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Community Leader

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PROFILE: JOANNE TROHA

By Lindsey Bungenstock

"The university setting suits me well. I can't think of a subject area that doesn't interest me, so working across campus, I'm constantly learning too. I have access to every discipline at UD," says Joanne Troha, director of community service learning for the Fitz Center. Connecting students and faculty to the community has been the primary focus of her work for the last 15 years.

Previous to that, Joanne's work for UD was closely tied to neighborhood development; that helped lay a foundation of relationships that support service learning today. She enjoys the task of taking project ideas in the community and seeing how many ways they can be used as educational opportunities at UD.

A current high priority is a Six Week Service Spree that supports the Neighborhood School Centers. In October, Joanne and student assistants began a "test drive" of a process for recruiting classroom assistants for the six Neighborhood School Centers sites, capitalizing on 10 years of similar work at Patterson-Kennedy School. More than 40 students volunteered for 17 options identified by the schools. Now Joanne is working with the NSC team on systematizing ways to ensure orientation, supervision and evaluation of volunteers. This is in preparation for future semesters when service will be more formally tied to UD courses and academic credit.

Helping campus and community partners meet their agendas is rewarding. But even more important to Joanne is her opportunity to shape service experiences and help students draw lessons from seeing the larger context: "I love my role in the learning process." 



Above: Joanne Troha, director of community service learning.

Below: Joanne Troha with the National School Centers site coordinators and Dr. Roberta Weaver (first row: Nina Scroggins, Tashira Collier, Weaver. Second row: Kym Beasley, Troha and Amber Rose.





GRANT ENRICHES UD AND ADVENTURE CENTRAL PARTNERSHIP

By Joanne Troha

Thanks to a \$5,000 grant awarded to the Fitz Center, UD and Adventure Central students and their instructors are exploring a new dimension of service learning this fall. In a two-tier approach, the UD students are working with youth as a part of their course work; the younger students have been encouraged to take the lead in designing a related follow-up project that will extend the service further into the community. UD is one of 13 universities and colleges receiving grant funds through Ohio Campus Compact to replicate this model first developed by Otterbein College and the University of Cincinnati.

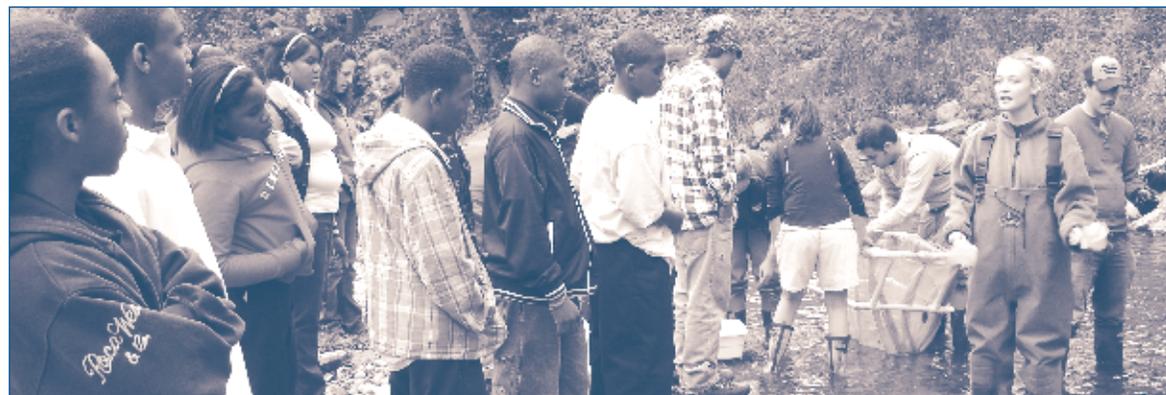
The grant enabled UD instructors Kelly Bohrer, biology, and Katie Schoenenberger, geology, to incorporate new features in Environmental Instrumentation Lab, a capstone course for environmental science students. The traditional purpose of the course continues: to master the use of field and lab equipment and techniques, while employing a team approach to investigating an environmental issue. Watershed assessments, like the one the class is doing on Wolf Creek, provide officials crucial data about the health of surface waters, biodiversity and impact of land use.

This fall, the nine UD students are directly involving eight teens from Adventure Central in one to two work sessions a week. The service challenges them to be teachers, mentors, teammates and role models. Early on, Adventure Central's youth board said they hoped for an opportunity to ask questions about college and careers, visit campus, learn about their local environment and have an effect on other people's awareness of and respect for the environment. Thus, the revamped schedule allots additional time for that as well.

