

K-State's Engagement E-News

"Connecting K-State to Kansas and Communities Worldwide"

K-State professor, students test community water supplies

K-State civil engineering students are making an impact on the Manhattan community. Alok Bhandari, associate professor in civil engineering, broke the traditional classroom mold to introduce service learning projects to his students.

"Service learning gives students a context for real world learning," Bhandari said. "Only after I tried it did I realize the true value for the students and the community."

Bhandari's most recent project included a hydrologic assessment of K-State's Campus Creek, which stretches from the School of Veterinary Medicine to Manhattan Avenue. K-State's Division of Public Safety contacted Bhandari's class to conduct a survey of the quantity and quality of water.

Students in the Natural Resources and Environmental Resources capstone class broke into two groups to analyze the water in the creek. The first group studied

the creek's water capacity during storm flows and the possibility of flooding. The second group analyzed the quality of the water.

All Bhandari's service learning projects are funded by WaterLINK, a service learning project available to all college and university faculty and watersheds in Kansas. WaterLINK is funded by the Kansas Department of Health & Environment.

Results from service learning projects also extend beyond the Manhattan community. Bhandari will present the results from several K-State projects at the American Society of Engineering Education conference on October 1-4 in Istanbul, Turkey.

"Students involved in service learning projects have seen the difference between conventional classroom work," Bhandari said. "Service learning provides not only career impact, but human impact."



**Alok Bhandari
testing a water
sample at
K-State's
Campus
Creek.**



K-State gives funds, support to new volunteer center

Contributed by Kim Frazier, Volunteer Center assistant coordinator

In spring 2007 the Student Governing Association recognized the value of partnerships between university and community organizations. They approved funding for the creation of a new volunteer center, the first of its kind in Manhattan. Today, only three percent of volunteer centers in the country are a division or program of a university. K-State hopes to serve as a national model for campus-based volunteer centers.

The volunteer center will be run by student coordinators with the support of other staff. The first employees will be hired this semester. They will work to develop and maintain positive relationships between the 437 registered student associations, clubs, organizations, and various community agencies throughout Manhattan. The volunteer center will serve as a resource for volunteer-organization connection by means of a web-based matching program that will allow community members to search for opportunities to serve in Manhattan.

The new center, housed within the university's civic leadership, is an affiliate of the National Volunteer Network which is supported by the Points of Light Foundation. This year Manhattan was one of 10 communities chosen nationwide to receive the support of the Points of Light Foundation. In mid-July, members of the start-up team attended the National Conference on Volunteering and

Service in Philadelphia. They attended a start-up academy, specifically designed to assist in the beginning stages of creating a new volunteer center.

Currently, K-State is the only financial supporter of the center, but they hope to involve the city of Manhattan as well.

The K-State Volunteer Center will provide other services such as volunteer training and other community service opportunities such as Community Service Week. These unique services will empower and enable local citizens to get involved and work together to find solutions for community issues.

For more information contact Lynda Bachelor at bachelor@ksu.edu or Kim Frazier at kfrazier@ksu.edu.



Fall 2007 Volunteer Opportunities, Special Events

Little Apple/BIG Fun: Sept. 29

This event is designed for the Special Population participants and Special Olympic Athletes in Manhattan and surrounding communities. Participants will be split into three groups for activities including fishing, kickball, and races in Annenberg Park. Volunteers are needed to assist with check in, the activity stations, rotation of groups, and other tasks.

Please contact swan@ci.manhattan.ks.us for more information.

Church World Services CROP Walk: Oct. 7

The Church World Service has global efforts to fight against hunger and poverty. Of the money raised, 25% support local hunger fighting organizations.

Please contact lbachelor@cox.net for more information.

K-State's Community Service Week: Oct. 27-Nov.3

Students participate in week-long community service activities with various organizations around Manhattan. Some past organizations worked with include: Sunset Zoo, Manhattan Arts Center, Boys and Girls Club, K-State Gardens, Stoneybrook Retirement Community, and many more!

Please contact bachelor@ksu.edu for more information.

