

Dickinson

Office of Community Service & Religious Life

Year In Review 2012-2013

WELCOME, REV. DONNA HUGHES!



The Office of Community Service and Religious Life is proud to announce that it has a new Director of Community Service and Religious Life! After an extensive national search, Dickinson selected Rev. Donna Hughes, to be the next Director of the Office of Community Service and Religious Life.

Rev. Hughes comes to Dickinson from Cleveland, Ohio, where she served three different college campuses in an ecumenical campus ministry setting through the United Protestant Campus Ministries of Cleveland, OH. While in this position, Rev. Hughes was the head of the ministries' non-profit board, and she worked extensively on international coffee houses, first-year leadership programs, international and domestic service trips, and local community service opportunities for students. She was also involved in working with the President's Interfaith Challenge, and was President of the Ministries' Inter-Religious Council.

In the past, Rev. Hughes has worked as a campus minister for the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, taught courses in World Religions at Lyndsey Wilson College and Midway College in Kentucky, and National American College in South Dakota, while also teaching Environmental Biology at Lyndsey Wilson, and Cultural Anthropology at National American. She also spent a year teaching English in Hohhot, Inner Mongolia, China.

Rev. Hughes has a B.S. in Animal Health Management from Sul Ross State University in Apline, TX, an M.S. in Agriculture from Texas A&M University in College Station, TX, and M.A in Divinity from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, KY.

We look forward to welcoming Rev. Hughes to campus in late June, and we are excited for the passion and enthusiasm she will bring to Dickinson.

RECAP: 2012-13

As John F. Kennedy once said, *"Change is the law of life and those who look only to*

the past or present are certain to miss the future." The 2012-13 academic year brought a number of changes for the Office of Community Service & Religious Life with new professional staff, student staff members, and student leadership. In the midst of the changes, however, one thing remained the same – the drive from student leaders to create new innovative programs that connect students with the community through service; strengthen the interfaith conversation among students, staff, and faculty; and develop opportunities for new experiences, connections, and relationships both on campus and in the Carlisle community.

This year, the Office focused on continuing successful programs such as weekly volunteer opportunities through CommServ, intense opportunities for service and reflection through trips, and sharing 'What Matters Most' with one another over dinner. In addition, the Office launched new programs that **connect first year students to the community through service** with 'Neighbors to Neighbors,' **provide grant writing opportunities** for Level 3 Montgomery Service Leaders, and **create discussion about the intersection of gender, sexuality, and faith** through 'Is Faith Straight?'

2012-13 proved to be an **exciting and transformative year** as students continued to step forward with a drive and determination to make a difference on campus and in the community that epitomizes **the ideals of being a Dickinsonian**. Please continue to read to learn from the students themselves about their passions and how they shared their talents to truly shape the direction of the office programs.

YEAR IN NUMBERS

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 3 | Service Trips |
| 1 | Interfaith Service Trip |
| 17 | Interfaith Programs |
| 15 | Student Staff Members |
| 17 | L.E.A.D. Mentors |
| 8 | Service Trips Leaders |
| 29 | CommServ Coordinators |
| 13 | CommServ Programs |
| 223 | Cans donated to Project SHARE through ExtravaCANza |
| 38 | Volunteers who staffed a table at Charity Fair |
| 20 | Montgomery Service Leaders |
| 65 | Dickinson Day of Service Participants |
| 135 | CommServ Volunteers |
| 150 | Neighbors to Neighbors Volunteers |
| \$82,695 | Funds raised by students for local organizations |
| 38,673 | Total Volunteer Hours |

Neighbors to Neighbors

Neighbors to Neighbors (N2N) is a program launched this year with the goal of connecting the first-year neighborhoods with local community organizations through active service. Each first year neighborhood is partnered with one specific community organization in the local Carlisle area with the intent of creating consistent, small, weekly service projects for students in each neighborhood. Facilitating the weekly projects, there is one 'N2N Liaison,' an upper class student who works in the CSRL office, for each first year neighborhood.



PARTICIPANTS IN THE FALL ALL NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE PROJECT

For the 2012-13 academic year, Adams partnered with Downtown Neighborhood Connection to focus on sustainability projects; Drayer partnered with Thornwald Home, a local elder care facility; and the Quads partnered with Bosler Children's Library.

Throughout its first year, *Neighbors to Neighbors brought together approximately 150 student volunteers in service to the 3 different agencies.*

In addition to the small weekly service projects with each community partner, N2N hosted an All Neighborhood Service Project each semester. The All Neighborhood Service Projects allowed all of the community partners and first year students to join together in service. In the fall semester, students worked with Downtown Neighborhood Connection to assist in the Carlisle Community Clean-Up. For many first-year students it was an opportunity to learn about Carlisle while helping to clean up the community! In the spring project, Bosler Library and Thornwald Home partnered together and students spent an afternoon with local children listening to senior resident's stories, creating shadowboxes, and enjoying an ice cream celebration. It was a great time to join across multiple generations — and it brought a smile to so many faces!



CRAFTING SHADOW BOXES DURING THE SPRING ALL NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICE PROJECT

N2N had a very successful first year, and it will be exciting to see the program grow next year.

In Their Own Words: N2N Liaisons



BERNADETTE BRANDT '13, N2N LIAISON FOR ADAMS NEIGHBORHOOD

My work this year with the Downtown Neighborhood Connection and the Adams neighborhood was extremely rewarding. We undertook projects to clean trash out of parks and playgrounds, weed and mulch community gardens, and breathe new life into underutilized recycling bins by painting them in decorative ways. The first-year students were eager and excited to connect with their community and make a positive difference. On one early Saturday morning, a student told me that she had been up all night talking to her roommate. Shocked that she had still come to serve, she told me that *she didn't want to skip N2N because it was a fun relief from her schoolwork and she enjoyed going out into the community.* This student's commitment and attitude about the program reaffirmed my belief that N2N will continue successfully for many years to come.

