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Steans Center Newsletter

Steans Center

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objectives with DePaul University’s Vision Twenty 12 strategic plan. During the past six months, the Center has been developing new interdepartmental initiatives that focus on expanding and enhancing academic-based service-learning opportunities across the curriculum. During the coming years, we will be developing new community partnerships that address the many social, political, and economic challenges of our time.

During his time at DePaul, Ed Ramirez was a key figure in the development of the Steans Center. He brought to his new position a continued strong commitment to promoting social justice, engaging community partners in meaningful ways, and advancing academic-based service-learning opportunities across the curriculum. During the past six months, the Center has developed a strategic plan that directly aligns with our goals and objectives, and has made significant progress in supporting our partners in the community. The Center is committed to ensuring that our students and faculty are engaged in meaningful ways that align with the values of the Steans Center.

The Center seeks to be a nationally recognized program that addresses the many social, political, and economic challenges of our time. In doing so, we will be developing new interdepartmental initiatives that focus on expanding and enhancing academic-based service-learning opportunities across the curriculum. During the coming years, we will be developing new community partnerships that address the many social, political, and economic challenges of our time.

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DePaul’s North Lawndale Initiative

Collaboration between the Study Abroad Program and the Steans Center has created the idea of the DePaul service learning program. Through this program, students have the opportunity to reflect on what they did during their time in northern Mexico to combat the problem of education and social justice issues in an global context.

Annual Idealist Campus Conference at DePaul This March

The staff of the Steans Center and the national organizations of the North Lawndale Initiative have been planning the Conference for the past year. The conference, which will be the first time in the event’s twenty-four year history. A wide range of community-based organizations in Chicago.

Students gain experience

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Steans and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center: Partnership Embaces Service Learning

Vincentian Service Day.

Through a partnership with the Puerto Rican Cultural Center (PRCC), an education, childcare, AIDS awareness and prevention, and obesity organizations, residents and businesses, and a class that is held in the community about what they read about in textbooks or write about in a term paper.

By Dan Baron, from the outside who visit the community like De Paul students. It is delightful with the relationship that has developed over the years.

"Before we established this partnership with Steans, residents were sharing anecdotes about how their rent or property taxes was going up," Ibanez says. "I think the work we are doing could lead to further change in their community. "People who have lived in this community – and the value of service learning." I think the work we are doing is having an effect in the real world," says Andrea Craft, a senior who is majoring in geography and also took the urban geography 102 class last spring and helped install the exhibition in Rogers Park in June. "This has been a great experience, because learning about the community is as important as learning about the history of a people who have been oppressed in other communities."

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Service Extension in Merida, Mexico

Collaboration between the Study Abroad Program and the Steans Center has fostered the creation of the Mexico Service-Learning Program. Through this program students have the opportunity to extend what they learned in Spring Quarter experience to living and learning in a Mexican community.

"It's a great opportunity for teaching and learning. These students truly care about the people in the community and the problems that are faced and partners in this project, which has brought a lot of harm to the neighborhood. People say, "Architects, who is also engaged in service learning in Mexico."

Students gain experience through the experiential learning model in the project. It has opened their eyes about this community, and the value of service learning. "The work we are doing is as important as learning about the history of a people who have been oppressed in other communities."

As a true in Pilsen (see story on page 1) and many other Chicago communities, a major element of the Pilsen Coalition is documenting the history of the neighborhood, often in the face of gentrification that threatens to change the community.

Terry Gill, a senior from DePaul last year with a degree in geography and also took the urban geography 102 class last spring and helped install the exhibition in Rogers Park in June. "This has been a great experience, because learning about the community is as important as learning about the history of a people who have been oppressed in other communities."

Student Planning Committee, composed of undergraduates from both DePaul and other area institutions, will essentially plan and carry out the rest of the conference logistics.

For more information about the North Lawndale Initiative, please contact Chris Brown at cbrown27@depaul.edu.

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Steans and the Puerto Rican Cultural Center: Partnership Embrafces Service Learning

By Dave Reading, Freelance Writer

Divission Street, Chicago – Native-born students of the Puerto Rican Cultural Center, or PRCC, for short, enjoy having a vibrant stretch of Chicago’s Humboldt Park neighborhood as their home community.

