“ULS Serves” is the service-learning initiative of the University of Louisiana System that was created under the leadership of former UL System President Dr. Sally Clausen and funded by a three-year grant from the Corporation for National Service’s Learn and Serve America Division to address the devastation and suffering that many Louisianans experienced in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Through this program, the eight universities in the UL System have logged, thus far, 115,000 hours of service-learning activities involving 13,500 college students, 300 youth and 1,400 adult participants, as well as over 300 community partners.

Former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley, a strong advocate of service-learning, suggested that “As we work to strengthen our schools and prepare our students to achieve, I hope that we will continue to focus on their growth in the support and compassion they can demonstrate for others in their communities. I also hope that our schools will continue to be not just centers of academic learning, but also of positive personal growth and a training ground for good, caring citizens.” ULS Serves has done much towards this worthy end. Our grant has allowed the System to expand service-learning throughout its eight campuses and reinforce this important teaching strategy as a top priority as its benefits are far-reaching; extending beyond the classroom into the community. Service-learning strengthens and promotes the spirit of civic service for UL System students, faculty and staff while encouraging them to be innovative. Our grant has assisted communities with recovery, encouraged and engaged student leadership and accelerated the institutionalization of this concept throughout our System.

An interesting evolution during this grant was the formation of a unique partnership with the Louisiana Department of Education to establish and enhance mentoring programs; a specific aspect of service-learning. College students are able to enhance recovery efforts by working with at-risk youth to improve literacy, numeracy and interpersonal skills. These programs reinforce longstanding relationships among UL System institutions and their local elementary and secondary schools.

The programs captured in this report showcase the energy, creativity, compassion and commitment to service of the eight UL System campuses, consistent with President Barack Obama’s recent signing of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act that will create new volunteer and service opportunities for Americans. As is with the President’s agenda, service-learning continues to be at the top of the agenda for the UL System.

Contents

THREE-YEAR OVERVIEW ............... 2
Grant Success: By the Numbers....... 4
Ensuring Success: Grant Management ................. 5
Measuring Success: Pre- and Post-test Surveys ........................................ 7
Celebrating Success: Annual Service-Learning Conference ................. 8
Guiding Success: Service-Learning Council .................. 10
Future Success: Institutionalization .... 11

Nursing, psychology and social services ...................................... 44
Social sciences ........................................ 46
Student-driven projects ..................................... 48

Project Highlights ............... 15
Agriculture .................................. 16
Architecture ................................ 18
Communications ...................... 20
Education/mentoring .................. 22
Environmental sciences .......... 28
Family and consumer sciences .... 32
Fine arts ................................... 34
Foreign language ....................... 36
Health and exercise science ...... 38
Historic preservation ............... 40
Information technology .............. 40
Mathematics and science ........... 42
THREE-YEAR OVERVIEW

PHOTOS (from left to right)

Dr. Ellen Smiley’s grant titled “Improving the Schools, Reducing Crime, and Supporting the Arts and Culture” gave students enrolled in musical ensembles at Grambling State University the opportunity to inspire high school students affected by Hurricane Katrina through music. Mallory Walls Padgett, former McNeese SGA president and UL System Student Board Member, was the brainchild behind X’treme Spring Break – a program initiated to assist the rebuilding of homes devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In addition to her service on the Board, Wall served as the Student Government Association (SGA) President of McNeese State University, which was the University of Louisiana System through its ULS Serves program, the Louisiana Department of Education was eager to support the effort.

The fall of 2005 marked significant change for Louisiana. Hurricanes Katrina and Rita left a path of destruction, helplessness and despair. Yet, these natural disasters also sparked remarkable determination, selflessness and resilience in our state’s people, and they brought to the forefront the University of Louisiana System’s coordinated effort to spread service-learning across its eight universities. Thus, ULS Serves was born.

Service-learning and volunteerism have long been synonymous with higher education. Prior to 2005 all eight UL System campuses engaged in service projects ranging from Greek organization initiatives to sporadic outreach programs to a handful of dedicated faculty actively engaged in service-learning. These initiatives and others varied in intensity and reach from campus to campus, and there was no system-wide effort to facilitate cross-campus collaborations or provide financial incentives to grow programs.

Under the leadership of former President Sally Clausen, the UL System began to promote and coordinate student engagement through the development of a UL System Council on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement and leadership in the American Association of State Colleges and Universities’ American Democracy Project. The UL System staff was instrumental in the creation of the Southern Consortium of the American Democracy Project (ADP-South), a 13-state organization.

UL System Student Board Member Mallory Wall served as a keynote speaker at the first annual ADP-South meeting held in Atlanta in 2005, just months after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. In addition to her service on the Board, Wall served as the Student Government Association (SGA) President of McNeese State University, which was directly affected by Hurricane Rita. Wall’s presentation about the impact of the two hurricanes on Louisiana and higher education, in particular, sparked a tremendous groundswell of empathy and a desire to help.

In response, the UL System office worked with its eight university SGA presidents to create “X’treme Spring Break 2006: Students Rebuilding Louisiana,” a weeklong service project where students built homes in partnership with Habitat for Humanity while being housed at McNeese and Southeastern Louisiana University. This first venture into a system-wide, coordinated service project was a tremendous success and provided impetus for the system to apply for a federal service-learning grant from the Corporation for National Community Service.

In August 2006, the Corporation for National Community Service’s Learn and Serve America Division awarded the UL System a three-year, $1.2 million grant to implement service-learning programs focused on hurricane recovery and disaster preparedness. The grant was structured so that 90 percent of the federal funding would go directly to the eight UL System universities’ grant projects.

In order to ensure service-learning programs effectively met the state’s needs for hurricane recovery, successful sub-grant applications had to focus on one of the 15 needs as identified by the Louisiana Recovery Authority in the report Louisiana Speaks. The 15 needs were:

1. Build better levees and other hurricane protection,
2. Develop new housing,
3. Restore coastal areas,
4. Improve schools,
5. Attract new businesses to the area,
6. Make reconstruction jobs/training available for residents,
7. Provide better community social services,
8. Make highway and street improvements,
9. Reduce crime,
10. Devise a workable evacuation plan,
11. Protect the environment,
12. Buy out flood-prone properties,
13. Provide a better public transportation system,
14. Support the arts and culture, and
15. Create more parks and open spaces.

In addition to addressing these needs, the sub-grants had to demonstrate a learning component, seek out partnerships with community groups, match requested funds on a 1:1 scale, and demonstrate sustainability of the project at the conclusion of grant funding.

With nine well-designed mentoring programs already underway, the University of Louisiana System is contributing to state and local efforts to raise student achievement and ensure that Louisiana’s students are college and career ready. These models are utilizing energized college students to engage, focus, and motivate at-risk students and to increase high school graduation rates.”

Paul Pastorek
Superintendent of Education
State of Louisiana
In total, 79 sub-grant projects were awarded over three years: 29 in 2007, 21 in 2008 and 29 in 2009. While some projects are still in-process, the UL System exceeded its goal of initiating 70 projects.

Grant Success: By the Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service Hours</th>
<th>College Student Participants</th>
<th>Faculty and Staff Participants</th>
<th>Adult Volunteers</th>
<th>Community Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>114,968</td>
<td>13,471</td>
<td>836</td>
<td>1,424</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Earlier this year, through a program called ‘Extreme Spring Break,’ students from the University of Louisiana System’s eight campuses volunteered their vacation time to help rebuilding efforts in the wake of last year’s hurricanes...We applaud the volunteer contributions of college students in Louisiana and across the nation. Like most volunteers, they probably will get more than they give in the bargain.”

“From providing hurricane relief activities to building Habitat for Humanity houses to meeting gaps in community services, students are gaining insights that extend far beyond the traditional classroom experience and take them from ‘me’ to ‘we.’ There could also be the potential benefit that students who become engaged in their college towns may forge a link that keeps them there even after they graduate...By encouraging college students to think beyond themselves, to serve others and to live lives as engaged citizens, colleges are returning to what ‘higher’ education is all about.”

A critical foundation to the successful implementation of any grant similar to ULS Serves is a cadre of skilled, committed people. However, the effective application of technology is often overlooked as a component of success. This latter feature has undoubtedly allowed service-learning to expand and thrive on the UL System campuses.

With its eight campuses spread across the state and the opportunity for hundreds of faculty and staff to participate in the ULS Serves program, the University of Louisiana System created an efficient, cost-effective and user-friendly Internet-based grant system to allow sub-grantees and council members alike to navigate through the grant application, approval and monitoring processes. As well, a uniquely designed internal database was developed that offers additional financial controls beyond those provided by its fiscal agent and existing on-campus reporting systems.