HEATHER GEIST '15, N2N LIAISON FOR DRAYER NEIGHBORHOOD

I personally had the opportunity to work with wonderful residents from Drayer Hall and the Thornwald Home. Once a week, a group of students and I traveled to our community partner to connect and play interactive games with the senior citizens, including bowling, bocce ball, shuffleboard and many more! The people and personalities you find at the Thornwald Home are truly phenomenal. *Every week the students and I left with smiles on our faces.* It is amazing to realize how a few moments of your time can make a lasting impression on those around you. N2N has afforded me the opportunity to work with amazing individuals. In the coming years I hope to see more students take advantage of volunteering in their community, beginning with N2N!



ALEJANDRA CHAVEZ '14, N2N LIAISON FOR THE QUADS NEIGHBORHOOD

Every Tuesday, the Quads residents and I would assist elementary students at Bosler Library with homework and help them prepare for state exams. I looked forward to coming in every Tuesday and seeing the interaction between the volunteers and the students. They were always so engaged and appreciated the presence of one another. *This experience became more than a weekly service event* — it was a safe space for the students to express their academic struggles and have the volunteers do their best to assist them. The volunteers really built a connection with the kids, even if they only went once. College students made a huge difference in the education of the kids — one school counselor expressed to us the improvement the students had been making in school. Neighbors to Neighbors gave the Quads community a place to engage and make a difference in the world surrounding Dickinson. Many of the first year students said that this program helped them interact within their first year class and volunteer outside of their normal groups.



Montgomery Service Leaders

Rachel Jordan '13

This academic year was a big one for the Montgomery Service Leaders. After launching as a brand new program in 2011-2012, this year brought the implementation of all the final aspects of the program.

The Level 3 component had a very successful year, implementing the Grant Writing program and Capstone projects. Through the Grant Writing Program, Level 3 students completed a Grant Writing seminar with the help of Doris Ditzler, a grant writing instructor from the Carlisle Area Health and Wellness Foundation. After a peer-review process, they then submitted their own grant proposals for a self-designed project meant to further the mission of their community partner. Upon successful completion of the Grant Writing program, **each of the Level 3 participants were awarded up to \$500 to help them with the completion of their projects.**

Simultaneously, students completed the Internship Notation Program through the Dickinson Career Center as a part of their Capstone project, allowing them to reflect on their experiences within the Level 3 program and for the **project to appear on their transcript as an official internship.** This year, these students successfully completed projects related to food waste and canning education, transitioning out of homelessness, art as a form of environmental education for children, teaching healthy lifestyles to girls going to college, and an environmental fair for the Dickinson community.

The Level 2 component also saw the implementation of its academic connection piece this year. With the help of Associate

Provost and First-Year Class Dean, Shalom Staub, students identified an academic class that could connect with their work at their community partner. At the end of the class, each Level 2 student wrote a paper reflecting on the connections they formed, and what they learned from the experience. The students also gave a presentation to the other Montgomery Service Leaders detailing their experiences with the Level 2 program.

It has been exciting to see all the final aspects of the program come together and how each student has been able to make their current Level their own.

2012-13 MSL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

ALLARM
YMCA
CASA
Employment Skills Center
Project SHARE
Sadler Health Center
YWCA
Camp Koala
United Way
Central Pennsylvania Conservancy
Salvation Army
Carlisle CARES



(LEFT TO RIGHT) MADELINE CHANDLER '16, NICKKI RUSSO '14, ELIZABETH LANIGAN '16, MARK SHAFFER '16, JAMIE PHILLIPS '16, GREG HORNE '16, KENDALL BEALS '13, CAIO SANTOS RODRIGUES '16, RACHEL JORDAN '13

CommServ

Ryan Corbett '13

CommServ has had an exciting year with a total of 13 different programs and 135 different Dickinson student volunteers. All of the programs have accomplished great things, such as one program leading a trip to the Baltimore Aquarium with middle school



ERIC STANGROOM '14
COMMSERV COORDINATOR

kids, another raised over \$300 through successful fundraisers, and a new tradition for a third program of a trip to a pumpkin patch in the fall.

While all 13 programs were outstanding this year, three CommServ groups in particular went above and beyond in service to the community.

PIT (Prison Inmate Tutoring) expanded to include the Camp Hill State Correctional Institution. **Volunteers now tutor over 40 inmates at 2 different prisons and have helped 26 inmates receive their GEDs this year.**

ArtWorks! started in the spring semester as a new program, but quickly made up for lost time with a steady number of Dickinson volunteers and an interesting array of art projects working with local kids. This year, volunteers created paper mache animals and dot projects based on Aboriginal designs with participants.

Senior Companions began last year out of one student's desire to connect volunteers with an older generation at Claremont, a local nursing home. In its second year, Senior Companions has really thrived. **Senior Companions led six amazing events this year,** such as a picture making activity and a year end banquet where Dickinson student volunteers cooked the nursing home residents their favorite meals.

Service Trips

Colleen Berger '13

This year, the Office of Community Service and Religious Life ran three trips, one over winter break to New Orleans, LA and two over spring break to Greenwood, South Carolina and Sylvania, Alabama. The experiences and relationships formed on these trips pushed participants to examine the world they live in and their own lives differently.



