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Center for Community Engagement affirms St. Bonaventure's commitment to promoting student-centered learning

In any given week, St. Bonaventure University students can be found in a number of area non-profit and social service agencies that range from working with children to visiting those who are in prison.

Establishment of the new Center for Community Engagement at St. Bonaventure affirms the university's commitment to promoting student-centered learning. It also is a natural progression inspired by the Lilly Endowment-funded Journey Project, established in 2003 through a five-year, \$2 million grant.

The Journey Project initiative was designed to create a campus culture in which faculty, staff, administrators and students give serious consideration to issues of faith, service and vocation — all in the context of liberal arts education. The initial Lilly Endowment grant expired in 2008, but the university received a \$500,000 extension grant that runs through 2011.

The Center for Community Engagement seeks to enhance and broaden the university's educational mission by leading, coordinating and sustaining a variety of integrative and transformative educational, service and volunteer activities in mentored situations. It also will create standard practices and procedures for all non-academic (and some academic) volunteer projects, service opportunities, internship placements and service trips.

Larry Sorokes, associate vice president for Franciscan Mission and director of the Fr. Mychal Judge Center, is providing leadership for the Center for Community Engagement. Michael Williams, who directed the Journey Project since 2005, has left St. Bonaventure for a new position at Thiel College.

The CCE will have three primary functions:

- Coordination: The center will be the central coordinating office to facilitate student service-learning opportunities and off-campus outreach.
- Communication and Marketing: The center will provide a clear entry point for communication with community partners and

university audiences. It also allows for comprehensive and coherent marketing of the university's commitment to using service as a means toward integrative and transformative educational experiences.

- Formation: The center will provide resources and training for people (faculty, staff, community members and service partners) who are mentoring St. Bonaventure students in the community and in the classroom. This establishes a collectively held understanding of the goals of experiential learning at SBU.

"We want to continue to further enhance and expand the learning through service opportunities that are available to our students," said Br. F. Edward Coughlin, O.F.M, vice president for Franciscan Mission.

"Volunteer, service and internship opportunities typically have a significant impact on a student. It is important, therefore, that our students are invited to learn from those experiences through integration and reflection opportunities, to be critically conscious of the social, political and economic realities that create and perpetrate social problems through social analysis, and to be encouraged to thoughtfully consider how, for example, the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching might offer an alternative way of thinking about how to transform situations over time," said Br. Ed.

"We want to invite students to be aware of the social context of their service, to be aware of how people we're going to visit live. We want students to be attentive to the environment they're entering."

Community-Based Learning Fellows

One of the primary goals of the Center for Community Engagement is to support faculty. The effort to institutionalize service and experiential learning requires integration into the academic arena. To encourage and support faculty in this endeavor, the CCE will initiate a two-year Community-Based Learning Fellows program. Faculty will be invited to apply for grants to provide them with the support they might need to create or, in some cases, re-create a course to include a community-based learning component.

An ad hoc selection committee will be formed to review proposals and to select four Community-Based Learning Fellows for the 2009-2010 academic year. Application details and guidelines can be obtained from Br. Edward Coughlin, O.F.M. (coughlin@sbu.edu).

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SBU officials giving PEP talk on swine flu

St. Bonaventure Student Life officials are urging members of the university community to listen to their PEP talk about the swine flu.

"Prevention, Education, Preparation — that's what we're preaching," said Rick Trietley, vice provost for student life.

Melissa Gallison Blackstone, Ph.D., the university's new director of Health Services and Nurse Practitioner, is working closely with Trietley, administrators and members of SBU's Emergency Preparedness Planning Group on plans for preventing and, if need be, containing a campus outbreak of H1N1 — the swine flu virus.

"We can't react to the panic many people are succumbing to," Gallison Blackstone said. "We have to be thoughtful and deliberate about this. We have a committed campus community that is collaborating on the implementation of a comprehensive approach to prevention, education and treatment."

The state and county health departments and the Centers for Disease Control are key partners in ensuring “we utilize an evidence-based approach in all our efforts,” Gallison Blackstone said.

Prevention is of primary concern. Housekeepers are paying closer attention to the cleaning of “high touch” areas such as doorknobs and stair railings, said Phil Winger, associate vice president for facilities.

Visible signs have already appeared across campus: temporary hand-sanitizing stations that will soon be replaced by permanent sanitizer dispensers. For those people taking prevention into their own hands, take note: only alcohol-based sanitizers are effective in fighting H1NI, Blackstone said.

Cleanliness is the most effective deterrent, she said. Local, state and federal health organizations are all stressing the same precautions:

Wash your hands often with soap and warm water. Use alcohol-based hand cleansers in between.

Avoid close contact with people who are ill.

Stay home from work or school if you are sick.

Use tissue when you cough, sneeze or spit, and dispose of the tissue in a covered trash bin.

If a tissue is not available, cough into your upper arm, NOT your hand.

