

# Opportunity Knocks

Reporting on OWU Community Service Learning & Opportunities in Delaware and Beyond  
Martha Park ~ Editor In Chief

## Theory to Practice Grants Allow for Student-Designed Service Learning Projects

Over the summer, Benjamin Andrews, Ahlam Awad, and Heather Werling traveled to several different cities in Eastern Africa on a Theory to Practice Grant project they proposed, called “Affecting the Uninfected: HIV/AIDS Orphans in East Africa.” Also on the trip were Paula Travis, the Office Manager for Women and Gender Studies, Black World Studies and the Sagan National Colloquium, and Professor Ali Skandor, a professor of Swahili. For the majority of their time they remained in Kenya, but they also ventured into Tanzania for nearly a week. They made stops at several non-governmental organizations and orphanages, trying to comprehend the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the local areas and the effect HIV/AIDS has on people in these local areas. Ahlam says the group came up with the idea for the grant by combining their interests. “With Ben and Heather being Sociology and Black World Studies majors who had taken several Swahili classes with Mwalimu Ali (Professor Skandor), and myself, a biology major who is interested in pursuing my studies in Public Health, it all came together.” Ahlam continues, “Since I am from East Africa (Ethiopia), I literally grew up hearing about HIV/AIDS my whole life, and seeing people stigmatized and children dying of AIDS. The prevalence varies from one country to another, but our interest focused on Swahili speaking countries because I personally wanted to see how people living with HIV/AIDS dealt with it in places outside of my country, and because Ben and Heather spoke a little Swahili. Also, Mwalimu Ali is originally from Kenya so our interests were compatible.”

The group came prepared with questions. They were interested in finding out how pervasive the stigma attached to HIV/AIDS is for those who have contracted it, as well as learning by what means children taken care of who have been orphaned due to the death of their parents who had HIV/AIDS themselves. As far as accomplishing their research objective, Benjamin says he is certain they learned a lot, but also says that one month was not nearly enough to gain a conclusive understanding of the situation in Eastern Africa.

Benjamin said he was surprised, when talking to medical authorities and locals, at how many contradicting opinions there are about the HIV/AIDS epidemic. “Assuredly, there are a plethora of ideas here in the States about the AIDS epidemic as well. It was certainly obvious that people are not completely educated about what AIDS even is and how to go about dealing with it.”

Heather Werling shared, “One of the most moving moments was when I spoke with a health worker named Patience. She took me on the route that she goes on every week in order to give persons with HIV their antiretroviral drugs. When I commended her on her dedication, she replied that she does this to help others because she truly understands their worries and fears because she too is HIV positive. She then opened up even more and told me her story surrounding getting tested and worrying about if her sons were positive too. The two hours I spent with Patience seemed like they lasted days, and I gained more of an understanding with every minute that I spent with her. I certainly couldn't fully understand her situation, but my experience with Patience enabled me to become more open as a person.”

**Continued on next page...**



Ahlam Awad speaks to children in an orphanage in Mombasa.  
Photo by Paula Travis.

## *Theory to Practice*, continued...

The group's project will continue at OWU. Ahlam says, "Although we visited several, our next plan is to help one specific orphanage in Mombasa. We want to start a donation program for that orphanage. When we left, we were all just too attached to the kids there. Some of the orphans are eighteen or nineteen years old and done with high school, but have nowhere else to go, so they keep repeating the 12th grade since they can't afford higher education."

Benjamin, Heather, and Ahlam will present a poster session and answer questions about their trip on October 20th from 6–7 pm in the Benes Room. Their session will be followed by the Sagan National Colloquium speaker, Dr. Kennedy Walibora Waliaula. They are also in the editing process for a documentary they are making about their trip. In addition, the group is planning a food and clothing drive in order to provide the Mombasa orphanage with some necessities in time for the holiday season.



From Left to Right: Professor Ali Skandor, Ahlam Awad, Heather Werling, Benjamin Andrews, and Paula Travis.



## **"Recycled Life"** OWU and Global Village Partner in Serving The Safe Passage School

Delaware's Global Village Collection and OWU's Peace and Justice House member, Gabe Quick, are partnering to present the documentary "Recycled Life" on October 24th in the Bayley Room of Beeghly Library. "Recycled Life" documents the struggles of children of the Guatemala City garbage dump. The screening will in part provide information on the products that Global Village carries and how sales of these products can help the children of the Safe Passage School. Global Village Collection carries Safe Passage Guatemalan Coffee from HigherGrounds Coffee Company. HigherGrounds gives a portion of the profit from the sales of this coffee to the Safe Passage School for children from the Guatemala City garbage dump. In addition, Global Village Collection gives a portion of its profits from the sale of all Safe Passage Guatemalan coffee to the school. The goal of the Safe Passage School is to educate children who otherwise would grow up working in the city dump all their lives. Safe Passage wants to break this cycle, and the Global Village Collection wants to help, as well as educate the Delaware community about their efforts.