The neighborhood is a treasure trove of Puerto Rican culture, food and life. The students also like the cultural connections to Humboldt Park, the Jesse White neighborhood and surrounding communities that serve as a backdrop to the steamy PRCC landscape.

And it is all right for you to visit the community like DePaul students.

The students are a part of the Steans Center at DePaul University. The Steans Center has been working with the Puerto Rican Cultural Center over the years. The students are part of a team that is made up of about 20 DePaul students.

For DePaul students who enter Humboldt Park, learning isn’t just about studying in a textbook on a university campus. It is also about making a difference in the community.

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I bring to my new position a continued strong commitment to promoting social justice, engaging community partners in on-campus and off-campus initiatives, and expanding academic-faculty service learning opportunities across the curriculum. During the past six months, the Center has embarked upon a planning process that directly aligns our goals and efforts to create a university-wide partnership with the North Lawndale community. These efforts will provide students and faculty with many opportunities to extend classroom learning into the city and to raise Learning, Community-Based Research, and University-Community Partnerships. I expect these efforts to result in new ways of highlighting De Paul’s unique model of engaged learning and student development.

My primary challenge will be to ensure that the work we are engaging in helps to strengthen the learning community and the communities we serve. I will also continue to encourage, and collaborate with faculty, to promote social justice and equity work, furthering the growth of the learning community, research, and university-community partnerships. I support these efforts through the creation of the Student Community Engagement Fellow, which will be responsible for highlighting De Paul’s unique model of engaged learning and student leadership development.

I would like you to know that the board historians, social justice, and some extraordinary examples of how the Center provides a center for student, faculty, and community engagement. I look forward to hearing your feedback (bocl@depaul.edu) and to receiving new ways of connecting the learning communities of De Paul’s urban community and with the broader society.
expanding and enhancing academic-based service-learning opportunities and to ensure that our partners in the community receive the best collaborations in order to enrich the academic quality of the courses we develop.

During the coming years, we will be developing new interdepartmental contributions to redefining how higher education institutions engage in community partnerships. When I arrived at the Center for Community-based Service Learning and Community Service Studies, I was positioned to build a nationally recognized program that provides educational opportunities grounded in Vincentian community values to DePaul students. The Center seeks to develop programs that create partnerships and coalitions with community organizations in order to develop a sense of community in our students through immersion in CSL.

My primary challenge will be to ensure, through detailed assessment, that our students are engaged in meaningful, high-quality, service-learning activities that meet the needs of the communities in which they serve. I will also continue to encourage and support the involvement of community-based organizations in our academic programs, including community-based student employment.

During the past six months, the Center has developed a planning process that directly aligns our goals and objectives with DePaul University’s Vision Statement 2020 strategy. During the coming year, we will be developing new interdepartmental collaborations in order to enrich the quality of our service learning and to ensure that our partners in the community receive the best possible support and resources.

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I think you will find that this issue of our newsletter sheds light on some important practical, ethical, and moral questions about how to address community partnerships. I expect these efforts to result in new ways of highlighting what assets the community has. It’s such an amazing experience to see students engaged in the community.

“Hopefully, this story will make people see the conditions they are in – and how there are barriers preventing them from being higher up in the economic chain. At the same time, I find this to be a very friendly and collaborative community.”

Meanwhile, Ryan Kelter, a junior in communication, worked with a group organizing to prevent obesity, informing community members about the issue. “I had never really thought about community involvement until I got to DePaul,” he said. “I want to make people aware of things happening around them.”

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My primary challenge will be to ensure, through detailed assessment, that the work that we are engaging in is truly engaging and that our students are engaged in meaningful, high-quality, service-learning activities that meet the needs of the communities in which they serve. I will also continue to encourage and support the involvement of community-based organizations in our academic programs, including community-based student employment.

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I look forward to welcoming you to the Center and to continuing our efforts to develop and enhance academic-based service-learning opportunities and to ensure that our partners in the community receive the best collaborations in order to enrich the academic quality of the courses we develop.