

Opportunity Knocks

Reporting on Community Service Learning and Opportunities in the Delaware Community
Stephanie Bologeorges, Editor In Chief

A Student's Response to Agent Orange

Editor's Note: *Summer is generally a time for relaxation, working the odd job, catching up with old friends and not having to get up for class at 8 am. For Jessica Schaffner however, this summer was anything but typical. Rather than lying on a beach in Cancun, she traveled to Vietnam to work with victims of Agent Orange. I asked Jessica to share her story. ~ S.B.*

This summer I had the opportunity to travel to Vietnam for 6 weeks to help with an ongoing survey project being conducted by the Fund for Reconciliation and Development, which is a small non profit organization that works on US relations with Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. In the past couple of years, FRD has increasingly focused more on issues related to Agent Orange, a chemical defoliant used during the Vietnam war that led to lasting negative consequences for people and the environment. Several years ago, FRD started collecting information about programs in Vietnam that strive to support people affected by Agent Orange with the goal of providing the best assistance possible. My task for the summer months was to travel around the country and meet with the organizations that needed an information update. I had no idea what to expect before I left, but I ended the summer having gone through one of the most incredible experiences of my life.



Jessica Schaffner '07

With the help of a local organization called The Center for Gender, Family and Environment in Development, I began meeting with organizations such as the Vietnam Red Cross, Vietnamese Association for Victims of Agent Orange, the Fund for Agent Orange Victims and many others. Since I don't speak Vietnamese, I had a translator with me during all of the meetings. It was very different for me to be in an environment where I couldn't read or speak the language, and so I had to learn to rely on another person to help me communicate. This gave me a chance to interact with people in a way that was completely new and scary for me, but greatly enhanced my communication skills.

The other portion of my trip was devoted to field visits where I was able to meet with families that had one or more members affected by Agent Orange. The purpose was to collect their stories to be used in the United States for educational purposes. The people I met were all very different with diverse backgrounds and experiences in relation to Agent Orange. As I interviewed them, I was continuously touched by their wisdom and I experienced a very unique exchange of cultures. Not only did I get a first hand look at the culture, but I was also able to look at how social organizations operate in Vietnam. Overall, the experience further enhanced my dedication to service as I witnessed the power that people have when they work together to support an issue that they believe in.

The most important conclusion I found from this summer was that the biggest need is funding. There are an estimated 4 million people in Vietnam who have been affected by Agent Orange and though there are incredible programs offering support, there are still large numbers of people who aren't receiving any assistance. It is the hope of FRD that the collected information will help organizations in the US understand the need for assistance and where it is needed the most. I'm very happy to say that the FRD recently received a donation of \$35,000 which will help support a great number of social and medical needs.



Jessica's interest in the effects of Agent Orange was inspired by a Spring Break Mission Week experience in March of 2005. Since then she has worked tirelessly to educate others, and she has founded an organization called Voices for Agent Orange Victims. You can visit the organization's website at: <http://www.frd.org/Voices.html>.

(Please see a related story on page 3.)

Student Initiative for International Development ~ By Taapsi Ramshandani

It all started with winning the Burton Morgan Entrepreneurship Paper Competition from the Economics Department, where I submitted a proposal for getting students involved in microfinance. An internship and a summer later, I am laying the building blocks for the Student Initiative for International Development at OWU.

Foreign aid is *undoubtedly* one of the main channels for assisting the poor in developing nations. However there is ALSO a need for investment in long term projects; projects that might not feed a family tomorrow, but would guarantee food for an entire family for at least another month. That's where SIID comes in. SIID will be a student group focused not just on short-term international development, but on what can be sustainable in the long run; that enlists the help of the poor themselves and enables them to carry on without further aid.

Microfinance is a long term concept. And, you don't have to be an economics expert to get the essence of this ingenious concept! The poor, because of their lack of collateral, are denied access to credit by commercial banks. We use credit to buy textbooks, pay our cell phone bills and the like. The poor want credit to buy a stove so they can cook and sell food; they want credit to buy a sewing machine so that can alter clothes and make a living; they want credit to have all those opportunities that we have...and we find it financially unstable to give them that chance.