The grant advisory team includes Kelly Bohrer and Katie Schoenenberger from UD, plus Joanne Troha and Ashley Cadaret (Fitz Center) and Adventure Central staff Nate Arnett, Kim Catchpole, Ashley Krogel and Nina Grout.

Much of the grant is being used to purchase scientific equipment to support data collection and reporting at Adventure Central now and in the future. The staff at Adventure Central would like to create a more permanent water monitoring station on the grounds and involve the youth as a regular part of the outdoor curriculum, capitalizing on their location and the proximity of Wolf Creek. Grant funds will also provide exhibit or display materials which will expand options for the UD and AC partners to share lessons about environmental stewardship at both campuses and elsewhere in the community.

You are invited to attend the final presentation for this project 4 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 5, in the UD Science Center Auditorium, room 114. 



Above and below:
Adventure Central and UD students count species of fish in Wolf Creek as one measure of water quality.

ADVENTURE CENTRAL AND UD: A PERFECT MATCH

By Ashley Wagner Cadaret

Every Monday through Thursday afternoon, more than 100 kids and staff in West Dayton gather together to pledge themselves to “clearer thinking,” “greater loyalty,” “larger service” and “better living.” This group is Adventure Central, an educational center for youth ages 5 through 18. Adventure Central serves as a hub for out-of-school-time programming, including after-school programs and summer camps. The goal of the program is long-term contact and they utilize a holistic approach, engaging a variety of partners — parents, youth, service learners and community agencies. Adventure Central is located in Wesleyan MetroPark along James H. McGee Boulevard. This innovative partnership between Five Rivers MetroParks and Ohio State University Extension 4-H focuses on skills for success using science, nature and technology as content to achieve these ends.

In addition to serving youth in West Dayton, Adventure Central has become a valuable asset to the University of Dayton’s community outreach and engagement efforts through providing students a welcoming environment in which to interact meaningfully with youth, experience a nonprofit social service organization and apply classroom learning in a real world context.

Here are few ways in which Adventure Central (AC) and UD exhibit their shared interests:

- Professor Carl Friese’s SCI 230 honors biology course has found Adventure Central an excellent venue to engage scientific knowledge through developing educational projects for the AC youth. In addition, members of Tri-Beta, the honors biology fraternity, give individual attention, assist with homework, and develop meaningful, positive relationships with youth.
- A Great Cities Great Service grant from the Ohio Campus Compact enables a science capstone course to include a service-learning component. By the end of the Fall 2007 semester, the UD course will have provided more than 150 service hours.
- AC at Fairview is an after-school program for fourth- through sixth-graders in its third year at Fairview Elementary, one of Dayton’s Neighborhood School Centers. AC has provided leadership for the program, which has accounted for more than 1,300 student contact hours thus far.
- The Fitz Center noticed the need to develop a presentation focused on building relationships with youth for UD students serving in the community. Adventure Central offered an experienced perspective and, in the last four years, this training has reached more than 2,000 UD students.
- Through Fitz Center programs like AmeriCorps*VISTA and Semester of Service, students and recent alumni are able to develop leadership skills and immerse themselves in full-time working positions. This experience is invaluable and unparalleled with traditional volunteer opportunities for college-age adults.
- Adventure Central staff members are active members of the Rivers Institute at the University of Dayton and are assisting with plans for its future growth.

In the last five years, more than 200 UD volunteers provided 6,900 hours of service at Adventure Central. Other multi-faceted co-learning opportunities for AC and UD are being explored. Continued occasions for University outreach and engagement are expected to unfold in the future. 



Above: An Adventure Central youth learns about map reading and watersheds with UD students enrolled in Environmental Instrumentation Lab.

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Above: Steph Zielonko '09 (left) and Grace Finn '09 (right) present a new idea to their cohort at a project meeting.

Below: Allison Cone '09 (right) takes notes at a project meeting.

DAYTON CIVIC SCHOLARS ARE BUSY IN DAYTON

By Erin Fuller

This fall has been an eventful and exciting time for all three Dayton Civic Scholars cohorts. Students have immersed themselves in community engagement and service opportunities on and off campus and have continued work on their cohort projects.