For more information visit <http://www.safepassage.org/> Or <http://www.globalvillagecollection.org/>  
And attend the screening of "Recycled Life" October 24th in the Bayley Room of Beeghly Library from 5-7 pm.



*Racism. Hate crimes. Love. Islam. Culture. Language. Life.*

## **Unveiled: A One-Woman Play** Written and Performed by Rohina Malik

**Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup> 6:30-8:30 pm in the Benes Rooms**

Sponsored By: Amnesty International, the Peace and Justice House, the Chaplain's Office, the Women's and Gender Studies Department, the Religion Department, the Women's Resource Center, the Theatre Department, the Sociology-Anthropology Department, the Ohio Wesleyan Art Guild

**"Powerful solo show... five riveting tales of Muslim women" - Chicago Reader**



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## HaitiOWU

### Ohio Wesleyan Considers Long-Term Service In Haiti

(With Help from Students Gretchen Curry and Will Condit)

In August, a delegation of Ohio Wesleyan students and staff visited Project Espwa, an orphanage in Les Cayes, Haiti. Doug Dittrick, who is a member of the Ohio Wesleyan University Board of Trustees and serves on the board of Project Espwa, was a member of the team as well. The purpose of the visit was to gain deeper understanding of the project and assess opportunities for Ohio Wesleyan students, staff, faculty, and alumni to get involved in a long term program of service learning and servant leadership. Gretchen Curry and Will Condit, a junior and a senior, were the two students who went on the trip.

The experience of going to Haiti and actually see the destruction and the ways those living there cope is one that Gretchen and Will are still struggling with.

Gretchen illustrates the difficulty they still face in understanding their experience in Haiti. "If I had to sum up my three hour experience in Port-au-Prince via a tour from our van, I would say it was uncomfortable, striking, disheartening, literally indigestible, unsettling, and, at times, ironically hopeful. We would pass shanty town communities where young women my age sat on stools outside their makeshift homes, smiling and laughing with each other. I didn't know whether to feel relieved or completely saddened."

Will shares a similar sentiment when describing the pockets of life surrounded by destruction: "When I think about what I learned, two things come to mind. First, Port au Prince and the surrounding area is still flattened and in a state of complete disrepair months and months after the earthquake. Secondly, the people of Haiti have such an intense will to live. Even in the destruction, they make do with what they have and don't seem to be giving up."



as well. There is also a medical clinic, a few gardens, a pig farm, art shops, and a growing number of vocational training programs. They're working on building a girls' home for the few dozen girls who have shown up since the earthquake. When I say this place is incredible, I mean it. Miracles happen at Project Espwa. I've traveled to many countries and I've and shared stories about the dire poverty I've seen, but nothing compares to this." Gretchen stresses that upcoming projects are in the planning stages, but that a long-term relationship with Project Espwa, allowing students from OWU to visit and help out multiple times a year for both short and prolonged stays, is the goal. I have officially been bit by the Espwa bug. After going to Espwa, meeting Father Marc and Doug Dittrick, and spending so much time with some of the boys, I don't think I have any choice but to go back. It's too inspiring of a place to visit just once."

Gretchen and Will are currently applying for a Theory to Practice grant to be able to go back to Haiti and continue the project with the help of other students. Those who are interested should watch for exciting future events to continue with the project.



**Gretchen Curry with children in Project Espwa, Haiti.**

Another experience marked in Gretchen's memory is the group's stay in Project Espwa. She says, "Any person who has ever said, 'I want to change the world,' should model their work after Project Espwa. The visionary behind the orphanage, Father Marc, is one of the most dedicated people I have ever met. His orphanage, which started in the city of Les Cayes, has grown from about 25 street boys to over 800. They are now located on a large plot of land directly outside the city. Much of the growth of the orphanage can be attributed to Doug Dittrick, an OWU alum who has dedicated much of his energy for more than ten years to this project. Project Espwa itself serves over 3000 meals a day. It serves as a school to not only the boys who live there but to neighborhood kids

