

# K-State's Engagement E-News

*Connecting K-State to Kansas  
and Communities Worldwide*

## *Service Learning*

*There are many opportunities for service learning at Kansas State University. Through services and organizations such as the K-State Volunteer Center of Manhattan, WaterLINK, Kansas Campus Compact, the Regional AIDS Project and alternative spring breaks, students have a variety of options to be involved. This issue highlights those opportunities.*

### **A Message on Service Learning from Dave Procter, Director of K- State's Center for Engagement and Community Development**

The mission of the Center for Engagement and Community Development is to promote engagement across the breadth of our campus- in teaching, research and outreach.

In past newsletter issues, we have featured wonderful engaged research, creative endeavors and outreach. In this newsletter issue, we highlight examples of engaged teaching at K-State, also known as service learning.

Service learning is based on an educational philosophy that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility and strengthen communities. The result of this teaching strategy can be a radically effective transformative method of teaching students. Community members, students and educators are discovering that service-learning offers all its participants a chance to take part in the active education of its youth, while simultaneously addressing the concerns, needs and hopes of their community.

We hope you enjoy the examples of service learning at Kansas State University highlighted in this issue of our CECD newsletter.



#### *Projects Featured*

*\*WaterLINK*

*\*Kansas Campus  
Compact*

*\*K-State  
Volunteer Center  
of Manhattan*

*\*Regional AIDS  
Project*

*\*Alternative  
Spring Break*



# Community Campus Partnership Promotes Water Quality

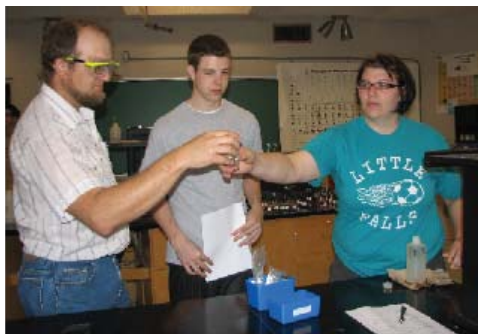
by Jenny Barnes

WaterLINK is a service learning project available to college and university students and faculty and community watersheds in Kansas. The main goal is to improve water quality through partnerships with the community and campus while infusing service learning into college classrooms.

Christa Smith, the interim project coordinator for WaterLINK, said, "It is a unique project because we are targeting college students."

Faculty members are able to apply for a grant of \$5000. They use these funds and structure their curriculum around service learning and water quality improvement. Smith said this could be things like testing and monitoring water within science labs.

The project, funded by the Kansas Department for Health and the Environment, started in fall 2005 with two projects, but has since grown into an organization that has helped facilitate more than 50 projects and worked with more than 300 students across Kansas.



*Students participate in water testing.*

A recent K-State project involved a public relations class developing a publicity campaign for the Delaware River group.

"This was a recent example of a great project," Smith said. "The students did research and got out into the communities and were able to produce some really great media materials."

Another recent project is the Rain Garden at the International Student Center on the K-State campus. Lee Skabelund, assistant professor of landscape architecture, regional and community planning, led this project.

It addressed the problem of storm water run-off. He is also working on putting in a green roof at Seaton Hall.

CECD is now the principle investigator on this project. Other key leaders include Janice Cole, Bill Hargrove and Jan Middendorf.

Smith said, "Despite funding issues, I think the concept of service learning in higher education will be around for a long time."

# Campus Organization Encourages Engagement in the Community

by Jenny Barnes

Kansas Campus Compact is part of a nationwide organization that promotes civic engagement and service learning at the university level. There are 35 states that participate in Campus Compact. Kansas has been a member since 2003 and there are currently 12 schools that are members.

Matthew Lindsey, executive director of Kansas Campus Compact, said the main benefit of membership is the network of more than 1200 schools across the United States. This provides opportunities for networking and making connections to help with projects. He said the office is like a repository and expert resource for service learning and civic engagement.

"If a community college in southwest Kansas wanted to better connect with their Hispanic population, our office might connect them with a school in California or New Mexico that has experience in that area," Lindsey said.

The organization also sponsors AmeriCorp VISTA volunteers on K-State's campus, along with

WaterLINK and service awards.

Data has shown that service learning increases retention at the college level and also helps students learn better.

Lindsey said, "I think service learning is a highly effective means of reaching a broader set of students and helping them succeed in the classroom."

Kansas Campus Compact hopes to help develop a class of students that are nurses, teachers and non profit workers that are willing to work in high need communities in Kansas.

"A lifelong idea of engagement promotes success within communities," Lindsey said.





