

# ISSUES IN SERVICE:

Student  
Projects

March 2017

Service-Learning at UCF Newsletter



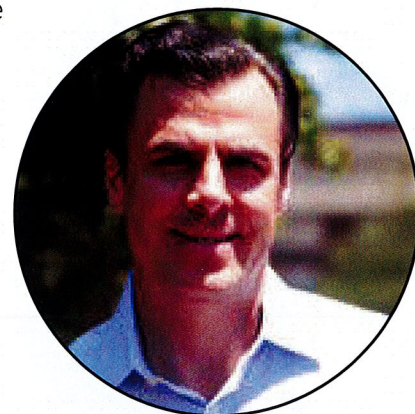
Office of Experiential Learning

# WELCOME!

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**D**r. Jason Jude Smith has joined the Division of Teaching and Learning and the College of Undergraduate Studies as the Director of the Office of Experiential Learning. Dr. Smith has extensive experience leading the development of internships and other field experiences designed to prepare students for the rigors of their professions. In addition, he has led research and accountability efforts for one of the oldest and largest Professional Development School partnerships in the United States.



Dr. Smith holds a doctorate in Education, with a specialization in Curriculum, Literacy, and Cultural Studies, from West Virginia University, and his bachelor's and master's degrees from UCF.

*"This experience gave me the ability to learn the material in lecture and apply it out of the typical classroom setting; applying the material out of the classroom involved working with group members of various backgrounds on a topic that we all found interesting. This diverse collaboration served as a form of experiential learning that promoted my own personal growth as a student, by making me work outside of my normal comfort zone, but it also allowed me to develop collaboration techniques and community engagement skills that really connected me with my university, and extended that relationship with the community."*

**- Megan, student in Dr. Enrique Del Barco's Nanoscience II: Technological Applications course**

**Students in the College of Education and Human Performance** explain how they have benefitted personally from their Junior Achievement service-learning experience:

- I have become better as a teacher. More comfortable in a classroom setting and more secure in abilities as an educator.
- It really gave me confidence in my future career!
- I gained valuable teaching skills and learned to handle an elementary class.
- This was my first experience presenting a lesson to a whole classroom and I really learned how to do so.
- I worked in a diverse classroom which mirrors the real world and the future classrooms I will experience.
- I feel more prepared to start my internship.

# Dr. Linda Walters & Students Communicating Science

## Objectives:

- Increase awareness of microplastics.
- Incorporate our research into an exciting hands-on lesson that inspires a younger generation to limit their plastic footprint.

A primary objective of BSC 4312 SL is to connect and communicate science to the public. Through this service-learning experience, we realized how important it is to be the voice of science and the power of community involvement. Discussing and engaging with elementary students through hands-on activities that we developed based on our research has not only taught them, but us, the necessity for education and outreach to truly make a change.



## Squawk Squad: “Scoping in” on Florida Shorebirds

### Objectives:

- To understand how human numbers can impact shorebirds and better communicate this research to the community, especially beachgoers.
- To teach a 2nd grade class about the importance of shorebirds and how humans can affect them.

Student Learning increased by 30%

t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Unequal Variances

Difference between the means was significant ( $p < 0.0001$ ).

Standard Error of Means:

Pre-test : 5.8049; Post-test: 3.6949

Civic Engagement:

As scientists, it is important to educate people about how humans can effect the environment. Educating people on the beaches about how their actions can affect other species.

Our Impact:

Directly impacted:

19 students at Galileo School and teacher

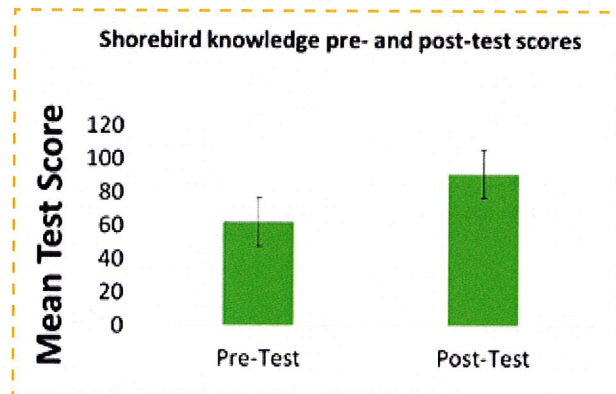
~60 beach-goers

Indirectly impacted:

