On February 25, DSP presented, “This I Believe,” an international writing project of core values from National Public Radio. Bobby Gomez, Rita Perez, Mychal Davis, Angelica Otting, Devi Bluvan, and Leo Hernandez each took a personal spin on the topic, sharing values and life goals.

Bobby Gomez said, “Education is the ultimate equalizer. If you don’t like your culture, an education can change it. Education, Gomez said, is ongoing: It starts, It starts, and Never Ends. To promote his beliefs in education, Bobby is studying to become an educator. He creates his own culture by being himself, taking pleasure in helping and teaching others, and never worrying about fitting into stereotypes or social demands.

This theme rang true in all the essays. In Mychal’s essay, Why My Education Matters, he said, growing up, he saw the struggle at the end of the month to pay bills and have food at the table. But, Mychal said, “Education isn’t just about living comfortably; it’s about achieving my dreams.”

Since kindergarten he knew he wanted to be a veterinarian. Since his first trip to the zoo seeing doctors for animals, Mychal has always had a passion for helping animals in need. His ultimate goal is to get his degree, become a veterinarian, and return to his community to be a role model for young males. Many young men do not have fathers in their lives and need a strong male role model, he said. Angelica grew up with similar struggles. Her dream was to get a college education, and help her family by becoming an archaeologist.

She is well on her way as she completes her DSP project with Dr. Ritterbush. Angelica also plans to attend the Kansas Archaeological Field School this summer.

Rita is also the first in her family to attend college. She is a strong role model for her three siblings. As a kid, she dreamt of being a super hero --a Power Ranger – but has since found a new dream.

“I have given up on becoming a Power Ranger,” Rita said. Now Rita acts as a hero by tutoring students and fighting evil by researching cancer.

Leo moved to the United States when he was 6 and began to learn English. Times were difficult at first. Leo was dropped a grade in school in order to learn a new language. It was then he realized he would have to work hard to achieve his dreams and make his parent’s move to a new country worth it.

“I know that if I don’t do well, it’s my own fault,” he said. After learning English and excelling in school, Leo came to K-State where he joined DSP. “DSP expects and demands success, but helps guide you along the way,” Leo said.

Devi followed a slightly different path than the other five; she bypassed higher education to follow her father’s footsteps into the Navy. After graduating first in her class in Persian Farsi studies in the Navy, she discovered that learning languages comes easily to her and that SAT scores didn’t matter as much.

Devi discovered her passion for learning and came back to work toward her B.A. degree while being a mother of two. She sometimes thinks of leaving school to be with her children, but quickly remembers why she must achieve her dreams and complete her education. Forty “A”grades later she knows she can do it, she said.

In the College of Architecture, the developing scholars are risk takers, willing to add to their already busy load to work one-on-one with the professors to gain extra insight to the designed environment.”

-Dean Dennis Law

“Quote Me!”

“The Scholars are an extension of my family. They make me want to get out of bed every day and come to work. They make me bake. They make me rake leaves! But most of all, they make me proud day in and day out.”

--Anita Cortez, DSP Administrative Director
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Who are Developing Scholars?

It has been eight years since the Developing Scholars Program officially began. It has grown from 20 scholars to 60 scholars. Alongside their cutting edge research, our DSP students are attaining commendations across the University and the nation. We asked a few people, “Who is a Developing Scholar?” These are their responses:

“A Developing Scholar is a student who seeks opportunities and challenges beyond the classroom. Through innovative and thought-provoking research, a Developing Scholar raises the bar for intellectual discovery and discussion, and helps promote educational opportunities for all. Most importantly, a Developing Scholar seeks to be a contributing member of the community through moral and ethical behaviors which exemplify ideals of academic excellence and positive growth.”
—Clemente Herrera
Architecture Graduate

“They are model students, learning from their challenges and mistakes, and moving forward to contribute in new ways.”
—Angelia Perry
Academic Advisor

“A Developing Scholar is a self-directed learner who wraps his/her mind around a research topic, implements stages of the research process, and paves the road toward independent research in the future.”
—Dr. Marjorie Hancock
Elementary Education
DSP’s first mentor

“A Developing Scholar is an undergraduate student who (i) has an interest in research, (ii) would like to work closely with a faculty mentor, and (iii) is willing to have his/her horizons stretched through those experiences.”
—Dr. Ralph Richardson
Dean of the CVM