Keep hands away from your face. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Clean shared spaces — such as phone receivers, keyboards, steering wheels and office equipment — before you use them.

Refrain from sharing personal items such as forks, spoons, toothbrushes and towels.

Gallison Blackstone said students should visit Health Services, located in Doyle Hall, if they have a fever or are experiencing flu-like symptoms. Those people exhibiting flu-like symptoms will be kept isolated from other patients, she said.

Since almost all flu strains are viral, treatment for students exhibiting flu-like symptoms will be conventional for the first week: rest, fluids, isolation and fever reducers.

Eating nutritious foods, getting enough rest, and exercising regularly are key components to preventing the flu, said Gallison Blackstone, who has worked with residence life staff to help educate students about swine flu.

Posters have been distributed with flu-prevention tips and resident assistants have stressed swine flu awareness at floor meetings. Notice boards about swine flu prevention have been e-mailed several times since school resumed last week.

The university’s Emergency Preparedness Planning Group meets Friday for the first time this semester with swine flu preparedness the sole topic on the agenda. In the spring, the EPPG finalized emergency planning and communication protocol for a wide variety of emergencies, including a pandemic.

In the event of a communicable disease outbreak, the Cattaraugus County Health Department would be immediately notified. Depending on the scenario, recommendations from the county would be followed. At that time, response to such an event would be under the direction of outside authorities, beginning with the county’s Health Department.

“Our focus is on prevention, education and preparation,” Trietley said. “We want people to understand that we have a plan in place to communicate details of what to do, should an outbreak occur, with all members of the Bonaventure family — students, faculty, staff and parents.”

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First FHCP student begins med school in D.C.

Shawn Sood still bleeds Bonaventure brown, but he was thrilled to don a white coat at his new home in the nation's capital.

Sood, class of 2009, is the first Franciscan Health Care Professions graduate to move on to medical school at George Washington University. He earned a degree in biology and his master's in business administration.

The dual-degree major from Katy, Texas, was one of 177 members of the class of 2013 to take part in the traditional White Coat Ceremony welcoming first-year students into the George Washington University medical community. During the ceremony, students are presented their white coats, recite an oath and sign an honor code pledge.

"The ceremony definitely crystallized that I could see the light at the end of the tunnel," Sood said. "The fact that my white coat will say Shawn B. Sood, M.D., four years from now is exciting ... but also a little scary."

A dozen family members attended the Aug. 22 ceremony, which Sood called "a wonderful and exciting experience," one shaped by his time spent at St. Bonaventure.

"I already have a strong foundation in the sciences thanks to Bona's ... but the biggest thing I gained from going to Bonaventure is the realization that medicine is much more than a science," Sood said. "Being able to relate to my patients and showing empathy are traits of great physicians and by cultivating these qualities at Bona's, I feel that I will be able to offer my patients much more than just a diagnosis."

Sood said classes so far "are a bit overwhelming. Time management and repetition are vital to success in medical school. But the courses are fascinating and pertinent, so it doesn't make studying too bad."

He urged students in the pre-health programs at Bonaventure to cherish their time as an undergraduate.

"It's important that you take advantage of everything Bona's has to offer," he said. "Go nuts at a basketball game, spend an evening at Mount Irenaeus, get to know your professors — really take in what great opportunities you have as an undergraduate there because you will definitely miss Bona's when you leave."

Under the umbrella of the Franciscan Health Care Professions program, St. Bonaventure has several avenues for students to pursue a medical career: acceptance as freshmen into a combined degree program, the opportunity to apply for early assurance admission to medical schools as sophomores, or as traditional pre-med students who will seek enrollment into doctoral programs after they complete their SBU careers.

The combined degree program grants talented freshmen acceptance into professional school upon entry to St. Bonaventure, which has programs with George Washington University (medicine), Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (medicine and pharmacy), University at Buffalo (dentistry), Daemen College (physical therapy), and SUNY Upstate Medical University (medicine).

For details on all of SBU's pre-health programs, visit www.sbu.edu/prehealth.

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Professor co-authors Stonewall Jackson book

Chris Mackowski, associate professor of journalism and mass communication at St. Bonaventure University, has co-authored a new book on the death of Civil War general Thomas Jonathan “Stonewall” Jackson.

“The Last Days of Stonewall Jackson,” written with Civil War historian Kristopher D. White, recounts the accidental wounding of the Confederate general at the hands of his own men at the battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863. The wound left Jackson vulnerable to pneumonia, which claimed his life eight days later.

“The story of Jackson’s wounding and subsequent death is one of the most famous stories of the Civil War, and there’s a lot of mythology and romanticism that surrounds it,” Mackowski says. “We wanted to peel some of that back and look at what really happened while also doing honor to the story.”

Commissioned by the National Park Service, “Last Days” is written for a general audience.

“The Park Service wanted something a general reader could sit down and read in a single night and get a good overview of what happened,” Mackowski explains. Seventy-five sketches, photos, and maps accompany the text.