~200 SURE attendees; UCF's undergraduate research conference

~160 family members from Galileo School

- Projects created and presented by students in Dr. Linda Walter's Marine Biology course



## Service-Learning Student Showcase Scholarship Recipients Highlight



### The project:

Course: Longitudinal Curricular Theme

Instructor: Dr. Judith Simms-Cendan

Community Partners: Dr. Luis Esmurdoc and the Universidad Católica Nordestana

**M**edical Students Providing Across Continents (MedPACt) is a student-run organization dedicated to increasing awareness of global health disparities and meeting the needs of medically underserved populations, locally and abroad. To this end, MedPACt organizes and facilitates an annual international service-learning trip to the Dominican Republic (DR) and also seeks to address the healthcare needs of migrant communities around Central Florida.

The team included UCF Colleges of Medicine and Nursing students and faculty, UCF Engineers Without Borders, University of Florida College of Pharmacy, a non-denominational chaplain, and this year, dentistry served to facilitate a comprehensive approach to patient health. Together, we were able to provide medical (including oral surgery), nursing, dental, pharmacy, and engineering services.

Our service team partnered with the local medical school Universidad Católica Nordestana to offer healthcare to 864 underserved patients from six different rural communities in the north-eastern DR over a span of seven days. We continued to enjoy improvements of our portable, customizable electronic health record (EHR) for the majority of our patients, allowing MedPACt to provide continuity of care in the same communities we served the years before.

The DR trip allows medical, nursing, dental, pharmacy, and engineering students to deliver a sustainable and inter-professional approach to patient health to a population in need, while exploring diverse healthcare systems and cultural traditions. Students gained experiences in organizing an international outreach trip, in collaborating with an interdisciplinary team, and in integrating an EHR into patient care. We aim to continue this trip every summer to provide continuous service to the same underserved populations.

Approximate impact numbers:  
864+ community members

## What Showcase?

The Annual Service-Learning Student Showcase is an opportunity for students to present a poster that focuses on their service-learning project. Students enrolled in summer, fall, and/or spring semesters of the current academic year are eligible to participate. The event is open to the public for viewing.

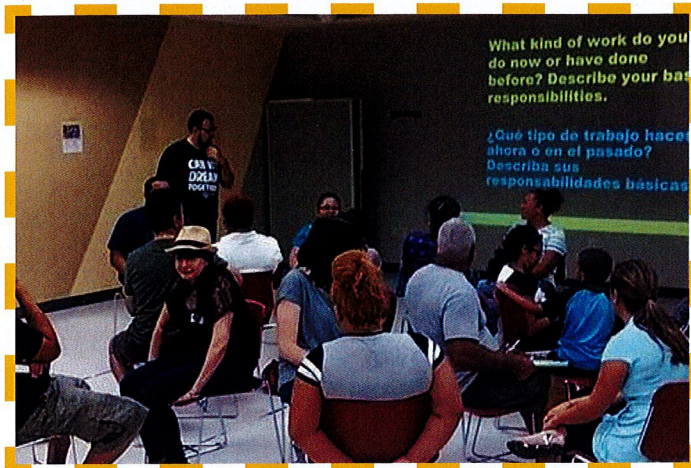
Over \$10,000 in scholarships are awarded in recognition of best practices in pedagogical value, quality of display, value to agency, caliber of reflection, enhancement of civic engagement, excellence in undergraduate and graduate studies among other categories. To date, over \$82,000 in scholarships has been awarded.

The event gives students an opportunity to articulate the relationship between academics, service, and civics. It is a user-friendly, conference style occasion that helps students, faculty members, and our community partners acknowledge their achievements.