“A Developing Scholar is a person who is committed to lifelong learning because she/he understands that we all continue to develop and grow with new knowledge we gain. The more we come to know, the more we realize there is to know, so we all remain lifelong learners!”
—Candi Hironaka
Leadership Studies

A visit from past Scholars

“I turned 24 today. Where do all the years go? I think I’ve finally settled into grad school but I wish I had someone like DSP around here to help me out.”
—Mathew Leonard, Graduate in Physics, Berkeley, CA

“I am still in Lincoln, NE working at the University of Nebraska Athletic Department. When are the poster presentations for DSP? I’d love to come down if time allows. Have a good day!”
—Morgan Fisher, M.S. from the University of Bowling Green

“Thanks to the DSP program I still have my sparked interest in research. I will be applying to schools, including K-State for my Ph.D. here shortly in Marriage and Family Therapy.”
—Tenisha Pettus, M.S. from Friends University

K-State & KU both winners!

KU Law School dean Gail Agrawal and colleagues hosted freshman Catrina Elmore, her parents, DSP mentor Margaret Burton and Anita Cortez for brunch at the Lawrence Country Club in October. In March Jacquene Nance, Director of Admissions, visited the DSP seminar and shared information on law school.

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—Dwight Alexander
former DSP, Law Student

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“The best part of this project is working with Jose.” - Dr. Thompson

Congratulations to our Graduating Scholars
Dwight Alexander
Cameron Anderson
Gloria Conner
Greg Corbin
Danielle English
Elise Gaines
Clemente Herrera
Andrew Herrs
Dwayna McFerren
Samuel Ornelas
Amber Tyler

Dr. Daniel Thompson, Jones Professor of Production Medicine and Epidemiology in the College of Veterinary Medicine, works closely with Jose Valles, first year Scholar majoring in Animal Science and Industry. Dr. Thompson coordinates Research concerning the health and well-being of cattle in all segments of the beef industry. He was a student researcher himself while completing his undergraduate studies. He started out cleaning stalls for the cattle and swine research programs, then worked his way up as an animal caretaker, and got a job cleaning a virology laboratory where he started making media for projects. One day he was asked to work on validation of the ELISA test for brucellosis in cattle from the gold standard “Milk ring test.” His last year as an undergrad, he coordinated grazing and feedlot research. When asked what is most rewarding about this research partnership, Dr. Thompson replied, “This is easy. The best part of this project was working with Jose Valles. You can never erase the human factor from working with others. I have always believed in giving back to the students. The most significant factor in a mentor/mentee relationship? An open line of communication and an understanding of each other’s priorities, Thompson says. Student researchers are no different than student athletes. The school work has to come first or they will not go on to professional or graduate programs. Why does he mentor several DSP undergraduates?

The toughest thing for me as a student researcher was time management. I also had to realize that I was not only responsible for my own success but I was also responsible for the team’s success. My mentors invested time in training me and it was my responsibility to get their projects finished on time. It is awesome to see students learn how much work goes into a 250-word abstract and how much impact those words can have on a society.

Developing Mommies

You may remember your parents saying, “Go to college! Get an education!” As you spent your evenings on college admission applications, you may have questioned their advice. Meet Jannet Wright, third year Scholar working with Dr. Tandalayo Kidd in the Human Nutrition Department. On December 24, 2007, Jannet gave birth to Kenyin Allan. When asked what kind of adjustments she has made as a researcher, she replied, “Like every mother, I only want the best for him. Before I gave birth, I made many arrangements to avoid schedule conflicts and prepare for a future as a family.” Jannet admits being a parent will not be easy. She said, “Although I lack on sleep, it is all worth it; my son is my personal alarm clock who wakes me up at o’dark thirty so I am never late to classes. It doesn’t get any better than that.”

Next, meet Devi Bluvan, first-year scholar in behavioral psychology and proud mother of two. When asked how she balances being a wife, mother, student, and researcher, Devi said, “Crazily. It takes a lot of time management. My kids are my inspiration. I do not think I would have made it this far without them.” She commented, “I like to understand why people behave and act the way they do.” Devi works in the lab of Dr. Matt Palmatier.

