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Community Leader

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PROFILE:

JANA STROM LEADS SEMESTER OF SERVICE


By Alex Orlowski

Although Jana Strom is known for her thoughtful, methodical approach to decision making, it took her less than two days to choose to move to Dayton and take an AmeriCorps*VISTA position with the Fitz Center's Semester of Service program four years ago. It is rare to find someone with a degree in molecular biology in the service-learning field, but Strom has found fulfilling means to stimulate her passions in her position as the coordinator of the Semester of Service program.

The Semester of Service is an opportunity for University of Dayton undergraduate students to take a full semester or summer off from full-time classes to immerse themselves in 450 hours of direct service in one of the partnering service agencies in the Dayton community. The program emphasizes experiential learning and prepares students to become life-long advocates and leaders of social change.

Strom says her passion stems from working with students who are interested in investigating and learning about social justice and injustice both in Dayton and throughout society. With her ability to actively listen and respectfully challenge students to expand their world views, Strom observes that her most rewarding moments "occur when a student's mindset about poverty evolves throughout the course of the semester, and they begin to deeply understand the barriers to social justice and their capacity to create positive change," she said. Strom promulgates a life philosophy of seeking balance and bringing attention to social disparities through companionship with others as they proceed through their lives' journeys.

Strom realizes that her career path may one day lead her closer to her science background, but her main goals are to continually advance her own learning and share her knowledge with others. By engaging people with different backgrounds and experiences, Strom hopes to integrate knowledge with advocacy in helping populations who are sometimes passed over in our society.

Instead of concerning herself with leaving a grand legacy or attaining some great position in life, Strom approaches her vocation on a day-by-day basis. When she does find some spare time, she enjoys exploring Dayton, running and visiting friends. 



Above: Jana Strom, Semester of Service coordinator

Below: Strom (bottom left) with Semester of Service participants and Borth Ed Zamierowski, S.M.





Above: Caption


Below: Caption

SUMMER 2008 SEMESTER OF SERVICE: HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

By Jana Strom

For the 10 students participating in Semester of Service this summer, Dayton has become a home. The city and UD campus are no longer their seasonal home from late August to early May, but rather their year round home where they learn about the challenges facing the community and experience the fabulous nooks and crannies that can be easily overlooked when consumed by 16 course hour credits and club meetings. These 10 students are part of a larger group of 20 total students per year who participate in Semester of Service and serve full time in Dayton nonprofit centers for inner-city children and teens, individuals who are homeless, and neighborhoods undergoing revitalization. In addition to serving in the community and participating in a three-credit service-learning course that accompanies the experience, summer students live in an intentional community sharing meals and reflecting on their service.

When Semester of Service began in January 2003, social science students were most heavily recruited for the program due to the natural connection between their courses and the learning opportunities offered through the experience. As the significance of experiential education in higher education has continued to grow, SoS has come to attract students with a range of educational goals and majors, including but not limited to business, science and education. The profile of the students who engages in SoS continues to evolve and the summer 2008 participants exemplify the diverse majors that are being connected in this long-term service immersion experience. Participating this summer are juniors **Kaitlin Berger**, public relations and marketing, **Krysten Cotone**, special education with a minor in psychology, and **Dan Wasnick**, philosophy with minors in communications and English. The seniors participating are **Kelly Grimes**, international studies and human rights, **Cassidy Lekan**, psychology with a minor in social work, **Alyssa Lux**, math and science middle childhood education, **Leah Makley**, biochemistry with a minor in fine arts, **Carly McInerney**, sociology with minors in social work and women's studies, **Caitlin Robie**, psychology with a minor in business, and **Abby Rossbach**, English with a minor in criminal justice.

No matter the major, SoS students agree they are shaped by their service experiences in the city of Dayton. Some students are inspired to continue their language minor because of their work with an English-as-another-language client. Other students decide to change their majors because of the experience. And still others learn small but significant lessons about themselves, like a very organized person becoming comfortable with the unpredictable pace of a youth classroom. Such experience, when combined with reflection, offers students a greater sense of who they are and what they need to lead fulfilled lives. 



PARTNER PROFILE: UD AND THE DAKOTA CENTER


By Ed Zamierowski, S.M.