Created by staff member Dr. Edwin Litolff, the internal database serves as a tracking tool for all expenditures; both reimbursable and donations of monetary value and time. Staff members are able to print and review reports directly from the database, which are then forwarded to the fiscal agent for processing.

Another effective aspect of the ULS Serves system is its online application process. Interested faculty submit their sub-grant applications online, and these proposals are then sent to the Council on Service-Learning for anonymous review, comments and grading. The system also tracks sub-grant partnerships and sustainability levels. The
program combines all of these categories to calculate a final score and ranking relative to other proposals that allows for quick and easy decision making.

Other features incorporated into the online application design include the collection of grantee contact information, online registration for the ULS Serves annual conference, and pre- and post-test service-learning evaluation tools, which allow the staff to observe attitude changes in students after their participation in a service-learning project. Results of these evaluations suggest that ULS Serves grant projects have helped to not only increase support for service-learning, but also have increased student civic engagement. Student comments reinforce the power of service-learning projects, as many believe that they have made a difference.

The UL System’s online application, grant review, reimbursement and database design are valuable assets of the ULS Serves grant. Together, these innovative tools have facilitated the growth of service-learning throughout the UL System by offering a user-friendly experience to those new to grant-writing and/or service-learning. As well, the tools have aided fiscal integrity of the overall program. During a recent national service-learning conference, the UL System was praised for the efficiency and accuracy of this centralized system by the national office.

“The ULS Serves electronic submission and retrieval process is straightforward and simple to use. Users can access the system day or night, and the process is intuitive, allowing even a first-time user to hit the ground running.”

Steve Gruesbeck
Service-Learning Director
Northwestern State University

Measuring Success: Pre- and Post-test Surveys
Pre- and post-test surveys were administered to over 4,000 ULS Serves grant participants. The results, which are highlighted below, show statistically significant positive impacts of service-learning activities on various perceptions.

Pre-test (▼) and Post-test (▼) Survey Results of ULS Serves Grant Participants

I find the content in school courses intellectually stimulating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I can make a positive difference in my life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I feel that I can have a positive impact on local social problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I plan to improve my neighborhood in the near future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
<td>▼</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

I feel well-prepared for my future career.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▼</td>
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<td>▼</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Dollar-for-dollar matches from the eight schools in the system have provided $2.5 million over the past three years for programs that have assisted and enriched communities and civic groups and provided opportunities for students to expand their classroom knowledge and experiences with hands-on service...As UL System President Randy Moffett said, students who participate in the Service-Learning program discover that using their skills and talents to assist others ‘is the ultimate gift and the best way to give back to the communities that have helped make their education possible.’”

Natchitoches Times
December 20, 2008

“Music has survived chaos, calamity and now Hurricane Katrina. With a $15,000 grant from the University of Louisiana System, Grambling State University launched a service-learning project called ‘Preserving the Arts and Culture’ to ensure the preservation of the state’s musical legacy, particularly in the New Orleans area.”

Southwest Daily News
April 8, 2007
The annual conference is part of the UL System’s commitment to growing service-learning at its eight universities. The intent was to offer professional development to faculty, staff and students; celebrate the work funded by the Learn and Serve America grant and encourage collaborative partnerships for the development of new service-learning projects.

The grant not only succeeded in that, but also achieved other desired outcomes, which included inspiring new grantees with different ideas as well as highlighting the value of past grant projects as learned through another conference evaluation, “I got loads of ideas from the sessions, and I appreciate the work that has already been done. I’m thoroughly impressed with the service-learning initiative in our UL System, and I’m excited about writing a grant myself.”

The first conference held in the fall of 2006, jump-started the ULS Serve grant. Much of the meeting focused on overview information about service-learning, information about sub-grants available courtesy of the Learn and Serve America grant and networking opportunities among the eight universities. The keynote speaker was Tony Byers, Professional Development Director of the National Youth Leadership Council. Over 80 people attended across various academic disciplines. The success of the inaugural conference was evidenced by the awarding of 29 projects for a total of $618,291.

The second annual conference in 2007 focused on collaboration. Guest speakers included Dr. Marybeth Lima, who was the recipient of the national 2007 Thomas Ehrlich Faculty Award for Service-Learning, Dr. Stuart Stewart and Dr. David Deggs from Louisiana Campus Compact, and Jan Shoemaker, Director of Louisiana State University’s Center for Community Engagement, Learning, and Leadership. With an attendance of 89 people, this conference was the first opportunity to showcase grant-funded projects with 13 breakout presentations.

The third annual conference in 2008 had an underlying theme of institutionalization. Dr. Barbara Moely, Professor Emerita of Psychology and Research Affiliate of the Center for Public Service at Tulane University, presented on building and sustaining service-learning programs. Attendance for this conference grew to 108 people and excitement abounded as 26 breakout presentations showcased the diversity and creativity of grant-funded campus projects.

These conferences were not only a great place to encourage community and collaborative partnerships, but also served as a networking function for grantees to receive advice and support. “It was encouraging to see faculty there that were actively engaging their students in meeting community needs in hands-on ways. The information provided on grants was helpful,” said a conference attendee.

As a former campus president at Southeastern Louisiana University, UL System President Randy Moffett is a long-time advocate of service-learning. “We already know the transformational power of these initiatives, but being able to see first-hand the impact of the projects at the annual conference further displays the importance of service-learning and serves as a reminder of why we pursued national grant funding,” said Moffett.

The fourth annual conference to be held on August 10, 2009, will continue to highlight the value of collaboration between institutions, work toward systemic strategies for long-term service-learning initiatives on our campuses, and celebrate the great work completed and underway thanks to the Learn and Serve America grant.
The University of Louisiana System’s Council on Service-Learning and Civic Engagement was created in 2005 to guide and coordinate the growth of service-learning across our campuses. The intervening years served to clarify the group’s mission and to simplify its name. Now known as the Council on Service-Learning, the group works to develop community programming for students outside of the classroom and to integrate innovative service components within the traditional academic experience.

The Council is comprised of representatives selected to serve by the Provosts of each of the eight UL System universities. Over the past four years, the Council has played an integral role in ULS Serves by reviewing grant proposals, providing program and grant oversight, and serving as a resource to faculty, staff and students alike.

As service-learning has moved beyond its introductory phases, the Council has emerged in an enhanced role that will continue to promote growth and sustainability. Council members are presently surveying exciting options to offer recognition for significant service-learning achievement, and they have initiated healthy discussions regarding the intrinsic value of developing standardized assessments and measurable outcomes.

In addition to offering convenient professional development workshops ranging from service-learning basics to best practices, the Council also envisions multi-campus collaborative colloquiums that will serve to improve networking, support and interaction amongst campuses, communities and disciplines. As more focused service-learning research reveals which practices are most productive, the Council on Service-Learning’s experience will provide the insight that is required to effectively implement practical applications.

The ULS Serves grant has served as a catalyst to expand and institutionalize service-learning throughout the UL System. A recent survey of campuses reveals tremendous progress has been made over the past three years. The following are a few examples:

- At Grambling State University, a service-learning requirement was added to the General Education Program effective Fall 08. All incoming students must complete 160 hours of service-learning as a requirement of graduation. GSU has also implemented an approval process for a course to be designated as a service-learning course. GSU now offers over 20 service-learning courses per year; 3 years ago service-learning activities were random and not documented.

- Louisiana Tech has established a service-learning council with faculty, administrative and student representation. In 2007/08, 104 courses were offered with a service-learning component; only 4 such courses were offered four years ago. Faculty receive credit lead campus activities. Twelve courses are offered with a required service-learning component; only 4 such courses were offered four years ago. Faculty receive credit for service-learning activities in their annual performance evaluation.

- At McNeese State University, a service-learning coordinator has been appointed to lead campus activities. Twelve courses are offered with a required service-learning component; only 4 such courses were offered four years ago. Faculty receive credit for service-learning activities in their annual performance evaluation.

- At Nicholls State University, a service-learning coordinator has also been established. In 2007/08, there were over 40 courses offered with a service-learning component; only 17 such courses were offered three years ago. Nicholls also implemented an approval process for a course to be designated as a service-learning course. Nicholls now offers over 20 service-learning courses per year; 3 years ago service-learning activities were random and not documented.

- At Louisiana Tech, there were over 40 courses offered with a service-learning component. Two years prior, only 17 such courses were offered. A new campus-wide service-learning award has been initiated.

"The University of Louisiana System launched the initiative to place students in their surrounding communities as a means of making them better citizens... UL System Board Chairwoman Elise Boudoir-Miller, who lost her Slidell home during Hurricane Katrina and is still in the process of rebuilding, said it’s a role that universities have been filling for more than two years and the commitment remains. ‘As Louisiana continues to recover from the devastating hurricanes of 2005, it is gratifying to know we have top faculty, staff and students at our universities who will be investing their time, resources and brain power to make a difference,’ she said."

