

Year In Review
2011-2012

Dickinson



“What an experience.”
“Wow that opened my eyes.”
“I never thought of poverty like this before.” “Thank you for the opportunity to serve my community.” These are just a few of the comments generated from the programs hosted in 2011-2012. The RLCS office was a buzz all year as evidenced by the numbers provided on the right – things are happening!

This year we worked to incorporate previous results assessment to strengthen

“Wow what an experience!”

service trips, to enhance weekly leadership meetings, to charge students with leading staff meetings, and to offer dinners promoting discussions to question faith and belief. Not everything worked perfectly, but change is the constant, and improvement is always expected.

In a reflection at the end of the year, a student staff member wrote: *For me, this is the strength of the office as a whole; it creates friendships over matters of great significance whether that is community service or discussions of faith and broadens everyone’s Dickinson experience.*

This is what higher education is about. It’s

about stretching and learning. It’s about finding ourselves and seeing how we each fit into the larger picture. It’s a time to lead and a time to be led. It’s a time to take risks, learn along the way and open our eyes to new ideas, new people and new perspectives.

Through all the RLCS programs of the office we aim to help students REFLECT on what they are doing and how it connects with their lives; LEARN about community needs, new faith traditions and the intersection of our values and our service; CONNECT with others (both on campus and in the community), and SERVE each other and our community in small and big ways. Please read on to learn how we worked towards accomplishing these goals this year.

By the Numbers

- 8 service trips
- 12 dinners around meaning and faith
- 13 student staff
- 16 service trip leaders
- 13 CommServ weekly service groups
- 27 Montgomery Service Leaders
- 28 CommServ coordinators
- 123 participants in Day of Service
- 83 Dickinson Day of Service participants
- 190 CommServ volunteers
- \$31,006 raised on campus for local orgs.
- 39,731 volunteer hours by Dickinsonians

Interfaith Service Trip

By Anne Feldman '12

On March 30th, the Office of Religious Life hosted a weekend interfaith service trip to Philadelphia. The trip, which brought together sixteen students and administrators, was a huge success and allowed students to explore different faith tradition and serve the community of Philadelphia.

The weekend started off with a traditional Shabbat service at Dickinson College’s Asbell Center. The service, led by team participant Evan Dubchansky '14, perfectly complimented the interfaith theme through its explanation of traditional Jewish prayers and rituals. Afterwards, students were treated to a Kosher meal and lecture by Gary Rosenblatt, editor of *The Jewish Week*, the

largest Jewish newspaper in the U.S.

The remainder of the weekend was spent in Philadelphia where students met with religious leaders and worked on projects dedicated to helping the homeless.

In describing the weekend, Melissa Canu '13 explained, “I consider myself to be an outgoing, easygoing person, but attending an interfaith service trip definitely put me outside my comfort zone. However, the weekend was incredible; I met a ton of new people who collectively established a safe space in which we were able to learn, interpret and react to the religious experiences in our

own way.”

Other highlights of the weekend included attending Palm Sunday at Mother Bethel’s Church, the first Black church in America and Arch Street Church, sponsoring Bingo at a drug recovery center, serving dinner at 300 Ministries homeless center, and meeting with Chinmay Parajape, a Hindu student at University of Pennsylvania.



Montgomery Service Leaders

In-depth community engagement, leadership and awareness, & academic connections

By Mike Blair '12

The 2011-2012 year brought out monumental changes to what was formally known as the Bonner Leadership Program. This summer, the program was restructured into the John Montgomery Service Leaders. John Montgomery was an original founder of Dickinson College, as well as active participant, congressman and leader in the Carlisle community, which lead him to become the obvious choice for the naming of our new program.

The Montgomery Service Leaders Program focuses on the three major hallmarks of in-depth community engagement, leadership and awareness, and academic connections. These characteristics provide opportunities for



Montgomery students to become engaged citizens, equipping them to be life-long learners and leaders within their community, while in Carlisle and beyond. To accomplish this, the program has been

reorganized to encompass three different levels of service, each building upon each other to create a foundation of strong leadership at each community partner site.

Level 1: Establishing an understanding of the student's community placement. This includes learning about the organization, its programs and the recipients in which the organization serves.