## Delaware CropWalk 2010

[www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org)



People   
In Need, Inc.  
of Delaware County Ohio



*Members of Sisters United Prepare to Walk*

Despite the cold and gloomy weather on Sunday, October 3rd, at least 150 people braved the elements to walk 6 miles in order to raise awareness and dollars for hungry people all over the world. This year's event raised more than \$10,600 for **Church World Service**, with 25% of that coming back to Delaware's own hunger-fighting agency, **People In Need**. Numerous OWU students worked behind the scenes to help make the event a success. Pictured above, members of Circle K handled the registration and counted the donations. Also, members of Kappa Phi helped to prepare and serve sandwiches during the post-walk festivities at First Presbyterian Church. As has been the case for many years, OWU Chartwells donated bottled water and bags of chips for the walkers. Thank you one and all for supporting the walk, and the vital work of these two important humanitarian organizations!

*The folks at People In Need also send their heart-felt thanks. Watch for details in next month's newsletter regarding the annual PIN Holiday Clearing House.*

## OWU Alumna to "Run Across Ethiopia"



Claire Everhart, OWU Class of 2010

In January 2011 Claire Everhart will be joining eight other runners from the United States in running 250 miles across the southern part of Ethiopia, running 10 marathons in 11 days. The goal of this ultra marathon is to raise funds for education in Ethiopia. Each runner needs to raise at least \$15,000 to participate. This pays the Tesfa Foundation to be support staff. Team Tesfa is a track-and-field program for youth in Ethiopia that provides safe housing, nutrition and education for young women who are homeless and vulnerable. They also provide vocational skills for young adults. The \$15,000 also goes to the Oromia Cooperative Farmers Cooperative Union (OCFCU) for the building of schools. **On The Ground** is the organization spearheading the multi-organizational fundraiser. *On the Ground* is the non-profit arm of Higher Grounds Trading Company a fair trade coffee company that is a supplier of The Global Village Collection on Sandusky Street. No funds will go to *On the Ground*. As the organizer of "Run Across Ethiopia", it will be giving all of the funds to the previously mentioned organizations, Tesfa and OCFCU. PBS is making a documentary about the run, and more information can be found at the websites listed below. Claire needs help raising the \$15,000 needed to participate in the run. To donate, please contact her at [claire.everhart.2010@owu.edu](mailto:claire.everhart.2010@owu.edu).

[www.oromiacoffeeunion.org](http://www.oromiacoffeeunion.org)  
[www.onthegroundglobal.org](http://www.onthegroundglobal.org)  
[www.javaforjustice.com](http://www.javaforjustice.com)





## Willis Big Brothers Big Sisters

Are you free on Tuesday afternoons from 3:15 to 5:15? If so, these two hours a week can make a huge difference in a child's life.

Applications for the Willis Big Brothers Big Sisters program are available on the table outside the Community Service Learning Office on the fourth floor of Hamilton Williams Campus Center...(room 407).

Questions? Contact the BBBS Program Director,  
Kerri Robe at (740) 369-2447, e-mail:  
[krobe@bbbscentralohio.org](mailto: krobe@bbbscentralohio.org).

Or, contact one of the OWU Student Team Leaders:  
Hunter Moss & Kelsey Kerstetter.

**Background Check Required.**



## The Literacy Coalition of Delaware County has Multiple Volunteer and Internship Opportunities

- Become a Homework Helper for (WS)2 After School Homework Help Program.
- Volunteer to help with a book drive and help get books into the hands of families and children in need.
- Become a Volunteer Tutor and help an adult with reading or English as a Second Language.
- Become a Literacy Advocate and help promote literacy in the community.

Hours are flexible. Specific responsibilities can be targeted to your interests and background. Depending on responsibilities, a background check may be required.

To learn more, contact Tina Younoszai, PhD,  
Vice President, Board of Directors, (740) 816-3514

E-mail: [info@delaware-reads.org](mailto: info@delaware-reads.org)

Web Page: <http://www.delaware-reads.org>

Like us at <http://www.facebook.com/LiteracyCoalitionOfDelawareCounty>



## Stratford Ecological Center 3083 Liberty Road

**Farm & Nature Guides – (Weekday)** Stratford is dedicated to educating children and adults toward understanding the relationships between living things and their environment, thereby fostering an appreciation of the land and all life that depends on it. One of the volunteer opportunities that speak to this vision and mission is being a Farm & Nature Guide. We will train you.