ALEX FERNANDEZ '15, ALAN YAO '15, COLLEEN BERGER '13
AL SPRING BREAK SERVICE TRIP

In New Orleans, LA, a group of 17 Dickinsonians worked on two houses in Slidell damaged by Hurricane Isaac, which struck Louisiana in late August 2012.

Before leaving, the group focused on the social justice issues surrounding disaster relief and how this is seen in the process of rebuilding the greater New Orleans area. The group connected with a Dickinson alum, a teacher in New Orleans with Teach for America, who explained the New Orleans educational system, its problematic nature, and innovative efforts for improvements.

The spring break trip to Greenwood, SC, worked with Habitat for Humanity, working side by side with local community volunteers. The group's biggest accomplishment included **tearing down and completely replacing an entire roof of one Habitat for Humanity home.** In all, this group of 15 students and staff worked together on the jobsites during



CINDY BAUR '16
SC SPRING BREAK SERVICE TRIP

the day to combat poverty. In the evening, they reflected upon their days and discussed the greater issues prevalent in society.

The other spring break team traveled to Sylvania, AL, and worked with the Upper Sand Mountain Parish on a variety of different projects including organizing materials in the parish's warehouse, building a wheelchair ramp, and breaking apart the foundation of a house torn away by a tornado the year before. This trip addressed the issues surrounding rural

poverty within the south and how this is similar or different from urban poverty. The participants also grew close through reflections, games, and hiking in the area.



ASIR SAEED '16
SC SPRING BREAK SERVICE TRIP

A Glance Inside:

Service Trip Journals

One of the most important aspects of service trips are the reflections and discussions we engage in every day. Participants have an opportunity to write down their own thoughts in a journal that is later given to each student, allowing them to reflect and remember what they and their fellow team members experienced.



JASMINE BRITTON '14, TRIP LEADER
AL SPRING BREAK SERVICE TRIP

"...I overheard Dilbert, the head of the Parish, talking the other day about the work he does and he said, "as long as we are alive, we can work to change our situation. What happens in the past doesn't really matter. We can do something about it." That really stuck with me. Coming to a school where I knew no one has been a lot harder than I expected, and I feel like I have spent too much of my time mourning my past and feeling sorry for myself, while not doing anything to change it.

*This is all really incoherent and random, and I can't lift my arms over my head because they are so sore from the work yesterday, but I guess I am trying to say that I haven't been this content, motivated, and inspired in a very long time. I am so grateful for the opportunity to go on this trip, as well as for the wonderful people around me who opened up, listened, and made me feel like I was important. **Service is now an integral part of my life and myself. I can't picture existence without it.***

- Kerry Richmond '16, AL

*"...The enormity of need for service in our world can be discouraging to me at times, and even worse it can instill me with a sense of guilt over the comparatively privileged life I lead. A loving family, food on my plate, a roof over my head, and a fantastic school to attend are needs and luxuries that many are in need of. However, this trip has made me realize that being discouraged and guilty is a waste in this context. It is better to simply do whatever you are capable of to help whoever is in need. If everyone in the world did at least that much, we would be in better shape. Maybe someday that will be the case, but even if we never reach that point, **I now know that it won't stop me from doing my little part in the overall service of the world's needs.** It's a humble job, but the sum of all our efforts really can add up to something meaningful in the end."*

-Alex Kasznel '15, NOLA



ALEX KASZNEL '15
WINTER BREAK SERVICE TRIP

In Her Own Words: A 'L.E.A.D.' Reflection

The program 'L.E.A.D.' has been in the works for several years with Oanh-Nhi Nguyen '13, a graduating Dickinson senior, at the forefront of this project. She began creating 'L.E.A.D.' her sophomore year, and with the help of Dickinson faculty and the YWCA Carlisle, it was implemented into nearby schools this year.

'L.E.A.D.' stands for 'Learn, Empower, Act, and Define.' In the words of Oanh-Nhi, **"The mission of 'L.E.A.D.' is to create a safe space where students can learn about social justice and diversity issues, to empower bystander intervention, to encourage students to act with self-respect and respect for others, and to define their passion in today's culture."** Dickinson students who were interested in volunteering with this program dedicated ten weeks of mentoring and leading students in grades, 5, 8, and 11 to become 'L.E.A.D.ers.' The different lessons that were taught in after school 'L.E.A.D.' programs included race, gender, culture, safety, media, and cyber-bullying.

I was fortunate enough to hear about 'L.E.A.D.' this past semester, and I applied to be a 'L.E.A.D.er' (Dickinson student volunteer) without much knowledge of the program. I had heard about Oanh-Nhi and this amazing program she had built from the ground up that would empower our future generations in nearby Carlisle schools. I was floored with the idea. Sure enough, once I learned more about 'L.E.A.D.' and its purpose, it was more amazing than I had imagined. I was lucky enough to be accepted as a 'L.E.A.D.er,' and thus, my journey had begun.

*I was fortunate enough to work the 5th graders at Bellaire Elementary who were energetic, wise beyond their years, and ready to rise to new expectations. Through this program, my fellow 'L.E.A.D.ers' and I had become **"a catalyst in ending a cycle of violence and creating a cycle of leadership,"** with the assistance of the 'L.E.A.D.' curriculum. 'L.E.A.D.' brought many subjects to light that aren't discussed at school or at home. The 5th graders I worked with rose to every expectation we set for them. They were extremely self-aware and attune to the environments around them, and we helped to inspire them to spread their awareness to others in their school and at home. These*

kids are certainly more open-minded and smarter than my own generation. They give me hope.