Good Neighbor Day: Nov. 3

This program exists to "build good neighbors in the community." It was formed to ensure neighborhoods are clean, safe, and welcoming to all. Community clean-up efforts will be led by the Good Neighbor Taskforce.

Please contact lfp@ksu.edu for more information.

Developing Thriving Communities Through CECD

Everyone seems to agree that it is important to have healthy, thriving communities. But when we begin to discuss just what that means, people will often describe very different perspectives of what a thriving community should look like. It is because of these differences that communities vary in their design, composition, and priorities. Expectations of the community also change through time. For example, the Dodge City, Kan. of the late 1800s was a very different community from the Dodge City, Kan. of the early 21st century. Given these changes over time and variances in community emphasis, nearly all community development practitioners will agree that fundamentally, every community has similar basic requirements for long term health and sustainability. Generally speaking, the following elements for sustainable communities are listed below.

Environmental Requirements

Natural resource requirements: A sustainable community needs a healthy natural environment. The quantity and quality of natural resources is a foundation to sustain the local population.

Built resource elements: Desirable communities require adequate infrastructure. This may include buildings, streets, housing, water systems, communication infrastructure, and waste removal. The definition of “required infrastructure” continues to change as our quality of life expectations change.

“People” Requirements

Human elements: A sustainable community should support the health of its’ residents. This means making certain there are opportunities for residents to meet mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health needs and have access to health care.



Social elements: Community members have opportunities for interaction, involvement, and social services. Sustainable social strength also involves maintaining collaborative working relationships across the community to address common goals.

Cultural elements: People need an opportunity for self expression. Cultural expression may include the arts, cultural traditions, celebrations, or historical representation.

Economic Requirements

Economic requirements: Individuals in communities should have opportunities to earn, save, invest, and acquire goods and services.

What makes a community thrive, however, is often a degree of how well a community expands on these basic elements. While the basic elements of a community are generally agreed upon by practitioners, the degree to which each area is fulfilled is more subjective. The degree of investment in quality of life criteria will vary from community to community. For example; one community may find greater identity in its’ historical architecture or events; while a second might build on its physical location or a local natural resource; while a third may identify itself most through the arts or cultural identity.

In order to help build healthy, sustainable communities in Kansas, the Center for Engagement and Community Development has developed a resource listing for each of these areas of community investment. To discover resources to enrich your community, visit www.ksu.edu/cecd/communitydev/

Resources:

Sustainable Indicators. <http://www.sustainablemeasures.com/Indicators/ChecklistItself.html>

North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. <http://www.ncrcrd.iastate.edu/projects/commcap/7capitals.htm>

“The Dodge City, Kansas of the 1800s was a very different community from the Dodge City, Kansas of the 21st century”

CECD Organizes Greensburg Disaster Response

About 40 people from different colleges, academic departments, and organizations met with K-State's Center for Engagement and Community Development for a conference call with various people involved with the Greensburg community on Aug. 22. The meeting explored K-State's response to Greensburg and the resources available at K-State to assist Greensburg's rebuilding efforts.

"I think we heard a really strong interest in convening a K-State group who will continue helping," said Dan Kahl, extension liaison for CECD.

This meeting came after a trip to Greensburg on Aug. 2 by David Procter, director of the Center for Engagement and Community Development and Kahl to talk with residents in regard to K-State's assistance in rebuilding.

"The center's philosophy is to help meet community needs, which includes connecting K-State's resources with those needs," Procter said.

Since the August meeting with CECD, K-State faculty and staff have started a community media project, a business incubation project, and a class project with civil engineering. In addition, faculty from the College of Architecture, Planning and Design are assisting Greensburg in community design and working with a home construction company to assist in designing "green" homes for Greensburg residents. Kansas Campus Compact is also organizing an alternative fall break for students interested in volunteering to assist Greensburg.

"I think our August meeting illustrates the very real concern and interest K-Staters have in responding to all kinds of disasters and especially the tornado disaster in Greensburg," Procter said.

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CECD Organizes Community Resources In:

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