Microfinance institutions fill this gap by offering the poor access to financial services and taking care of the collateral issue by asking people to form groups of five with each group member standing *as* collateral for the other members! As SIID's first project we would focus on raising \$5000 which would be used to set up a village bank for 40 families in either Haiti, Malawi, Tajikistan or Uzbekistan, (depending on what the group decides), and give that community access to credit that can help them break the shackles of poverty. Through alumni, current students, organizations etc. we can fundraise that amount in a year and hopefully take a trip in the summer to a *village bank* to interact with microfinance recipients, understand and appreciate their perspective, and hopefully take back some valuable lessons to share with our peers.

I don't doubt that there are more people than not who are interested in helping the poor. Hopefully, SIID will give them the chance to channel good intentions into something tangible. Selfish as it may seem, it would personally give me immense pleasure to know that through our combined efforts we were able to help at least one family stand a chance of a new and better life.

To learn more about SIID, or to become a member, contact Taapsi at ttramsha@owu.edu .



Someone You Should Know: Brad Mann



Sophomore Brad Mann

Self-appointed as the "Habitat ReStore Box Trucker," sophomore Brad Mann works as a volunteer pick-up driver for the Delaware County ReStore, which sells new and salvaged building materials to the public to raise funds for Habitat for Humanity. Ever since the program's director, Todd Miller, came to speak to the environmental club at the TreeHouse last year, both of which Brad is a part, he has been volunteering every Saturday in the ReStore, picking up donations in their truck. Often, he recruits his OWU friends to join him, furthering the mission of ReStore by spreading the word and getting others involved. He has also participated in many of the program's home deconstruction projects and helps out any way he can. Todd Miller says of him, "Brad has been a real fun volunteer to have around and has contributed a great deal of success to the ReStore, above and beyond his good looks!"

To be a "good looking" volunteer like Brad, contact Todd Miller at 363-9950.

Walking the Talk... Lisa Spradley



Lisa Spradley (left) and Leslie Mass

Often, service-learning is viewed as a set of opportunities in which only students can take part and benefit. Dr. Lisa Spradley however, proves this to be a misconception. Since her arrival at Ohio Wesleyan, she has been a participant on various Spring Break Mission Week teams as well as a volunteer for science education boards, acting as a model for her students.

In the Spring of 2005, she was a faculty advisor on the “Kids without Borders” team to Vietnam. She says, “I learned firsthand about issues I’d only heard as they occasionally passed through the air via television. I played with children permanently disabled by the effects of Agent Orange. I experienced being treated like a queen by the local people in a country that still bears the physical and emotional scars from U.S. invasions. I ate food I had never tasted before, heard a language all around me for which I had no personal understanding, traveled across the countryside and into orphanages, and was part of a team who created memories that will always live in my heart.”

In 2006, Dr. Spradley co-led the first ever all faculty/staff mission team, working as part of the Hurricane Katrina relief effort at the Houma Indian Nation in southwest Louisiana. Although there were no students on the trip, she says the experiences ran deep and the emotional impact on the entire team was no less intense. She continues to lead the effort collecting and sending teacher materials to the Grand Caillou Elementary School, which lost all its teaching materials and tools in the storms. In March of 2007, she will be a faculty advisor for the mission trip to the Lakota Nation, and has already begun collecting clothing, toiletries and school supplies to take with her.

As an education professor, Dr. Spradley requires 6 hours of volunteer work for both her EDUC 322 and 323 early childhood methods courses. She wants students have fun with the experience, branching out to do work they would not have done otherwise. Her hope is that students will learn about themselves in the process and that the impact of the service experience will, from there, grow in incalculable ways.

Dr. Spradley sees her role as a faculty member as one who can facilitate service learning by creating a safe place for students’ emotions to be addressed and to allow for room to grow and strengthen. She holds the belief that college life is generally a self-centered experience of growing up and enjoying a time of life that cannot be replicated. She believes community service of any kind can alter the focus on the individual’s insulated environment by adding a dimension that enhances a student’s ability to think, feel and experience outside of the typical college setting. Additionally, she thinks Ohio Wesleyan is a unique place for students to get involved in service learning due to the variety of ever-growing opportunities available. She feels that “even with the group of students who either have never thought about service learning or did not have previous opportunities to be involved, OWU has a prime opportunity to be a positive influence.”

