



The Project YES! Volunteer

The newsletter of AmeriCorps Project YES!, a program of the Northwestern University Settlement Association

Vol II no. 2 Winter 2006/07

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Serving Our Community through Non-Violence

Dates to Remember

March 31- Cesar Chaves Day of Service and Learning

April 21 – National and Global Youth Service Day

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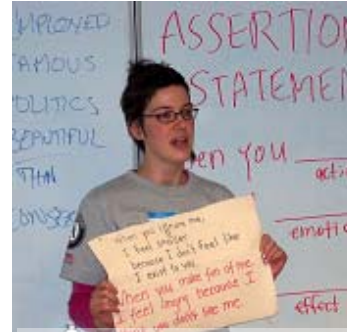
Member of the Month – 4

-ABOUT US- PROJECT YES!

connects caring adults with youth in and around the West Town community through mentorship, educational, service, artistic, and recreational activities in order to support their academic achievement, provide them with positive alternatives to destructive behaviors, and foster an ethic of service in the entire community.

January 15, 2007 marked another successful volunteer project organized by Project YES! in honor of the Martin Luther King Day Jr. Day of Service. Project YES! AmeriCorps members began organizing the project, which included workshops, speakers, and service, in November. After a morning welcome by the members over breakfast volunteers went off to attend workshops run by different community organizations. Speakers from Howard Brown, Rainbow House, and Justice Talking worked with volunteers to explore different issues of non-violence to honor the legacy of Dr. King.

Once the workshops concluded, volunteers were invited to participate in one of two service projects. One project focused on the creations assertion statements. Assertion statements are a non-violent model of communication that allows the speaker to be direct without casting judgment on those whom their message is directed. Volunteers wrote assertion statements on strips of canvas to call attention to the effects of violence and compassion in their lives. The statements will be stitched together and displayed publicly. When completed, the project helped viewers reflect on the nature of violence and the choice for non-violence. Examples of assertion statements included: “When you *confide in me*, I feel *trustworthy* because you make me feel *needed*.”; “When you *yell*, I feel *stupid*, because you are *attacking my dignity*.”; When you *make fun of me*, I feel *angry*, because *I don’t think you like me*.”



Left: Project YES! member Esther Lindström presents assertion statements



Below: a group of volunteers participating in Justice Talking workshop

The second service project of the day involved the creation of toiletry kits for Rainbow House. Rainbow House works to end domestic violence in the Little Village and Morgan Park neighborhoods. Travel size toiletries were donated by local stores and hotels and then assembled into kits by volunteers. The kits included an assortment of items along with a note written by the volunteers explaining why and when the kits were made.



LeaderCorps: Facilitating Inter-Program Collaboration

In mid-November of 2006, approximately 40 representatives from various Illinois AmeriCorps state programs met in Springfield for a LeaderCorps training conference. There were members from as far north as McHenry County and as far south as Rend Lake. The purpose of the conference was to bring participants from diverse AmeriCorps programs together to ratify the bylaws of LeaderCorps as proposed in the spring of 2006, to develop ourselves and each other as leaders, as well as put into motion the initial planning process for Illinois AmeriCorps involvement in National & Global Youth Service Day (N&GYSD).

At the conference we were very lucky to have Jeff Birdsall, a trainer and consultant to AmeriCorps programs in the state of Washington, serving as our facilitator for the weekend. Jeff helped us to examine our leadership styles through teambuilding exercises and the Leadership Compass, in which we learned both the advantages and difficulties to our individual approaches to leadership. Although most of us had never interacted with each other before the weekend, Jeff helped us to talk and learn together about communication and facilitation techniques, and in so doing, cultivate our leadership abilities.

On the second day of the conference, Jeff facilitated our planning for N&GYSD. After much discussion, we decided on an environmental theme for the day.. The goal of LeaderCorps regarding N&GYSD is to coordinate the involvement of 750 Illinois youth and many AmeriCorps programs in any of three days of possible service between April 20-22, 2007.

Since November's conference, LeaderCorps has been working on the initial organization of National & Global Youth Service Day. Committees are laying the ground work for a successful day of service, ensuring that awareness and coordination among communities and programs is organized and effective. We are looking forward to N&GYSD, when AmeriCorps programs across Illinois can work together to mobilize and support youth in community involvement and service, while raising awareness among the public of young people as leaders in their communities.

-Esther Lindström, Project YES! LeaderCorps rep

NUSH Thanksgiving Dinner – a Holiday Tradition



On November 21, 2006 neighbors and friends of the Settlement gathered in Burnside Hall for the annual NUSH Thanksgiving dinner. Each year dinner is served to the community by members of the Board of Directors, as well as members of the many Auxiliary Boards and staff from Noble College Prep. Student volunteers from Noble College Prep and AmeriCorps members served drinks and helped keep the service line full of hot food. Diners were entertained during dinner by the Noble College Prep Choir. 2006 marked another successful year for this community tradition

Alumni Update:

Dave Weldzius Class of 2005

“I just began my second year of graduate school at the California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles. I am studying photography. Next summer I will teach photography through CSSSA (California State Schools Society of Art) to L.A. County public high school students. I am currently investigating artist fellowships in New York (Whitney Program), Houston (CORE Program), and Eastern Europe (Fulbright). If nothing else, I would like to settle down in Venice or Culver City, which despite popular misconception, is the most interesting area in greater Los Angeles.”

Send your updates to:
pbader@nush.org
sub: Alumni

Member Page



Name: Erica Lee

Site: NUSH

Hometown: Glendale Heights, Illinois

College and Major: UIC- Sociology

Favorite Movie: Harold and Maude

In my free time I . . . rest, read, listen to music, walk around

After Project YES! I see myself . . . pursuing an MSW in Illinois



Name: Esther Lindstrom

Site: Noble College Prep

Hometown: Danbury, CT

College and Major: University of Michigan: English Language and Literature

Favorite Movie: Big Top Pee Wee

In my free time I . . . read, sew, make greeting cards, and garden

After Project YES! I see myself . . . one day getting my teaching certificate and becoming a high school English teacher



Name: Stephen Metropolis

Site: James Russell Lowell Elementary

Hometown: Hilton Head, SC

College and Major: Coastal Carolina University; Art Studio Major

Favorite Movie: Green Mile, Braveheart, or The Passion

In my free time I . . . Watch t.v., eat, and sleep. I like playing sports every now and then though.

After Project YES! I see myself . . . Joining Peace Corps and doing a master's program in Sociology.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Project YES! needs your help!

On **April 21, 2007** Project YES! will be organizing a community volunteer project in celebration of:

NATIONAL & GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY

This year's theme for Illinois – *the Environment*

Please consider supporting our event by becoming a volunteer

For more information email volunteeryes@nush.org or call (773) 278-7471 ex 139

Project YES! Member of the Month: Oct & Nov



Denny Aldridge and Lisa Friedlen
AmeriCorps Project YES!
Members of the Month
October and November

Each month Project YES! members select a member to recognize for their hard work and dedication to the program. For the month of October Denny Aldridge was selected as member of the month. Denny is currently serving as a member at KIPP: Ascend Charter School. Denny was recognized for her work on the Make a Difference Day community service project. Denny headed up one of the planning committees for the project and organized volunteers at the Onward House site.

Lisa Friedlen was selected member of the month for November for her hard work at Noble Street Charter School. Members who nominated her commented on her dedication to the students and her ability to pull the team together. Lisa serves in a number of classrooms at Noble Street including academic support and grade level mentoring.

Congratulations to both Lisa and Denny!



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