Rosemary Almeida is also a first-year scholar and a mother. A kinesiology major, she researches the cardiac output under hypoxia and normoxia conditions and compares it with blood flow and VO2 kinetics. She also has two boys. She tells us, “I usually try to wake up around 5:45. This gives me just enough time to get ready, dress my kids, and drop them off at day care. If I am not in class or working with Dr. Barstow, I am usually in Hale Library doing homework. After my husband gets off work, he picks me up. We go get the kids, and run whatever errands we have. Once at home, I put in a load of laundry, clean the apartment, start making dinner, and at 8:00, I give my kids baths and at 9:30, it’s lights out.” Rosemary hopes to open up her own chiropractic clinic after she graduates.
Engineering Professor Seeks Out Undergraduates

Todd Easton is a professor in Industrial and Manufacturing Systems within the College of Engineering. Dr. Easton is the mentor for David Willis and Matthew James.

What is your main area of research?
I do research in discrete optimization. This typically finds the maximum or minimum value of something with some restrictions. Recently, I have been moving toward simulating complex systems.

How did you first become involved in research with students?
I like doing research and IMSE’s undergraduate students are excellent. I currently work with nine undergraduate students, including two DSP Scholars. I actively recruit students into my research group through my undergraduate classes.

What do you think is the most rewarding experience in this research partnership?
The relationship that is generated between the faculty and the students.

What is the most significant factor in a mentor/mentee relationship?
Frequent meetings and respect for the other person’s ideas.

What has been the most exciting research you have worked on?
I like all of it.

As a mentor, what do you hope your students will learn?
To be good citizens and that hard work generates good results.

Why mentor undergraduates?
That is why I became a professor. To encourage students to excel beyond what the student previously thought was possible.

Two such students are Matt James and David Willis whose work, “Movements of an Infection through a Rural Environment,” tracks how people move. They hope to find a way to prevent the spread of infection in rural areas. Matt says of their research, “Everything is challenging, a lot of the work requires a different type of thinking.” Matt stays current on his classes and on top of his research by prioritizing and avoiding procrastination. When asked how his research experience will relate to his future career goals, he states, “this work experience will be invaluable.”

Honor societies affiliated with Developing Scholars:
- Kappa Delta Pi
- Phi Kappa Phi
- Phi Eta Sigma
- Phi Kappa Phi
- Golden Key
- Multicultural Honor Society
- National Society of Collegiate Scholars
- Silver Key Sophomore Honorary
- University Honors Program
This past fall our scholars replaced their regular monthly meeting with something unique and intrinsically rewarding. Divided into four groups, the Scholars spent one chilly, Sunday afternoon raking leaves in the Manhattan community. The event was titled Rake ’n Run. Students brought trash bags, borrowed rakes from the university, and car-pooled to travel across the city raking leaves in tree-lined neighborhoods.

“Kristel Williams suggested this idea for our community service,” Anita Cortez, administrative director of DSP, noted. “She planned the whole event which was no small task. Kristel canvassed the community to find yards in need of our help.” Kristel Williams replied, “I wanted to let people know that we are compassionate beyond our academics.” Anita observes, “I was especially pleased to see that many of the recipients were in need of someone to assist them, and our Scholars approached the task with gusto. In fact, they made it look so fun that even I joined in.”

Students knocked on doors, delivering information cards on DSP, before raking. Recipients were surprised and grateful. One woman said, “It’s been twenty years since we’ve been able to get out here to clean the leaves, and now I’m just too old, so this is great!” Others called the office and invited Scholars back again. Scholars enjoyed the activity too and plan to make it part of the DSP community service tradition.

Bobby Gomez, a Scholar participating in the event, remarks, “There is a sense of satisfaction as we rake a complete stranger’s yard, then he/she comes out and is appreciative of our work. It is amazing what a group of focused students can accomplish. It’s always exciting to see people helping each other.”

In March, the Developing Scholars replaced their monthly meeting with another community service project titled “Random Acts of Kindness.” Students were challenged to perform caring acts for people on campus and in the community. DSP believes that compassionate actions-large and small-count towards making a positive impact in people’s lives.

El Grito Hispano
Sammy Ornelas, senior in Kinesiology and third year scholar, initiated a film series after attending the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in San Francisco in order to empower and educate our K-State student body on social and civil issues.