Through 'L.E.A.D.,' the 5th graders I worked with gave me hope for the generation to come. They inspired me to be better. As they rose up to and beyond our expectations, it showed us that these kids are ready for the future ahead of them. These kids are ready to make change. They are prepared to spread respect, empowerment, kindness, and leadership to everyone they meet. While some may think that 5th graders are just elementary school children who have yet to grow up, more people need to give these young adults a second chance. They have strong voices that are ready and eager to be heard.

- Caitie Simpson '15



CAITIE SIMPSON '15
COMMSERV CO-LEADER
L.E.A.D.-ER



MLK Day of Service

Antonia Johnson '13

Although the weather was bitterly cold, students gathered in January for a candlelight vigil to honor and remember the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting that occurred on Dec. 14, 2012. **The candlelight vigil utilized Martin Luther King Jr.'s philosophies of compassion and nonviolence to celebrate the lives of the victims of the Sandy Hook.** With the help from the African America



Society, Angela Medrano '16, Michael Cook '13 and Dickinson's poetry group "Exiled," the night was filled with poetry and music to commemorate

MLK Jr. Day of Service. Prior to the candlelight vigil, students made inspirational cards filled with messages of hope and support to the families victims. The goal of 'MLK Day of Service' is to put into action Dr. King's teachings and philosophies through service projects that empower people and build bridges in order to strengthen communities; the candlelight vigil and card making attested to this very notion.

While many people flock to the big bright and extremely large tree in Rockefeller Center, it has become a tradition for Dickinsonians to look for the "Giving Tree," an artificial tree in the HUB. Thought it is small, the "Giving Tree" has more powers than most other Holiday trees: it has the power to bring smiles to children who live at the United Methodist Home for Children in Mechanicsburg. Each child who lives at UMHC has experienced behavior issues or family problems deemed severe enough to keep them from remaining at home and in their community, and they create a "wish list" of items they would like to receive during the holidays. Dickinsonians have the opportunity to make a child's day by fulfilling their wish through the "Giving Tree." From Soul Clavier key chains and Nike socks to Justin Bieber posters and Hello Kitty belts, the requests from the children were for the simplest and smallest things. This year, with the help of Dickinson students and staff, **the "Giving Tree" delivered a total of 65 gifts and gift cards.**

Giving Tree

Antonia Johnson '13



Style Your Sole

Emily Rincavage '14

"Style Your Sole" is a project of TOMS shoes, where campuses nationwide sell TOMS and host a shoe decorating party. Now, this seems very consumerist, and how does it relate to community service? Well, **TOMS follows a "one-for-one" model, which means that for every pair of shoes bought, they donate a pair to a child in need.** Currently, over 2,000,000 pairs of shoes have been donated to

germs that seep into cuts on the feet. Furthermore, in many countries, the school uniform required to attend includes black shoes, which many families cannot afford to purchase.

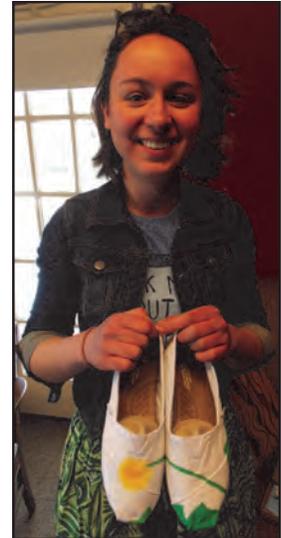
At Dickinson, TOMS shoes were sold for a week. Then, when the shoes arrived, the CSRL Office hosted a "Style Your Sole" party on April 7th in Landis House, and

students who purchased shoes were able to decorate them. Additionally, on April 7th starting from Landis House, a barefoot walk was hosted around parts of campus to spread awareness to the campus while other students were laying out enjoying the sun.

One of the greatest successes that came from "Style Your Sole" was collaboration with the new TOMS Campus Club. This group helped to advertise and spread awareness about this important topic to the campus community.



LEAH MILLER '14
STYLE YOUR SOLE PARTICIPANT



STYLE YOUR SOLE PARTICIPANT
SHOWS OFF HER SHOES



STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN A BAREFOOT WALK AS PART OF "STYLE YOUR SOLE"

When Hurricane Sandy hit the United States in October 2012, there was an enormous amount of destruction along the east coast. Organizations and individuals from all over the country provided immediate aid to one of the worst natural disasters North America had ever seen. **While no amount of support could have ever been enough, the Dickinson community responded as well.** Dickinson's Office of Community Service and Religious Life worked in conjunction with the Carlisle Rotary Club to coordinate a Hurricane Sandy Relief Project.



CAITIE SIMPSON '15
DONATIONS FOR HURRICANE SANDY RELIEF

With the help of staff in the CSRL Office, a large banner was created and hung outside of the HUB. In addition, posters advertising the drive were distributed all over campus and CSRL staff members staffed a table for two weeks in the HUB to collect donations.

Students, faculty, administrators, and the Carlisle community all provided an overwhelming response with blankets, clothes, canned foods, toiletries, etc. **At the end of the drive, enough was collected to fill an entire van with donations.** The CSRL Office then had the honor of driving the donations to the Carlisle Rotary Club to contribute Dickinson's collection of donations to their large storage spaces and two full tractor trailers that were already overflowing with other donations.

Hurricane Sandy Relief Project

Caitie Simpson '15

While the donations only made a small dent in the greater need, Dickinson still refused to sit back and do nothing. The campus's compassionate community rose up together and found a way to help the areas hit by Hurricane Sandy. Dickinson College is a progressive institution of wonderful individuals whose goals of community engagement continue to reach far beyond the borders of the Carlisle community.

