We had some amazing service learning projects happening at MSUB this spring semester on both the main campus and the City College Campus! Thank you to all of the faculty members who work hard to provide meaningful experiential learning for our students. These projects truly make a difference in our students’ educational experiences here at MSUB, as well as making a difference in our community!

Jenny Randall
Service Learning Coordinator

Spring 2015 Projects

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2015 Montana Service Learning Colloquium

Faculty, staff, students and community partners gathered at Montana State University Billings on April 9th to get the scoop on service learning and civic engagement practices throughout the state of Montana. MSUB proudly hosted the 2015 Montana Service Learning Colloquium; a free, one-day event comprised of presentations, workshops and panel discussions.

MSU Billings instructors and faculty presented at the event along with officials from the University of Montana, and the University of Northern Colorado. Dr. Deborah Romero, director of Engagement at the University of Northern Colorado, delivered the keynote address along with colleagues Annie Epperson and Elizabeth Gilbert.

The team delivered a thought-provoking presentation on Reframing the Engagement Culture on Campus.

2015 Outstanding Service Learning Faculty Award Winner

Dr. Sarah Keller was a guest of honor at MSUB’s 2015 Faculty Excellence Awards ceremony held at the Northern Hotel on March 12th.

Dr. Keller was presented with the Outstanding Service Learning Faculty Award for her exceptional involvement in community based media projects. She has been utilizing service learning in her classes for many years to help her students learn to apply their knowledge to create solutions to real world problems with community partners. Her projects have focused on a variety of community issues including domestic violence, suicide prevention and childhood obesity.
Dr. Russell Lord

Dr. Lord’s Advanced Exercise & Prescription class worked with Foundations of Exercise Science students to identify mild physical conditions and develop plans to physically treat those ailments.

Human Performance major, Jinise Osborne used a Biodex Balancing Machine to help treat Kristen Swan’s ankle injury. The machine measured Swan’s balance using a dot system and Osborne tracked that progress three to four days a week over the course of the semester.

Dr. Loretta Morgan’s Methods of Adapted Health Enhancement students also participated in a service learning project this spring creating adapted lessons for a variety of community partners.

College of Arts & Sciences

Dr. Samuel Boerboom

Women, Media & Society students were broken up into groups and assigned the task of developing presentations concerning stereotypes in the media. Their lectures were presented in various Billings area high school classrooms, generating an interactive discussion about topics like “enlightened sexism” and “feminism.” MSUB’s Alyson Murnion, Taylor Machler, and Shelby Martinell educated Kurt Wohler’s Skyview senior psychology students on how the media shapes their daily lives by relating modern music and popular television shows to their choices in clothing, friends, topics of conversation, and general attitude. The lecture and discussions were powerfully thought-provoking.

Dr. Jennifer Scroggins

Hanna Baus, Lisa Demarais, and Krishel Moran-Gonzalez, students in a Women and Gender Studies Capstone class, hosted tabling events, went door-to-door, and collected thank you cards to send to Montana Governor Steve Bullock to spread the word about Planned Parenthood’s Plan First program, a health plan for women with little or no healthcare insurance. This grassroots organizing experience was vital to developing their senior theses. These passionate students presented their capstone projects at an open house for the new Women’s and Gender Studies Center on April 21st. “This was a huge gain for me,” says Demarais. “What we learned about all semester, we got to experience firsthand.”

Dr. Lisa Kemmerer’s two sections of Introduction to Ethics were also involved in service learning projects this spring helping at the Salvation Army, The HUB and the Yellowstone Valley Animal Shelter.

Dr. Sarah Keller’s students have continued their work with Let’s Talk Billings, a suicide awareness campaign.
Ms. Sue Winn

Sharing valuable health information with the community is standard in Sue Winn’s Gerontology class. City College PN Nursing students gathered at Highgate Senior Living on March 4th to exhibit a one hour presentation on the health benefits of tea.

Shannon Stoken, Sam Grover, Jessica Wagner, and Elizabeth Mancuso introduced four tea flavors and described their advantages to residents. The residents chatted with students over cups of their favorite tea, compliments of Tea City. “It’s a great idea” said Amy Swenson, Highgate’s Life Enhancement coordinator, “and our resident’s love the interaction.”

Mr. Wayne Pitt

Wayne Pitt’s Managed Client Care students are required to participate in 12 hours of civic engagement in the community. His students worked with Absarokee Senior Center, local elementary schools, STEP, Inc., Dentistry from the Heart, and Billings Community Connect.

Students participated in these service learning projects to identify community health needs, develop leadership skills, and expand their knowledge of team building. STEP, Inc. volunteers worked with program participants to build a garden.

Dr. Tim Urbaniak

Bannack State Park was a mining town in the mid-1800’s and Montana’s first territorial capitol. Montana State Parks has “kept it preserved as long as they can” says Heather Marchant, a Drafting & Design student at City College.

Urbaniak’s Drafting & Design capstone class spent the Spring semester digitally recording and restoring the park’s historical landmarks using LIDAR scanning, photogrammetry modeling, CAD software modeling, and three dimensional printing technologies. Capstone students presented their work at MSUB’s Two Year Research conference in Great Falls on April 10th. “Three of the students already have permanent job positions with Phillips 66 and Worley Parsons” says Urbaniak.

This project was funded by Montana State Parks. They will utilize these three dimensional visual documents to digitally preserve Bannack State Parks’ structures and landscape for years to come.

Mr. Terry Madtson’s capstone Construction Technology-Carpentry students worked on a year-long project building a house with Classic Home Designs, enabling students to complement their course learnings with hands on experience while building teamwork and leadership skills that are vital to on-site carpentry work. Some of the profits from the sale of the house fund scholarships for the students in the program.

Ms. Kat Pfau’s Automotive Technology students helped out Zoo Montana by completing some maintenance work on some of their fleet vehicles.
College of Business

Dr. Jennifer Leonard

Business Capstone students applied their knowledge by implementing their skills to create business plans for various companies and local non-profit organizations.

Dr. Michael Campbell

Students in Accounting Information Systems create an accounting system to meet the needs of a business or non-profit entity. Although the clients typically do not install the accounting systems, they often get good ideas for their system from the student teams.

Dr. AJ Otjen

Dr. Otjen had students in three of her courses this spring working on Service Learning Projects: Strategic Marketing Management, Undergraduate Research, and Product Design & Critical Thinking. Some of her students were completing a campaign that they started in the fall for the Billings Clinic on Childhood Obesity.

University Honors Program

Dr. Virginia Mermel’s Hunger & Food Security honors students worked with Family Services to bring attention to hunger in Billings. Students worked to find possible solutions to get donated food to people without transportation. They also orchestrated the Cans Around McMullen, a food drive that collected 1,781 pounds of food. Sodexo also generously agreed to match the donation to Family Services.

For More information on the Service Learning Program at MSUB, contact Jenny Randall in the Office for Community Involvement, SUB 222.

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