**Saturday Farm & Nature Guides** – (3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday – April - November - 2010) **Something New!** - Stratford has opened the experience of farm and nature tours to families and we need dedicated volunteers to make this a reality. We will train you

**Farmer's Helper** - Being a Farmer's Helper may include animal chores, carpentry, fence building, preparing and maintaining the fields, and other farm maintenance and upkeep tasks.

**Gardeners** - Stratford has vegetable gardens, including the Children's Garden, Field Gardens, a Giving Garden, greenhouses and landscape gardens, and we are looking for those who wish to dedicate a few hours a week to help in the Stratford gardens for fall clean-up.

**Receptionist - Weekdays & Saturdays** - This volunteer answers the phone, directs visitors to activities, trails & u-pick areas, and sells farm products. We are looking for volunteers to cover this area Monday—Friday 9am-5pm and Saturday 9am-1pm.

**Trail Maintenance** - We are looking for volunteers who would like to help keep our trails clear of debris and easy to follow.

**Get Involved** - Stratford now has an active and involved volunteer-led group that works behind the scenes to make Stratford the best education center it can be. The purpose of the Volunteer Get-together is to offer an informal bi-monthly opportunity to all Stratford volunteers to build community, share expertise and work as a team to ensure the future of Stratford. All are invited to come and join in the discussions. Hope you can join in, sharing your unique perspective with the group. Please call for dates and times.

Contact Jane at [SECVolunteer@aol.com](mailto: SECVolunteer@aol.com)  
or call 740-363-2548



## The Humane Society of Delaware County

The Humane Society of Delaware County, 4920 State Route 37 East, is currently accepting applications for volunteer care staff positions. Individuals who demonstrate excellence will have priority consideration for available paid care staff positions. Care staff responsibilities include, but are not limited to, all cleaning, care and enrichment tasks for our residents. Candidates must be able to lift 50 pounds. Submit availability with letter of interest or application to: [hsdcsherri@gmail.com](mailto:hsdcsherri@gmail.com).



[www.commongroundfreestore.com/](http://www.commongroundfreestore.com/)

*Located at 193 E. Central Avenue, Common Ground Free Store Ministries is a partnership between Delaware churches, businesses, civic organizations and caring citizens. They believe that God's mercy doesn't come with a price tag. They have established a warm and welcoming store which is run by volunteers, and where everything is available to everyone free of charge—from clothing, shoes, diapers and linens, to small appliances, books and toys. There are no income requirements, no questions, and no scrutiny—everyone is on common ground.*

There are many immediate and on-going service opportunities for OWU students at Common Ground. The Free Store is either open, or shifts are available to work on Mondays, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm; Thursdays from 3:00 pm to 8:00 pm; and Saturdays from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. To sign up for a specific shift to work, contact Bonnie Ristau at (740) 369-3733, or [bonniefrs@columbus.rr.com](mailto:bonniefrs@columbus.rr.com). Typical tasks include helping to run the store, sorting clothing, re-stocking racks and shelves, greeting shoppers, or helping to serve food.

Donations are accepted on Saturdays between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. All donated items should be clean and in good condition. Kitchen ware, small appliances, towels, bed linens, dishes, glasses/silverware are always welcome donations.



### VITA, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program (VITA), provided Community Action Org., offers free income tax preparation services for low to moderate income individuals and families with combined income of \$42,000 or less. As a volunteer for this program, you will receive training in a classroom or online and become IRS certified to prepare tax returns. This free service provides Delaware County tax payers the opportunity to bring more money back into their household budgets by maximizing available tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Additional Child Credit.

Enhance your resume with tax preparation certification and volunteer experience. It also allows you to apply your tax and accounting training to real world situations and to provide a free service to eligible tax filers in need of your help. To volunteer please contact Diana Rice at 740-369-3184 or [vitamanager@caodmu.org](mailto:vitamanager@caodmu.org).

## T.E.A.M. MENTORING

**A Program of The Delaware County Juvenile Court**  
*Together Everyone Achieves More*

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?

