

the Volunteer voice

JCPS VOLUNTEER TALENT CENTER NEWSLETTER VOL 1: ISSUE 3

✧ The Volunteer Talent Center ✧

“Service Learning”

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Every so often, we look back on lessons we've learned through the years about teaching. And always, we find ourselves remembering one truth: John Dewey was right when he said students “learn by doing.” Doing what? “Serving others.” Learn what? “The learning depends on the service.”

Service learning is not community service. Yes, it is service, but it also has an academic basis. Service learning engages students in real life experiences that promote academic learning and build citizenship skills. Research supports Dewey's theory: Students learn when they apply their knowledge to problems that exist in real life context. Learning is fundamental to the service. For example, if students do a project with a nursing home, they will learn about current issues related to aging: health problems of the aged, pensions, and other cost of living issues. Students can learn too from stories of the past: experiences of the World War II era or some other conflict;

pictures and reports on “the good old days.”

In keeping with the Volunteer Talent Center's (VTC's) focus on volunteerism in Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS), there is a myriad of examples of student volunteers engaged in exciting service-learning programs in our school buildings and community. And the programs involve students from kindergartners to high school seniors. Some of the projects touch on interests and needs of specific schools, some reflect interests within the community, some address national and international issues. All of them encourage students to use their problem-solving skills as they seek solutions for defined needs.

We will be bringing you, from time to time, some information about service-learning projects in our schools. We think you will be impressed by the skills and thoughtfulness our children and youth bring to the discussion of real life issues. ■



Photo, Abdul Sharif

Volunteer Spotlight: Alayne Wright

Is there room enough in your schedule to be a reliable, energetic volunteer and, at the same time, a world traveler? Yes, says Alayne Wright, **Every 1 Reads** tutor, English as a Second Language (ESL) mentor, and VTC fisherperson. “I love to travel and make room for travel in my yearly vacation plan,” Alayne says and points out that this year she already has taken a Mediterranean cruise, which stopped at Barcelona, the west coast of Italy, and ended up, away from the water, in Amsterdam!

The grandmother of six youngsters, Alayne retired from accounting to the role of volunteer world traveler because she found retirement alone was “too boring.” And so, with her husband, who retired from Philip Morris, Alayne has been abroad (just to name a few) in Australia, Germany, Alaska, and Peru.

Alayne’s volunteer world is as vast as her travel world. She is a tutor for several ESL students at Waggener Traditional High School. She tutors in **Every 1 Reads** at Wheeler Elementary. She reads with Spanish-speaking students at Churchill Downs (the “hot walkers”), and she recently signed up to go fishing with the Aquatic Resources Program. The volunteer activities are scheduled for Wednesday through Friday each week. What does she do on Monday and Tuesday? “I sit back, drink coffee, read books, and look ahead to my next trip!”

Some interesting sidelights to the Alayne story: She is very much at ease with volunteering with the Spanish-speaking students at Churchill Downs because, in part, her mother is Spanish-speaking too. Alayne understands overcoming adversity because she had polio as a child and learned to cope with limited mobility with a smile. Are we lucky to have her on our volunteer roster? In a shout heard’ round the world: **yes! -- C.C.**

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Aquatic Volunteers Tackle Needed Repairs

Forty-three volunteers showed up to repair fishing equipment on the Aquatic Resources Fishing Program Tackle Repair Day, Saturday, February 19, 2011. "It was a great turnout," said Roy Birmingham, program director. "We repaired and inspected over

300 rods, 340 reels, 40 pole totes, and 19 tackle boxes."

A lots of laughter marks these repair sessions, primarily the result of jokers in the group who spin stories as they work. Pizza and cookies rounded out the day. Tackle repair is followed by fishing at Camp Crooked Creek

and Salato in Frankfort during the month of May.

"We still need volunteers to help out when we're fishing," Roy pointed out. "You're welcome to come aboard." Individuals interested in volunteering for fishing should call **485-3710**.

Aquatic Resources Tackle Repair Day. Photos by Joe Hermann





SPAVA Reaches Across the Border

Photos, Abdul Sharif

Hosts visiting officials from Colombia, South America

By Judy Lippmann



Word of our venerable antiviolence program, The Society for the Prevention of Violence and Aggressiveness among Adolescents (SPAVA), has an international flavor these days. How come? Well, ten Colombian visitors to the United States came to Louisville to talk about teaching students nonviolence. The visit was arranged through the U.S. Department of State and coordinated locally through the World Affairs Council of Louisville and Southern Indiana. Spanish-English dialogue was accomplished through two translators traveling with the Colombians.



