



Service learning inspires students, assists community



Wright State students participating in local service project

Megan Grilliot, a Wright State student pursuing a degree in social work, was unsure just what career path she wanted to take, but once she began to tutor children at Westwood Elementary in Dayton, her mind was made up.

"I knew I wanted to work with kids, but when I went to Westwood and saw the need for it, I knew that's what I wanted to do."

Grilliot, whose tutoring experience was part of a service-learning course, says the kids at Westwood taught her things she would never have learned in a college classroom, such as the differences in her experience and the experiences of the children she was tutoring.

"I was going in there with closed eyes, and when I got there, my eyes were opened significantly to something I had never seen before," she says. "These kids had to go through all of these daily routines that were significantly different from how I grew up."

The Office of Service-Learning was created in January 2007. There are service-learning courses available in the Colleges of Liberal Arts, Nursing, Education and Human Services, and the Boonshoft School of

Medicine, to name a few. In fact, Wright State received national recognition for its service-learning program when it was named to the 2009 President's Honor Roll. Schools are chosen based on the scope and innovation of their service projects, percentage of students participating in service activities, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.

At Wright State, students can benefit from service-learning in many ways. It can help them decide their career path, as it did Grilliot, but it can also help them prepare for or sometimes land an internship or job.

Grilliot says her service-learning "will definitely help me get a job somewhere, or give me experience, or show that I am willing to dedicate some time out of a week to volunteer. It's good for a resume, it's good for experience, and it's good for personal growth."

Some service-learning courses address local needs. Others take students off campus and out of Dayton, such as a course taught by Senior Lecturer Hunt Brown and Sara Twill, assistant professor of social work, who will take a group of students to Athens, Ohio, this spring. The goal of this trip will be to

work with local agencies to promote environmental and social sustainability, participate in day projects involving watershed development, plant for an organic farm that supplies food to local food pantries, and work with low-income senior adults.

Cathy Sayer, director of service-learning at Wright State, would like the Office of Service-Learning to expand into a center for civic engagement.

"I think that all of the long-term programming should look at what the needs in our community are," she says.

Both Sayer and Grilliot agree that one of the most important areas for service-learning to focus on is public education. Sayer says she would like to work on improving academic achievement in area schools, as well as "to help children from low-income families who've had little in the way of resources or role models, to help them prepare for futures that are bright with possibility, instead of being burdened by the past."

Grilliot has a similar view. "I think education is where we can actually get the kids. They're legally mandated to go to school, so that's where you can take a child and change their life."

Whether education, social work, medical research, or volunteering in Appalachia, it's clear that the people who participate in Wright State's service-learning program are passionate about what they do.

Sayer offers individual consultations to faculty interested in service-learning. Grilliot has continued her work with Westwood students, using it to fulfill her major requirements. "It takes everyone to build a community up," says Grilliot, "and I think that's one thing the service-learning program is trying to focus on: assessing the needs of the community and taking Wright State students and incorporating that into what our community needs. By doing that, we're bettering ourselves, bettering our community, and bettering the future."



National Science Olympiad Tournament coming to Wright State

Wright State University has been selected as the site for the National Science Olympiad Tournament, which pits teams of bright young students from around the country in science and engineering competitions that often involve everything from astronomy and fossils to balsa structures and battery-powered vehicles.



Wright State will play host to the National Science Olympiad Tournament in 2013, as well as two events leading up to it—invitational tournaments in February 2011 and January 2012.

The three events are expected to pour an estimated \$1.6 million into the region in restaurant, motel, and other business.

“The National Science Olympiad is the pinnacle of science-related competitions for our sharpest middle and high school students,” said Wright State President David R. Hopkins. “Our campus and our region will serve as a national stage for the country’s best young scientists.”

Science Olympiad features competitions in biology, chemistry, earth science, astronomy, physics, and technology.

The 20-plus events, which involve top teams from each state of up to 15 students per team, include the construction of aquifers, helicopters, and mousetrap-powered vehicles. Other events test knowledge of anatomy, fossils, optics, protein modeling, and food-borne illnesses.

“The students that are going to be coming to the national tournament are the cream of the crop from all across the United States,” said CeAnn Chalker, a national committee chair for Science Olympiad.

Science Olympiad competitions, which started more than 25 years ago, were modeled after successful programs in Delaware and Michigan. The school-based teams prepare and practice throughout the year, then compete in regional and state tournaments. The top teams advance to the National Science Olympiad Tournament.

Wright State University participates in national virtual college fair

March 23–24

Wright State University is once again giving interested prospective students the chance to learn more about the university from the comfort of their home or office during an upcoming college fair.

As part of this virtual college fair, presented by CollegeWeekLive, visitors can chat with a Wright State University admissions representative who will be standing by, ready to answer questions about the university, admissions process, and more. This is a great alternative for those who cannot travel to a physical college fair. It can also complement an in-person visit and allow visitors to ask any additional questions.

Visit www.wright.edu/admissions/chat for more information about the college fair.

Wright State student profile:

Dominique Star

Hometown: Lorain, Ohio
(Lorain Admiral King High School)
Major: Athletic Training

Dominique is one of the talented students in our College of Education and Human Services who is taking advantage of all that Wright State has to offer, both in and out of the classroom.

What were the biggest factors in your decision to attend Wright State?