Scholars earn academic honors for Fall 2007:

Danielle English
Robert Gomez
Michelle Hubin
Kristel Williams
Devi Bluvian
Catrina Elmore
Leonel Hernandez
Matthew James
Rita Perez

Sheila Ellis is a junior in Mass Communications and second year DSP Scholar. Her most recent accomplishment? She was appointed as campus editor for K-State’s Collegian. One of her main goals is to build an environment with diverse ideas and individuals that will make the Collegian a diverse newspaper. “It’s crazy!” says Sheila. “The Collegian is over 100 years old, and I am the first student of African-American descent to become a campus editor.”

Sheila realized that the Collegian lacked diversity in its staff which was reflected in the coverage and articles. After a lot of consideration and support from her advisors, Sheila initiated the Organization for Diverse Media Communicators which promotes multicultural writers and greater diversity coverage on campus.

Sheila has demonstrated an interest in academia across the board. Her accomplishments and enthusiasm as a writer, have lead Sheila to her internship with the Virginia Pilot newspaper. As part of her internship she gets $5,000 each of two summers and a job offer after graduation.

As a DSP Scholar, Sheila is currently researching how different newspapers market and publicize their name. With so many technological advances available to all readers, Sheila says, “Times are changing and newspapers need to adjust in order to survive.”

For Sheila, DSP has been a growing experience. DSP allows her to interact with excelling students. Sheila says, “It’s inspiring; I don’t think my goals would have been as high without it.” For Sheila, DSP has allowed her to grow beyond her peers whom she says, only seem interested in acquiring written clips and compiling resume material. She comments, “DSP made me realize I could acquire a Master’s degree and then pursue a Ph.D.”
As a first year DSP Scholar, Vanessa Reyes’ research is at the edge of discovery. As a Biology major, she works on purifying plasmids (DNA) from E. Coli cells and then combining them with other cells such as Yeast cells in order to regulate patterns of DNA structure. Her research goes beyond a basic scope of understanding; she says, “I am doing research at the highest levels of academia.” Her research could help us understand how we can manipulate DNA in humans.

Beyond research, Vanessa remains committed to extracurricular involvement. Since high school, Vanessa has been playing the viola. Since arriving at KSU, Vanessa has wanted to travel to Scotland and England with the KSU Orchestra. “This is a once in a lifetime opportunity; it is the first time that the KSU orchestra has traveled beyond the state of Oklahoma, let alone across the world; I didn’t want to miss the opportunity,” she said. Vanessa auditioned for the orchestra and got invited to participate. She was excited: “It sounded so cool, and then I was told it cost $3,000. Then it didn’t sound so cool!” However, with the help of her parents, DSP, and a bit of digging for scholarship money, Vanessa has secured her involvement in this trip. During the spring break 2008, Vanessa will travel for ten days in Europe performing in various concerts in England and Scotland.

Scholars in a political world

There is much anticipation and excitement as we witness the presidential race of the century. Never before has the United States seen such a diverse presidential race. Our Scholars take pride in the fact that they too can take part in this great precedent. Johna Wallace, Senior in Biology/Pre-Vet, took an online quiz to find her ideal candidate. She says, “After I found out my candidate, I decided to look further into all the other candidates.” Johna is interested in the issues of stem cell research and immigration. She says, “My whole family supports one side, but I usually stand alone.” Johna summarizes, “It is always good to know what you stand for.” Tiffany Harris, DSP Scholar and sophomore in Biology/Pre-Med, says, “I stay informed by watching news on the TV. It is important that everyone has an equal say in our society.” Tiffany reinforces this thought by saying, “People don’t vote because they have the attitude that one vote doesn’t matter.” It does. Tiffany believes that voting is a fundamental right of our political system. Furthermore, Tiffany says, “My family has been voting for a while.” Then she adds, “As DSP Scholars we should vote, because we are leaders on campus and influence others to follow.” Go to <http://www.kssos.org/forms/elections/voter-registration.pdf> to register to vote.

“My first rehearsal at K-State was so hard I almost wanted to quit. I stuck around and I think I have improved quite a bit.”