"Students who do volunteer work outside the classroom are more likely to be successful, not just in their studies but in life, a national study and top Louisiana higher education officials say... The UL System is urging professors in the eight-campus System to engage students in volunteer work and is offering mini-grants to help them pay some of the costs of volunteering. The system has received a $1.2 million grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service in Washington, D.C., through its Learn and Serve America program."

Thibodaux Daily Comet
January 25, 2008

Monroe News Star and Shreveport Times
October 30, 2006
At Northwestern State University, a full-time Director of Service-Learning has been hired. Virtually no service-learning courses were offered three years ago; today 13 such courses are provided. The Office of Service-Learning recently sponsored 3 workshops for faculty/staff interested in learning more about this concept.

Southeastern Louisiana University has instituted a Service-Learning Committee comprised of faculty, staff and students. A campus-wide identification system is currently being created to note courses that have service-learning content. Plans are also in progress to establish a website for community partners to post potential projects. The University estimates that there has been a 67 percent increase in service-learning offerings over the past two years.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette has appointed a Dean of Community Service. There have been two recent campus-wide surveys to begin the process of identification and collaboration of service-learning activities on a broader scale. Spring 09 faculty self-reports show that 118 courses have a service-learning component. The University will soon require a service-learning component for all first-time freshmen, with the program scheduled to be tested by select faculty in the fall of 2009 and piloted in the spring with about 100 students.

The University of Louisiana at Monroe’s College of Pharmacy has implemented service-learning since the Spring semester of 2006 and it is now a requirement for every pharmacy class. Campus-wide, approximately 65 courses are offered annually with a service-learning component.

“The LRA Director of Community Planning Jeff Hebert spoke at the UL System’s annual service-learning conference held August 13 in Baton Rouge and pledged resources from his office to help faculty make connections with community organizations already engaged in recovery efforts across the state.”

Poitee Couppee Banner
September 20, 2007

“At its December meeting, the ULS Board awarded several additional learning grants to all three area universities…The universities’ ambitious proposals include tutoring partnerships with area public school systems, several hurricane-related projects including Tech’s assistance with the recovery of the Gert Town neighborhood in New Orleans and the implementation of an instructional unit for ULM’s freshman seminar students that will expand their knowledge of social and environmental issues pertaining to the hurricanes. UL System President Sally Clausen said the projects are a ‘significant step toward our goal for all students to have a service-learning experience before they graduate.’ We agree.”

Editorial
Monroe News Star
January 3, 2007

“If it’s intended to provide firsthand knowledge about Louisiana’s litter problem and shed light on the negative impacts of marine debris, The cooperative endeavor includes the Nature Conservancy, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, AmeriCorps and the Grand Isle community. Service-learning projects like this one offers benefits to students. Participation can have positive impacts on leadership ability, grades, retention, degree aspirations, critical-thinking skills and commitment to helping others. Additionally, research shows that at least 50 percent of students who engage in service-learning during college will continue volunteering after graduation.”

Thibodaux Daily Comet
December 23, 2008

“A whole lot of shaking was going on at The IDEA Place Math and Science Discovery Center Thursday as the center’s newest exhibit, an earthquake simulator, was unveiled…Because a component was service-learning, I think we put more heart into it knowing it was being donated to the science museum on campus,…They [students] can demonstrate what they have learned and educate at the same time. This teaches the science behind the exhibit but also allows students to demonstrate what they are capable of.”

Monroe News Star
May 28, 2009

“This fall, the After-school Achievement Program, will transition from its “pilot” status to an improved and established program, thanks to the Learn and Serve grant, which will fund a mobile math lab complete with six laptop computers, math manipulatives and other math skill-building supplies.”

Baton Rouge Advocate
July 16, 2009

“...because a component was service-learning, I think we put more heart into it knowing it was being donated to the science museum on campus. …They [students] can demonstrate what they have learned and educate at the same time. This teaches the science behind the exhibit but also allows students to demonstrate what they are capable of.”
With approximately 80 grant projects conducted at the eight universities over the last three years, UL Serves has made tremendous strides towards hurricane recovery and disaster preparedness. The following pages highlight these projects, which are divided into the following academic disciplines:

- agriculture,
- architecture,
- communications,
- education/mentoring,
- environmental sciences,
- family and consumer sciences,
- fine arts,
- foreign language,
- health and exercise science,
- historic preservation,
- information technology,
- mathematics and science,
- nursing, psychology and social services,
- social sciences, and
- student-driven projects.

Improving schools and providing better community social services were prominent among the hurricane recovery needs identified by the Louisiana Speaks report referenced in UL Serves’ initial grant application. The impact of the hurricanes on schools as well as the challenges faced by displaced and relocating families generated an increased need for mentoring services in schools, and in responding to these needs, educators gained insight into effective tools that can be incorporated into future disaster response strategies. Both of these factors were evident in the number of service-learning projects that focused on education and mentoring.
As a student and head of the student nonprofit organization Resourceful University Network (RUN), I have benefited greatly from the ULS Serves grant. The funded project RUNbus has allowed me to plug-in the skills that I have learned as a communications major and to develop a better understanding of cross-disciplinary interactions between engineers, industrial designers, businessmen, marketing professionals, and environmental scientists. By promoting sustainable living and alternative energy in the community, the RUNbus project has afforded me an opportunity to be part of the common good. Above all, the grant has given me the courage to continue pursuing bigger dreams and the confidence that by bringing together the right people anything is possible.

Chance Gabehart
Student
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Building Hope: Service-Learning Initiative of UL Lafayette Building Institute and Boys and Girls Club University of Louisiana at Lafayette Dr. W. Geoff Gjertson

The population increase in Lafayette due to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita generated a corresponding increase in average daily attendance at the Boys & Girls Club. Approximately 25 UL Lafayette architecture students collaborated with Boys & Girls Club members, community members, local business leaders and professional architects to build a facility and develop a master plan to increase the Boys & Girls Club capacity and positively impact the entire community. The benefits for the project included a model for service-learning utilizing community design and construction, a sustainable master plan for the Boys & Girls Club and an enriched, diverse and accessible environment to benefit the welfare of the community.

ReNEW: A Service-Learning Initiative of UL Lafayette University of Louisiana at Lafayette Dr. W. Geoff Gjertson

Fifty UL Lafayette School of Architecture, Building Institute, Art Education Program and Department of Visual Arts students worked with approximately ninety community volunteers from the Acadiana Outreach Center and homeless clients. They used donated and reclaimed materials to create new, functional and artistic items public art marketed to beautify the community through public art. Surplus and salvaged building materials (wood, tile, metal, doors, windows, etc.) were donated to the program warehouse workshop from commercial construction sites, home-repairs and building vendors to keep from being wasted in landfills. Hurricane debris was also reclaimed for use in the program. The clients used the skills learned to secure employment in the construction industry.

Renewing Communities: Assisting the Rejuvenation of Gert Town Louisiana Tech University Dr. Vibhavari Jani

This was an inter-disciplinary, collaborative, community service-learning project where sixteen interior design and architecture students provided assistance to the Gert Town residents of New Orleans. The research indicated that Gert Town’s compelling needs included removal of abandoned houses, building new housing, community centers, parks and open spaces, as well as street and drainage repairs. With the help of professors, community partners and professional consultants, students developed four site specific housing prototypes and a Friendship House that can be adapted to support hurricane recovery efforts. The overarching goal was to encourage students and faculty participation in recovery efforts; facilitate collaboration with community partners, professionals and service organizations; create awareness regarding health, safety and welfare of the hurricane affected community; and provide opportunities for student reflection and service learning.

Utilizing Abandoned Homes to Assist Families Devastated by Disasters: A Unique Response and Recovery Model Louisiana Tech University Dr. Vibhavari Jani

This project responded to a need for preparing temporary shelters for families who were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita as well as other disasters that may occur in future. The project challenged students to utilize abandoned homes in Ruston, Louisiana and prepare renovation plans so that funding agencies and professional and community organizations could prepare temporary shelters for such families. Students identified abandoned residential dwellings that could serve as emergency response shelters and a basis to develop social networks to help rebuild mutually enhancing relationships.

“I have been the recipient of two ULS Learn and Serve grants and have worked with our students to assist Katrina affected Gert Town community and later to prepare shelters to assist disaster affected communities. Both projects were designed to assist communities in need, but also engage our design students in community service projects. Our architecture and interior design students poured their hearts and souls in these projects and learned a great deal not just about how to design homes and associated technical aspects, but also how to work with clients, understand their needs, and provide comfortable, culturally and climatically appropriate solutions. Through these projects, our students became aware of the issues of sustainability, poverty and social justice. These projects ignited curiosity and transformed our design students into compassionate and caring designers. Many students now want to donate their time in various green and sustainable design events. Without these grants we would not have been able to achieve this drastic change. I hope that these grant programs continue to inspire many other educators and students.”

