



JUNE / JULY EDITION 2007

E-Newsletter

Project Highlights

Fish Out of Water, Chautauqua Learn and Serve Academy, Bay County

Cynthia McCauley, the highly motivated and intensely passionate director of Chautauqua Learn and Serve Academy, recently sent me an email relaying wonderful news from her district. Her words explain the success of her project far better than any summary I could write:

"The state is going to build 3 special needs hurricane shelters-one just north of here in Panama City-Marianna. While I am well aware that the Chautauqua Learn and Serve State Farm Grant did not cause this to happen totally, we did have a part in the decision. As you recall, our grant was written to reflect the needs of the disabled during a hurricane. I came to understand this need during the 'summer of hurricanes' in Panama City. Each time the city was evacuated, a minimum of 4 students would end up at my house. Many of our students live in independent living apartments. They have no able families. Their care is provided by a staff of privatized workers making, I'm sure, little more than minimum wage. So, when the call comes to evacuate, these workers naturally leave with their families. The disabled have no transportation- the trolleys are pulled off the roads. As outlined in the grant, our students started their advocacy efforts to get a special shelter and shifts of ESE teachers to volunteer. The Agency for Persons with Disabilities then held a conference at Gulf Coast Community College to involve support coordinators and in-home support workers about our ideas and process. The problem came with the Red Cross and the trolley (our public transportation system). The Red Cross kept saying--"you don't know what a can of worms you're opening." I was getting frustrated. Then, the legislature threatened severe cuts to services to the disabled. To many of my homeless disabled this would have been a "hurricane" of sorts to their lives. While the Agency wanted people to rally in the courtyard of the Capitol with umbrella (wanting a rainy day fund) we felt that too tame. After the basic Learn and Serve preparation we loaded the entire school in vans and went with our hands tied with rope and signs that read 'don't tie our hands' or 'No Sunland' (the state facilities the bill threatened to return our disabled to). Our gang clogged the halls--wheelchairs can do that. Two senators and three legislatures agreed to meet with five students to

"Students who participate in service-learning are likely to continue to work all their lives in many different ways to improve the world around them, with lasting benefits for our country and our planet."

- Senator Edward M. Kennedy

News Updates

Make It Your Own Awards

Do you have big dreams for your community? The Case Foundation is launching a pilot grants program that could turn these dreams into reality.

The Make It Your Own Awards, a new initiative from the Case Foundation, launched on June 26, 2007, is about giving grants, tools, and recognition to people who are coming together to discuss what matters, form solutions, and take action. Twenty semi-finalists will each receive \$10,000 grants to start bringing their ideas to life. Four final grant recipients will then be chosen by the public using an online voting system. These finalists will each be awarded an additional \$25,000 grant.

The Make It Your Own Awards came about in response to research showing that many people feel disconnected from public leaders and institutions and do not believe they have the power to make a real difference in their community. These findings were the reason for a paper released by the Case Foundation last fall, *Citizens at the Center: A New Approach to Civic Engagement*, suggesting that if people are actually going to become and stay engaged in their communities, one thing has to happen first: They must have more chances to connect with one another (including those with whom they might disagree), and figure out how they can work together for the common good.

This kind of citizen-centered approach represents a subtle, yet powerful, shift that encourages people to create new spaces where they can come together, become connected to each other, and make a difference as a community working toward a common vision and real

explain our needs. [...]They acknowledged the good and bad of the disabled living independently with support throughout the community-especially in disasters-and the dialogue started. I'm sure that people all over the state had the same experience and there were many voices raising the concern, but I must admit, the grant was a motivation to open the problem for solutions."

Three cheers for Cynthia McCauley and her students for their bravery and persistence!!!

action.

** All applicants welcome, ages 14 and up. **

Application deadline: **August 8th.**

To learn more and apply today, visit:
<http://www.casefoundation.org/make-it-your-own/awards?source=partnerAMVISTA>

Conferences & Events

July 16-18, 2007

National Conference on Volunteering and Service
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
<http://www.volunteeringandservice.org/>

Attention!

No-Cost Extensions are available for projects needing more time to complete proposed activities. The deadline for requesting a No-Cost Extension is **July 31, 2007**, in order to allow time for processing. If you would like to request a No-Cost Extension, but are unsure of how to proceed, please contact **Amy Kochanasz** at **(850)488-3123** or akochanasz@admin.fsu.edu.

Year 3 funding for the State Farm Florida Service-Learning & Home Safety Initiative is right around the corner! Please check your email for the RFP and attachments. Note: Eligibility by invitation only. Please contact **Amy Kochanasz** at **(850)488-3123** or akochanasz@admin.fsu.edu if you have any questions or concerns.