The Class of 2010 began its monthly meetings in August, and students have had the opportunity to hear guest speakers from around the city. Bobbi Dillon, a legislative aide in the Dayton City Commission office, talked to students about exciting projects she has been leading, including the Summer in the City intern program and the Welcome to Dayton reception for first-year college students in the area. Tim Donnellan, president and CEO of the Community Action Partnership, introduced students to his organization's mission and offered practical ideas for making a difference in the Dayton area.

The Class of 2009 has been holding joint monthly meetings with UD's Bonner Leaders, who are also focused on community service and engagement. These meetings follow the national Bonner Leader student curriculum, which helps students develop both personally and professionally. Students explored time management, created action plans and learned to listen to the needs of communities. In addition, many students are participating in the Leadership in Building Communities seminar offered by the public administration program and political science and sociology departments through the Fitz Center. This semester, the seminar has partnered with the Carillon neighborhood, located just west of UD's campus, to help develop a shared vision for the future of the neighborhood.

The Class of 2008 has been adding the final touches to its capstone project, the Beyond Brown Downtown Directory, which will be printed and distributed later this fall semester. The Downtown Dayton Partnership has been extremely influential in securing funding and providing resources for the project. Instead of meeting monthly, this cohort will participate in workshops throughout the year on grant writing, GIS mapping, census research and career preparation.

Four students attended the National League of Cities Conference in New Orleans, La. Program Director Dean Lovelace travels to this conference annually with Dayton Civic Scholars to expose them to local government programs and practices around the nation. This year's delegation included Erin Aldrich '08, Monica DiGiandomenico '09, Emily Mumm '10, and Annie O'Connell '10.

Recruitment for the Class of 2011 has begun. Lovelace has been speaking to advising seminars within the social science departments to invite students to apply. Applications are available on the Fitz Center web site and will be accepted through Jan. 31, 2008. 



THE PATH LESS TRAVELED: SEMESTER OF SERVICE

By Dani Kusner

The Fall 2007 Semester of Service program is providing three seniors real-world work experiences and insights into career paths through full-time, service-learning internships with nonprofits in Dayton.

While students gain skills unique to each partner site, the opportunity to expand learning beyond the classroom is universal and invaluable. Tim Hall, a student case worker at Salvation Army Booth House, says, "I have learned about social justice, chemical dependency and poverty in ways that classroom learning could never match."

Students also learn life skills of adaptability and patience. Whitney Dawson, a case worker assistant in Daybreak's self-sufficiency program, comments, "When you work in a setting that is totally dependent upon other people's actions and their willingness to cooperate, you have to expect the unexpected." Life lessons are easily acquired in the chaotic social service environment, which starkly contrasts the controlled learning in academic classrooms.

Throughout the semester, students learn about the city of Dayton and the joys and hardships of inner-city life. Paul Engles, an after-school education leader at Adventure Central, says, "Far too many UD students are confined to the 'UD bubble.' By doing a Semester of Service, students are able to explore the greater Dayton community, work with underprivileged populations and give back to the city that they call 'home' for four years."

As originally intended, Semester of Service continues to impact students' decisions about their career paths. For a junior or senior with a confident vision for the future, Semester of Service affords sacred time to spend weeknights and weekends applying for post-graduate internships and master's programs without the stress of papers and tests bearing down on them. Hall's experiences at the Booth House have confirmed his desire to study community counseling and he is currently applying to graduate programs. For others, Semester of Service offers insights into alternative career paths. Dawson, whose eventual goal is to be a criminal defense attorney, has decided to wait on law school and explore social work. And students who are still undecided about specific career paths receive confirmation of their passions and begin to explore specific routes. Engles' experience has reaffirmed his desire to work with children. Despite differences in their future directions, all three seniors claim that this experience has deeply enhanced their time at UD, helped them remember or learn the privilege of their undergraduate education, and has affected their decisions for life beyond UD. 



Above: Paul Engles is serving the students of Adventure Central as an after-school education leader.

Below: Whitney Dawson stands at the construction site for the new Daybreak Opportunity House in Dayton. She served as a case worker assistant in Daybreak's self-sufficiency program.





Above: Melissa Hoelzle spent her semester at Booth House helping men and widening her lens of the world.

MY FINAL SEMESTER OF SERVICE JOURNAL ENTRY

By Melissa Hoelzle (Summer 2007)

How do I write my final journal? I feel there is no way for me to poignantly wrap up my experience, and I am feeling a deep and sudden sadness as I'm realizing that this really is my last journal, this really is my last week at the Booth House.