Need Help With Yard Work or Household Chores?



Hire an Ohio Wesleyan Spring Break/Summer Mission Team to Help!

Saturday, November 4th

To hire a work crew, contact Kelly Adamson at 740-368-3091

(All proceeds benefit the OWU Spring Break Mission Week Program)



Help is Needed for PIN Annual Holiday Clearing House ~ Sue Pastors

The Holidays are drawing near, and as with every year at this time, People In Need is gearing up to make sure that this is a good year for Delaware County residents who are most in need of help. Unfortunately, donations from the community are down this year. On a recent visit to PIN with sophomore Jimmy Long, I observed that the shelves in the food pantry are bare, and Executive Director, Kevin Crowley reported that cash donations are much lower than normal. This alarming situation is probably due to the ever growing numbers of clients needing services throughout the year, rising costs for fuel, health care and prescription medicines, and much more competition for donation dollars. Be that as it may, it's time for all of us to dig down and see what we can do to help. So, please donate any spare change and/or food points for canned goods and taxable items, as well as new clothes and new toys. An extensive list is available at PIN or through the Community Service Learning Office of the most needed items. Details about the 2006 Holiday Clearing House are as follows:

**People In Need, Inc.—Holiday Clearing House 2006—P.O. Box 962, Delaware, OH 43015
(Monetary Donations Accepted)**



**FOOD, New TOYS and New CLOTHING Drive
Delaware County Fairgrounds Coliseum—236 Pennsylvania Avenue
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2006
9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

**Donations Will Also Be Accepted At
Delaware City and Delaware County Fire Departments**

**HOLIDAY CLEARING HOUSE BEGINS—Monday, December 4th—9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Delaware County Fairgrounds Coliseum — 363-6528**

**SENIOR/DISABLED BASKETS PACKING DAY—Wednesday, Dec. 6th—9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
FAMILY FOOD BASKETS PACKING DAY—Saturday, Dec. 9th—9 a.m. to noon
DECORATE COLISEUM & TOYLAND SETUP—Saturday, Dec. 9th—1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
DISTRIBUTION DAY FOR FAMILIES—Sunday, Dec. 10th—8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**

If you are part of a large group/organization and desire to be part of a positive sharing experience, please call Kevin at 363-6284 to schedule your volunteer/service time.

Individuals need not call in advance to volunteer

People In Need is a United Way of Delaware County Agency

HEALTH DEPARTMENT INTERNSHIP / SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

The Delaware General Health District, a local public agency dedicated to improving the health and environment of our residents and communities, is looking for a volunteer to enter data for two important surveys. The volunteer for this project must:

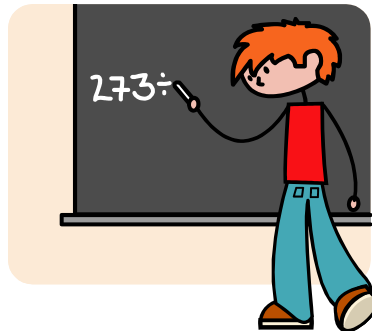
- Have had experience entering data in both Excel and Access**
- Be accurate and detail-oriented**
- Be dependable**

Days/Hours are flexible to meet your schedule. The project currently anticipates at least 120 hours of work. Take advantage of this opportunity to improve your skills, learn about the healthcare field, and build your resume.

To learn more, contact Lucille Vitka at the Delaware Health District, 203-2009, lvitka@delawarehealth.org.

21st Century After School Tutoring Program

- ♦ Tutors are needed to work with Woodward Elementary children in an after school setting any day M-F from 3:45 to 5:15 pm. Woodward is located within 3 blocks of campus at 200 S. Washington Street.



