

Regis University Ignatian Collaborative for Service and Justice Fall 2006 Newsletter

Regis' MBA Supports Micro-Finance in Denver

Regis' professional students are committed to supporting social change through technical, marketing and management support.

Regis University's offices of Service-Learning, Justice Education and Ignatian Spirituality have come together to recognize and celebrate our shared endeavors. The Ignatian Collaborative for Service and Justice is an expression of our shared values of service to the community, justice for all people, and personal and social change from the Ignatian perspective. Along this path, we are walking towards:

- *Cross-fertilization of service & justice events and programs*
- *Clearer entry points for community agencies to connect with Regis service-learning.*
- *Shared educational strategies, curricular tools and other Ignatian, service and justice resources.*

Each office still maintains its individual mission and scope , but though our shared efforts we seek to have a greater impact on the campus and in the community.

Cultural Exchange in Our Own Back Yard

Regis College crafts an innovative community-based learning model: Spanish-language immersion program with Denver immigrant families.

The Right to Learn: Service-Learning in Ghana

Regis College students enhance ethnic studies while focusing on service and immersion programming in Ghana through school libraries and enhancing literacy.

Peace and Justice Studies... On the Move

Peace and Justice Studies (PJS) grows at Regis College. A formal major is in the works to be offered starting fall 2007.

Regis' MBA Supports Micro-Finance in Denver:

Service-Learning in the School for Professional Studies

BY DENISE COPE

How does the development of business skills create social change? Ask Dr. Meg Thams her opinion, and she will tell you that economic enterprise is key to ending poverty, and in order to accomplish this you need solid business skills. "Harnessing skills in marketing, strategic management, finance and operations has tremendous possibility for making significant economic and social change at global and local levels," says Thams.

So, how does this happen? The most well-known example is Grameen Bank, founded by Muhammad Yunus. Yunus recently won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in poverty alleviation. He successfully melded capitalism with social responsibility to create a micro-lending institution committed to providing small amounts of working capital to those experiencing poverty, thus creating a wave of social change effects. Through the growth of business, women and men now have the ability to feed their families, provide educational opportunities and health care to their children.

Denver is lucky enough to have such an organization locally, [MicroBusiness Development \(MBD\)](#). Regis' MBA Program partners with MBD through service-learning consultancy opportunities to support their mission: to eradicate poverty in Colorado using micro-finance as a tool. Over the summer, Dr. Thams and

"When education takes a hands-on approach to learning, the result is a more informed, more involved community of future leaders. Service-learning brings substance to our democracy and strengthens the thread that binds our diverse nation." - Michelle Engler, National Commission on Service-Learning

Reflection of Thanks during this Season of Giving

May Christmas,
Chanukah, Kwanza, and
other December holidays
not be about giving gifts of
"things", instead let's learn
to give gifts of time.

Dr. Sipos worked with Randy Schoonover of [Singlebrew Coffee](#), a client of MicroBusiness Development, to provide strategic marketing assistance in order to bring Singlebrew to the next level. In small teams MBA students applied what they were learning in class to Schoonover's specific case, offering tailored guidance to Singlebrew's business issues. Students also researched the practice of micro-finance and its potential to leverage business to create economic and social change. "Micro-enterprise is an incredibly powerful tool in the fight against poverty. It provides individuals who face barriers to traditional employment an avenue to create legitimate income to support themselves and their families in manners that maximize, instead of minimize, their cultural and social heritage," says Brandy Bertram of MBD.

Cultural Exchange in Our Own Back Yard

BY PAUL BURSON and MELISSA NIX

"I can't believe that after studying Spanish in the classroom since middle school I still can't really speak or understand Spanish!" This is a common complaint of many university students who have succeeded in reading and writing Spanish in the classroom but feel like "losers" when it comes to "real life" use of the language. While students are aware of the benefits of cultural and language immersion through a semester abroad, not all have the ability to travel.

Fortunately a new model for language immersion in the Denver community is being implemented this semester by two innovative Regis professors, Dr. Obdulia Castro and Dr. Elizabeth Grassi in conjunction with the Center for Service Learning. The project is modeled after a Pitzer College program. The Regis project is designed to connect the assets and knowledge of two different cultural communities: Regis College students and Latino immigrant families with children studying at Sandoval Elementary or Escuela de Guadalupe. Fifteen Spanish and Education students are presently being hosted by five Denver families. They visit the families two hours a week and communicate only in Spanish. Students participate in the family's daily activities and discuss issues of importance to immigrant families living in the U.S.

The goals of this project include: 1) exposure to the Spanish language through weekly visits to the families' houses; 2) contact with Latino immigrants living in the neighborhood; 3) an understanding of the issues immigrant families face while living in the United States; and 4) a deeper understanding of the educational expectations of immigrant families.

"This program has really grounded the academic learning for me," says Rachel Schneider, a student in the program. "In addition to practicing Spanish with my family, I have an enhanced understanding of life in Latino immigrant homes in the Denver area. Plus, I've developed relationships that are meaningful!"

The Right to Learn: Service-Learning in Ghana

BY AWON ATUIRE

Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5,000 years the RIGHT TO LEARN is undoubtedly the most fundamental.