For more information about the event check out [explearning.ucf.edu/about/news](http://explearning.ucf.edu/about/news)

## Fluente: Outreach Promoting Bilingual Communities

**S**tudents enrolled in the Advanced Spanish Conversation course work with Fluente to promote the use of English and Spanish in Orlando and to help those who encounter communication challenges in their daily lives. With this partnership, students enrolled in the course not only practice Spanish and improve their proficiency in their second language but also directly help others to develop the necessary linguistic skills that they need in their daily routines.



Fluente is a non-profit language program that helps English and Spanish learners lose their fear and achieve fluency by coming together. The goal is to engage Spanish and English speakers in conversations to promote linguistic development and social awareness of bilingual communities. More information can be found at <http://www.fluente.net/>.

**D**r. Ann Neville Miller's students in her Intercultural Communication course "investigate communication between people of different genders, races, religions, subcultures, ethnic groups, and nationalities, as well as differences in communication patterns across cultures." An excerpt from a student journal interview with an international student attending the Conversation Hour at the UCF Center for Multilingual Multicultural Studies follows:

*"During my conversation hour today I talked with Muhammad who is from the United Arab Emirates, specifically Dubai. At our first greeting, a simple hello and exchange of first names followed with a handshake. Just how he introduced himself as well as his appearance I could tell he was much older than the rest of the students I have met with. I simply asked him how old he was and he responded with a laugh and then said, '32.' This first introduction really set the tone for how our conversation would follow for the hour. We would go on to discuss his career path as well as my own career path; exchanging thoughts and insights into how our cultures are alike and differ." -David*

**U**CF defines service-learning as "a teaching method that uses community involvement to apply theories or skills being taught in a course. Service-Learning furthers the learning objectives of the academic course, addresses community needs, and requires students to reflect on their activity in order to gain an appreciation for the relationship between civics and academics."

Service-Learning is part of the UCF initiative to provide a means for every student to enhance their academic program with experiential learning opportunities. As a teaching method, service-learning enables students to take academics out of the classroom and into the community in an effort to promote civic engagement. By working with community partners such as non-profit organizations, public schools, government agencies, campus groups, or businesses with specifically philanthropic missions, students develop skills and knowledge that will help them to become civically responsible members of the community.

Essential Elements of Service-Learning:

- **Reciprocity**
- **Reflection**
- **Development**
- **Meaningful Service**
- **Diversity**

## Leadership on Ice



LEAD Scholars student working with members of the Gliding Stars organization which provides individuals with disabilities the opportunity to increase their potential through development of ice skating skills.

## Technology Aids Veterans' Memory

Excerpt from a student team service project abstract, Dr. Anthony Pak Hin Kong's Communication Disorders course:

Our service-learning project took place at the Orlando Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center. Our group worked with Veterans who had suffered mild Traumatic Brain Injuries. Traumatic Brain Injuries can cause a variety of problems for the person who is injured. Some problems can include changes in behavior, memory and attention problems, as well as problems with cognitive/thinking skills. Our group developed a functional memory strategy sheet for these veterans to use in their everyday life.

Our memory sheet focused on how the Veterans can use their smartphone as a memory aid and the steps required to do so (e.g. the steps to setting a reminder on their smartphone calendar). With the increasing popularity of technology and the fact that most people have their phone on them at all times, the use of a smartphone as a memory aid is functional and realistic.

## UCF Designed by Students

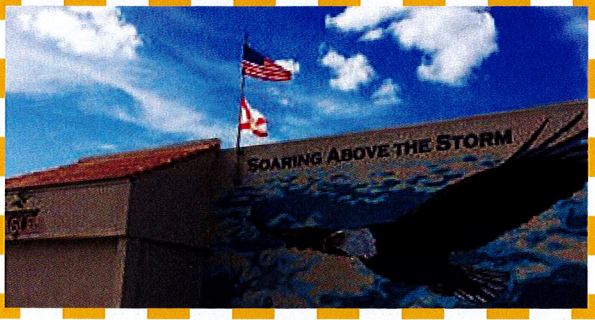


The service-learning students in my class design and conduct research projects on the UCF Orlando campus that focus around Urban Ecology. UCF manages approximately 800 acres of natural lands on the main campus in Orlando and we use this space, along with the Arboretum's organic community garden, to engage our service-learning students in the design, implementation, and communication of their research projects.