Level 2: Integration and engagement between community and academics. The stu-

dent collaborates with staff to work with a specific area of the organization. Students work with the Assistant Provost to chose a class that will complement their community service and present a reflection paper and presentation sharing the connections identified.

Level 3: Capstone project with Dickinson's Internship Transcript Notation Program and implementation of a project that forwards or strengthens the mission of the organization. Level 3 includes a grant writing workshop and grants to support the projects.

With year one of the new program underway, full implementation of all the levels will start next fall, offering an exciting future for both Montgomery students and the Carlisle community.

A Generous Donor Makes MSL Grants Possible

In early fall an anonymous parent contacted us about wanting to make a difference in the local community through the work of Dickinsonians. After discussion, a generous donation was made to three community partners: **Project SHARE, Employment Skills Center and Sadler Health Corporation.** The donor was pleased with their work making a difference in the lives of those in Carlisle each and every day. The donor also appreciated their commitment to work with Dickinson students in a variety of ways from volunteers to Montgomery Service Leaders to classes.

Additionally the Montgomery Service Leaders program received a donation of \$10,000 to support the grants for Level 3. This generous gift will support student projects in many community partners and be a capstone project for both the partner and the student.

2012-2013 will be the first year of using this funding for grant projects and already six projects that include environmental magazines, greening schools, awareness of food waste and work with the homeless are all being planned. We look forward to how these mini grants will help move forward the mission of each organization.

Mike Blair: Dickinson College Student Employee of the Year

As a senior in Environmental Studies, Mike has worked for two years at the Employment Skills Center and then studied abroad his junior year. Mike returned to help usher in the new Montgomery program. He worked diligently to help his peers make the transition, ingrained in the new program with an emphasis on academic connections and worked with the student leadership team to make the new program happen.



Mike Blair with friends at the Bloomsburg clean-up day.

Under his leadership this fall MSL helped with clean-up in Bloomsburg, PA after the floods. In the spring MSL organized a Disaster and Deserts night to share the challenges of natural disasters and the impact on the community.

Mike is known for going above and beyond to accomplish whatever project he is working on. His personal understanding of community service and engagement, coupled with his organizational style and ability to relate well to any of his peers, has propelled this position and organization. The vision and birth of a revised community services leadership program that partners with those in Academic Affairs and the Career Center would not be possible without Mike's support, leadership and commitment.

Weekly Community Service

CommServ

*Student Reflection by
Christine Talbot '13*

Working as a coordinator for Special Friends, I have found that the experience often overlaps with material that I have been learning in class. This is probably especially true because I have always had an interest in psychology and psychopathology, so essentially working in Special Friends has just been an extension of that interest. One main thing that I learned about in class but had not had much firsthand experience in was the stigma associated with individuals who have a disability.

In class, we would fairly frequently talk about stigma associated with different disorders. People with a disability often feel isolated, misunderstood, and angry about being different from others. I am

thankful to say that no participant in the program has directly said to me that they feel a stigma against them, but as a coordinator I now see more clearly how the stigma has been so long-lived. Shockingly, it is sometimes unintentionally caused by the very volunteers who are working with the community members of Special Friends.

The language people use has a great influence over others. While all the volunteers of Special Friends amaze me with the incredible work and dedication they put into the program, what they say sometimes surprises me.

They still perpetuate stigma against people with disabilities by saying their buddies "suffer from" a disorder or will sometimes label a person by their disability, rather than acknowledging that first and

foremost, their buddy is another human. I am positive that the volunteers mean no harm by doing this, but I do find it interesting that even in that community of volunteers, they continue labeling people with disabilities as "others," which is exactly what I learned in one of my psychology courses.

One of my hopes is to help diminish the stigma associated with people who have disabilities. I think that the class that taught about stigma was meant to do the same thing. Hopefully as a Dickinson community, through education, we can help others recognize the stigma and as a result help it dissipate.



Special Friends Prom



Habitat for Humanity gets support of President Durden

New Weekly Programs: ArtWorks, Healthy Eating P.I.T. & Senior Companions



Kids making a snack with the Healthy Eating at Empower!