Dr. Vibhavari G. Jani
Assistant Professor Louisiana Tech University
Consulting as Service-Learning Southeastern Louisiana University
Dr. Suzette Bryan

This project incorporated a service-learning component with a graduate class in the Communication Department at Southeastern Louisiana University. The class integrated communication-based organizational assessment and remediation techniques. Students were afforded an opportunity to practice consulting skills by working at the Parenting Center, a nonprofit agency, which was identified by the St. Tammany West Chamber of Commerce. The Parenting Center responded to the devastation by Hurricane Katrina by offering classes to families about preventing crises as well as intervention classes for divorced families.

Establishing Community and University Connections to Enhance Disaster Response University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Christopher Harris

The ULM English Department, the Student Success Center and the Freshman Year Seminar collaborated to provide social and environmental learning units related to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita for first-year students. Learning Communities were created wherein students worked with experts to address hurricane-related topics. Students partnered with local relief agencies and shared their experiences with local secondary schools.

Preparing Green Education is Key: Understanding the Simple and Economically Friendly Avenues to be Environmentally Responsible Southeastern Louisiana University
Dr. Amber Narro

Throughout South Louisiana’s recovery from Hurricane Katrina, there has been much press involving the possibility of the area coming back stronger and greener. It is this grant’s intent to provide the community with information about becoming “green” and encourage environmental communication through educational recycling programs for junior high students and an Earth Day celebration at Southeastern Louisiana University which focuses on the simple ways to “go green.” The Cities of Hammond and Ponchatoula have begun recycling programs, and the spring 2009 public communication class will educate the community about these initiatives. Students will interview local recyclers and experts in renewable energy to determine which elements people who are on a fixed income or who are classified as poverty level may utilize in their lives.

Service-Learning in Technical Writing University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Sandra Hill

ULM technical writing students joined forces with area businesses and nonprofit organizations to develop disaster response and preparedness materials. This helped ULM students and community members deal with the psychological trauma of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The goal of the project was to assist area agencies repair lives in Louisiana while providing real-world writing experiences for technical writing students.

‘We Shall Overcome’: Narrating the Challenges of the Early Civil Rights Movement in Southeastern Louisiana University
Dr. Suzette Bryan

The Communication Department at Southeastern Louisiana University partnered with the local chapter of the NAACP to capture first person narratives from those people immersed in the earliest permutations of the Civil Rights movement. After receiving instruction from faculty, students were assigned to give audio and videotaped face-to-face interviews to founding members of the Tangipahoa Parish NAACP, dating to 1965. Edited content from these interviews was made available to the public via Podcasts from the Communication Department web site, the Southeastern Channel, and KSLU, the Southeastern radio station. In addition, an interactive permanent exhibit was established in the Southeastern library. This grant’s overarching goal was to provide students with a historical perspective of the early Civil Rights movement in their community; to preserve time dependent content in that many of those selected for this project are elderly; to secure content in light of the diaspora that has occurred subsequent to Hurricane Katrina; and to provide a service to the NAACP to preserve the heritage of this organization.

The Deep South Festival of Writers University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Dayana Stetco

UL Lafayette students partnered with approximately 100 area high school students to reinitiate the 42-year-old tradition of the Deep South Festival of Writers after a 4-year absence. The festival taught students how to cope with and reflect on traumatic events, such as hurricanes, through art and writing. UL Lafayette graduate students, assisted by the English and Art high school faculty, led workshops in the Fall of 2007. The workshops culminated in a panel at the Festival during which high school students read and displayed their work. In addition, they participated in Festival events, such as lectures and workshops conducted by nationally recognized professional writers, folklorists and publishers. These partnerships enabled them to work closely with novelists, poets and editors and glimpse the world of writing, publishing and art.

Writing in the Galleries University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Judd Jeansonne

Twenty UL Lafayette students partnered with the University Art Museum and hurricane impacted 3,000 Title I elementary school students to improve their writing skills through art appreciation. Teachers in the target schools scheduled a field trip to the University Art Museum and utilized pre- and post-visit exercises designed to address K-12 grade level benchmarks in both language arts and visual arts. Students’ appreciation, knowledge and understanding of art, improvement of writing skills, as well as confidence and self-esteem, were targeted. This project also was a unique opportunity for university students to develop their own skills as leaders and project managers.
Cajun Comrades
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Peter Sheppard

The main objective of this project was for UL Lafayette teacher education candidates, the UL Lafayette Center for Child Development, and the Louisiana Office of Public Health to provide academic assistance to local schools in the Lafayette Parish School System so that K-8 students would maximize their academic potential. Because this project was associated with a mathematics teaching course, it was imperative to monitor the degree to which 42 UL Lafayette students improved their teaching abilities. As reported by students through journal reflections, class presentations, and final reports, 88 percent of the students delivered gains in their teaching abilities. Similarly, 83 percent also mentioned that they achieved a greater understanding of elementary aged students as a result of the one-on-one social interaction afforded by the project. There was also a report that 100 percent of the 42 fourth grade students tutored/mentored by UL Lafayette students met the LEAP test.

Combating Truancy: A Prevention and Remediation Focus for the N.O. Recovery School District
Northwestern State University
Dr. Gerra Perkins

The goal of this project was to provide school counselors in the New Orleans Recovery School District with the resources and materials to help parents and students understand the importance of school attendance. Approximately 60 students in the Counseling program at Northwestern State University helped design a two-pronged approach (prevention and remediation) that targeted students and parents and addressed the issue of truancy at the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. Students’ decision making, problem-solving, creative/critical thinking skills were enhanced, and products and resources were created that target truancy in the New Orleans Recovery School District.

Everybody’s Child: Teacher Preparedness in Times of Crisis & Recovery
Southeastern Louisiana University
Dr. Cynthia Elliott

This service-learning initiative involved collaboration between the International Center for Everybody’s Child at Hofstra University in New York, Southeastern Louisiana University and local education agencies in Southeast Louisiana, in an effort to improve schools by better preparing teachers to respond to the needs of children and families in times of crisis. The overarching goals of this project were to develop a curricular framework that incorporates service-learning pedagogy for enhancing teacher preparedness in times of catastrophic events and ongoing emergency situations; to provide professional development that embraces literacy-based activities designed to support families and children’s academic development as well as social and emotional needs; and to establish Louisiana as the Gulf Coast Site for the International Center for Everybody’s Child.

In-Process
Recovering the Mahalia Jackson Center (CASA) Early Childhood and Family Learning Foundation to reconstruct and provide services at the Mahalia Jackson Center. Graduate students will conduct evaluation research on the reconstruction process and the initial year of services. The project is a tremendous opportunity for students of applied research to promote community recovery while leveraging the impact of existing resources and fostering productive interaction with numerous community participants.

In-Process
Family Learning Center
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Holly Houpt

This project will help to support hurricane recovery efforts and improve conditions in the impoverished Central City neighborhood in New Orleans by collaborating with an existing project by the Early Childhood and Family Learning Foundation to reconstruct and provide services at the Mahalia Jackson Center. Graduate students will conduct evaluation research on the reconstruction process and the initial year of services. The project is a tremendous opportunity for students of applied research to promote community recovery while leveraging the impact of existing resources and fostering productive interaction with numerous community participants.

In-Process
American Education/MENTORING

dr. Michelle Morris
Northwestern State University
Disadvantaged Youth

This project’s purpose is to partner 75 students from the university’s education program with Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) to provide information about child abuse and neglect, certifying them as CASA advocates and expanding the CASA Christmas present project. The project also supports hurricane recovery needs through improving schools and providing better community social services. NSU students pursuing education as a career path will receive supplemental information about child abuse and neglect which will help them in their future roles as teachers.
Future Teachers: Outreach and Empowerment with Technology
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Mike Bestner

ULM education students collaborated with local schools to create and disseminate a visual campaign regarding relief and disaster efforts. Participating students devoted time, effort and energy in the creation and dissemination of positive and optimistic messages through the use of posters—a visual campaign to transform bare walls into a transformative environment. This proposal empowered students to learn, use and apply skills and knowledge to conduct a visual campaign with common technology resources available at most schools.