----W.E.B. Du Bois (1949)

"...it is often individual students, whose passion for service takes them to a heightened level of engagement, thereby inspiring their peers, faculty and staff with glowing examples of what service and justice are all about." - Jeremy Lee, RSHSP Service-Learning

"Students find that when they have the opportunity to stay in a community and live with a family another type of learning takes place." -Paul Burson, Regis College Service-Learning

When W.E.B. Du Bois made this statement Ghana was not even in existence as a country in the modern sense of the word. It was not until 1957 and after years of struggle that the former British colony of the Gold Coast was renamed Ghana upon attaining independence from Britain.

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Every other summer students, staff and faculty of Regis Tinansa Intercultural Learning visit the former home of W.E.B. Du Bois, a gathering place for intellectuals and activists of the African Diaspora, during their service learning immersion in Ghana. Interacting with students and scholars at the Du Bois Center in Ghana is a natural progression of course work completed by the Tinansa students prior to going to Ghana. Tinansa is a three-phase program involving academic study of a three credit course in Africana Studies offered in the spring, an intercultural immersion and service project in Ghana during the summer, and a one-credit course in the fall involving classroom inquiry, advocacy and education in the local community on issues pertaining to Africa.

Tinansa service projects are consciously chosen and focus on enhancing education and literacy for children as tools for self-determination. Tinansa program administrators and participating Regis students and faculty work with schools in Ghana for approximately two years culminating with the group's immersion in Ghana. The 2006 intercultural immersion and service project took thirteen Regis students and faculty to Ghana in June where they joined close to six hundred students at the Wesley Girls Junior Secondary School in establishing the Ama Ata Aidoo Library for the Education of the African Child. In addition to stocking the library with texts relevant to curriculum and literacy, and afrocentric themes, both Ghanaian and Regis students made murals, distributed books and curricular resources, and painted Adinkra symbols, and powerful quotes supporting the education of young women.

The collaboration with Regis Tinansa has resulted in the creation of a good school library, the building of relationships across cultures, and provided a meaningful and critical context for engaging with global apartheid and informed response and action.

For more information please visit [Tinansa: www.regis.edu/tinansa](http://www.regis.edu/tinansa) To view the 2006 Ghana Immersion video please visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Lmr2kv1o_E.

Peace and Justice Studies... On the Move

BY DR. BYRON PLUMLEY

Fall 2006 brought new energy, programs and staff to the Justice Education Office. elle thomas, a work-study student in the undergraduate college, is a Peace and Justice Studies (PJS) major with a focus on feminist perspectives. elle has developed a website for [Peace and Justice Studies](#) and advertised the program through various marketing efforts. TJ Bowen is an intern in the office and a student in the Master's of Nonprofit Management. He has been performing outreach to college students and promoting the PJS program. TJ has done considerable research for the PJS major proposal. Together elle and TJ have promoted the PJS Club for students, helped with the Regis delegation to the Ignatian Family Teach-in and School of the Americas demonstration, and other activities.

"While not providing the answer to all of the world's or education's ills, service-learning is proving to educators and to hundreds of others around the world the power to bring social and intellectual problems into the light of day." - Service Learning in Higher Education Around The World, 1999.

"Students who participate in service-learning are likely to continue to work all their lives in many different ways to improve the world around them, with lasting benefits for our country and our planet." -Senator Edward M. Kennedy

Through the work of TJ and elle, 50 students indicated interest in the PJS program during Freshmen orientation in August. And, the Foundations of Peace and Justice course is being offered in the spring semester to accommodate the growing interest.

The office is working on the establishment of the PJS major. The goal is to imbed justice and peace in the structure of Regis University. This will be a visible statement in support of the university mission and particularly the Jesuit charism of a faith that does justice. In September the PJS Advisory Committee presented a proposal for a PJS major in the college to the College Core Curriculum Committee (CCCC). The proposal was well received, and after some revisions and development the CCCC has asked that the PJS meet with them once more in January to address any final questions or concerns. If all proceeds as planned the proposal will then advance to the Provost's Committee and on to the Board of Trustees, so Regis will have a formal PJS major by fall 2007.

Reflection of Thanks during this Season of Giving

BY DR. KATHY SCHAEFER

*If the only prayer we ever say
in our lives is "Thank You,"
that will be enough. -Meister Eckhart*

In this month of celebration, let us commit ourselves to doing more to preserve the planet by reducing and resisting pressure to join the rampant consumption that leads to the misuse of the earth's resources in the production of holiday gifts that are often quite unnecessary. May Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanza, and other December holidays not be about giving gifts of "things" which can lead people to feel inadequate for not having bought enough or received enough of items that are being promoted for sale. Instead, Rabbi Lerner suggests that we consider gifts of time (e.g. some amount of hours to provide something friends or neighbors might want: to this one, child care, to that one, help in food shopping, to another, help with an elderly parent, to yet another, help in painting part of their house or helping with their garden or teaching their children some skill or sport, or in some other way sharing one's time in a way that the particular person receiving the gift would actually need and benefit from), and let others know that it is that kind of gift that we most wish to receive.

Let us renew a commitment to bring more love, more kindness, more open-heartedness, more non-violence, more peace, more social justice, more environmental sensitivity, and more gratitude into the life that we live, into encounters with others, and into the world that we help shape, and into the consciousness that we bring to each aspect of life. We give thanks for all this and all those things we cannot even put into words.



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