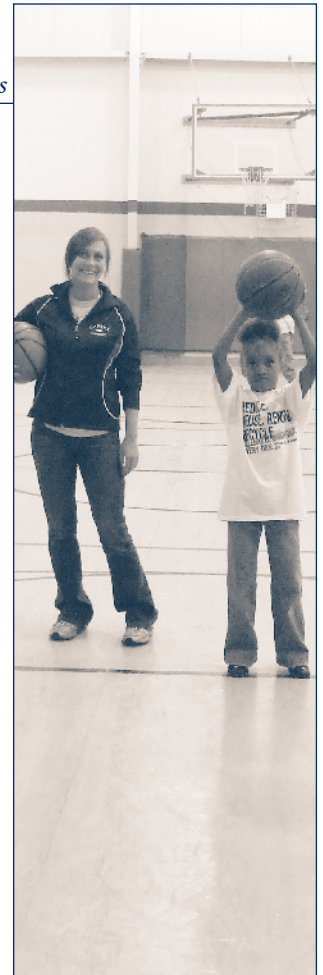
Father Phillip Hoelle, S.M., had an idea in 1966 for a youth center, and it took shape in a social hall of Holy Name Church on Dakota Street. The University of Dayton has a long history with the Dakota Center, beginning with students as start-up staff and with financial help from William J. Hoben, then dean of the UD School of Business Administration. In 1974, an electrical fire gutted the building and temporary quarters were found in the vacant parish school. Two years later it moved again to “the barn,” a century-old carriage house on Summit Street, now Paul Lawrence Dunbar Street, in the McFarlane neighborhood. It took 25 more years for Father Hoelle’s dream to materialize with the opening of the newly constructed Dakota Center on Barnett Street at Fifth Street.

The Dakota Center contains a gym, activity and meeting rooms, kitchen, locker facilities, and office space for staff and outside agencies that offer services to local clients. The mission of the center is to provide a safe community atmosphere engaging Dayton neighborhoods and people of all ages in programs that educate the whole person.

Programs offered at the center include academic tutoring (Homework Club, in which the Dakota Center Club at UD provides major tutorial assistance, with additional volunteers from Chaminade-Julienne High School and Sinclair Community College); computer classes, arts and crafts, summer camp, Dakota Warriors Basketball (which participates in the city recreation leagues) and Dakota Swish Basketball (an AAU team with many trophies to prove their skills). The award-winning drill team/drum corps/dance team is one of the longest programs. The drum line has performed at UD basketball games for several years to standing ovations from the UD student section. In addition, there are karate classes for the kids and adult computer classes for up to 20 students each, First Job Training that teaches entry fundamentals, and a large community garden with vegetables and flowers.

In 2006, the Dakota Center served 1,786 nourishing meals to the after-school program attendees; many would not have an evening meal otherwise. This past year has seen a 25 percent increase in attendance at the Center due to the closure of several schools and community centers.

Sharon B. Mitchell has been executive director since just before the move to Barnett Street and has looked forward each term to a new UD Semester of Service student who comes there with new skills, energy, and enthusiasm to help the Golden Age Club, Homework Club, and arts and crafts and recreation programs. Caitlin Robie is the current UD student serving at the Center. 



Above: Caption of Robie at Dakota Center

Below: Caption of Robie and Mitchell at Dakota Center



A Fond Fitz Center Farewell

By Linda Potyrala

A fond Fitz Center farewell was given to 10 graduating seniors and their parents in May. This cohort formed the first Dayton Civic Scholars class to complete the program since its inception in 2004. DCS Director Dean Lovelace served as master of ceremonies, presenting each scholar with a personal memory, comments on their distinguished service and parting gifts. **Josh Rauch** and **George Ertle** will attend the University of Kansas public manager program; **Erin Aldrich** will attend University of North Carolina School of Government; **Allison Kretz** will attend Case Western Reserve University School of Law; **Kyle Lauterhahn** will work locally as campaign manager to re-elect Judge Jeffrey E. Froelich; **Molly Heineman** will volunteer in Malawi for the Marianists for two years and develop the nonprofit she created to fund education for street children there; **Claire Yerke** will study at the University of Pittsburgh's Center for International Studies; **Anne Johnson** has joined Teach for America, an inner-city teaching program addressing educational inequities; **Julie Salomone** will study social work at Tulane University; and **Charity Smalls** will start her master's in English at the University of Dayton. All are scholars indeed!

DAYTON CIVIC SCHOLARS CONTINUE TO EXPLORE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

By Linda Potyrala

The 2009 cohort of the Dayton Civic Scholars continues to hone its capstone project. In the fall, they will host a speakers' series with two government leaders who will discuss challenges and opportunities facing the city of Dayton before the November election. The second set of speakers will be invited in the spring to address issues facing the city of Dayton after the November election. Watch for posters in the fall for this exciting program.