By Paige Hollenbeck '12

This year has been especially busy for CommServ. With the needs of the community ever-changing, CommServ has added three new

programs to help better serve the Carlisle community:

- **ArtWorks:** Partnering with the Carlisle Art and Learning Center (CALC), this after school art program works with middle school students to help them develop their artistic talents and techniques while also building community. Starting Fall 2012!
- **Healthy Eating** is now a regular special event at Empower's afterschool programs. Interns from Dickinson farm teach kids how to cook healthy foods and use local ingredients.
- **Prison Inmate Tutoring** partners with the Cumberland County Prison. This program provides

tutors to the prison to help the inmates get their GEDs. The hope is that once the inmates are released, this new knowledge will provide them with opportunities to better their future.

- **Senior Companions:** Partnering with Claremont Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, this program pairs Dickinson students with a senior 'buddy' to help serve the retired community in Carlisle. The students meet with their buddy weekly and organize social events for the residents at Claremont to bring more variety to their day.

CommServ and its members continue to take initiative in strengthening the community and will continue to do so in the coming years.

Dinners around Meaning, Faith, & Purpose

Beliefs and Big Questions

By Nicole Wasson '15

A new event at Dickinson College began called Beliefs and Big Questions in the Spring 2012 semester. Its focus is to bring students of different beliefs and faiths, and across class years and social groups, together to take part in a meal and an open dialogue about beliefs.

The conversation was purposefully left open so that students could feel comfortable sharing their own experiences and learning from the experiences of others.

What really enriched these conversations and allowed for very diverse responses was the presence of diverse backgrounds. Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Bahá'í and Agnostic students attended this event. Students expressed that they were very happy to find other students on campus willing to discuss topics of interfaith, and hoped that programs such as Beliefs and Big Questions, and perhaps an interfaith club, could be instituted on campus in the following semesters.

This unique experience will hopefully foster a different sort of religion and faith-based community on campus than has been present in the recent past.

Beliefs & Big Questions

- Tell us a time when religion or spiritual beliefs were really important in your life.
- How has being a college student affected your spiritual journey?
- How are your plans for a vocation/academic and extra-curricular interests affected by your personal beliefs?
- Is practicing your faith belief a challenge on campus in any way?

What Matters Most



*What Matters Most Dinner with
Dr. Elke Durden*

By Emily Rincavage '14

What Matters Most dinners are based off of the Last Lecture Series at Carnegie Mellon which was made famous by Professor Randy Pausch. The prompt was, if this was your last chance to convey any message to your students,

what would that message be? Pausch was diagnosed with terminal cancer, which made this literally his last lecture.

At Dickinson, What Matters Most dinners provide an intimate space for Dickinson faculty, staff and administrators to have conversations with students that are not usually found in the classroom or in the cafeteria. These dinners provide a space for students to have these deeper conversations and to feel included and not alone on campus.

Students have the opportunity to reflect on what is actually most important in life. To one student, this is "what makes her happiest." To another student, this was "history, aspirations, and challenges."

Another student claimed that the dinners allowed her to reflect on "how she has grown as a person through her experiences at Dickinson and looking back, how those pivotal moments changed her life and led her to where she is now."

Fundamentally, these dinners are an avenue for students to have deeper and more meaningful conversations with both Dickinson faculty, staff and administrators and with students they would not have otherwise met, and for students to have the chance to reflect on their own lives.

Themes Change Service Trips

By Josh Handelsman '12

This academic year came with many changes to the administration of service trips. We instituted a new training retreat for trip coordinators, altered our application process and streamlined our service trip groups under one umbrella.

Beyond these administrative and symbolic changes, we enhanced the reflective element of the experience by giving each trip a theme. For instance, our trip to Philadelphia centered on urban poverty and hunger; our volunteers



Disaster Recovery in Alabama

in Alabama and New Orleans learned about disaster relief; and the group that went to the Dominican Republic examined differences between third-world poverty and that of our own country.

The themes received attention in our pre-trip meetings and during the trips themselves. This involved watching documentaries, reading articles and frequently engaging in discussions about the theme of the trip.

In any service experience, we learn a lot, but we also run the risk of over-extrapolating the lessons learned from an individual experience.

However, by examining the issues that confront the communities we serve, our volunteers better understand the global and historical context in which these communities exist. That makes us all better equipped to engage the world beyond Dickinson.