I know I will be asked what I thought about my Semester of Service and how it affected me. While I could write a book about this summer, it is also good to be able to keep my reactions in small parcels. Just like a jar filled with small keepsakes from great memories, each a glimpse at a moment remembered, it is good for me to be able to have a few key words or emotions to tie back to this summer.

First, this summer has been eye opening. I've said it many times to express how different this summer has been for me than from any past experience. My backyard runs into a cornfield and the summer of 2006 was spent with girls with trust funds. Having the opportunity to work among urban men who have had nothing more than a few dollars to their name has been one of the most scope-widening experiences of my life. To illustrate: I was talking to my dad about immigration. I was so frustrated by him only being able to see it from his vantage point. I told him, "I don't want to think like a Fremont-er anymore. It's a narrow lens with which we view the world, and I think that is dangerous." I was worried that perhaps I had offended him, but he told me that when he was my age, he, too, wanted to widen his scope. He moved back to Fremont and raised a family and, he says, his scope went back. He actually thanked me for pointing it out. I'm not saying I'm even close to being as open-minded as I'd like to be, but I'm realizing more every day how much I have to learn about scopes and the "big picture."

Another thing that this summer offered me that I wasn't really expecting was inspiration. For a drug addict, each day without that drug is a major victory, but my guys do it every day. For a homeless man that is so sure society has written him off, it is a huge struggle to put on his nicest, second-hand clothes and nail an interview, but it happens a few times a week. For a man who has not one family member who trusts him — and no friends who aren't high or dying — to look at me, smiling, and say, "I'm blessed" when I ask how he's doing ... I'm constantly blown away. For many of these men, they will be the first to tell you that it was selfishness, greed, pride or a number of other vices that got them to where they are, yet it takes enormous strength to get back up and get on with life.

For me, this summer has also been empowering. To see the men pull themselves up, to do whatever it takes, to make it work at all costs, to ask 30 businesses to hire them, to go to daily meetings, to ask for help, I am constantly proud and amazed. Sure, some days I'm so mad at them I could jump across my desk and shake them, but I don't want to focus on that. I want to remember the good I got to see. Sometimes it was just a glimpse, but at least I got to see that.

I can tell a dozen stories about unappreciated comments, relapses, disappearing clients or just plain noncompliance. But for every one of those, I can tell two dozen more about daily battles won and little goals accomplished leading to big changes. I can see men who literally transform from angry, vindictive and unkempt to thankful, bright, excited and motivated gentlemen.

I can't verbalize how appreciative I am of this program. I feel that I might sound insincere when I say how much this has meant to me. I hope those who read this realize that I am being genuine. I have tried to not take this experience for granted and I have really strived to suck everything I could from this. Some days, it was darn difficult to do. But most days, I felt so blessed to have been able to do this. I can't thank you enough for giving me this opportunity. Thank you for an amazing summer and an experience that I will have no choice but to take with me wherever I go from here. 

FITZ CENTER RESEARCHERS TO PLAY ROLE ON MAJOR FEDERAL GRANT

By Brenda Donnelly, Ph.D.

Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley has received a five-year demonstration grant from the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Programs of the Office of Population Affairs of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to assist teens involved with the child protection authorities in Montgomery County. Through individual contact with a youth development specialist, group activities and programming, and the presentation of a series of educational modules, it is hoped that this program will help the participants to reach their full potential, support their efforts to avoid health-risking behaviors including early sexual activity, and promote better relationships with the important adults in their lives. About 100 12- to 14-year-olds will receive these services each year.

One of only 17 organizations to receive an evaluation-intensive Adolescent Family Life Prevention grant this year, Catholic Social Services of the Miami Valley will be working closely with the research staff of the Fitz Center for Leadership in Community to find the most effective ways to support youth and their adult caretakers as they negotiate the challenges of adolescence. The evaluation will entail a random assignment of the young people who have come in contact with Children Services Division of Montgomery County Job and Family Services to either this program or to a control group. Changes in their attitudes, behaviors, expectations, relationships and understanding of both program youth and the control group will be tracked over a period of up to two years. Information from both groups will be used in a multi-site evaluation of the AFL Prevention programs and as part of the ongoing effort to find effective ways to help young people make healthy choices. 