The 2010 cohort is examining a capstone project concerning mentoring programs in the Dayton area. They've hosted representatives from Dayton Public Schools; DCS alumna Carolyn Slott, currently the volunteer coordinator for the city of Trotwood; Shelley Dickstein, Dayton assistant city manager for economic development; and Stanley Earley, Dayton assistant city manager. Speakers have provided insights to current trends in education, volunteerism, economic and metropolitan development and challenges for Dayton.

Some members of this cohort made their spring breakouts part of their service for the DCS service requirement. **Ryan Grande** and **Anne O'Connell** served at a weeklong program in UD's Appalachia Program in Salyersville, Ky. **Bethany Allen** joined DCS senior **Charity Smalls** and **Dean Lovelace** in attending the annual National Community Reinvestment Coalition conference in Washington, D.C. During this conference, they visited the offices of Representative Mike Turner and U.S. Senators Sherrod Brown and George Voinovich to encourage them to vote for economic initiatives to help those who have suffered from predatory lending and foreclosures.

The 2011 cohort completed its orientation, meeting with City Planner John Gower, community leader Annie Bonaparte, Dayton Metropolitan Housing Director Greg Johnson, artist Willis "Bing" Davis, Mayor Rhine McLin and other community leaders.

After meeting at a Dayton City Commission meeting, City Commissioner Nan Whaley told the new cohort with a smile: "We are always thrilled to meet our new Dayton Civic Scholars. We expect great things from you!"

At the Fitz Center, we know they will do great things. 



INTERNS AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS: BUSY PEOPLE

By Emily Klein

Assisting Brenda Donnelly and Cindy Currell in research, **Brigitte Beale**, **Justine Bunn** and **Megan Nichols** are working on the project Choices Teens Make, which is gathering data for the purpose of developing programs to help teens make good decisions throughout their teenage years. Their work consists of conducting a series of surveys of children in the region.

Lindsey Bungenstock has recently assumed the role of a graduate assistant in the Fitz Center. She will be working with the Neighborhood School Centers, the Leadership in Building Communities course and the National Issues Forum. She has also begun taking classes for her master's in public administration.

As the Bonner Senior Intern, **Laura Burgess** will be assisting Jana Strom and Brother Ed Zamierowski, S.M., with the Summer of Service Program, including orientation, community events and reflection preparation. In addition to this work, she will be working at a camp for inner-city Cincinnati children.

Continuing her work with the Rivers Institute this summer, **Emily Klein** will be planning the River Stewards orientation program, working with Rivers Institute interns Katie Norris and Liz Markus, and other institute work. This summer she is also working on writing her honors thesis.


Interning with the Rivers Institute this summer, **Liz Markus** and **Katie Norris** primarily will be researching watershed initiatives in other areas

and continuing the conversation on the Great Miami River Corridor started at the River Summit. Both are holding additional jobs; Norris is working at UD Research Institute, Markus is working in a biology lab.

Summer began for **Linda Potyrala** with the Dayton Civic Scholars orientation program in the first week of May. For the rest of the summer, she'll be working as a graduate assistant on school year preparations for the three cohorts. She also plans to travel to Governor's Island with her family.

This summer, **Alex Orlowski** will be working on multiple projects in the Fitz Center, including the Service Learning Strategy Retreat and the National Issues Forum. In addition to his work in the office, he is also working on his honors thesis and studying for the LSAT.

Jordan Rowan Fannin will continue her work as graduate assistant with Brother Ray Fitz, S.M., this summer as they prepare for the Marianist Educational Associates and Association of Marianist Universities meetings. She will also be conducting research for Brother Ray and for her own thesis.

Tim Shaffer's work as graduate assistant with the Rivers Institute will continue this summer. He will also be kicking off the Graduate Community Fellows program. The new program will provide University of Dayton graduate assistantships at local non-profit agencies. 



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Above: Dusty caption (better photo?)

Below: Rivers Summit caption

SUMMITS, STEWARDS, PADDLES, OH MY!

By Tim Shaffer

On April 28 in the College Park Center on the University of Dayton campus, President Dan Curran told a story about a time he was in San Antonio. He was told he had a room with a “river view.” To quote a recent editorial in the *Dayton Daily News*:


He didn’t feel cheated so much as mystified when he looked out the window and saw the “stream” that has been a catalyst for that city’s vaunted downtown redevelopment.

