition waiver program exists at Evergreen. It was definitely a challenge. We had to convince the administration and we had to raise \$10,000 for the living expenses of a student. Over 900 students signed our petition; the faculty put it to a vote and individually donated a total of \$1,200 to the living expenses fund. Eventually a committee to install a waiver program was assembled. We created the first student initiated waiver program for students from Iraq at a state college. In order to get connected with a student to receive the waiver we worked with an international group called the ISP (Iraqi Student Project). They connected us with many students including Andrew Birwari...

“My name is Andrew Birwari, 22 years old, born and raised in Baghdad, Iraq. When I was 20 my family and I moved to Syria to seek refuge from the situation at the time. In Syria, I joined a program that offered Iraqi refugee students whose education was interrupted by violence, a chance to continue in the US. The program is called The ISP. When the time came to go for the student visa interviews at the America embassy in Damascus, my family got approval for resettlement. I decided to go with my family.

My family and I moved to Chicago in August 2008. I still wanted to go to college, but was unsure of the future. A month after being in Chicago, I found out that the ISSC had decided to support my undergraduate education financially and through ongoing support at the college and in the community. I was accepted in March 2009 for fall quarter. I came to Evergreen in September 2009. Mission Accomplished!”

Andrew’s arrival has been an inspiration. Our main concern for this year is that the waiver continues to be utilized and Evergreen students continue to fundraise for the necessary living expenses.

CCBLA Documentary Project

On October 4th, 2009 we premiered the CCBLA Documentary Project at the Olympia Film Society Capitol Theater. Thank you to all of those who came out to support! If you missed it, no problem! Check it out on the CCBLA’s website. www.evergreen.edu/communitybasedlearning



Q&A Panel after the screening of film

We want to thank student filmmaker, Zachary Dolan for his year of hard work with us and our community partners!

Students in Service

Students In Service is a part time AmeriCorps Program through Washington Campus Compact. Its purpose is to meet critical community needs by engaging higher education students. Through the program students are introduced to local, regional and national volunteer opportunities. Students in Service provides tuition awards for community work. With tuition costs rising, the education award earned upon successful completion helps make service a viable opportunity for students with financial need. Student in Service Orientations take place every Wednesday from 1pm—3pm at the CCBLA. Please contact Yoshi or Andreas at sis@evergreen.edu or call 867.6866.

Introducing our Students in Service Coordinators



Yoshi Nagata
Senior Community Service
Program (SECEP)



Andreas Keodara
Work-Study Student
MES Program