- Vanessa Reyes

Other Traveling Scholars

Johna Wallace – Belize
Danielle English – Mexico
Jannet Wright – Thailand
Bobby Gomez – Spain
Zach Marteney – Belize
Morgan Franklin - Africa
John Grice - France
Amber Tyler - Mexico
Samuel Ornelas - Okinawa

DSP Scholar, Delegate to National Convention

Freshman John Grice will be part of the Obama delegation to the Democratic National Convention this summer in Denver, Colorado. John’s major is Political Science and his faculty mentor is Dr. Dale Herspring.
The Developing Scholars Program has certainly made its mark. Farrell Webb, Developing Scholars faculty director and Clemente Herrera, graduate student in architecture and former Developing Scholar were honored at the Commerce Bank Presidential Awards for Distinguished Services to Multicultural Students reception at the K-State Alumni Center January 22.

The award is one of the most, if not the most, significant award a student or faculty member at K-State can receive for their efforts to further diversity at K-State, said Dr. Myra Gordon, associate provost for diversity and dual career development. Interestingly enough, besides the winners, all finalists were Developing Scholars members: senior Amber Tyler, senior Uriel Estrada, and sophomore Bobby Gomez.

Anita Cortez, administrative director of Developing Scholars and former recipient of the award said, “There are many outstanding undergraduates on this campus, so I am very proud of our student finalists as well as the recipients. I think it is important to note that our students are out there giving back to the community at the same time they are involved in higher academic challenges. In other words, they are well-rounded individuals who are not thinking only of themselves.”

At the event, administrators and faculty recognized Webb and Herrera for their involvement in multicultural affairs on campus. “Dr. Webb is one of the most quiet powerful forces behind the scenes,” Gordon said. “He is working in the trenches making sure our students leave our programs with excellent skills in every area. He is an unsung hero.”

As the Developing Scholars seminar instructor, Webb whips many timid undergraduate students into shape, telling them they will leave his class at the end of the semester a new person. Indeed, many of his students admit that he has influenced their academic success. “He sets very high expectations for undergraduates. When students are working with him, they find out very quickly that they are working at a much higher level than their peers,” Cortez said.

Webb noted during his humble acceptance speech that he is just doing his job. He encouraged faculty to spend more time with students. “I teach students it is not okay to not do your best,” he said. “That is just unacceptable.”

Herrera, the student recipient was noted for being a path-maker for multicultural students at Kansas State University. “He tirelessly forges the path for those that follow after him,” Cortez said.

This year, Herrera gained attention for being a national finalist for the Rhodes Scholarship, one of the most prestigious scholarships in the U.S. “DSP helped me realize that I could achieve all my goals,” Herrera said. “Clemente is an outstanding student, a true role model for all of us and a quintessential university citizen,” Dr. Gordon said.

Cancer is a word that strikes fear in the hearts of all who must confront it. Most of us know someone who has had to battle this disease, but in DSP we have a number of Scholars who are on the cutting edge of the fight against cancer. Several Scholars have been recognized with Terry C. Johnson Cancer Research Awards this year. They are Olga Martinez, a second year Scholar, from Dodge City, Rita Perez, Vanessa Reyes and Jorge Mendoza, first year Scholars from Garden City.

Areli Monarrez, second year Scholar from Liberal, Kansas, majoring in life science, has been scheduled for presentation in a poster session at the 2008 Annual Association Cancer Research Meeting in San Diego, CA and will be published in the 2008 proceedings of the AACR. “I am still preparing for the meeting. I am doing more research, reading articles, and mentally preparing myself.” Areli works under the mentorship of Dr. Annelise Nguyen.
LaReash: I feel more comfortable and confident in my work for labs that go with my classes. I think my experience shows, and other students ask me questions. Have you got to travel or publish yet as a result of being in this lab?

LaReash: Yes, I have. I went to the Biophysics Society Meeting in Baltimore last spring, and our poster was presented in San Antonio for the Society of the Study for Reproduction. How are you deciding the next best direction for you?

LaReash: I want to go to graduate school. I want to go the research route in graduate school, but I don’t know that I want the life of academia. I may go the public health route after graduate school. I just know that I have come too far to quit now.

What should students know before committing to a research project?

LaReash: They have to know it takes time and dedication. The more dependable you are to your mentor, the more beneficial it is directly to you. You can also see a definite difference in growth between those who work in a research lab and those who don’t. It helps reinforce class work too, and that’s always nice.

LaReash and Dr. Freeman, what, if anything, have the two of you gained from your association with the DSP?

LaReash: I’ve gained a lot of encouragement and confidence in my work and my future. Without that support, I don’t think I would be contemplating the things that I am. It definitely sets you up for a different life.