Learning to Serve is Learning to Lead
Nicholls State University
Dr. James Barr

This grant partnered students of the College of Education at Nicholls with local schools and the community to organize reading tutor programs, mentor training and family literacy programs to create a community infrastructure that can support learning should the area be affected by future storms. The project supported the hurricane recovery efforts by helping students “catch up” in their reading skills; preparing for future disasters within the school community and by the storm by building self-help networks of students and families that can maintain the local education of children. The focus of the activities was on developing and enhancing the literacy skills of children and parents in areas affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Project MAD: Making a Difference
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Phyllis Sanders

This project, led by Louisiana Tech’s Student Government Association, initially engaged 50 college students in a one-on-one mentoring relationship with 50 ninth-grade students from four high schools in Lincoln Parish. The mentoring provided continuous support in the form of tutoring, college preparatory assistance and social activities. Each year, an additional 50 college students were paired with an additional 50 high school students, directly impacting 150 high school students over three years. Mentors also reached out to rural schools through the Louisiana GEAR UP program. Teams of mentors traveled to 39 middle and high schools to provide mentoring and support through Explorers Clubs at each of the schools. This project aided recovery by increasing the number of low-income students that graduate from high school and pursue postsecondary education.

NSU Tutors Reaching Near and Far
Northwestern State University
Dr. Michael Cundall, Jr.

This project will focus on facilitating engagement between the students of Nicholls and the surrounding communities, pairing an additional 50 college and 50 K-12 students each year to impact 150 K-12 students over three years.

One Campus One Community: A Mentoring Program and Community Partnership
Nicholls State University
Dr. Michele Caruso

In-Process

In-Process

Project MAD: Making a Difference
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Phyllis Sanders

The ULM Colleges of Education & Human Development and Nursing provided Booker T. Community Outreach in Monroe, Louisiana which serves at-risk populations with strategies and resources necessary for improving the community. The goal was to increase educational and community awareness by providing information and resources available at the local and state level to populations at-risk for educational and social isolation. Senior citizens of the John Breaux Assisted Living Community, a health-care facility for senior citizens located in the heart of these three schools, were also impacted by the program.

Service-Learning is fun. The more memorable the initiative is and the more sustainable the program is, the more it will impact the lives of the students and the community.

Environmental Science programs educate students on the importance of protecting the many different ecosystems and their importance to human survival.
This project is designed to provide targeted interventions in reading and writing for the Monroe City School and Cypress Point University Elementary sites (first-fifth grade students), practical application of teacher preparation course content for College of Education and Human Development participants (junior year teacher candidates), and opportunities for ongoing relationships between university participants and site recipients. The student population at these schools reflects the long-term academic needs of many of the communities affected by Hurricane Katrina, such as declining literacy rates, absenteeism and emotional or behavioral disorders. The UL System Service Learning grant will enhance the existing relationship with Cypress Point by providing essential and sustainable resources to meet the needs of all stakeholders.

In-Process
Project Soar: Launching a Professional Development School University of Louisiana at Monroe Dr. Lynn Clark

The Nature Conservancy, Grand Isle State Park, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Grand Isle community collaborated to provide experiential learning opportunities through low-cost technology materials to enable children displaced during emergencies to take career assessment and to use resources in the Career Resource Laboratory. In improving numeracy and literacy, students also gain access to career technology which they can transport and apply as they progress in high school.

In-Process
Service Project: Multimodality Language Learning in Children Louisiana Tech University Dr. Kerri Phillips

The goal of the project is to utilize multimodality learning and low-cost technology materials to enable children displaced during emergencies to take career assessment and to use resources in the Career Resource Laboratory. In improving numeracy and literacy, students also gain access to career technology which they can transport and apply as they progress in high school.

Tutoring Middle Grade Students in Reading and Writing Grambling State University Dr. Davis Williams-Smith

Seventy GSU undergraduate students seeking middle school certification were trained to assist 108 Hurricane Katrina evacuee middle grade students in improving their writing abilities and performance on standardized writing assessments. After developing training materials for reading and writing tutors, a tutoring program was instituted. Members of the Middle Level Service Learning Leadership Team collected and analyzed data from the tutors, students and parents regarding the effectiveness of the tutor relationships. They also organized celebrations for the 2007-2008 fall and spring semesters. At the conclusion of the project, the leadership team presented their findings and lessons learned from the implementation of the project during conference presentations and professional development sessions for K-12 teachers and university faculty.
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Assessment of Rural Well Water Quality in Southwest Louisiana in the Post-Rita Era
McNeese State University
Dr. W jejin Dong

This project was designed to address two major needs identified by the Louisiana Recovery Authority—establishing the need to restore coastal areas (which requires safe drinking water) and protecting the environment (which requires the prevention of contaminated drinking water.) The project identified areas in Southwest Louisiana that needed water quality assessment after Hurricane Rita. The participants included citizens from rural communities in Southwest Louisiana, students and faculty from McNeese State University, and staff scientists from Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (Lake Charles Office) and Calcasieu Parish Health Unit. Students learned and received training as to how to use water analysis equipment to assess drinking water quality and to reflect on how they use the training and skills learned to serve their communities.

Conducting Home Energy Conservation Audits in Hurricane Recovery Areas
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Giblalom H. Massiba

The goal of this project entailed conducting testing and community education in the area of home energy conservation and energy reduction to Louisiana homeowners. Construction course students from UL Lafayette Industrial Technology Department were introduced to energy saving practices and processes by calculating energy use in a house and designing ways to reduce energy consumption. Students and volunteers conducted energy surveys on area houses and the data was disseminated to educate homeowners on energy guide labels, appliance energy use, and general energy conservation. Students and faculty involved in this project conducted presentations and workshops during the spring of 2008 and 2009. Academia Home Builders Shows and SLEMCO annual meeting in Lafayette.

Construction and Enhancement of the Living Wetlands Learning Center at Lafayette Middle School
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Griff Blakewood

This project was designed to address two major needs identified by Louisiana Recovery Areas—issues critical to Louisiana is coastal erosion; an issue especially heightened from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. To combat this, UL Lafayette students from the Department of Renewable Resources assisted Lafayette Middle School students in creating a series of outdoor learning stations/classrooms where middle school students learned about a range of environmental topics focusing on coastal ecology and restoration. The project included the design and placement of informative signs, situating an outdoor classroom, remodeling an existing classroom for vermiculture studies, construction of both a shade house and a greenhouse for the propagation of plants to be used in wetland restoration, and the establishment of plants representing a native forest ecosystem and a native prairie ecosystem around the existing wetland.

Earthquake Simulation Room for The IDEA Place
Louisiana Tech University
Dr. Melissa E. Carley

This project will design and construct an earthquake simulation room for The IDEA Place, an interactive, non-profit, children’s science museum that inspires children towards learning about science and mathematics. The room will simulate what a real earthquake feels like. Users will be able to select famous earthquakes and feel the magnitude of the waves beneath their feet. This project will help to stimulate the minds of children and fuel their passion for applied sciences. Although residents of Louisiana do not experience the magnitude of earthquakes, this project will help them appreciate the magnitude of earthquakes, this project will help them appreciate what Californians experience and will inspire them to help California residents in a time of need just as they did for Louisiana after Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Gustav.

Environmental Awareness Service Projects for Low Income Homes
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Giblalom H. Massiba

The goal of this project is for students from the College of Engineering at UL Lafayette to perform energy and environmental testing on low income homes in recent hurricane-ravaged communities in hopes of enticing the homeowners to use better insulation, purchase energy-efficient appliances, and modify their energy consumption habits. The data gathered from the homes by students and volunteers, which may include an inspection of the building envelope (insulation levels, windows, doors, air leakage, etc.), as well as heating and cooling systems will be disseminated to educate homeowners on energy guide labels, appliance energy use and general energy conservation.
In an effort to better prepare ULM students and teachers on the cause and effects of hurricanes, related safety procedures and how to help protect the environment, ULM designed three technology-enriched service-learning projects. They were: Exploring Hurricanes Technology Development Day, Environmental Summer Camp and Teacher & IT Coordinators Technology Development Day. The overarching goals of this project were to inform stakeholders about the causes, effects and ways to help prevent environmental damages; and to create Podcasts on the causes, effects of hurricanes, related safety procedures and how to help prevent environmental damages; and to create Podcasts on the effects of hurricanes and safety procedures for schools or communities. Students learned about climate change, coastal erosion and ozone depletion; created Podcasts on the causes, effects and ways to help prevent environmental damages; and developed a website that displays the above-mentioned projects to enrich service-learning projects. They were: Exploring Hurricanes Technology Development Day, Environmental Summer Camp and Teacher & IT Coordinators Technology Development Day. The overarching goals of this project were to inform stakeholders about the causes, effects and ways to help prevent environmental damages; and to create Podcasts on the causes, effects of hurricanes, related safety procedures and how to help prevent environmental damages; and to create Podcasts on the effects of hurricanes and safety procedures for schools or communities. Students learned about climate change, coastal erosion and ozone depletion; created Podcasts on the causes, effects and ways to help prevent environmental damages; and developed a website that displays the above-mentioned projects to students and teachers throughout the state.