Once back in Dayton, he said, he checked out the view of the Great Miami from a third-floor room at the Courtyard by Marriott. “Now that’s a river,” he told the crowd at this week’s River Summit, hosted by the university and the Miami Conservancy District.

More than 100 community leaders from the government, business, agriculture and recreation sectors of the region gathered at the first Great Miami River Summit to discuss the 98-mile river corridor that stretches from Sidney to Hamilton. Convened by UD and the Miami Conservancy District, the summit’s presenters included mayors of some of the cities along the corridor and representatives of Five Rivers MetroParks, the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, the Dayton Development Coalition, and the University’s Rivers Institute and River Stewards program. Other participants represented educational institutions, rowing clubs and recreational outfitters, the art community, and conservation organizations. The greatest take-away from the River Summit was the similarity among the presentations and how the communities already have a shared vision for the future of the region.

The summit is just the beginning of what conveners envision to be an ongoing conversation among participants. The Rivers Institute, along with the Miami Conservancy District, will play major roles in continuing the conversation of this first Great Miami River Summit.

In other news, Rivers Institute coordinator Emily Klein and Fitz Center Executive Director Dick Ferguson, along with other members of the Rivers Institute, presented to the UD Board of Trustees on the yearlong seminar and the five-year plan it produced. With opportunities like this, the Rivers Institute continues to gain support from within the University as well as in the greater Dayton community. The Rivers Institute will also be active this summer by participating in the Five Rivers MetroParks’ Paddle in the Park.

Additionally, the 2011 cohort — comprised of 13 students from 12 different majors — was selected in April. The River Stewards continue to grow and now number 25 students. This growth demonstrates the increasing interest from a diverse range of students, building on the idea that our watershed and river system are not only for scientists. We all have a role to play. 



DAYTON'S NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL CENTERS GET NATIONAL ATTENTION


By Lindsey Bungenstock

This past May, the Neighborhood School Center site coordinators traveled to Portland, Oregon, to present at the Coalition for Community Schools National Forum. The Dayton model of neighborhood schools is viewed as one of the premier examples in the nation. Edison site coordinator **Nina Scroggins** commented, "Being able to interact with active crusaders who are committed, as I am, to developing strong relationships with communities and schools really put my work into perspective."

Although the school year is coming to an end, each NSC is busy with events. For example, Fairview NSC recently had its end-of-school-year celebrations for its after-school programs: Adventure Central, Girl's Club, Physical Education Program and Sobre Fronteras. Starting June 23, Fairview hosted a five-week CDF Freedom Schools Summer Program. This program is sponsored by the Montgomery County Children Services with programming by Unified Health Solutions. As a part of this program, Fairview will lead a march against violence on July 9. Contact **Tashira Collier** at tcollier@uhs-dayton.org if you have any questions about this program

In May, Edison NSC hosted its second annual gender retreat at UD: A Dialogue on Personal and Social Responsibilities on May 29 (female participants only) and May 30 (male participants only). Approximately 180 fourth- through seventh-grade students participated in dialogue sessions with community leaders on topics such as respect, self-esteem, and the importance of education and community involvement. Notable community leaders who participated include Dr. Donnell Gregory, Dayton Youth Commissioner; Mark Baker, Montgomery County Mentoring Collaborative; and Dayton Public Schools administrators.

Cleveland NSC has been hosting events. One highlight was the May 23 Cleveland School Carnival organized by the Community Education Council. The YMCA donated an inflatable for the event and the school was full of neighborhood residents, Cleveland school students and their families.

At Kiser NSC, a group of third- and fourth-grade students enjoyed a trip to the Cincinnati Zoo with a class of UD service learners in April. The Kiser students learned basic facts about lots of animals and then focused on learning in-depth about a specific animal. With the help of their UD buddies, Kiser students wrote about their chosen creature and shared their knowledge with their peers in a public-speaking exercise. **Kate Byrnes** and her faculty adviser, **Carl Friese**, are moving this effort forward. The Salvation Army and Neighborhood School Centers also contributed financial and social capital. This trip left the students asking, "When can we go again?!?" 

