Summer Funding for Internships and Student, Faculty Research

Support for research and academically based internships is a major component of the Center for Civic Engagement’s work on campus and in the community.

In the summer of 2006, the CCE, will fund competitive faculty-student collaborative research projects and independent student research projects that address contemporary issues and solutions in social, cultural, legal, environmental or political spheres. Some of these fellowships will be supported by the Richmond Quest.

The CCE will also make grants from the Burhans Civic Fellowship fund to students undertaking internships serving civic or social service organizations in greater Richmond and other areas.

Students awarded fellowship grants will receive $3500 plus a $500 housing reimbursement for completing ten weeks of full-time research or internship work. Faculty research fellows will receive $6000.

To learn more about CCE summer fellowship opportunities, or to download guidelines and application forms, please visit the CCE office in Tyler Hayes Commons or the CCE web site at http://engage.richmond.edu. Completed applications for CCE research fellowships are due by 5 p.m. on Feb. 10, 2006. Completed applications for the Burhans Civic Fellowships are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, Mar. 3, 2006.

Governor’s Award Recognizes Civic Engagement Efforts

In October, the Center for Civic Engagement was honored with a Governor’s Community Service and Volunteerism Award.

The recognition, given for excellence in the area of Civic Engagement, was presented to the CCE staff in a ceremony at the Library of Virginia in Richmond. Approximately 20 individuals, companies and nonprofit agencies received awards.

The CCE was noted for its efforts to bring together campus and community members in collaborative study, reflection and action.

Virginia Gov. Mark Warner said the awards celebrate “the generosity of Virginians and their efforts to enhance the lives of their neighbors” and afford the opportunity to publicly thank them. “I encourage all Virginians to follow their example by becoming involved and providing service to their communities.”

Engagement Initiative Builds Partnerships with Richmond’s Northside Neighborhoods

“Build It,” the University of Richmond’s largest community engagement initiative, moves its efforts to the Northside of the city this year—under the new leadership of the Center for Civic Engagement.

Build It is designed to connect students, staff and faculty to each other, and to the residents of metropolitan Richmond, through service, education, and other community involvement. Build It participants develop and implement collaborative projects that address pressing needs in at-risk neighborhoods in the greater Richmond area.

The current Build It project has evolved from earlier community

Community focused ... Academically grounded ... Together engaged
service efforts, largely due to students’ interest in transforming such events as Community Service Day, the Merriwood Miracle, and Habitat for Humanity home builds into longer-term, campus-wide service initiatives with a sustained, positive impact on Richmond area neighborhoods.

Today Build It brings the University into partnership with nonprofit and government agencies. It links service with courses and educational programs on campus. Build It participants work to effect change through a variety of activities ranging from tutoring to renovation projects to collaborative research. The educational component of Build It is developed with the understanding that continuing “real-world” experiences deepen students’ engagement with their academic work. Build It is led by a steering committee of students, faculty and staff who work together to engage the campus and community through service, education, events and fundraising efforts. The project seeks to utilize participants’ existing talents while encouraging them to learn through their Build It experience. The overall goal of the initiative is to make a lasting impact on community needs and on those organizations and individuals that participate.

This year’s partner community is the Northside of the City of Richmond, including Highland Park and nearby neighborhoods. With its historical and cultural richness, recent economic and educational revitalization, and active local citizens and organizations, this area is an excellent fit for the Build It initiative.

To learn more about the various Build It collaborations or to find out how you can get involved, visit the CCE website or call (804) 484-1600.

The Bonner Center for Civic Engagement

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ESL Program Connects Students and Staff

It is not only students who converge at the University of Richmond from locations around the world. Staff working in departments across the suburban campus hail from countries as disparate as Haiti, Bosnia, Mexico, Congo and Iran.

This fall, the Center for Civic Engagement launched an ESL tutoring program to link students with non-native staff members who are eager to improve their English skills. With the support of staff supervisors across campus, ESL specialist Dr. Nuray Grove, and CCE Student Coordinator Marie Strnad, the CCE began matching student tutors with staff and offering ESL training for the tutors.

Approximately 10 student-staff pairs have begun their tutoring sessions to date, meeting for up to two hours each week. Additional matches will be made from the waiting list in the spring.

Many of the tutors say they joined the program because they themselves are studying a foreign language. “I think that all the student tutors enjoy the opportunity to work with non-native English speakers in an educational setting. Especially for those who have studied abroad, it is a poignant reminder of what it is like to live in a country that speaks a different language,” Strnad said.