## Center Strives to Connect Community and Campus Through Service

by Jenny Barnes

There was a need in Manhattan to promote civic learning and service to both the campus and the community. In July 2007, the K-State Volunteer Center of Manhattan was established to do just that.

The Volunteer Center helps engage people in meaningful volunteer and service opportunities. They have a national online database through [www.1800volunteer.org](http://www.1800volunteer.org), which allows people to post volunteer opportunities.

Kim Frazier, Assistant Coordinator of the Volunteer Center, said, "The Web site is a great free service that we provide to people to help get the word out for volunteering; it's a great marketing tool for any organization."

They also have a listserv that sends out Weekly Wednesday volunteer opportunities.

Other projects the Volunteer Center works on include: Academic Mentoring, Volunteer Management Support and Training, Community Service Week and the Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service. They collaborate with many community and campus

organizations to help make these events successful.

The center also hosts an annual campus-community volunteer recognition event that celebrates volunteerism and service within the Manhattan community with "Inspire by Example" awards. More than 100 people attended the last event.

Frazier said, "We are still trying to get our bearings about us and get ourselves established, but I think we are moving forward in a great direction."



Volunteers participate in an event hosted by the center.

## Manhattan Group Promotes AIDS Awareness, Education and Support

by Jenny Barnes

*"I have worked on AIDS-related issues throughout my career life, first in Africa, then the Caribbean and more recently in the United States. Through my interaction with those infected and affected by the epidemic I have seen first hand the impact of the epidemic and what it can do to individuals, families, entire communities and society in general. With such experiences, I have decided to do something about it and getting involved with RAP is part of my contribution."*

-Nancy Muturi, Regional AIDS Project Board Member

According to their Web site, RAP is an organization in Manhattan that strives to promote education and awareness about AIDS. They target the younger generation through community events and educational programs because they are the age group most affected by the disease. They have hosted events such as World AIDS Day, lectures and have even offered free confidential testing.

Besides education and awareness, they also help people affected by the disease cope with their life changes. This can include anything from transportation to medical appointments to financial support and counseling referrals.

CECD issued a grant to RAP in fall 2007 to help a group of public relations students develop effective strategies to promote health literacy among minority women and execute intervention programs.

Since there is no cure for AIDS, members of

RAP vow to continue the battle by educating and generating awareness.

Community organizer, Dominique Saunders-Matta, said, "I remain passionate NOT about the Regional AIDS Project but about HIV and AIDS prevention and what the RAP and organizations like ours are doing to help in supporting those inflicted and educating those that

are not; until there is a cure for this disease I do not expect I will feel any differently."



The World AIDS day walk in Manhattan.

# Students Spend Breaks From School in an Alternative Fashion

by Jenny Barnes

Many college students spend their spring breaks in exotic party locations like Cancun or Panama City. However 23 K-State students chose to spend their time off from school serving others.

Alternative Spring Break is a program offered by the School of Leadership Studies that provides students with an opportunity to do service work during school breaks. The program was started approximately 15 years ago.

Kim Frazier is the assistant coordinator of the K-State Volunteer Center of Manhattan and helped put the trips together.

“Alternative Spring Break is a great opportunity for students looking for service in a new area,” she said. “It is a way for K-Staters to experience new things and gain new perspectives on issues like gang violence and urban youth which we aren’t always exposed to as much here in Manhattan.”

This spring break the program offered three different sites for students to choose from. In Dallas, Tex., K-State students worked for the seventh consecutive year with AIDS Services of Dallas. They helped with an annual fundraising event and built a new fence at the housing site.

In Phoenix, Ariz., students worked with the Welcome Home Project, which is dedicated to helping break the cycle of poverty, abuse and homelessness. It is a program within the Save the Family Foundation. Students helped prepare two homes for homeless

families to move into. This site was coordinated entirely by a K-State student.

In Chicago, Ill., students assisted urban youth at the James R. Jordan Boys and Girls Club. The students also served at the Greater Food Depository.

Leadership studies also offered an alternative option during winter break. Students visited Biloxi, Miss., where they worked with Habitat for Humanity on the Gulf Coast.

Frazier hopes the program will continue to grow in the future. For more information about participating in an alternative break contact the K-State Volunteer Center of Manhattan.



*The Phoenix, Ariz. alternative spring break team poses for a photo.*

## **CECD Mission & Vision**

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To promote engagement across the breadth of Kansas State University - in teaching, research, and outreach - and to connect the vast resources of KSU to the significant issues of public need facing Kansas and communities worldwide.

*Engagement occurs when collaborative partners — both on and off-campus stakeholders — work together to address a public need in a way that is both reciprocal and mutually beneficial. Through engagement, K-State endeavors to fulfill its historic land grant mission.*

*– David E. Procter, CECD director*