Environmental Podcasting
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Thillainataraja Sivakumaran

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Louisiana Lower Atmosphere Research Collaborative: Service-Learning
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Boniface Mills

The Geosciences Department at ULM created partnerships with three “academically unacceptable” K-12 public schools in the northern, central and southern coastal regions of Louisiana to build a comprehensive database of the lower atmosphere composed of “rocketsondes” (temperature, pressure latitude, longitude and elevation data). This data is useful for hurricane characterization and protection. The project not only helped university students gain practical experience in real-time data collection and distribution, but also connected children and teachers to math and science as key participants in an authentic scientific enterprise.

Marine Debris Removal at Grand Isle State Park
Nicholls State University
Dr. Alyse Ferrara

The project identified areas in Calcasieu and Cameron Parishes where new parks and open spaces could be developed and how existing parks could be enhanced to endure hurricanes. Students enrolled in the Geographic Information Science program at Louisiana Tech University processed remote sensing images and digital maps for the two parishes to better understand how to use geographic information software and enhance a series of points and maps for Cameron Parish and the City of Vinton to identify the best location for parks and open spaces to mitigate hurricane impact on the landscape. The project also determined the best species composition that would minimize the force of hurricanes.

RUNbus is an exhibition vehicle that provides an exciting space for learning about environmental protection, sustainability, and social entrepreneurship—issues that were heightened as a result of the hurricanes. It utilizes a collaborative team of UL Lafayette educators, environmentalists and entertainers to reach out to Louisiana communities. RUNbus participants study and help raise awareness about progressive concepts such as sustainable living strategies, while promoting existing efforts in the community. It is a refurbished 65-passenger school bus fueled by used cooking oil that exhibits practical demonstrations of clean energy, community-based food production, natural building strategies and conscious consumer choices.

Study of Mold and Moisture Control in South Louisiana Construction Aftermath of 2005 Hurricanes
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Herbert Hebert

The goal of this project was to conduct research and comprehensive testing of hurricane-affected homes for moisture and mold damage with a goal of recommending advances in technology to create energy efficient and safe housing materials. The research data from this project helped to advance the technology in energy efficient housing materials and processes in residential construction. Students and faculty involved in this project conducted presentations and workshops in the spring 2007 Blue Print Show that took place at the Lafayette Convention Center.

University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Barbara C. Benson

Project RUNbus
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Bogdan Strimbu

In-process Mapping the Future Landscape for Two Southwestern Louisiana Parishes
Louisiana Tech University
Dr. Bogdan Strimbu

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“In this final year of the ULS Serves grant, the Nicholls community can be quite proud of its accomplishments. Nicholls faculty, staff and students volunteered approximately 176,000 hours of service in 2008—and this year, the university is establishing a mentoring program that focuses on Pre-K-12 partnerships. Service-learning is indeed a recognized strength of this university.”

Dr. Stephen Hulbert
President
Nicholls State University

In-Process:
A Head Start for Family and Consumer Sciences: Mentoring by UL Lafayette Hospitality Management Students
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Ms. Becky Dubois

This project pairs senior level UL Lafayette Hospitality Management (HRTM) interns with Acadiana high school programs to offer Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) programs. These interns provide over 250 high school students with support on technical industry skills, career paths, postsecondary education opportunities and industry certifications. They also mentor the FCS students for local, state and national competitions held each year. The project aims to create and foster an ongoing relationship with the FCS programs in Acadiana and to ultimately create an awareness of the possibilities in the educational sector for youth interested in the foodservice industry. By training and investing in youth today, Acadiana will continue to see job growth, economic success and a trained workforce that will help to withstand and recover from future catastrophic events, such as Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike, and ensure quick recovery.

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Dr. Stephen Hulbert
President
Nicholls State University

PHOTOS (from left to right)
Skills learned in Family and Consumer Science grant projects can be valuable in many facets of the workforce such as construction, architecture and fashion design.
A McNeese student receives a Lake Charles key to the city pin at X-treme Spring Break.
Family and Consumer Science service-learning programs provide students with real-world training that includes providing services for the elderly to support the arts and culture.

Be Our Guest
Nicholls State University
Dr. Pamela Kirkley

Golden Learning Opportunities (GLO) is a program for seniors age fifty and over who are interested in learning, increasing cooperation and who enjoy interacting or exchanging with others. The project gave 43 Nicholls’ students an opportunity to serve an impacted community with hurricane recovery, support and resources from NSU. The goal of this project was to restructure GLO’s classes and to promote the Louisiana Spirit Hurricane Recovery Program. In just five weeks there were strong bonds formed between students, employees and instructors and all developed unforgettable memories.

In-Process:
Coping Skills and Disaster Recovery Strategies for Low-Income Parents
McNeese State University
Dr. Allison Gibbons

The overall goal of the project is to improve community social services in Southwest Louisiana by exposing low-income parents to information on coping skills and recovery strategies, including how to access available community resources. This will require students to be involved in activities which include identifying crisis needs of low-income parents in the five-parish area through an interview process structured as a research activity; preparing and publishing a Parents’ Resource Guide that provides information and guidelines on accessing community resources as well as information on family coping strategies; and holding face-to-face focus groups with sample groups of parents in the five-parish area.

“Working with kinesiology students from the University of Louisiana at Monroe, the CPR at School Training program brought important life-saving skills to my students. Our elementary school kids learned to identify the signs and actions to take when someone is in distress. As a result, our students are more responsible for their personal safety and know they can make a difference when it comes to assisting victims of heart attacks and choking emergencies. I truly believe as a result of our partnership with ULM that some of my students may choose to enter the medical field and future lives may be saved.”

Renee Meredith
Science Teacher
Lakeshore Elementary
Monroe, Louisiana
Acadiana Food & Folklore Media Initiative: Preserving Culture and Promoting Tourism Recovery
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Charles Richard

Students from UL Lafayette’s Cinematic Arts Workshop along with the Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission, the Center for Cultural & Ecotourism, South Louisiana Community College, and the Academy of Information Technology at Carencro High School studied, documented, conserved and promoted unique Louisiana cultural assets that attract visitors and economic vitality. The project targeted businesses and customs severely affected by disasters, in risk of disappearing or situated in disadvantaged communities. Through the use of digital video, audio, photography and text, a rich multimedia experience of South Louisiana food and folk heritage was assembled. Preservation of the community’s storm-damaged cultural infrastructure and restoration of tourism jobs and income was achieved.

Angels on the Bayou Restoration
Nicholls State University
Dr. Carol Britt

Thirty-nine Nicholls and L.E. Fletcher Technical Community College students joined with over 90 Terrebonne High School and Pointe Aux Chene Elementary students to restore the Angels on the Bayou sculpture garden damaged by Hurricane Katrina. During the spring of 2007, Nicholls’ students set out to begin restoration on the Chauvin Sculptures Garden in Chauvin, Louisiana while at the same time an art restoration consultant from International Artifacts instructed students on art preservation. A lecture was given to seventy-six Terrebonne High School students at the NSU Art Studio in Chauvin where the students participated in the restoration process. As the sculptures are located in an area that readily floods, the community’s awareness and education in restoration will prove beneficial as similar needs arise in the future.

Improving the Schools, Reducing Crime, and Supporting the Arts and Culture
Grambling State University
Dr. Ellen Smiley

Students from Earl Lester Cole Honors College and those enrolled in musical ensembles at GSU worked together to preserve Louisiana culture. Throughout the semester, professors educated the students about Louisiana culture, possible career paths in music and the use of music as a deterrent to harmful behavior. Over 200 students traveled to two Hurricane Katrina affected schools in New Orleans (O. Perry Walker and Saint Augustine High Schools) where they had an opportunity to see firsthand the schools rebuilding efforts. The UL System students were also able to offer valuable feedback to over 1000 high school students through workshops and individual discussions.

Hurricane Devastation Photographic Exhibition
Louisiana Tech University
Dr. V. Elaine Thompson

This was a multi-disciplinary project designed to produce a professional-quality, mobile photographic exhibition showcasing images of hurricane devastation in South Louisiana. A collection of photographs taken on several trips to the area in early 2006 document the devastation and the earliest attempts at recovery. Incorporating students and faculty from six departments on campus, this project encompassed the notion of a multi-disciplinary service-learning endeavor. History students served as curators of this exhibit while graphic design students conceived the layout for the images. They also identified appropriate themes, selected the photographs to be included and wrote the script to provide context for the images. By training students to become public historians, a new generation of professionals who have the knowledge to produce high-quality educational exhibits and programming for the general public will emerge.