Growing up I have always been around diversity and Wright State is a campus full of diversity. I stayed for an overnight visit one time when I was in high school and I felt right at home. It is just the right size for me as well. I did not want to attend a school that was too small or too big.

If you had to take one photo of some part of campus to represent your time spent here, what would it be of and why?

My campus apartment. It’s where I’ve laughed, I’ve cried, spent times with friends, and been able to be myself. It’s where I have spent plenty of time studying, whether it’s been by myself, with groups, or with my roommates. My roommates and I would get together for “study parties” but after about an hour of studying, the rest of the night would turn into silly conversations, lots of fun or deep conversations, and lots of thinking. From our balcony we would watch all the activities that go on down on the College Park basketball court or we would just go



down and enjoy all the activities. I say we have really made these apartments our home.

How do your parents/family feel about the education you are receiving at Wright State?

My parents really do not know much about college. I come from a military family. I am the first generation to attend college. I had no idea what to expect when I came to college, and as I progress I still do not really know what to expect. All I know is just like any other experience in life, I will feed off of the knowledge of those that are willing to teach me and carry the common knowledge of all my teachers out into the work field and what most call “the real world.”

Raider Open House

Saturday, March 5

Encourage your students to register now for our spring Raider Open House on



Saturday, March 5, from 9 a.m. until noon (early bird sessions beginning at 8:30 a.m.), in the Wright State Student Union.

During the Raider Open House, students interested in Wright State can discuss their academic goals and interests with members of the faculty, take a campus tour, and learn about college life. Information sessions on financial aid, housing, student life, and more are offered throughout the day.

For more information or to register, please visit www.wright.edu/raideropenhouse.

Send your students to college for a day!

We love Wright State and we are hoping that your students will love it too. All prospective students, along with their parents, siblings, friends, and counselors, are invited to visit campus to see for themselves if Wright State is the right fit.



We have a variety of convenient tour options available, depending on the need of the visitor(s).

Tour options:

Monday–Thursday

- 90-minute walking tour at 10 a.m., noon, or 2 p.m.
- Opportunity to meet with an admissions staff member before or after the tour.

Friday

- 90-minute walking tour and admissions presentation at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Please call 1-800-247-1770 to register or visit www.wright.edu/admissions/visit for more information about campus tours.

Future teachers studying the African American educational experience

A collaborative new certificate program at Wright State University is helping future teachers relate to African American students, making them more effective teachers in urban public schools.

The African American Experience in Education is a certificate program designed for students interested in teaching in inner-city environments. The focus is simple: help teacher candidates understand the complexities of the African American community.

“African Americans are so diverse from one another that you can’t say that there’s one technique you use to teach all African American students,” said Christa Agiro, Ph.D., the education professor who co-coordinates the certificate.

“The one thing you can say is that other people group them together and categorize them,” she said. “You can be sure that if someone has dark skin in this country that they’ve experienced discrimination at some point in their lives.”

The certificate is made up of five courses, including courses on black history and culture, the social and historical factors that affect African Americans in education, and race and racism.

Sharon Lynette Jones, Ph.D., director of the African and African American Studies program and co-coordinator of the certificate program, acknowledges that these can be difficult subjects to tackle in the classroom.

“It requires us to cultivate an environment of open exchange,” said Jones. She added that a college campus is the ideal place for frank discussions on challenging topics.

A major goal of the class is to reduce teacher bias and to promote anti-racism.

Studies have shown that students who speak in non-standard dialects often receive lower scores for the same quality of work as students who speak in standard English. Plus, teachers tend to be more lenient with students whose backgrounds are similar to their own.

Acknowledging and fighting these biases are steps in the right direction, said Agiro.

After completing the certificate, students have a better understanding of how distinctive social, educational, economic, familial, and racial dynamics shape the worldviews of African Americans and impact their experiences in public education.

Armed with this knowledge, teachers can better communicate with students and their parents.

“We hope that the program increases the awareness of teachers in terms of giving them the experiences, knowledge, and skills to be effective with diverse student populations,” said Jones.

For more information on the African American Experience in Education certificate program, call the Department of Teacher Education at (937) 775-2677 or visit www.cehs.wright.edu/academic/teacher_education/certificates/african-american-experience.php.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

March 2011

- 4 – ACT registration deadline for April 2011 test
- 5 – Raider Open House
- 12 – SAT national test

April 2011

- 8 – SAT registration deadline for May 2011 test
- 9 – ACT national test

May 2011

- 1 – PSEO Application Deadline
- 6 – ACT registration deadline for June 2011 test
- 6 – SAT registration deadline for June 2011 test
- 7 – SAT national test
- 25 – PSEO Orientation

What's new @ Wright State?

You can find news, events, and campus highlights at:

ON THE WEB www.wright.edu/announce

Admissions deadline

Applications are processed year round for new students, but transfer and returning students with a GPA below 2.0 should pay close attention to petition deadlines. Decisions regarding admission to Wright State are usually made within two weeks.

Housing deadline

Housing is granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Although applications are accepted on a year-round basis, it is recommended that students submit an application and prepayment in the fall to ensure the best possible housing options. Students need to be admitted to the university before applying for housing.

Financial Aid deadline

Filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online is the quickest and most convenient method for submitting financial information. Wright State's Title IV code for the FAFSA is 003078. The priority deadline for the FAFSA at Wright State was February 15, 2011, but students may still apply for financial aid after that date.

