

# Students, Local Organizations Benefit From Service Learning

*DCC's Service Learning program, which combines community service with classwork to enrich the student experience and support local organizations, has grown exponentially since its inception in fall 2015.*

During that first semester, over 200 students and nine faculty members contributed a total of 1,800 hours on 20 projects. The following semester, 450 students and 20 faculty members worked a total of 4,500 hours to complete 75 projects. And for the fall 2016 semester, the number of students participating in service learning skyrocketed to 650 – more than triple the amount from just one year prior.

Pat Roza, activities director at Fishkill nursing home and rehabilitation center Elant, praised the work performed by students taking psychology courses with DCC instructor Nancy Mahar.

"We were so fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in a project with Dutchess Community College," said Roza. "The students created identity boards for residents with dementia. They were able to put a face on Alzheimer's disease by sharing the fact that residents were doctors, teachers, business professionals and homemakers who enjoyed their lives before they began slipping away."

According to a study by the Education Resources Information Center that included over 600 students in more than 30 academic disciplines, service learning enhances positive forms of motivation, problem-solving, civic skills and appreciation of diversity.

"We know that experiential learning enhances and complements classroom instruction," said DCC President Pamela Edington. "Our faculty have embraced the service learning model and our students, and the agencies being served, are greatly benefiting from these partnerships. It's a win-win for all."

## SERVICE LEARNING SPOTLIGHT

A few of the faculty members who worked with their students on service learning, along with a brief description of each project, are featured here.



**Dr. Brenda Squires**

**COURSE: ADVANCED COMPOSITION/ PEER TUTORING IN WRITING**

Students participated in the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read program through the Poughkeepsie Public Library District. The Big Read offers grants to support organizations in developing community-wide programs that encourage reading and participation by diverse audiences. Students led several literacy programs in the community including the Mill Street Loft's Habilidad program, which is an arts-based after-school program for City of Poughkeepsie High School students, the Poughkeepsie Public Library District and the Staatsburg Library District. Additionally, students collaborated with the Spark Media Project and E-TECH students taking Honors English at Poughkeepsie High School. DCC students assisted in teaching PHS students how to create social justice digital essays based on the Big Read book "Into the Beautiful North."



**Dr. Jessica Geer**

**COURSE: CHEMISTRY**

Students provided chemistry activities and lessons for S.F.B Morse Elementary School students. The intent of the project was to increase exposure of underrepresented groups to the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields. Demonstrations were interactive and engaging and taught the students about chemical matter, digestion, nutrients, food chains and polyacrylates. Students also discussed STEM careers and opportunities for a post-secondary education at DCC.



**Carla DelTreste-Jutt**

**COURSE: GEOMETRY FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS**

Students provided several classroom geometry activities and lessons for fifth graders at S.F.B Morse Elementary School. These interactive activities included building a city map, working with 3D geometric shapes and Legos, and surface area and perimeter exercises. DCC students also created "try this at home" brochures to allow parents to continue working with their children on geometry concepts introduced by exhibits in the Mid-Hudson Children's Museum.



**Terri Burke**

**COURSE: A BIOMEDICAL VIEW OF HIV/AIDS**

Students participated as project leaders in the annual AIDS Walk/Run for Hudson Valley Community Services, an agency that promotes prevention and wellness, encourages decisions maximizing quality of life and coordinates care for those living with complex health conditions. Students also created HIV awareness brochures and fact sheets and visited academic departments and administration offices to spread HIV and AIDS awareness on campus.



**Dr. Werner Steger**

**COURSE: HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES**

Students researched The Children's Home of Poughkeepsie's 170-year history and connected local and national events in each era of the agency's existence. Using information based on interviews with agency representatives and archive research, the students created a comprehensive publication that will be available to the public and used to create future projects including fliers, brochures and an infographic timeline of the agency's history in anticipation of its 175th anniversary celebration.



**Joan McFadden**

**COURSE: FAMILY LAW**

A working document was created by students that will assist domestic violence clients in maneuvering within the family court system in Dutchess County. It was created for Domestic Violence Services, a unit within Family Services, a local nonprofit that helps families and individuals help themselves through direct services, collaboration and advocacy. By simplifying terms, explaining resources and clarifying processes involved in the criminal justice system, the document is designed to help strengthen individuals, families and the community.



**Paul Pilon & David Freeman**

**COURSE: ARCHITECTURE**

Students collaborated with Habitat for Humanity of Dutchess County and designed an attached three-unit building for a site in the City of Poughkeepsie that was donated specifically to house veterans. Students presented their architectural plans to members of the community and College.



**Margaret Olimpieri**

**COURSE: PSYCHOLOGY**

Students provided tutoring, recreational activities and project/program assistance, as well as independent skills workshops for youngsters at the Children's Home of Poughkeepsie. Students in an adolescent teaching course created anti-bullying curriculums and presented at the 4th Annual Anti-Bullying Youth Summit at Marist College. In a mid-semester psychology course, students raised awareness of the needs of local middle and high school students by creating and collecting toiletry items for adolescents in the City of Poughkeepsie. Students in an adolescent teaching course collaborated with the Grace Smith House for its annual Connect for Respect summer leadership program. Topics included anti-bullying, leadership development and communication. Students taking a Psychology of Gender course participated in the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network's inaugural leadership conference and led high school students in seminars about how to implement initiatives in their schools. Students also participated in the Mediation Center of Dutchess County's annual anti-bullying walk.



**Holly McCabe**

**COURSE: GRAPHIC DESIGN**

Students worked with Rebuilding Together Dutchess County and completed marketing and outreach materials such as brochures for clients, volunteers and the community, as well as t-shirt designs for the agency's 25th anniversary.