

K-State's Engagement E-News

*Connecting K-State to Kansas
and Communities Worldwide*

Drama therapy program benefits Manhattan community, K-State students

by Kendall Lange

Theatrical arts and drama are often closely linked with the Big Apple, but K-State Professor Sally Bailey has brought the benefits of drama to the Little Apple.

Bailey's strong theatrical background made her the perfect pick to carry on the drama therapy program started at K-State by Dr. Norman Fedder in the 1980s. Drama therapy engages K-State students and includes an outreach program to Manhattan area residents.

"The best way to learn how to be a drama therapist is through hands-on experience," Bailey said. "It doesn't work just to read about it, because it involves people skills within an embodied experience."

The drama therapy program and K-State drama therapy students are working on several ongoing projects. Barrier-Free Theatre, done in partnership with the City of Manhattan Parks and Recreation and the Manhattan Arts Center, offers adolescents and adults with disabilities the chance to create an original play and perform it each

April at the Manhattan Arts Center.

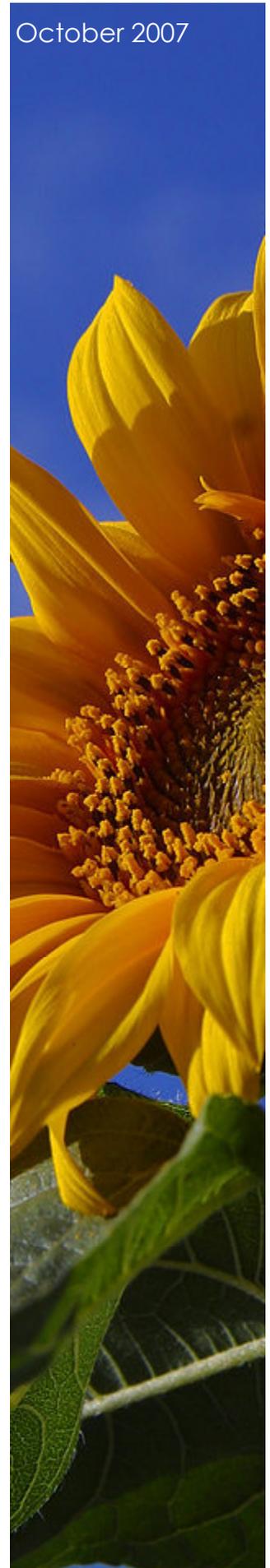
In June, Bailey began a drama group at Meadowlark Hills Retirement Community. A group of 12 adults between the ages of 75-95 meet each week to improvise and work on different projects. During the summer, the group hosted an original improvisational mystery dinner theater play.

"This fall, a number of drama therapy students have joined us at Meadowlark Hills," said Bailey. "There's a wonderful give and take as K-State students teach them about drama and the residents teach the students about life and growing older."

Other projects include drama camp for adolescents with special needs during the summer and various after-school projects with children at risk.

Bailey believes that drama therapy has many positive effects on participants including increased self awareness, communication skills, self confidence, discipline and understanding of oneself and others. These benefits are part of Bailey's vision for the drama therapy program at K-State.

"When students see how powerful drama therapy is and how much it positively affects peoples' lives, they develop the drive and the vision to take drama therapy other places," Bailey said.



Kansas Campus Compact links university, community

by Stephanie Faulk

Kansas Campus Compact works daily to connect the students of Kansas universities to projects in their communities. It serves as a portal — KCC sees higher education and civic involvement as undeniably linked. KCC believes that education must be applied in order to bring theories to life and shows students how concepts can be applicable to the real world.

“College students have this peculiar notion to give back,” KCC Coordinator Mary Marston said. “Higher education was created to make people better democratic citizens, and students feel a responsibility to help their communities.”

KCC creates mutually beneficial relationships between universities and local communities. Students apply concepts they learn in the classroom and communities receive the time and dedication of individuals who care.

One K-State student, Kourtney Bettinger, practiced service learning first hand during a summer volunteer program in Izamal, Mexico.

Another student, Stacey Pierce, was irreversibly changed by her experience practicing drama with special needs children. There are countless other stories of students who applied their knowledge and helped their communities.

KCC functions on many different levels — training, research, leadership development, campus consultation, and advocacy — to strengthen the relationships between higher education students and the communities they serve. This relationship can last a lifetime.

“If people do meaningful service when they’re young,” Marston said, “they’ll keep doing it.”

And that’s something worth investing in. Please visit www.k-state.edu/ksc for more information.



CECD receives USDA grant to assist rural grocery stores

by David Procter

The Center for Engagement and Community Development received \$50,000 through the USDA’s Rural Business Opportunity Grant Program. The CECD will utilize the Rural Business Opportunity Grant funds to assist with their “Business Enhancement for Rural Grocery Stores” program.

“We are very pleased to receive this USDA Rural Business Opportunity grant to assist Kansas rural grocery stores,” CECD Director David Procter said. “Rural grocery stores are critical to our rural Kansas communities for both economic and nutrition reasons. This funding will help rural grocers state-wide through the creation of resources and a communication network for store owners.”

CECD is partnering with the Kansas Sampler Foundation, the Huck Boyd National Institute for Rural Development, and K-State’s department of agricultural economics on this project.



Encouraging Public Participation in Community Development

by Dan Kahl

In the September 2007 issue of the Center for Engagement and Community Development newsletter we highlighted seven areas of focus for investment to create healthy, sustainable communities (see Developing Thriving Communities through CECD, Page 3). These seven aspects of community are referred to as “elements” or “capitals.” These elements comprise the “what” of community development. They can serve as a reference for community members to use when identifying areas for planned investment or improvement.

Equally important to community development is the “how,” or the process used to involve people living in the community. In the United States, public voice and opportunities for involvement are essential for project support and sustainability. Abraham Lincoln once said, “Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail. Without it, nothing can succeed.”

Effective community development processes require public participation, but engaging the public in

this important dialogue is increasingly challenging in the 21st century. Citizen mobility, dispersed families, and increasing levels of independence aided by technology are just a few of the barriers to citizen involvement.

CECD recognizes the importance of facilitated public discussion in this process. Engaging citizens in planned community investment helps a flock of migrating citizens to grow roots and invest both in the community of place and in one another. Facilitating this type of dialogue is the process of building community.

Working with the Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy (ICDD) and professionals in K-State Research and Extension, CECD is training public dialogue facilitators to help local government and citizen groups to come together in conversations for planning and problem solving.

For more information on the ICDD facilitation workshop or for assisting with public facilitation, visit www.ksu.edu/icdd or contact us at CECD.

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ICDD YouTube initiative receives positive feedback, recognition

by Stephanie Faulk

The Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy is using modern media to bring public dialogue to a new level. Their new YouTube initiative shows an international audience how K-State students feel about their community, their nation, and their world.

“You couldn’t pick a better medium to use,” ICDD graduate research assistant Kara Dillard said. “It’s quick, it’s interactive, and students love to have a forum to voice their opinions.”

The ICDD YouTube account strives to get students talking about issues that are important to them — higher education, health care, budget deficits, mental illness, and more. It does not push a specific

agenda, but rather gives students a means to voice their opinions, discuss ideas with others, and reach a new level of understanding.

“ICDD exists to promote civic dialogue and discussion,” Dillard said. “And YouTube is just another way we can show students that discussion and deliberation can happen in all realms of life, not just the classroom.”



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CECD Mission & Vision

Mission

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

Promoting Civic Engagement

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