In Her Own Words: *This I Believe* Reflection

This year, the CSRL student staff spent time discussing essays from *This I Believe: Life Lessons*, a collection of short essays based the NPR series of the same name. Posed the question “what do YOU believe?,” the students reflected upon their own personal values.



HEATHER GEIST '15
N2N LIAISON

*I believe in taking the time to listen. Every individual has a story – a piece of their background that they carry with them. **Some people wear their story on their sleeve and share it openly, while others keep it tucked safely away. And then there are others who don't always remember.***

The residents of the Thornwald Home have such personality. As I started my sophomore year of college, I knew that this nursing home was where I would be working, but I knew nothing about it. After an initial rocky start to the new community service program that we

created at Dickinson College, I began attending weekly to help, along with other students, in the large Wednesday night activities. Playing games with the residents is always something fun, but in the hustle and bustle of organizing, conducting, and concluding the games, I still wasn't getting the chance to know who these people I was working with really were.

After bowling one night (an extremely popular event), I was escorting some residents back to their rooms. I sent one particular resident on her way to walk back, while I wheeled another resident to her specific room for the evening. While I was walking back to return to the multi-purpose area, I saw the woman I had sent back earlier searching around. Now, she is truly a woman of character and cracks jokes all the time, but in that moment I saw confusion and concern. After joking with her for a few moments as I guided her back to her room, I paused outside the door where some pictures of her and her family were sitting in a shadow box. I always thought it was better not to take the time and ask about the resident's past,

because of the off chance they wouldn't remember, which could cause them some distress. I decided to take my chances and asked her about the animals and people in the pictures. In the moment I stepped out and decided that it was worth the time to hear her story, I heard anecdotes and recollections coming from someone who couldn't even remember her current room number. The most powerful moment in all of the conversation was her smile – the smile that didn't leave for a full 10 minutes as she shared about her children, husband and pets. I heard the silly stories, the things she missed the most, but I didn't see any of the forgetfulness as I had moments earlier.

I don't know what this resident may have gotten out of our conversation, but I do know that I learned a lot about a woman I hadn't known in this way before, and for those few minutes, she remembered some of the happiest moments in her life. **Every individual has a story to tell, and if there is one thing I have learned through my experiences this year, it is to take the time to listen.**

-Heather Geist '15

ExtravaCANza

Emily Rincavage '14

As a new event in 2013, ExtravaCANza was a structure competition where teams on campus collected canned goods

and built a sculpture out of them based on the theme for the year, “characters or animals.” The winner was chosen by participants of Charity Fair on April 27.

Three teams participated in ExtravaCANza 2013: Alpha Lambda Delta, Alpha Phi Omega, and Society of Physics Students. Alpha Lambda Delta, the first year honor society, built an owl out of their 94 cans to signify ‘wisdom.’ Alpha Phi Omega built the Dickinson Red Devil “D” out of their 57 cans. The Society of Physics Students built Schrödinger's cat out of their 72 cans.



ALPHA LAMBDA DELTA
EXTRAVACANZA 2013
WINNER

In order to pick a winner, students completed a service project at the Charity Fair and received a sticker that allowed them one vote for their favorite sculpture. By the end of Charity Fair, the winner was determined. With their owl, Alpha Lambda Delta won by a single vote. The prize, a trophy made from empty cans, will return for next year's competition.

Overall, through the three teams and various other efforts, 223 cans along with \$20 were donated to Project SHARE.

This academic year began with the introduction of a new Community Service Blog aimed at connecting the Dickinson community with the programs offered by the Office of Community Service and Religious Life.

Office Blog

Esmeralda Alvarez '14

The blog's main purpose is to highlight the various accomplishments and events from the different community service programs, such as Service Trips, Neighbors to Neighbors, Montgomery Service Leaders, CommServ, and Day of Service, along other related community service events. Aside from highlighting the various programmatic accomplishments, the blog also includes personal reflections written by community service leaders and service trips participants, highlighting their experiences and the benefits of coming together as a community and serving.

As the blog continues to develop and include more information on upcoming events and programs, the CSRL Office is hopeful that the Dickinson Community will benefit from the featured reflections, articles, and pictures, and mark the emergence of discussions sparked by the blog posts. Please visit the blog and feel free to leave a comment on your favorite post!

VISIT US!

<http://dickinsoncommunityservice.wordpress.com/>

What Matters Most

Austin MacDougall '15

This year, the 'What Matters Most' dinners continued to inspire students by engaging open dialogue between members of the Dickinson community. Inspired by "The Last Lecture" series by the late Carnegie Mellon professor Randy Pausch, the **'What Matters Most' dinners brought Dickinsonians together in a group setting to share what is most important to their own lives** and each of the speakers brought a different message for students to bring back with them.

With a diverse variety of eight different guest speakers throughout the year, students from all corners of campus attended these dinners. Whether it was Associate Director of Admissions Molly Boegel's story on the importance of family, Professor Douglas Edlin's powerful lecture on the importance of listening to oneself, or any of the other important topics discussed by our speakers, this year's 'What Matters Most' dinners

offered something for everyone and placed students into an intellectually stimulating discussion setting.

In his last semester at Dickinson College, **President William Durden delivered an enthralling discussion about his own life experiences and stressed the importance of taking chances and being prepared for the unexpected.** In another dinner, college farm director Matt Steiman expressed the benefits of not relying on a set plan, but instead being open-minded and willing to be flexible to adapt to changing conditions. The remainder of this year's speakers, Professors Amy Farrell and Mike Holden, Director of Diversity Initiatives Paula Lima-Jones, and swimming coach Paul Richards, each brought with them a distinct and valuable message about what they have learned in their own lives.