Improving the Schools, Reducing Crime, and Supporting the Arts and Culture
McNeese State University
Dr. Michael Buckles

This project seeks to provide quality string music instruction with high quality instruments, teacher support and skilled string playing undergraduates from McNeese for the enrichment and advancement of the Oak Park Middle orchestra program. Because of the continuing recovery efforts in Lake Charles from Hurricanes Rita and Ike, the provision of quality art instruction for those who can least afford it will help to enhance the quality of life of this population as well as the community at large. The service-learners will participate in many of the activities provided by teachers’ aides, such as classroom setup, paperwork, classroom management, participation in rehearsals, conducting instrument-specific rehearsals and tutoring, those with special needs.

PHOTOS (from left to right)

Members of Gambling’s music ensemble perform for high schools affected by Hurricane Katrina as part of Dr. Ellen Smiley’s grant.

Students from Pointe-Aux-Chenes Elementary were taught how to restore sculptures damaged in Hurricane Katrina during the grant titled Angels on the Bayou.

Improving the Schools, Reducing Crime, and Supporting the Arts and Culture educated high school students on how to use music as a deterrent for harmful behavior.

In-Process

Marine Debris Becomes Art with a Message
Nicholls State University
Dr. Allyse Ferrara

The plans for this project are to remove litter from the beach at Grand Isle State Park (GISP) to create an exhibit of marine debris sculptures in hopes to provide participants with knowledge about Louisiana’s litter problem and the negative impacts of marine debris on ecological processes, and to contribute to a marine debris database. Through educational seminars, firsthand observation, creation or viewing the exhibit, participants will become more educated about the sources and ecological impacts of litter. Members of Nicholls State University, GISP, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Grand Isle community will work together on this project. After witnessing the large amount of litter that accrues on Louisiana beaches, especially after hurricanes, participants may think twice before improperly disposing of trash.

In-Process

Service-learners and the Oak Park Middle Orchestra Program
McNeese State University
Dr. Michael Buckles

Improving the Schools, Reducing Crime, and Supporting the Arts and Culture
Grambling State University
Dr. Ellen Smiley

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Improving the Schools, Reducing Crime, and Supporting the Arts and Culture educated high school students on how to use music as a deterrent for harmful behavior.
“My service-learning experience as a mentor with the Oak Park Middle School Orchestra benefited myself and, more importantly, the orchestra students. The students were able to grasp fundamentals and concepts more easily when they were reinforced by a source other than their primary teacher. The project provided me with invaluable experiences as I had to become an instructor, role model, and counselor to the students. As there are an extremely limited number of orchestra programs in our area, working with this project gave both students and myself an opportunity to advocate for orchestra programs. I am thankful that I had this opportunity to serve and learn.”

Paul Redding
Student
McNeese State University
After the Storm: A Community Food System Assessment of Five South Central Louisiana Parishes
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Dr. Bernice O. Adeleye

This project was developed to foster a better understanding of the state of hunger and food insecurity and how the economic structure of retail food sector has distanced economically disadvantaged people from accessing healthy and nutritious foods. Students were involved in collecting relevant community food and nutrition data, developing acceptable “Healthy Heart” recipes and creating cultural appropriate education materials for teaching paraprofessionals who service emergency food recipients. Students gained an understanding of the extent alternative food sources (urban gardens, community gardens, home gardens, farmer’s markets, produce/food peddlers, food co-operatives and community-supported agriculture) managed by a larger number of people throughout the community. The project generated recommended actions to mitigate hunger and food insecurity, as well as recommendations to minimize poverty-induced nutrition-related health challenges among the vulnerable groups in Lafayette, St. Martin, St. Landry, Acadia and Evangeline Parishes.

PHOTOS (from left to right)
Food drives such as the one held during NSU Service Week not only provide the less fortunate with meals but also help students become aware of how the retail food sector has distanced economically disadvantaged people from accessing healthy and nutritious foods.

Students who participated in X-treme Spring Break learned about issues surrounding public health, safety and emergency preparedness.

Students involved in the C.A.S.T. program at ULM were able to complete a one-hour course that included CPR instruction.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

“Service-learning is an important part of the educational process at Northwestern State University. An outgrowth of Northwestern’s participation in the ULS Serves Initiative was the hiring of a full-time Director of Service-Learning and infusing service into academic programs. The learning that takes place outside the classroom by doing something for others adds greatly to what takes place in the classroom. Service-learning provides our students with a variety of experiences they would not otherwise have and also helps build a bond between the university and the community it serves.”

Dr. Thomas Hanson
Former Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs
Northwestern State University

PHOTOS (from left to right)
Preserving sculptures damaged by Hurricane Katrina allowed Nicholls students to learn the importance of art preservation through a partnership with International Artifacts.

University of Louisiana at Lafayette nursing students utilize podcasting technology to enhance their work. Similarly, a University of Louisiana at Monroe grant project generated podcasts on the effects of hurricanes and safety procedures for schools and the community.

Nicholls State students beautify an abandoned church’s graveyard and learn the history of its existence.

Heritage Education Activity at Badin-Roque Historic Site
Northwestern State University
Dr. Elizabeth Guin

The Master of Arts in Heritage Resources and the Bachelor of Arts in Heritage Resources students at Northwestern State University designed and implemented a community-based heritage education activity with a service-learning component. Preservation of the Creole cultural landscape is an important priority due to the devastation wrought upon Creole neighborhoods in New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina, and with the assistance of the Creole Heritage Center, this project showcased both the Creole culture and the Badin-Roque Historic Site, a National Register location. This project helped to strengthen community partnerships between NSU, Society for Heritage Resources, Creole Heritage Center, St. Augustine Historical Society and local public schools such as L.P. Vaughn Elementary, George L. Parks Elementary and Cloutierville Elementary, as well as aided the Creole community in creating a sustainable heritage education activity for use at the Badin-Roque Historic Site.

Service-Learning Using a Group Decision Support System Mobile Computer Laboratory in Southeastern Louisiana Communities
Southeastern Louisiana University
Dr. Minh Huynh

Southeastern students partnered with community decision makers to utilize a group decision support system mobile computer laboratory in making informed, data-driven decisions for recovery and economic development. The objectives were to use service-learning to connect students and the community to address issues and resolve problems related to hurricane recovery work and economic development and to provide via the Group Decision Support Systems (GDSS) lab that is used in conjunction with area businesses for service-learning, community applications, that promote service-learning within Southeastern Louisiana.

In-Process
Cyberbullying Prevention
Northwestern State University
Dr. Gerra Perkins

This project targets the problem of cyberbullying with a goal to provide NSU students, local administrators, teachers and school counselors with resources and materials to understand cyberbullying, ways to prevent it and how to educate parents and students. Approximately 60 students in the Counseling program at Northwestern State University will host an in-service for area school personnel who work at sites affected by the recent hurricanes, and will create resources to present to surrounding school parish educators. Approximately 40 local school personnel will be involved. The goals for this project are to enhance students’ decision making skills, problem-solving skills, creative/critical thinking skills, and responsibility taking; create products and provide resources that support cyberbullying prevention efforts in area schools; and enhance students’ technology skills.
ULS Serves has expanded Grambling State University’s service-learning efforts by providing opportunities for students and faculty that promote academic learning, service, and reflection. These opportunities have promoted interaction among peers, support for the elderly, enrichment for K-12 students, and support of the “common good” for the community. Students and faculty have expressed the joy of experiencing the “value added” from taking what is learned in the classroom and applying it in the community. Furthermore, grant-funded service-learning projects have served as catalysts that have boosted service-learning activities across the academic programs. Several who are not fortunate enough to have grant funded activities continue to develop viable service-learning projects for the students. Moreover, students have become more involved, by making suggestions for future service-learning activities. As a result of these funds, over the past three years we have seen our students evolve into more socially, culturally, civic minded individuals who are better prepared to meet their civic responsibility.

Dr. Rory L. Bedford
Director of Service-Learning
Grambling State University

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

In-Process
Enhancing the Cultural, Mathematical, Scientific, Writing, and Technological Skills of High School Students
Grambling State University
Dr. Rory Bedford
This project will allow Grambling students to assist in the academic development of area high school students by establishing a mentoring program. The program will promote one-on-one interaction between GSU’s Pre-Calculus and Biology students and high school students to facilitate social, cultural and academic development. Students will participate in tutorial sessions, test taking skills workshops and be introduced to resources and opportunities available through the Department of Education to enhance their basic skills and improve their chances of having successful careers in business, industry, and education. During the project, students will become familiar with disaster preparation skills, such as preparing a survival pack as well as the appropriate action to take given various disastrous situations. The program seeks specifically to help at least 50 mentees discover the full richness of the sciences over one academic year. One hundred mentor students from Grambling State University and 50 mentee students will benefit from the program.