Looking to examine how bullying is addressed in SPAVA sessions, the visitors explained to Judy Lippmann, SPAVA coordinator, and to SPAVA volunteer mentors Pat Taylor and Rod Fucella that bullying is a problem among Colombian youth as well. The SPAVA volunteers and staff demonstrated how they teach impulse control and the STAR problem-solving method: Stop, Think, Act, Review. The Colombians gave the SPAVA staff a DVD on a reconciliation program they use with youth.



While visiting the SPAVA office at Waggener Traditional High School, the Colombian guests also met with students from Mark Wehrley's Advanced World Civilizations class to discuss similarities and differences between the United States and Colombia in terms of human rights.

“Our guests invited everyone to visit Colombia, where we would be warmly welcomed and impressed by people’s friendliness and the country’s beauty,” said Judy Lippmann. ■

Program Highlight!



Pleasure Ridge Park High School, Greenwood Elementary School and Every 1 Reads Form Partnerships

By Katherine Becker

Sixty-seven of 75 students at Greenwood Elementary School paired with reading tutors from Pleasure Ridge Park (PRP) High School have seen noteworthy improvement in their reading skills, as measured by Letter Identification and the Developmental Reading Assessment (D.R.A.), says Annette Hackett, an instructional coach at Greenwood. The on-going partnership between PRP and Greenwood is part of the **Every 1 Reads** initiative, the goal of which is to have every student in JCPS reading at grade level.

In early October, Amy Stewart, Family Resource and Youth Services Center coordinator (FRYSC) at PRP and Greenwood, hosted an **Every 1 Reads** training session for students at PRP. Fifty-four students attended that training session, and many of them were matched with a reading partner at Greenwood. For the 2010-11 school year, 75 PRP student tutors – some new and some returning from previous school years—make weekly visits to Greenwood to work with their reading partners.

Working closely with Ms. Hackett, the PRP student tutors have learned reading strategies to help their reading partners improve their reading skills and scores. Ms. Hackett notes that the partnership with PRP has been a positive experience for all students involved. The PRP students, Ms. Hackett says, take their tutoring responsibilities seriously and are very attentive to their reading partners' needs and progress.

Mentoring Program Added

Last year, a new program in supplement to **Every 1 Reads** was added at PRP and Greenwood. Thirty of the PRP **Every 1 Reads** student tutors were chosen based on academic achievement and good attendance to mentor a student one-to-one at Greenwood through the Big Brothers Big Sisters of Kentuckiana program. The student mentors meet with their mentees once weekly for an hour, spending 30 minutes reading and 30 minutes on other topics including relationship building and goal setting.

In celebration of the students' achievement, PRP and Greenwood hosted a Valentine's Day party, where each student tutor and tutee received a free book.

We Need You!

Now that we are heading into March, like the kids, we begin to dream about summer. Things do begin to wind down when Spring Break appears on the horizon, and we are preparing for testing and other end-of-year activities.

However, the need for volunteers does not diminish or fade away. We don't want it to do so either because our outreach program – working with volunteers – is essential to the good health of the school district. Volunteers represent community engagement, and we applaud the increase in involvement that volunteering represents.

For that reason, we're busy, currently, identifying some summer school and community organizations that will need volunteers in June or July, while the school district is making plans for the coming year. We'll be listing some of the summer volunteer sites in our next newsletter. Meantime, if you think you might be interested in volunteering during the summer months, please call the VTC, **485-3710**, and let us know. We'll be happy to help you make a summer choice.

Oh, and by the way, it only takes two to three weeks to have a record check done instead of the six to eight weeks we faced here in the opening months of this school year. We will appreciate, if you plan to volunteer in the 2011-12 school year, that you come early (beginning July 1, 2011) and complete the records check in a short turnaround time.

Up Coming **Every 1 Reads** Trainings

March 9, 2011, Waggener High School, 330 South Hubbards Lane, 3 to 5 p.m.

March 21, 2011, Southeast Christian Church, 920 Blankenbaker Parkway 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

March 23, 2011, Waggener High School, 330 South Hubbards Lane, 3 to 5 p.m.

March 28, 2011, Park DuValle Health Center, 3015 Wilson Ave, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

MARCH 2011						
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21 	22	23 	24	25	26
27	28 	29	30	31		

The Volunteer Talent Center

In operation since 1990, the Volunteer Talent Center recruits, trains, and places volunteers to meet identified student needs. The options for service cover a broad range--from tutoring and/or mentoring individual students to serving as judges for academic fairs, chaperoning school events, and making writing books for classroom use.

