Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

The Health Disparities Service-Learning Collaborative

An Initiative of Community-Campus Partnerships for Health Funded by the Learn and Serve America Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service

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HDSLC Teleconference Call #3
Martin Luther King Day/Week of Service

12/13/07

Speaker

Rhonda Taylor is currently Deputy Director of Corporate Relations at The Corporation for National and Community Service. Starting at the Corporation in 1992, Rhonda has been responsible for King Day since its inception. In recent years, her efforts have been aimed at creating online resources for planning and implementing MLK Day of Service activities, as well as recruiting national partners with networks (e.g., Boys and Girls Club, Clear Channel) across the country. This year, in memory of the 40th Anniversary of Dr. King's assassination, the Corporation has introduced "40 Days of Nonviolence: Building the Beloved Community" to promote principles of nonviolence, which well mirror service learning precepts of education, action and reflection. The new program extends the service emphasis behind MLK Day being "a day on, not a day off" by encouraging longer term commitments to communities throughout the year. See www.mlkday.gov for more information.

Grantee MLK Projects

Arizona

Community groups, health and social service agencies will offer half-day service activities for the college community. MLK Day participants will reconvene in the afternoon for community activist presentations on homelessness, border human rights, and a voter initiative to ban exploitive check cashing businesses. Arizona notes that previous exchanges with these organizations have usually been limited to service presentations, so developing actual service projects with the college has been a new and positive experience.

Arkansas

Arkansas has partnered with the California Newsreel to use the educational series, "Unnatural Causes: Does Inequality Make Us Sick?" (www.unnaturalcauses.org) as an organizing tool addressing social determinants of health. The college will offer two screenings for community partner and academic audiences with discussions on how to use the film to promote social action and policy change, as well as meet with a local TV station about broadcasting the film series locally. Arkansas is also connecting with MLK Day activities organized by community-based groups statewide, which involve 'King Teams' that conduct neighborhood clean-ups, community fairs, etc. A challenge for Arkansas has been around how to incorporate "reflection" into their King activities.

*** Reflection ideas include a King birthday party at the end of the day, activities schedules the following week after folks had time to think about their experiences, reflection questions provided prior to entering the community, class reflection time, and reflection blogs.*

Hawaii

Hawaii's goal for this year's MLK activities is to strengthen community partnerships. To that end, the program is using a needs assessment class as an opportunity to collaborate with community health centers interested in these services. Hawaii is also meeting with the health department, non-profits and others to encourage these organizations to partake in MLK activities.
*** An excellent resource on community assessment can be found at http://www.mlkday.gov/pdf/mlkday/beloved_comm_resource_02.pdf .*

Morgan

Morgan has adopted a local K-8 school for their MLK activities, using the curriculum resource, www.mlkday.gov/pdf/mlkday/beloved_comm_resource_06.pdf, to develop historical sketches and couple with health and nonviolence teachings. Excited about this new collaboration, Morgan hopes it will continue as an on-going partnership. Additionally, Morgan has discovered a 1958 commencement speech by Dr. King, which it plans to circulate as part of ongoing activities in commemoration with the 40th anniversary of Dr. King's death.
*** For school age audiences, the Corporation is working with Cartoon Network to develop a workbook about Martin Luther King, which should be available the week of King Day.*

Nebraska

Nebraska is collaborating with a K-6 school around a healthy eating project for students and their caregivers. This project engages both university students and personnel from local organizations. Nebraska is interested in generating media attention for their event.
*** For media attention, contact community affairs at either Comcast http://www.comcast.com or Clear Channel http://www.clearchannel.com, official partners for King Day. Also, Rhonda noted that local media will all be covering MLK Day so don't hesitate to contact editors of the local section of newspapers etc. Additionally, the Corporation offers a media kit at http://www.cns.gov/about/media_kit/index.asp .*

San José

San José is working with AmeriCorps to organize neighbor clean-ups around partnering elementary schools. Though the university will still be on winter recess, they anticipate enthusiastic participation from students, based on last year's experience.
*** Remember, MLK observations can extend beyond the actual holiday, which might help address term recess challenges.*

Virginia

Virginia continues a decade long tradition of engaging their students in service to non-profits for several weeks in January. Students can choose between approximately 20 activities including a youth form and public school reading program. Following the service period, student will have a classroom opportunity for reflection. This MLK tradition was initiated by several non-profits including faith-based organizations and a local Historically Black College.