The service-learning projects help the UCF Urban Forestry, Land Management, and Arboretum teams ask and answer questions that arise around topics such as management of our campus tree canopy, stormwater ponds, natural lands, and urban agriculture. The information gathered and reported by these students drive environmental and programmatic decisions on our campus.

- Jennifer Elliott, SL Sustainability: Socially & Economically Viable Environmental Protection instructor

## Bad Kids?



Excerpt from Laurie Uttich's  
Creative Writing in the Community course:

**J**ourneys Academy is a school for students who have faced behavioral trouble in the past. The students there have threatened teachers, possessed drugs, sold drugs, and been in more fights than even they can accurately count. This makes it very easy for us to put these students into a particular category: bad kids.

We can cover up almost any issue the students at Journeys face with that label. They're bad kids, bad eggs, they decided to misbehave, they got themselves into trouble, and it's their problem now. The bad kids label, however, also makes it incredibly easy to cover up the circumstances that form the undercurrents to their behavior. It's easy to say that they made their choices and now they have to deal with them. It's much more complex to say "Maybe he got into fights because that's how he usually sees conflict handled in his community. Maybe she sold drugs because that's the only future she sees for herself. Maybe she threatened her teacher because she's so frustrated by his lack of understanding that she couldn't hold it in anymore." The former option leaves us free to judge. To say "I never would have made the choices you made." To blame the kids and throw them away and forget about them and say it's because they brought it on themselves.

The latter option requires us to question the very foundations of our culture. To ask ourselves if we have a hand in the problems we ignore. To question the way we deal with poverty and race and language in our country. To face our own privilege and say "I never had to make the choices you made." To explore the possibility that maybe these kids – these bad kids – were at a disadvantage from the start, and what we at large deem to be their "misbehavior" is actually just them coping with their situations.

## Continuing the Suffragist Movement



**T**he class adopted a political cartoon drawn by Nina Allender which is housed in the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum in Washington, D.C. The museum houses all papers and artifacts from the National Women's Party and Alice Paul among other suffragists, including the pencil collection of political cartoonist Nina Allender.

Each student selected a suffragist to study and created awareness about her through various means: flyers, baked fortune cookies, shared quotes in bookmarks, invited co-workers and friends to gatherings to discuss their chosen suffragist, and participated in a fundraising event that resulted in the purchase of a delicate paper and pencil political cartoon (circa. 1920).

In recognition of the successful effort, the museum has posted the class name next to the cartoon.

Dr. Santana continues to instruct students about the importance of preserving history in several Women's and Gender Studies courses.



# College of Undergraduate Studies

Office of Experiential Learning

## Service-Learning Certificate Opportunity for Students at UCF

### Service-Learning Certificate Criteria

The certificate program in service-learning (SL) is designed for students in any discipline who seek to engage in a reflective analysis of community service as it relates to academic course work. Service-Learning is an established and well-tested teaching method that uses a community setting as a living laboratory in which students apply theories or skills taught in traditional classrooms to real-world environments. Service-Learning furthers the learning objectives of the academic course, addresses community needs, and requires students to reflect on their activity in order to gain an appreciation for the relationship between civics and academics. Through service-learning courses, students develop academic skills, civic responsibility, and career opportunities. This certificate is open to all undergraduate and graduate students in any major.

### Credit Hour/Course Requirements

12 credit hours and 4 UCF approved service-learning courses. Students may choose any of the UCF-approved service-learning courses in any discipline to satisfy the credit hour requirements. Service-Learning courses are designated with an "SL" and can be accessed under "special groups" in the class schedule.

### Other Requirements

- Minimum GPA of 2.5 in UCF-approved SL classes
- Minimum of 60 community service hours in UCF-approved SL classes
- The official certificate allocated from the registrar's office is available to students beginning with the 2006-2007 catalog year

Students who are eligible to receive the Service-Learning Certificate must apply for it when they file their intent to graduate the semester prior to graduation.

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