Many of the staff involved in tutoring work in custodial or dining services positions that may be very different from the jobs they held in their home country. The ESL program allows them to build their English speaking, reading and writing skills and offers an opportunity for them to interact with students in a different way.

“I can tell that they really appreciate both the English tutoring and being able to get to know some of the students better,” Strnad said. “This program is proving to be a great way to give back to those who provide us with their service every single day.”

To find out more about the ESL tutoring program, or to find out more about how you can get involved, please email Marie Strnad at marie.strnad@richmond.edu.

Profile: Judith Daniel & Laurie Knies

Judith Daniel and Laurie Knies meet for an ESL tutoring session in the CCE conference room.

In her native Port-au-Prince, Haiti, U of R staff member Judith Daniel had just three college courses left to complete and was already working part-time in a school with young children. “But after school we don’t have anything to do, there are not enough jobs,” Daniel said. So she and her mother came to the United States, first to New Jersey and then to Virginia.

Daniel now works in the dining hall at Richmond. To help her prepare for the GED, and her long-term goal of becoming a nurse, she meets twice a week with her ESL tutor Laurie Knies, a sophomore from Wantage, NJ who studies history, international studies and French.

In their sessions, the pair practice new vocabulary and talk about such things as American politics and current events. “Judith is a great student,” Knies said. “She puts in a lot of effort.”

Knies finds she benefits from their sessions as well – and not only when Daniel helps her with her French. “I wanted a way of directly helping people,” Knies said. “A lot of times there are fundraisers and ways of working indirectly, but then you don’t see how your effort is being of use to other people.”

CCE Welcomes New Staff Member Gail Oliver

The CCE is pleased to introduce our newest employee, Gail Oliver, who began work as the CCE administrator in October. She fills the position vacated by Betsy Kelly, who has been promoted to service and program coordinator.

Oliver holds a B.A. degree in English from the University of Virginia, an M.Div. from the Howard University School of Divinity, and has received formal real estate training through the Long & Foster University. A Virginia native, she was born and raised in the Tidewater area and has lived and worked in many different areas. Gail is a dedicated professional with years of service in retail banking, university administration, non-profit management and professional sales management.

http://engage.richmond.edu

STUDENTS!!

Find out about civic issues, fun community events, and short-term volunteer opportunities on the CCE Listserv. To have this weekly digest delivered directly to your inbox, email engage@richmond.edu.

3
brown bag discussions

12:30 — 1:25 p.m. in the Center for Civic Engagement

1/27 Arts and Activism in Appalachia
Meredith Dean, executive director, Appalachian Women’s Alliance (Co-sponsored by the W.I.L.L. Program)

2/3 Juvenile Justice in Richmond
The Hon. Kimberly O’Donnell, Richmond Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court

2/10 Military Toxics Project
Doris Bradshaw, environmental justice activist and nationally recognized grassroots leader (Co-sponsored by the Weinstein Fellows Program)

2/17 Risk Communications or Spin Doctoring: Managing Public Perception of Environmental Justice Conflict
Alma Moore, communications and public relations specialist (Co-sponsored by the Weinstein Fellows Program)

3/17 Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?
A discussion of Dr. Beverly Tatum’s book of this title

3/24 Representing Richmond: The Dashiel Exhibit
Diana Vincelli, University of Richmond (Please note alternate venue in the Lora Robins Gallery)

1/31 Richmond’s Northside: Past, Present and Future
Dr. John Moeser, visiting fellow, Center for Civic Engagement; the Hon. Ellen Robertson, Richmond City Council, and other speakers TBA. 4—5:30 p.m., Brown Alley Room, Weinstein Hall
Building Social Change: Build It 2006 event

2/8 Gangs, Gangsta Rap, and Glory to God: Roles for Rhythms and Religions in Relating to Street Organizations
Dr. Jaleel Abdul-Adil, Chicago School of Professional Psychiatry (Sponsored by the Office of the Chaplaincy with support from the Weinstein Fellows Program). 7:00 p.m., location TBA
Building Social Change: Build It 2006 event

2/21 Richmond Public Schools: Problems and Possibilities
Speakers TBA. 7—8:30 p.m., Brown Alley Room, Weinstein Hall
Building Social Change: Build It 2006 event

3/30 The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics and “Color-Blind” Ideology in the Modern South
Dr. Matt Lassiter, University of Michigan (Co-sponsored by the Jepson School of Leadership Studies, the Westhampton College Dean’s Office and the Weinstein Fellows Program)
7:30—9 p.m., Brown Alley Room, Weinstein Hall
Building Social Change: Build It 2006 event