- ♦ Lead Mentors needed to help facilitate after school tutor/mentor program at Conger Elementary any day M-Th from 3:45 to 5:15 pm. Conger is located on the East side of Delaware, just off of E. William Street at 10 Channing Street.
- ♦ Applications are available through the Community Service Learning Office, (HWCC-407), or by contacting Kathy McWatters at (740) 548-7880, ext. 3464, or via e-mail: kathy_mcwatters@duesc.org

- ♦ You Can Make A Difference In A Child's Life !

Grady Memorial Hospital Has Volunteer & Internship Opportunities:

Due to the upcoming major expansion of the Grady **Gift Shop** they have several openings. Be the first to call and pick your day and time. Volunteers in the Gift Shop greet customers, assist in gift selection and process purchases. There are also opportunities to develop an internship in **Merchandising and Marketing** with this expanding operation.

They are also currently looking for multiple **Office Mates** to support several departments. Duties may include filing, data entry, answering phones and preparing mailing projects. Days and times are very flexible.

The **Hospice at Grady** is looking for volunteers. Hospice volunteers assist terminally ill patients and their families. If you feel you can provide support, relief and companionship for the patient and family or are able to perform other various tasks, please contact us.

Other compelling opportunities can be arranged, especially for **Pre-Med Majors**, on an individualized basis. Contact Shari Furay in the Volunteer Services Office at **368-5155** for more information. As members of the Grady Professional Family, volunteers receive orientation, training and special benefits.

Andrews House needs your help!

- Do you like to bake? If so, how about making some baked goods for the annual Christmas Bazaar, or cookies for their Cookie Sale? Contact Barb McKendry at 740-881-4261.

- If cooking isn't your thing, how about a knack for computers? Andrews House is also in need of a volunteer computer instructor to allow them to continue to offer free computer classes. They have a growing waiting list of people interested. If you can help, contact Jill at 369-4520.

- Are you a pre-law student looking for practice? They're also looking for pre-law students on the 3rd Tuesday of each month to help with their free legal clinic. Volunteers would be needed to do intake assessments from 5:30 to 9:00pm.

- Still batting 0 for 3? Tutors are needed for court-involved middle-school students who are in need of a structured learning environment. Please call Brigid Arace at 369-4520.

Service Opportunities

Volunteer With Big Brothers Big Sisters! - The following opportunities are available:

Willis Big Brothers: Tuesdays, 3:30-5:00 pm

Male Mentors are matched one-on-one with a 5th or 6th grade boy, focusing on academic and social enrichment activities at Willis Intermediate School.

Willis Big Sisters: Tuesdays, 3:30-5:00 pm

Female Mentors are matched one-on-one with a 5th or 6th grade girl, focusing on academic and social enrichment activities at Willis Intermediate School.

Conger Pacer Pals: Mondays and/or Wednesdays, 3:30 -5:00 pm

Serve as a BBBS Liaison during the Conger Elementary after school child care program. Assist in program activities and provide leadership for the high school mentors assigned to the program.

Middle School After School Mentoring Programs: Monday through Thursdays, 3:05-4:30 pm

Program Assistants needed to provide support to the BBBS Program Coordinator including activity ideas, match support and on-site supervision at Big Walnut, Olentangy Liberty, Olentangy Shanahan, and/or Olentangy Orange Middle Schools. (choose one or more days)

Interested? Please contact Kerri Robe of BBBS at 369-2447, (krrobe@bbbscentralohio.org) or Sue Pastors at x3084, (smpaster@owu.edu) .



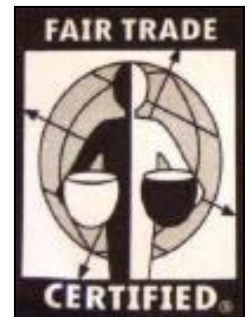
Common Ground Free Store is a new non-profit organization in Delaware and needs volunteers to work in the store. The store is located at 193 E. Central Ave. and works, through donations, to provide clothing, linens, appliances and other household items to individuals and families free of charge, no questions asked. Volunteers are needed the first four shopping days of

November to help sort, restock and serve lunch. November 2: 3:00-8:00pm; November 4: 10:00am-3:00pm; November 6: 10:00am-3:00pm; November 9: 3:00-8:00pm. In addition to volunteers, they are in need of children's clothing, especially for the winter months. If you can help, call 740-369-FREE.