In conversations with students in attendance, it was clear that everyone learned an important lesson about themselves that extends far beyond the classroom setting. As one student reports, "I learned more about a

person that I have so much respect for and learned how to do what I am really passionate about in the future."

The 'What Matters Most' dinners have provided a truly unique experience for Dickinsonians looking to seek those values and beliefs most important in their own lives.



WHAT MATTERS MOST WITH PRES. DURDEN

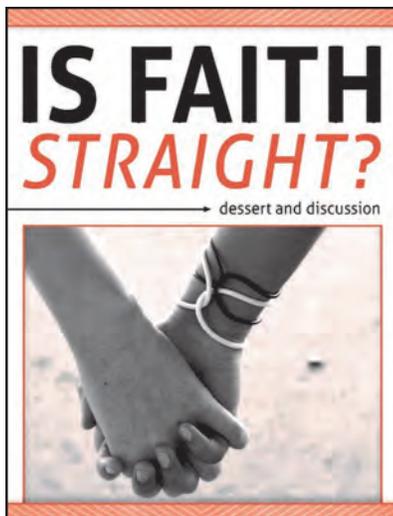
This year, the Office of Religious Life sought to expand the diversity of its interfaith programming to encompass new topics and ideas. Through these efforts, two new programs were created during the Spring 2013 semester: a student-led interfaith panel and a panel on gender, sexuality, and how it intersects with religion called "Is Faith Straight?"

the discussion, open up the interfaith conversation to a wider scope of students on campus. Students from Dickinson Christian Fellowship, the Newman Club, the Muslim Student's Association, Achim, Hillel, and students representing Hinduism all took part in the panel discussion. The panelists told their own stories about the role religion has played in their lives, respectively, and answered questions about the development of their personal beliefs as they have grown as college students.

What's New: Religious Life

Nicole Wasson '15

community. Panelists opened the floor to questions from students, staff, and administration leading to a group discussion. In all, this event demonstrated the need for more conversations about religion that transcend topics of gender and sexuality.



The interfaith panel was coordinated with the help of the Asbell Center for Jewish Life and Achim, the Jewish men's group. The goal of the panel was to model it after the 'Beliefs and Big Questions' dinners that have been taking place since Spring 2012, but through

"Is Faith Straight?" was another panel discussion in which members of Dickinson's faculty and administration addressed the intersection between religion and sexuality. This event, co-sponsored by the Office of Religious Life and the Office of LGBTQ Services, centered around stories from selected panelists about their journeys with religion and spirituality while members of the LGBTQA



STUDENT PARTICIPANTS IN THE INTERFAITH PANEL



Interfaith Service Trip

During the weekend of April 12-14, 13 Dickinsonians participated in the 2nd annual Interfaith Service Trip to Philadelphia, PA. Focusing on the opportunity to talk about different faith traditions, *students, faculty, and staff, used service as a way to learn about the needs of Philadelphia, while also examining the foundational understandings of service and religion.*



PHOEBE OLDACH '13

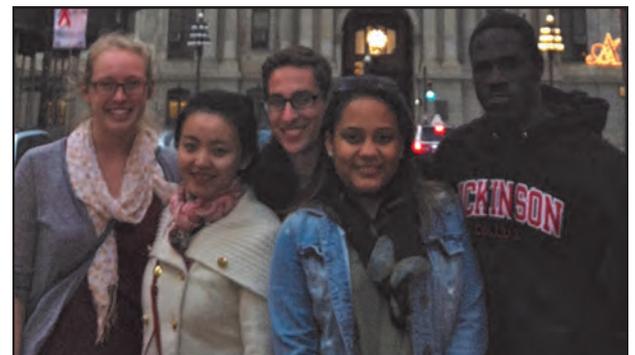
Participants, who spanned diverse religious faith backgrounds including Christian, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Agnostic, and Buddhist, started the weekend by attending a Shabbat service and discussion at the Asbell Center for Jewish Life. At this service, they investigated many of the fundamental principles of Judaism. After the service, they headed off to Arch Street United Methodist Church in Philadelphia, where they stayed for the weekend.

The following day included service opportunities with various agencies including *Women of Change*, a homeless shelter for the chronically ill, *Chosen 300 Ministries*, a food bank that distributes meals and services to the homeless of Philadelphia, and *Philabundance*, another major food service program for homeless residents in Philadelphia. Through these service experiences, the participants experienced first-hand the effects of poverty in Philadelphia and the growing issues surrounding feed-in programs and services.

On Sunday, the trip wrapped up with visits to the Arch Street United Methodist Church and Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church services. At these services, participants experienced different faith organizations, worship traditions, and through reflection, unpacked and discussed the services. Overall, through this trip, *students, faculty, and staff alike used service and religion to make connections and explore and expand the conversation regarding service, interfaith work, and different cultural faith traditions.*



STUDENTS AT A FOOD PANTRY IN PHILADELPHIA, PA.



(LEFT TO RIGHT) PHOEBE OLDACH '13, DI YANG '15, AARON HOCK '15, BRUSSELS MERCADO, MU MU '15

The 'Big Beliefs and Big Questions' program became a major staple for the CSRL Office during the 2012-2013 academic year. In small groups of 8-10 people over dinner, students of all religious and non-religious backgrounds discuss if and how religion has played a role in their lives.

The goal of these dinners is to *foster an interfaith community at Dickinson* where students feel comfortable both sharing their

own experiences with faith and religion and asking questions about the faith systems followed by their peers. Students are invited to share in an environment that is open and accepting with the hope that these conversations will carry on beyond just the small group to the rest of campus. In addition, students are able to attain a deeper understanding of what is important to their fellow classmates by understanding some of the fundamental beliefs of each student.