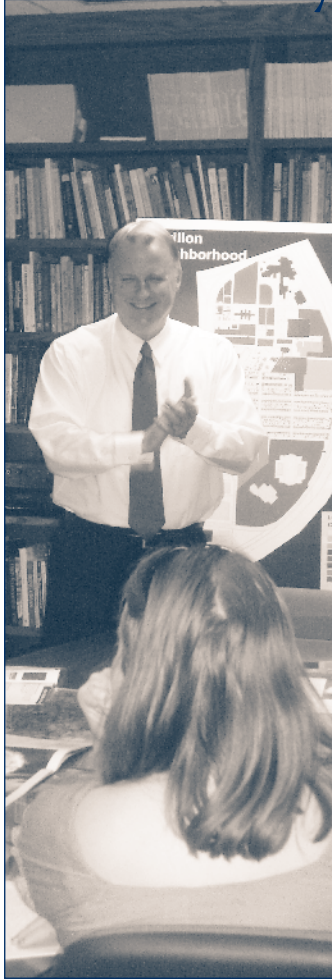


Above: Zoo caption

Below: Portland caption



Community Leader



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THE FITZ CENTER PRESENTS

By Jordan Rowan Fannin

As another school year comes to an end, amid the accomplishments of students and the honoring of graduates, the Fitz Center staff and faculty deserve recognition for the many opportunities they have had this year to speak, to share and to teach. They have represented the Fitz Center well on our campus, in our community and across the country in 2007-08.

July 11: Don Vermillion with Major Tom Duperee of the Salvation Army, *Kroc Center Project*, Northeast Priority Board

Aug. 13: Don Vermillion, *Dayton Region Development Patterns*, Booz Allen Hamilton staff

Nov. 8: Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., *Sharpening Blunt Intentions: Reflections on the Stewardship of Marianist Boards*, Marianist Workshop for the Board of Trustees at St. Mary's University

Nov. 16: Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., *Civic Engagement & the River*, UD's River Stewards

Nov. 29: Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., *Advancing Urban Justice: The Role of Faith Communities*, LEAD Stakeholders of Justice Dinner

Jan. 14 & 16: Dick Ferguson, *Civic Responsibility and Public Good*, First-year Business Seminar

Jan. 16 & 17: Dick Ferguson, *Universities and Civic Engagement – UD Perspectives*, Kettering Foundation Retreat, Miami University

Jan. 22: Don Vermillion, *Neighborhood School Centers Project Update*, Dayton School Board

Feb. 2: Don Vermillion, *Planning Session Facilitation*, Franklin City Council and staff

Feb. 18: Dick Ferguson, *Genesis and Neighborhood School Centers*, Cities and Social Justice Seminar



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Feb. 25: Dick Ferguson, *Leadership that Builds Community*, Xavier University Planning Team, Cincinnati

March 12: Dick Ferguson, *Social Capital as an Essential Community Development Tool*, Public Administration Organizational Theory course

March 25 & 27: Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., *Advancing Justice and Community: Creating Community Partnership at Catholic Colleges and Universities, Assessing Community-Based Learning in Light of Catholic Social Teaching and Community Partnerships and Mission*, First Annual Scholar Activist-in-Residence at the Common Good Symposium for Cabrini College's 50th Anniversary Celebration

March 28: Don Vermillion, *Neighborhood School Centers Project*, Dayton Civic Scholars

March 29: Don Vermillion, *Planning Session Facilitation*, Carlisle City Council and staff

March 30: Dick Ferguson, *Dayton's Neighborhood School Centers*, with Antoinette Adkins and Nina Scroggins, Panel presentation at Cabrini College, Philadelphia, Pa.

April 15: Dick Ferguson, *The Fitz Center and Community Building*, Partners in Marianist Education

April 22: Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., *Regional Challenges: Global Competitiveness and Economic Inequality*, CityLinks Conference, University of Dayton

April 28: Dick Ferguson, *The Rivers Institute at the University of Dayton*, with Tracey Horan, Great Miami River Summit

May 1: Dick Ferguson, *Tapping the Assets of Higher Education*, Coalition for Community Schools National Forum, Portland, Oregon

May 8: Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., *Marianist*

Education in the School of Engineering, UD's School of Engineering Retreat

May 15: Dick Ferguson, *The Rivers Institute at the University of Dayton*, with Emily Klein, UD Board of Trustees

May 16: Dick Ferguson, *UD's Urban Community Connections*, Lecture and bus tour for Leadership UD

May 16: Brother Raymond Fitz, S.M., *The Hedgehog & the Fox*, Address at UD Provost Fred Pestello's Farewell Reception

May 16: Don Vermillion, *Neighborhood School Centers Project*, Leadership UD