**TEAM Mentoring is a service learning program offered by**

**the Delaware County Juvenile Court that matches mentors with Delaware county youth who are court-involved, as well as with kids who are at risk of becoming court-involved.**



**Want to know more?**

**For information about becoming a TEAM Mentor, Contact Patty Cram at (740) 833-2678 or e-mail [pcram@co.delaware.oh.us](mailto:pcram@co.delaware.oh.us)**

**Your help can make a big difference to a child.**

## Preservation Parks of Delaware County

Volunteer in the parks and help Preservation Parks protect and preserve Delaware County's natural areas! Here are just a few ways:

- **Be a Nature Center Attendant** on weekday or weekend afternoons. You'll greet visitors and answer questions — AND you'll have time to do school work. There are 2-1/2 hour shifts available noon-5 p.m. every day at Deer Haven Preserve, and noon-5 p.m. week-ends at Hogback Ridge Preserve.
- **Lead Hound Hikes** - Upcoming dates are November 7 & 21, and December 5 & 19. Hikes are Sunday afternoons at 4 p.m. in various parks.
- Gather a group of friends to help **Tear Out Invasive Species** in the parks. Honeysuckle and other plants try to take over and we keep fighting them! You'll need to do this with our staff, so contact Chris Roshon at [croshon@preservationparks.com](mailto:croshon@preservationparks.com) if this is something you'd like to do.

For more information on being a nature center attendant or hound hike leader, or to learn about other opportunities, contact Sandra McBrearty at 740-524-8600, ext. 6, or at [saundras@preservationparks.com](mailto:saundras@preservationparks.com).



Visit [www.preservationparks.com](http://www.preservationparks.com) for information on parks, programs and events.

2010 Delaware General Health District Household Hazardous Waste Day  
Saturday, October 23rd\* ~ Delaware County Fair Grounds

**Volunteers Are Needed for Traffic Control or To Collect Donations**

**Two Shifts: 8-11:30 a.m. OR 11:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m. ~ Lunch Provided!**

**Call or e-mail Jenifer Way-Young at 740-203-2076 or [jway-young@delawarehealth.org](mailto:jway-young@delawarehealth.org)**

**\*October 23rd is "Make A Difference Day Ohio" - (See Page 8)**



"Dedicated to Your Health"

Delaware General  
Health District



**American Red Cross**

Delaware County Chapter  
380 Hills-Miller Rd.  
Delaware, Ohio 43015  
Phone: 740-362-2021  
Fax: 740-363-5871

## Presenting the 2010 Heroes Breakfast

Recognizing the accomplishments of our community heroes  
**November 16, Ohio Wesleyan University, 7:30 a.m.**

**Nominate your hero today!**

Local heroes are chosen in eight categories:  
Community, Education, Health Care, Military,  
Public Safety, Senior, Work Place, and Youth  
Nominations must be received by October 22, 2010

**Visit [www.delco-redcross.org](http://www.delco-redcross.org) for details...**

**And for reservations / ticket / table sponsor information!**

## OCTOBER 23, 2010 | Make A Difference Day Ohio

Make A Difference Day is a national day of service. Ohio has lead the nation in participation on this day for several years and we're looking to do it again!

In Delaware County, volunteers join together to serve those in need. **Connections** will be partnering with non profit agencies as well as the Council for Older Adults to help seniors with outdoor chores including gutter cleaning, painting, and gardening. We also encourage volunteers to create their own volunteer projects.

Join us for the kick off breakfast at 8am in Delaware, then work on projects from 9am to 12noon. Gather your friends for a day of service, then contact **Connections** at **740-363-5000** to register.

**Deadline for registration is Wednesday, October 20th at 4pm.**



### DATES TO REMEMBER

October 21st—"Up Til' Dawn"  
5pm to Midnight - Benes Rooms

October 23rd - (see right & page 7)  
Make a Difference Day &  
Household Hazardous Waste Day

October 24th - "Recycled Life"  
(see page 2)

October 26th - BODO Initiative  
Dinner, 6 pm - Benes B & C

October 28th, 29th and 30th  
Chi Phi Haunted House

October 30th - "UNVEILED"  
6:30 pm - Benes Rooms, (page 4)

November 20-28th  
OWU Thanksgiving Break

December 10th  
OWU Fall Semester Last Day of  
Classes

Please recycle



**Chi Phi Fraternity 26th Annual Haunted House**  
**October 28th-30th ~ 216 N. Franklin Street**  
**Thursday, 8-11 pm; Friday & Saturday, 8 pm-1 am**

**Admission: Adults \$6; Children \$3**  
**OWU Students with valid ID - 7 food points OR \$5**

**Donation of Canned Food for PIN = \$1 Discount on Admission**

**Proceeds Benefit (Delaware) Big Brothers Big Sisters and People In Need**



To advertise a service opportunity, or to provide a service-related story or picture, email Editor, Martha Park at [opknocks@owu.edu](mailto:opknocks@owu.edu).