'Big Beliefs and Big Questions' aims to add another facet to the

diversity already shared in our Dickinson community by making students aware of both the differences and similarities shared among those with whom they interact—and even those with whom they do not—on a day-to-day basis. *This year, almost 50 students shared together during three of these discussion dinners, signaling a promising future for the sustainably and growth of these important conversations.*

BIG 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?

Big Beliefs, Big Questions

Nicole Wasson '15

In His Own Words: *This I Believe* Reflection

'This I Believe' is a consistent, bi-monthly column in the *Dickinsonian*, inviting everyone from the campus community to share their beliefs and learn from one another.

January 15, 2009; a day that would go on to forever change how I look at life. This was the day I learned that my grandmother, who had been diagnosed with terminal lung cancer in the month of November, around the time of my birthday, had only a few more months to live. I knew my grandma to be one of the happiest, most content people I knew. Seeing her being stricken with something that drained her so much made me question why such a thing was happening to her.

By June she was transported from Florida, where she had been staying with a friend, back to Pennsylvania where her house was so that she could be with us.

Her conditions had only worsened and the doctor was only giving her another month to live. At the same time, I was enrolled in a confirmation class at my church in Beaver, Pennsylvania. Up until that year, I had not taken my relationship with God seriously at all, and I was unsure of what I wanted out of life. Even though I had attended church since I was a small child, I still could never completely grasp what it meant to have a relationship with God. I was simply going with the flow of life, allowing it to take me wherever I felt comfortable.

One evening, on my grandmother's birthday, we gathered at her house. The cancer had taken such a toll that she could not even move from her bed. For the first time in my life, I saw my mother's side of the family together, in one place. As we gathered around her bed, we sang the song "Amazing Grace," my grandma's favorite. She did not regularly attend church, nor did she pray every day, yet her favorite song, after 87 years of living, was "Amazing Grace."

On June 23, my grandmother passed away.

I had virtually nothing to look forward to for the rest of the summer, except for a mission trip I had lazily signed up for a few months back.

In July, I finally headed off on my church's mission trip to Richwood, West Virginia, not thinking anything of it and not knowing what I would get out of it. However, while on the trip, I felt as if I was a completely new individual. **I stepped far outside of my comfort zone simply because I was in an environment which felt almost utopian; one where I was growing in my faith while helping those who needed it the most.** I never knew that such a low point in my life could lead to me becoming stronger than I ever was. My faith in God grew immensely, and I began to look at each strenuous time in my life as foreshadowing a smoother one to come. I learned that life is a balance — no matter how close to rock bottom you may feel, there will always be another day, and that, is what I believe.

-Andrew DiNardo '16



Most Dickinson students will enjoy delicious chocolate milk samples from the Anabaptist vendors at the farmer's market, but how many understand the culture and religion of the neighboring community? About 30,000 Amish people live in Pennsylvania, yet few Dickinsonians know about their beliefs. While developing projects for the Office of Religious Life, it was the hope that visiting Lancaster would provide an opportunity for students to gain understanding.

On November 3, the Office of Religious Life and the Asbell Center for Jewish Life co-sponsored an educational day trip to Lancaster's Pennsylvania Dutch Country. With the help of a guide, participants visited farms, local artisans, a museum, and schools. They also enjoyed traditional Amish cuisine from Lancaster's Central Market, ranked by CNN as the one of the world's top ten "Best Fresh Markets". As part of the experience, Dickinson students enjoyed a healthy dose of food culture. Many were surprised to learn that Pennsylvania is home to the second largest Amish community in the world.

During reflections, students considered the importance of cultural understanding and religious tolerance. Specifically, they discussed the religious persecution of Anabaptists and modern day misconceptions. In feedback surveys, participants remarked that they appreciated the opportunity to learn more about a population that makes up a significant part of the Pennsylvania community. One student commented "This religion is so close to campus and seen at the Farmer's Market, yet I never knew much information about it." Another student remarked that, **"This trip exposed me to a side of Amish culture that I have never experienced."**

The group also discussed the importance of learning about faiths and belief systems other than their own. They discussed poor sources of information like the newest shows "Breaking Amish" or "Amish Mafia." These media portrayals create caricatures and perpetuate false information. Through this discussion, the Dickinson students

Amish Country Trip

Catherine Turvey '15

talked about different ways that their own faiths have been negatively portrayed through art and media. Overall, the trip helped the group learn about the Amish and consider better ways to more informed about belief systems and cultures.



STUDENTS VISITED THE
LANCASTER CENTRAL MARKET
ON THE TRIP

Holiday Photo Contest

In the fall semester, the Office of Religious Life sponsored the 2nd Annual Religious Life Photo Contest. The contest requested original photographs from Dickinson students depicting themes that encompass different religious events or worshippers, spiritual celebrations, or houses of worship. *In a record breaking year, the contest received over 140 entries representing 22 different countries, from 33 Dickinson students.* In all, the 14 photos seen here were selected and displayed in the cafeteria, HUB, and library for all to see. The Office hopes to further expand this event next year to highlight the global spiritual awareness of Dickinson students.