Poverty Relief with Habitat for Humanity

Looking inside the Service Trip Journals

I hope to only demonstrate difference; difference from the stigmas of those same foreign hands and difference in the fantasies of American exceptionalism. To the latter point, no experience could better demonstrate the relativity of our human experiences than the basketball game in which I participated. On this plane of competition no privilege was given – a common love for the rhythmic motion of body and basketball cared us for an elaborate performance of that which we all shared. This, for me was a defining moment.

For a half hour, during which our performance played out, our language barrier fell by the wayside and my teammates and I entered into the realness of the human experience – the achievement of unity not in spite of difference but because of it. Our human journey was more complete in having found a common ride to a different piece of the puzzle. Here I found what I find to be the true value to approach the situation in greater comfort—the ‘helper’ might be made more comfortable and willing to help others and the ‘helped’ might see that in whatever place you might find yourself you may help another. In this way and in these moments, others’ lives might be defined and re-defined in love and service.

-Andrew Hill playing basketball in the Dominican Republic



Kelly McIntyre sorting food to help tornado victims in AL.

Our last moments in Alabama were not the easiest to get through not only did we have to say goodbye to some amazing people, but we also really got to see the damage of the tornadoes and soak in what really happened but not even fully because this was a year later. I think that seeing this damage really made us become even more aware of the importance of community and how it can make people stay in a place where they are risking their lives by being there, but they feel so at home there that they could not imagine being anywhere else. I think that this mixed with the goodbyes was a lot for everyone to soak in and made us leave on a note of mixed emotions.

Overall, we were all saying how much we did not want to leave this place and how much we are not looking forward to going back to Dickinson and facing the real world again. I know I said this just as much and if not more than everyone else but having reflected upon this, I don't want us to be anxious or unhappy. I want us to take this challenge of returning to the not-so-nice real world and just remember what we learned this week... how to be good people. We need to challenge ourselves to always act in the way that we did this week and never forget how to love and treat others.

-Kelly McIntyre, spring break in Upper Sand Mt, Alabama



Andrew Hill at a school in Dominican Republic

Special Events throughout the Year

Dickinson Day of Service

On October 17, 2011, the Office of Community Services and Human Resource Services partnered with the United Way to host the first ever Dickinson Day of Service. Over 80 Dickinson students, faculty and staff came together and spent the morning volunteering. They worked to complete projects such as distributing food, painting classrooms and cleaning up trails with ten community partner organizations including Carlisle CARES, Cumberland Crossing Senior Living Facility, Carlisle Parks and Recreation, Carlisle Early Education Center, Carlisle Family YMCA, Cumberland Valley Appalachian Trail, Domestic Violence Services of Cumberland Perry Co, Employment Skills Center, Project SHARE and the Salvation Army. This event allowed our volunteers to see how the work they do impacts their community and also learn about how the

different agencies serve Carlisle. With the overwhelming popular response of our volunteers and community partners we hope to be able to support similar events in the future.



Dickinson faculty, staff, administrators and students joined with the United Way to serve the community.



By Anne Feldman '12

This past October, the Office of Religious Life partnered with Delta Nu sorority and the Landis House to

Bead for Life

sponsor Bead for Life. Bead for Life is a non-profit dedicated to the empowerment of women through the organized sale of Ugandan hand-made jewelry crafted from recycled paper which is then sold abroad at fair trade prices. The money raised from jewelry is then returned to women in Uganda breaking the patriarchal structure and creating financial independent women.

In the event, which was brought to our attention by alumni Heather Lingenfelter Ditillo '92, the current North American Program Director of Bead for Life, Dickinson was able to raise over \$1,400 dollars in a single day through jewelry priced between four and eighteen dollars.

Hosted at the Landis House, the Bead for Life brought together multiple campus groups who



were introduced to the mission of Bead for Life through educational videos as well as conversations with Dickinson-in-Cameroon's study abroad group who spoke of their own encounters with poverty and women's issues while abroad in Yaoundé, Cameroon during the 2011 spring semester.

As student coordinator of the project, I was thrilled to be able to connect my love of Cameroon, where I myself study abroad, with the mission of Bead for Life. Utilizing my own souvenirs from abroad include traditional fabric and woven baskets, it was wonderful to see Landis House, where the event was hosted, completed redecorated in the bright, bold patterns of African and showoff the beautiful handcrafted jewelry.