CATHOLIC EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE FORMED

By Judy Keyes

An Oct. 1 press conference announced a new Catholic Education Collaborative in Dayton. The 21 Catholic schools and 27 parishes of the Dayton area will be working together with the Dayton Deanery to set a joint vision for the Catholic schools in Montgomery County and parts of Greene and Miami counties. The deanery initiative will be lead by a board including Anne Battes, president of the collaborative, Father Dave Brinkmoeller, Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., and Franz Hoge. The collaborative expects to be a stronger, more interdependent partnership of Catholic schools than have operated in the Dayton area for most of the past century. They will work together with the deanery to better position parishes for the future. The deanery has a strong commitment to making sure there is a vital presence in the center city and ensuring urban children of any faith the opportunity to attend Catholic schools. 



Above: Brenda Donnelly, Ph.D., director of research.

Below, from left to right: Father Dave Brinkmoeller, Dr. Toni Moore, Brother Joe Kamis, S.M., Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., and Anne Battes at the Catholic Education Collaborative press conference



Above: Participants in the Great Miami River trip arrive in downtown Dayton and see the city skyline from a new vantage point.

Below: Heading south on the Great Miami River, the River Stewards and others enjoy the natural environment of Dayton, Ohio.

THE MAGNIFICENT MIAMI: RIVER TRIP REFLECTIONS

Serenity on the river

By Jaclyn Kelly

Canoeing or kayaking on the Great Miami River is one of the most natural and self-reflective experiences one could have during four short years at the University of Dayton. I immediately felt a sense of serenity and tranquility upon sliding into the wobbling canoe to begin my trip down the river this past August. I found myself completely tuned in to all that surrounded me. What amazed me most about the landscape of the river were the massive trees that stretched toward the blazing sun, exposing their roots as they clung for life to the hardened soil of the sloping bank.

Being an outdoorsy person, I was extremely attracted to the Rivers Institute at the University of Dayton. The trip down the Great Miami was everything that I had expected it to be and more. As I glided down the river, I was aware of the brilliant sights and sounds that surrounded my little canoe. The sound of birds calling to one another across the banks along with the sight of ripples as I methodically dipped my paddle into the cool clear water are only a few examples of the natural wonders that I witnessed while on the river. During my 17-mile journey, I often found myself wondering how such a treasure as the Great Miami could be so underutilized by both the University and Greater Dayton communities. My hope for the future is that one day you too can experience the wonders that lay right in our backyard.

Resources, beauty, graces

By Tracey Horan

This river orientation trip brought to my mind the trend of humanity resisting the order of nature. Our natural lives aren't long enough. Our natural bodies aren't beautiful enough. Everyday tasks aren't easy enough. Nature, in general, isn't accommodating enough. When we find that the natural placement of forests or that the natural, seasonal flooding of rivers isn't convenient enough, our first thought is to overrun nature for the sake of human contentment. Rarely do we suffer a slight inconvenience (even regarding a matter that is not life or death) for the sake of the natural order of things. No, river water or lake water is not as sanitized as pool water, but how does that make it contaminated? Perhaps some regions have more abundant sources of fresh water than others, but does this mean we should deplete flourishing rivers so that Americans do not have to burden themselves with the thought of water conservation? As much as I fear spiders, after this trip I cannot possibly find validity in the idea that nature is a burden. It provides us with resources, beauty and graces that no person could contrive in a lifetime. 



THE RIVERS INSTITUTE: PUTTING THOUGHTS INTO ACTION

By Tim Shaffer

You could say things are coming along quite nicely. As the end of the semester quickly approaches, the Rivers Institute is continuing to make strides in developing its vision and mission while simultaneously engaging the community through a variety of programs. The Provost's Academic Excellence Grant, matching funds from the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and a grant from the Greater Dayton Conversation Fund have allowed the Rivers Institute to envision its mission and overall strategy for becoming a major component of the University of Dayton and the broader community. The Rivers Institute continues to think about its role beyond the campus. Because of its partnership with the Miami Conservancy District, Five Rivers MetroParks, Five Rivers Outdoors and Adventure Central, the Rivers Institute is able to utilize the resources and knowledge from its community partners in the planning process.