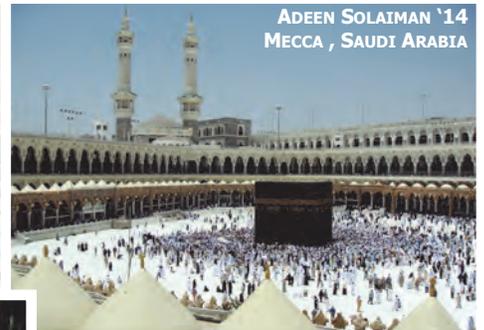
FLORENCIA CABRAL '13
BRASOV, ROMANIA



XIJIANG ZHANG '14
ITALY



HANNAH ANDERSON '13
CASABLANCA, MOROCCO



ADEEN SOLAIMAN '14
MECCA, SAUDI ARABIA



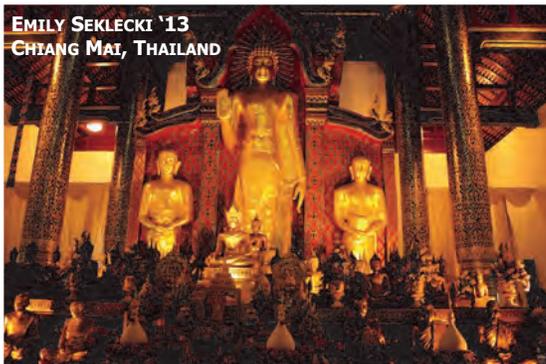
CAILEY CLARK '13
POKHARA, NEPAL



XIJIANG ZHANG '14
PERU



BERNADETTE BRANDT '13
CASABLANCA, MOROCCO



EMILY SEKLECKI '13
CHIANG MAI, THAILAND



RACHEL WILLIAMS '14
BAHIA, BRAZIL



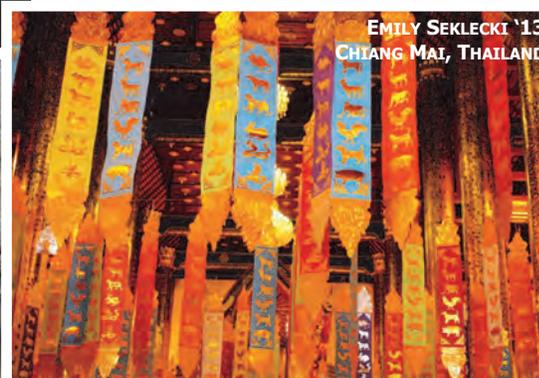
MISSY REIF '13
OURO PRETO, MINAS GERAIS, BRAZIL



CAILEY CLARK '13
POLHARA, NEPAL



EVAN JOHNSON '13
JERUSALEM



EMILY SEKLECKI '13
CHIANG MAI, THAILAND



TRUNG HIEU NGUYEN '14
BOLOGNA, ITALY

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Rachel Jordan '13
Caitie Simpson '15

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Austin MacDougall '15
Catherine Turvey '15
Nicole Wasson '15

OFFICE STAFF

Esmeralda Alvarez '13
Catie Duckworth '14
Emily Rincavage '14
Whitney Wells '15

Thank You!

A special thank you to all those who helped make this year possible. Without you or your organization's support, our office could never do any of things we do.

- * President William Durden
- * April Vari—Vice President for Student Development
- * Pat Mullane—Asst. Vice President for Student Development
- * Norm Jones—Dean of Diversity and Asst. to the President
- * Provost/Dean Shalom Staub
- * CommServ Coordinators
- * Service Trip Leaders
- * MSL Leadership Team
- * ALLARM
- * YMCA
- * CASA
- * Employment Skills Center
- * Project SHARE
- * Sadler Health Center
- * Carlisle CARES
- * Camp Koala
- * Carlisle Health and Wellness Center
- * United Way
- * Central Pennsylvania Conservancy
- * Salvation Army
- * Downtown Neighborhood Connection
- * Thornwald Nursing Home
- * Bosler Library
- * Carlisle Arts & Learning Center
- * BBBS of the Capital Region
- * Carlisle Area School District
- * Claremont Nursing & Rehab Center
- * Cumberland Valley Habitat for Humanity
- * YWCA Carlisle
- * Camp Hill State Correctional Institution
- * Cumberland County Prison
- * CP Drug & Alcohol Commission
- * Diakon Youth Services
- * Yellow Breeches Ed. Center
- * Upper Sand Mt. Parish (AL)
- * Habitat for Humanity (SC)
- * Epworth Project (LA)
- * Arch Street UMC
- * Mike Elias— RCD (Drayer)
- * Pavan Purswani— RCD (Quads)
- * Becky Eby— RCD (Adams)
- * Rachel Jetter
- * Melissa Garcia
- * Chuck Steel
- * Nicki Redmond
- * Erica D'Eramo
- * Muslim Students Association
- * Secular Students Union
- * Fellowship of Christian Athletes
- * Dickinson Christian Fellowship
- * Newman Club
- * Asbell Center for Jewish Life
- * Prof. Marcus Key
- * Prof. Mike Holden
- * Paula Lima-Jones
- * Prof. Doug Edlin
- * Coach Paul Richards
- * Matt Steiman
- * Molly Boegel
- * Prof. Amy Farrell
- * Joyce Bylander— Special Asst. to the President
- * President's Office
- * Office of Alumni Engagement
- * Campus Life
- * CASE
- * Dining Services
- * Facilities Management
- * Carlisle Faith Communities
- * Event Advisory Board
- * Office of LGBTQ Services
- * Marketing and Communications
- * Office of Diversity Initiatives
- * Office of Global Study & Engagement
- * Women's Center

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Mark Your Calendars: Plans for 2013-14!

Summer 2013— Rev. Donna Hughes joins Dickinson

Wed. Aug. 21st— New Student Orientation begins

Fri. Aug. 23rd— Discover Dickinson Programs

Mon. Aug. 26th— Fall Semester begins

September— Volunteers begin to return to placements