In-Process
Spring Splash into Mathematics Service-Learning Project
Northwestern State University
Dr. Kimberly McAllister
The proposed project involves pairing students with low parental involvement from two elementary schools with teacher education candidates, many of whom have been displaced to Natchitoches due to the hurricanes along the Gulf Coast. “Spring Splash into Math” will build a community of learners through a series of family mathematics night activities. Teacher candidates will plan and teach mathematics lessons and as parental involvement is essential, these events will be held in the evening to encourage participation.

“Keeping students interested in Math and Science is a priority for several ULS Serves grants. Similar to UL Lafayette’s RUNbus project, the Beausoleil Home was designed by students to generate more energy than it consumes. Using hands-on experiences allows students to develop a better understanding of the importance of a science background and the opportunities to use this knowledge in different careers.”

Dr. Rory L. Bedford
Director of Service-Learning
Grambling State University
Progressive Recovery through Higher Education: Rebuilding Louisiana
Grambling State University
Dr. Brenda Wall

GSU initiated a Practicum Course in Psychology, which was specifically designed to study the impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The course began with the student panel discussion from men in the class who compared the Iraq military engagement with the orders given to the military in New Orleans. The culmination of the first quarter was to travel to Thibodaux where students enrolled in the psychology course and other honor students joined students at Nicholls State University to participate in X-treme Spring Break. Twenty-nine students and five faculty and staff worked alongside the Bayou Area Habitat for Humanity in building homes for families. In addition to contributing to the construction of homes, students interviewed families in the community, shared with children and obtained perspectives from Habitat for Humanity and UL System staff.

“Remote Area Medical often participates in community projects, but when we joined the Southeastern Louisiana University nursing students and Operation Blessing International during the Greater New Orleans Medical Recovery Week, the impact of the experience on everyone was extraordinary. The need for basic medical services in New Orleans following Katrina was overwhelming. With turmoil and hardship everywhere about 40 nursing students jumped in to assist with triage and with gathering medical histories and vital screenings. The week of hard work was personally and professionally rewarding, but when the students waved goodbye they received a standing ovation of heartfelt appreciation from the grateful New Orleanians. I know that moment particularly stays with us and will forever reinforce the potential and impact that is possible when we work together to serve those in need.”

William Sanchez
Remote Area Medical Volunteer Corps
Economic and Cultural Development as a Function of a Research and Development Corridor on Louisiana’s Northern Frontier
University of Louisiana at Monroe
Dr. Joseph McGahan

The primary goal of this project was to teach University of Louisiana at Monroe students about research and development (R&D) so they can help teach the community at large about R&D relative to economic and cultural development, especially after the devastation of the hurricanes. Students developed a documentary and distributed these documentaries on DVD’s to high schools and colleges so that people became more knowledgeable about R&D and knowledge-based economies. The project also focused on designing and conducting a survey to determine whether people support an R&D component of the economy.

Enhancing the Quality of Life for Senior Citizens in a Rural Community after the Trauma of Katrina/Rita
Grambling State University
Dr. Grace Tate

The goal of this project was to provide stabilizing activities to elderly citizens displaced to Grambling and the surrounding area so as to eliminate or prevent some of the pain and distress caused in 2005 by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The project aimed to enhance the quality of life for approximately 100 senior citizens and helped to replace the support system that was disrupted as a result of the tragedy. Students enrolled in Social Work classes actively participated in the project and along with resource consultants conducted workshops and hosted activities that developed skills, promoted mental and physical health of these senior persons.

Little Zion/St. Luke’s Baptist Church Service-Learning Project
Nicholls State University
Dr. James Butler

This grant encompassed a social anthropology project in the rural community of Chackbay in South Louisiana where an abandoned church is part of a former plantation system. Sociology service-learning students were introduced to methods of applied research through site preservation techniques, retrieval of archived documents, research methods and documentation of cultural history, and the collection/preservation of oral history. The project’s historical documentation, presented in a public service brochure, helped to inform the Chackbay community and tourists of the cultural history of Little Zion/St. Luke’s Baptist Church. Also, documentation and archiving of the church will ensure the survival of the history for the community and future generations should another hurricane impact the area.

Nurturing the Families of Louisiana Nurturing Parenting Program
McNeese State University
Dr. Betty Robertson

Over the course of three semesters, 144 McNeese students served as child facilitators for three sites in Nurturing the Families of Louisiana Nurturing Parenting Program, a statewide initiative for the prevention of child abuse and neglect. The program is a collaborative effort of the Louisiana Department of Social Services, Office of Community Services, Prevent Child Abuse Louisiana, and other entities. University students created and implemented developmentally-appropriate learning experiences around a nurturing theme; served as child facilitators; facilitated family nurturing time when parents and children interact; created a reflective journal including evaluation; and participated in discussion sessions for brainstorming and problem-solving to identify problems, recommend actions and evaluate solutions. The intent of this family nurturing program is to provide families with life skills that can help them cope with and eliminate stresses that might develop as a result of natural disasters, such as hurricanes and flooding. Students’ experiences in this program helped them to understand the importance of family and community collaborations and also internalize some of the concepts intended for the participants.

PHOTOS (from left to right)
During Dr. Butler’s Little Zion/St. Luke’s Baptist Church Service-Learning Project, anthropology students were introduced to site preservation techniques.
This abandoned church is part of a former plantation system in the rural community of Chackbay, LA. Documentation by Nicholls students ensured survival of its history.
Summer mentoring programs provide undergraduate and graduate students practical experience in diagnostic testing and hone their teaching skills while preparing younger students for their next year of school.
X-treme Spring Break 2007: Students Rebuilding Louisiana
Nicholls State University
Dr. Judy Daniels

In the spring of 2006 McNeese and Southeastern, with the assistance of the UL System, responded to the devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita by hosting an alternative spring break program. Over 100 students from the eight universities in the UL System sacrificed their spring break to participate. In the spring of 2007 the SGA of Nicholls realized that there was still a substantial need to continue the building efforts in the aforementioned region. While the primary goal of the program was to assist Habitat for Humanity in their rebuilding efforts, the program also focused on educating students by way of presentations and training workshops about issues surrounding public health and safety, emergency preparedness and response, and the significant impact their participation in service-learning has on the lives of others, as well as their own.

X-treme Spring Break 2008: Students Rebuilding Louisiana
University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Mr. Edward Pratt

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette Student Government Association used lessons learned from “X-treme Spring Break 2007” in hosting “X-treme Spring Break 2008: Students Rebuilding Louisiana.” With the assistance and partnership of the UL System and the Lafayette Habitat for Humanity, a new community was initiated. While the primary goal of the program was to assist Habitat for Humanity in their rebuilding efforts, the program also focused on educating students by way of presentations and training workshops.

STUDENT-DRIVEN PROJECTS

A Collaborative Commitment: Grambling State University, Southern University-Shreveport, and Habitat for Humanity
Rebuilding Louisiana through Service-Learning
Grambling State University
Dr. Rory Bedford

This project formed a collaboration between Grambling State University, Southern University – Shreveport and Habitat for Humanity to develop new housing in North Louisiana for victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Students enhanced communication, writing and social skills by partnering and participating in a building project with Habitat for Humanity. In their classes, students learned about the devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita which they used as foundation for discussion and research assignments. Students also explored their own personal civic responsibility as it relates to service-learning and rebuilding Louisiana.

Can You Handle It? NSU Service Week
Northeastern State University
Dr. Patrice Moulton

This one-week project consisted of a series of discipline-specific service-learning activities by Northwestern faculty, staff and students who partnered with community groups. Hundreds of students positively impacted the local area.

In-Process
Hoping for the Best – While Preparing for the Worst’ Infusing Disaster Preparation into the First Year Experience Program
Grambling State University
Dr. Ellen D. Smiley

The project will allow professors, members of the Campus Emergency Response Team (CERT), members of the City of Grambling Fire Department and other trained responders to teach disaster relief preparation to 60 Grambling State University students and ultimately to 1000 students per year through workshops. The goal of the project is to ensure that students have a general understanding of what to do when faced with a disaster. Students will also learn how to develop a survival pack if evacuation is necessary. Students will utilize the on-line Red Cross training workshop to learn how to assist others who may be in need during a disaster.

Photos (from left to right):
The student driven initiative of X-treme Spring Break in 2005 was the motivation for the UL System to apply to Learn and Serve America for a service-learning grant.
X-treme Spring Break required students to sacrifice their spring break to participate in the program which helped to rebuild homes destroyed in hurricanes. McNeese State University, Nicholls State University, Southeastern Louisiana University and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette have hosted this event in the past three years.
NSU Service Week allows students to impact the community in a variety of ways; one such example is volunteering to care for abandoned animals.