Stand Up. Speak Out.

In October a group of 48 students and staff ventured to Washington D.C. for a day of exploring and finding voice. The trip started with a reading of famous sermon bits by Martin Luther King Jr. in preparation to see the newly opened memorial. At the memorial, our group joined people from around the nation of all backgrounds, sizes and colors to remember the power of speaking out against injustice for racial freedom and equality. MLK quotes surround the memorial and challenge us today to think about the injustices that still occur in our society.

After lunch, the group looked at those who stood up and those who didn't as we explored the interactive Holocaust Museum. In a new way participants were challenged to think about those who spoke out, those who remained silent, and the consequences of actions. A solemn time of reflection and seeking hope in reconciliation reminded the group of the choice everyone must make.

For dinner the group went to Bus Boys and Poets, a DC social justice restaurant that today is a platform for discussion of topics around social justice, equality and activism.



Visit to the MLK Memorial to learn about his values, beliefs, and standing up!

The owner of Bus Boys spoke about his passion for community engagement, remembering those who spoke up, and encouraging venues today where people can speak out on a variety of issues.

Dickinsonians to be engaged citizens, get involved and speak up so they can be the leaders of tomorrow that we need today.

Thinking about religious values, social justice principles and personal activism the entire day gave examples and challenged

Charity Fair

By Morgan Tramanto '14

Throughout the year, Dickinson students and staff connected with local community partners to meet the immediate needs in our community through Day of Service events, specifically the "Charity Fair," which took place in February.

The first event of its kind, the Charity Fair collaborated with local community partners in an attempt to gather all different campus and Carlisle community organizations to show students that service can be fun. The fair consisted of six stations with "five minutes of service" type stations. This way, people could see that a difference could be made in their community no matter the amount of time donated.

In addition to the stations, "Deal or No Deal" was fea-

tured, where the prizes won went to the local charities. In order to attract a crowd, the fair also featured "Henna for Humanity." At this station, henna tattoos were given by Dickinson students who have artistic abilities for a \$5 fee. The tattoos were a huge hit and all the money made was donated to an organization in India that empowers young women.

Overall, the Charity Fair was a huge success and attracted many different groups of students who do not normally participate in service. There are hopes to do more events like this in the future.



Writing cards for soldiers at the Charity Fair.

Shoot For Good

By Ryan Corbett '13

Shoot for Good was an idea started by an alumnus of Dickinson to encourage others to take pictures of the good they saw in their community. The photos were meant to inspire others to act in ways that positively affect their community after seeing others doing the same. I decided this may be a fun idea to take back to Dickinson.

Dickinson can sometimes act like a bubble—a big, thick, opaque bubble that blurs the outside world to us. We students can become so focused on Dickinson and our own lives that it is hard to see the community around us and how we impact it.

By asking first years to take photos of how they see people, whether students, professors, or Carlisle residents, doing good in their community and displaying the end results in the HUB during National Volunteer Week, I hope to make that bubble just a little bit more transparent and allow us to see our individual and daily impacts on our Dickinson and Carlisle community.



Serving dinner to homeless in Philadelphia



Student staff making dinner at Bethesda Mission

What's Coming in 2012-2013?

At Dickinson we are starting to implement Strategic Plan III which has a student focus. Student services, facilities, and opportunities will increase in the coming years as strategically Dickinson focuses on equipping young people for leadership in communities throughout the world.

A transition will occur this summer with a new director and program coordinator for Religious Life and Community Services. The new staff will be coming on over the summer and continue the work to deepen student's experiences through faith exploration and service to our community. Be sure to meet them both in Fall 2012!

We look forward to an exciting year of new weekly programs, living into granting grants with Montgomery Leaders, a strong student staff already hired and six service trips planned.

Dickinson's mission to create, mold, and refine students into engaged citizens—both of this and other communities. We look forward to another great year with lots of changes, but also tons of possibilities! Thank you for your commitment and support of our community.



Wii Bowling with Salvation Army Seniors

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Rebuilding on the 10th Dickinson trip to New Orleans

Be the change you want to see in the world. –Mahatma Gandhi