The Greater Dayton Conversation Fund of The Dayton Foundation has allowed the Rivers Institute to purchase four kayaks and a canoe to use for the various projects of the River Stewards. With this grant, the Rivers Institute has been able to work closely with the Dayton Early College Academy, DECA, on two occasions, engaging more than 110 students on issues of water quality of the Great Miami River. Test kits, nets and other materials for water sampling and testing with DECA students also were purchased through grant. The Rivers Institute is very grateful for the shared interest of the community in educating Dayton's youth about their important role in preserving our natural resources for future generations.

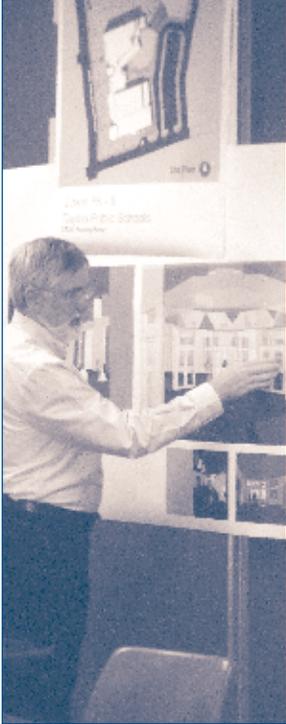
The Provost's Academic Excellence Grant and matching funds from the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences have supported the Rivers Institute Learning Community and Seminar. These Saturday morning sessions, facilitated by David Ramey of Strategic Leadership Associates, have allowed more than 40 students, faculty, staff and community partners to discuss and design a shared vision for an action plan of what the Rivers Institute will become. The ability to come together monthly to design the Rivers Institute has been essential to the continued development of this multifaceted initiative. There will be more information on this in future editions of the *Community Leader*. 



Above: River Steward Tracey Horan facilitates discussion with one of the smaller groups while Tim Shaffer, co-coordinator of the Rivers Institute, writes down the thoughts of the group during the Oct. 6 seminar.

Below: Students from the Dayton Early College Academy (DECA) wade in the Great Miami River near River-Scape while identifying macroinvertebrates.

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Above: John McCreery, an architect with Fanning/Howey Associates, presents the new building plans to the Edison Planning Committee.

Below: Kate Ervin (right) presents maps and renderings of proposed improvements for the Safe Routes to School initiative.

NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL CENTERS EXPAND BY ONE

By Don Vermillion

With the beginning of the new school year, Dayton's Neighborhood School Centers project added a school to the pilot project. The Dayton Board of Education decided to add Cleveland School in the Walnut Hills and Linden Heights neighborhoods to Kiser School, Fairview School and Edison School, which were in operation during the past school year. Ruskin School will begin as a Neighborhood School Center upon completion of construction in August 2008.

The YMCA of Greater Dayton is serving as the lead agency in partnership with Cleveland School. Kym Beasley, a former Dayton Public School teacher, serves as the site coordinator for the YMCA. Arlana Daniel is the Cleveland School principal.

In August, a new principal joined the Neighborhood School Center team at Kiser School. James G. Fowler is a retired military officer who has worked within Dayton Public Schools since 1995, and most recently came from a placement as assistant principal at Wogamon. Amber Rose, The Salvation Army's site coordinator at Kiser, has been working with Fowler to expand the school's programming.

A major component of the Neighborhood School Center concept is assuring that students are able to walk and bike safely to the school located in their community. During International Walk to School month in October, the four Neighborhood School Centers organized activities to encourage more walkers and bikers. Additionally, Cleveland School, Kiser School, Fairview School and Edison School all hosted sessions that included students, parents, police representatives, neighborhood leaders and city planners who walked the neighborhoods surrounding the school sites to begin the design process for determining the safest routes for walking and biking students. This also occurred in the Twin Towers neighborhood with East End Community Services organizing a similar session even though Ruskin School will not open for students until 2008.

The city of Dayton planning department will develop a plan based on these sessions that will be submitted to the state of Ohio for implementation funding. Kate Ervin, former Fitz Center graduate assistant for the Neighborhood School Centers project and a planner for the city, is leading the initiative.

A major component is assuring students are able to walk and bike safely to the school located in their community.



Each of the Neighborhood School Centers has begun its after-school programming for the 2007-08 school year. Fairview School again is hosting Adventure Central with its educational after-school program. In addition, one UD student intern, Drew Formentini, has organized an after-school club called *Sobre Fronteras* with a focus on students who have families who use English as a second language. The students in this program will have the opportunity in informal settings to become more comfortable with communicating in a way that will help them with self esteem and academic achievement.