But, Mackowski adds, “Last Days” has something to offer to Civil War buffs, too.

“Even people familiar with the story of Jackson’s death are going to find a few surprises in this book because we had access to some never-before-published material that provides new details,” he says.

The book goes beyond Jackson’s death to also recount details of his funeral, the separate burial given to his amputated left arm, and the preservation of the building where he died.

“The building, known today as the Jackson Shrine, has an interesting story of its own, which we really wanted to highlight,” Mackowski says. “People find the place profound and sublime. We wanted to give readers a glimpse behind the scenes.”

The Stonewall Jackson Shrine is part of the Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park (FSNMP), a national park in central Virginia that encompasses four major Civil War battlefields, including Chancellorsville, where Jackson was wounded.

Mackowski’s writing partner, Kristopher White, is a Civil War historian who lives near the Chancellorsville battlefield. He’s a former historian at FSNMP and a former Licensed Battlefield Guide at Gettysburg. He and Mackowski have co-authored a half-dozen magazine and journal articles together on a variety of Civil War-related topics.

Aside from his work as a journalism professor at St. Bonaventure — a position he has held since the fall of 2000 — Mackowski works as a historical interpreter for FSNMP, giving battlefield tours and working at the Jackson Shrine.

“The Last Days of Stonewall Jackson” is available from Thomas Publishing, a leading publisher of Civil War-related books. It is the first in a series of books commissioned by FSNMP in cooperation with the Friends of Fredericksburg Area Battlefields. Future volumes in the series include a book by Mackowski and White on the Battle of Chancellorsville and a book by Mackowski on the Battle of the Wilderness.

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Green named interim dean of A&S

Eleanor H. Green, Ph.D., of Baltimore has been named interim dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at St. Bonaventure University.

Green began work at St. Bonaventure in late July and will serve until a permanent dean has been appointed and is in place after a national search. A search committee will be formed within the next month, said University President Sr. Margaret Carney, O.S.F., S.T.D.

Green comes to the University through the Registry for College & University Presidents. Her appointment is on an interim basis; she will not be a candidate for the position.

"Eleanor brings a wealth of experience and will really be a great asset as we begin to assemble a search committee for a permanent dean," Sr. Margaret said. "We invited The Registry to assist us in this short-term need, and the organization has a proven record as a valuable service."

Green is the former vice president for Academic Affairs and dean of faculty at the College of Mount Saint Vincent in Riverdale, N.Y., where she served the four-year liberal arts institution from 2002-2005. Prior to that she was the dean of Arts and Sciences (1999-2000) and dean of faculty (2000-2002) at the University of Maine at Presque Isle.

Green has held a number of faculty positions at Ohio Northern University, where she served as associate professor, professor and chair of the English Department. She also served on the English faculty at Norfolk State University.

She is an evaluator of Periodic Review Reports for the Middle States Commission on Higher Education; evaluator for the New England Association of Schools and Colleges; consultant evaluator for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, North Central Association of Colleges and Schools; and editor of the D. H. Lawrence Review

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Newsmakers

Dr. Julie Hens' research paper "Analysis of Gene Expression in PTHrP-/- Mammary Buds Supports a Role for BMP Signaling and MMP2 in the Initiation of Ductal Morphogenesis" was accepted into the journal of Developmental Dynamics for publication.

SBU alumnus Kevin McNamara, '02, John Watson, and Carol Wittmeyer published "The Utilization of a Succession Plan to Effectively Change Leadership and Ownership in a Small Business Enterprise" in The Journal of American Academy of Business (September 2009). This was a case study of the succession plan of McNamara's company, Millington Lockwood, Inc.

Dr. Paula J. Scraba, facilitator for The National Board for Build With Living Stones, presented a BWLS session for the 2009 Chapter of Mats for the Franciscan Sisters of Jesus in St. Louis, Mo., on Aug. 13, 2009. The presentation, "Called to Live the Gospel Way of Life," combined Bonventure's Legenda Major with Build With Living Stones "Francis, Clare and the Franciscan Family."

Dr. Charles Walker, professor of psychology, recently presented his research on student well-being at the American Psychological Association convention in Toronto Aug. 6-9, 2009. The title of the presentation was "A Longitudinal Study on the Psychological Well-Being of College Students." His study gave evidence that the well-being of students does indeed improve over their four years in college. However, some indicators such as those for health habits and spiritual practices decline. This longitudinal study on student well-being, conducted at St. Bonaventure University, is one of the first to be reported in the United States.

Dr. Kimberly Young, professor of management sciences, had two book chapters published in The Praeger International Collection on Addictions published by Praeger. Chapter one, titled "Assessment and Treatment of Internet Addiction," outlines the latest techniques in evaluation and treatment of the disorder. Chapter two, titled "Online Gaming: Symptoms, Risk Factors, and Treatment," outlines the latest research on new social problem of role-play gaming and virtual environments.

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