Ohio Wesleyan Greek life's PanHellenic Council is currently organizing a clothing collection on campus to collectively donate. They've had two successful collections so far and will have a third on November 30. Please contact Amanda Matthews at almatthe@owu.edu for details.

The Global Village Collection

Global Village is a unique store located in historic downtown Delaware. Staffed entirely by volunteers, this non-profit gift shop supports fair trade. Help make FAIR TRADE in Delaware a success as a VOLUNTEER. If you'd like to give of your time in the store, please stop by and fill out a volunteer registration form at 37 N. Sandusky St., just two short blocks away from campus. Check it out!



Get Involved!



Help Start Best Buddies!

Best Buddies is an international organization aimed at enhancing the lives of people with intellectual disabilities by providing opportunities for one-to-one friendships with

their non-disabled peers. Through these friendships, Best Buddies seeks to end social isolation, increase self-esteem and confidence, and integrate positively into the community through employment and rehabilitation.

The Alpha Group is currently looking for a student interested in becoming the organizational director for a Best Buddies chapter at Ohio Wesleyan. If interested, contact either Wendy Salyers or Becky Farmer at 740-368-5810 x183.

5th and 6th Graders Need Mentors!

(WS) 2 is a collaboration between William Street United Methodist Church and Willis Intermediate School. The program is facilitated by The Literacy Coalition of Delaware County.

Volunteers are needed **Mondays and Thursdays** from 3:30 to 5:00 pm, **through May 10th**, to work with 5th and 6th graders as mentors.

Responsibilities include supervising students through snacks, games, homework and clean-up as well as developing lasting friendships.

If interested, contact Theresa Milner at 740-369-7401. milnergt@midohio.net

SAVE THE DATE!

Habitat For Humanity Annual Soups For Shelter—February 22, 2007

Hand Made Ceramic Bowls Needed—Contact Jackie Kuhns to learn more (363-9950) jackie.kuhns@rroho.com

Victims Services

Victims Services is a screening agency and assistance center for victims of violent crimes. They are looking for volunteers for the Christmas Parade at the end of November and have internship opportunities available as well. Please contact Tabitha Bonifas at 740-833-2710.

TEAM MENTORING PROGRAM

A Program of Delaware County Juvenile Court

Do you like to play games, go out to eat, and hang out with kids? Can you spare 2 hours a week to be a mentor? If so, please contact Patty Cram at 833-2678 for more information about being a TEAM Mentor. Being a TEAM Mentor is a service learning program offered by the Delaware County Juvenile Court that involves getting involved with Delaware county youth both involved in the court system and not. Your help can make a valuable difference in the life of a child.

PAID TUTOR(s) NEEDED—Monday through Friday, 1:00-2:00 pm—\$20/hour.

Contact Patty Cram to learn more.

DATES TO REMEMBER

November 23-30
OWU Thanksgiving Break

December 14th
Last Day of Classes

December 16 - 21
Final Exams

December 21st
Term Ends at 5 p.m.

December 22 - January 14
OWU Winter Break



Under the leadership of Jimmy Long, (kneeling 2nd from left), members of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity raised over \$400 for the 2006 Delaware Crop Walk which took place on Sunday, October 1st. Each year the campus and community join forces on the first Sunday of October for the 10k Walk to benefit Church World Service, a non-denominational organization focused on global disaster relief, refugee relocation and sustainable projects. Monies are still coming in, but to date OWU students have raised over \$1,000 for the 2006 effort.



Junior, Nick Collinger listens intently to one of the 3rd graders from Buckeye Valley East Elementary School. Nick is one of twelve OWU participants in the "Buckeye Valley Reads" tutoring program, which is part of the "Ohio Reads" initiative. The partnership between OWU and Buckeye Valley East has been in existence since 1998. To learn more about the Buckeye Valley Reads Program, contact Sue Pasters at 368-3084; or student coordinator, Jesika Keener at jakeener@owu.edu.