Not all after-school programs taking place in Neighborhood School Centers are geared toward students. Cleveland School offers a Zumba exercise class through the YMCA to parents, teachers and community members each Thursday afternoon, and the turnout has been exceptional.

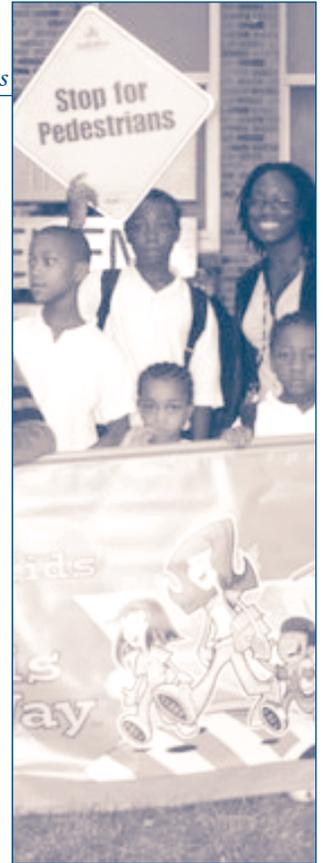
Nina Scroggins, Dayton Urban Leagues's site coordinator at Edison, has been working with residents in the Carillon Neighborhood to increase their awareness of activities at Edison and to improve their perceptions of the school. Students from the Edison Neighborhood School Center, as part of a service project, raked leaves for senior citizens on Harriett Street in the Carillon Neighborhood north of the UD Arena. This was one of the first activities of the Edison School Service Club. 

Neighborhood School Centers evaluation begins

By Brenda Donnelly, Ph.D.

The general purpose of the evaluation of the Neighborhood School Centers project is to identify and understand whether or not the Neighborhood School Centers have made a difference in the lives of the Dayton residents, their students and their communities. Movement toward meeting the major fundamental goals of the project — improvement in the learning environment for students and the strengthening of these schools' neighborhoods — will be evidenced in information collected through Dayton Public Schools, observations by the evaluation team, and daily recording of the activities of the site coordinators.

The efforts of the site coordinators are being tracked carefully and documented so that any changes in the opportunities available to the schools' students, area residents, and the neighborhood which develop out of the project's activities can be identified. Improvements in student educational outcomes or increases in involvement of area families, institutions and organizations in the school will be understood better in the context of the efforts of project workers. All activities are tracked by site coordinators in terms of activity goal, to whom it is directed, and how they go about it. It is hoped that the evaluation will provide information about the most effective ways to create vibrant schools in Dayton neighborhoods.



Above: Nina Scroggins with Edison students in search of safe routes to school.

Below: Members of the Edison Planning Committee discuss ways to create safe routes for students to walk to school.



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NEW STUDY CONSIDERS POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

By Alex Orlowski

After more than 18 months of planning, research, data analysis, drafting and editing, the "Millennials Talk Politics: A Study of College Student Political Engagement" report was released at the University of California's Washington Center in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday, Nov. 7. The study was one of the largest of its kind, conducting 27 focus groups incorporating 386 students from 12 four-year college campuses nationwide. This report is the most detailed current examination of college students' political and civic attitudes and experiences.

Fitz Center student intern and Dayton Civic Scholar Alex Orlowski is a coauthor of the report and helped coordinate focus groups at UD during the 2007-08 academic year. After spending his summer at the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement helping to draft the report, Orlowski returned to D.C. to help present the findings at the November release.

This study has compelling implications for higher education, national policymakers, and the news media, among others. The release incorporated a presentation of the findings coupled with two panel discussions on the report's implications for research in higher education and also the report's implications for the future of government, politics and the media. Notable panelists and featured speakers included Richard Battistoni, professor of political science at Providence College; John Bridgeland, president of Civic Enterprises, LLC; Maureen Curley, president of Campus Compact; Maya Enista, chief operating officer of Mobilize.org; George Mehaffy, vice president, Academic Leadership and Change (AASCU/ American Democracy Project); and Trish Tchume from idealist.org. For more information on the Millennials Talk Politics report, contact the Fitz Center. 

Above: Dayton Civic Scholar Alex Orlowski is a co-author of the new *Millennials Talk Politics* report, produced in conjunction with CIRCLE and the Kettering Foundation.

<http://fitzcenter.udayton.edu>

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