

The Institute for Civic Engagement

Service Learning • Community Outreach • Research and Economic Development

Volume 2 Issue 7

April 2009

Affiliated with NY Campus Compact & the American Democracy Project

Contact Information

- Richard Kendrick: Director
(607) 753-2481 or
Richard.Kendrick@cortland.edu
- John Suarez: Service Learning Coordinator
(607) 753-4391 or
John.Suarez@cortland.edu
- Adam Megivern: Main Street Building Administrator (607) 342-6460 or
adam@cortlanddowntown.com
- Timothy Rodriguez : Main Street Community Outreach Coordinator, (607) 753-4270 or
Timothy.Rodriguez@Cortland.edu
- Shelly VanDusen: Graduate Assistant & Newsletter Designer.
(607) 753-4270 or
Shelly.VanDusen@cortland.edu

Inside this issue:

Service-Learning	2
4th Annual Youth Day	2
Research and Economic Development	3
Community Outreach	3
Developing a Good Heart in STEM	3
Paint the Town Purple	3
Red Dragon Athletes Successful On and Off the Field	4
Plant the County Red Spring 2009 Campaign	4

"Walls" is the 2009-10 Academic Theme

By Kevin Sheets, Associate Professor of History

For the 2009-2010 academic year, the Cultural and Intellectual Climate Committee is pleased to announce that it has chosen the theme of "Walls."

2009 marks the 30th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall; the 20th anniversary of Tiananmen Square; the December 1989 invasion of Panama by the United States. While historic/ political/ geographical topics to consider in the context of the theme suggest themselves immediately, it is our intention that Walls encompass the entire Cortland intellectual community. We have chosen a broad theme, one that opens itself to a variety of physical, metaphysical, epistemological, chemical, biological, historical, political and theoretical interpretations.

First, a question: What is a wall? To what purpose is it constructed, maintained; and who, as Frost asks, "is it walling in or walling out?" What happens, as John Mellencamp (or Joshua - take your pick) sings, "when the walls come tumblin' down."

To begin the campus conversation, we have generated a list of ideas for potential topics. These are meant to be provocative, not prescriptive.

*Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.'*
--From "Mending Wall" by Robert Frost

- What "glass ceilings" prevent the ascension of certain groups? To what extent have these ceilings been shattered?
- SUNY Cortland contains many barriers to access for

People with Disabilities. How is the college, as physical institution, a wall?

- To what extent do ghettos still exist in the USA?
- The climbing of Mt. Everest and the breaking of the four-minute mile both mark apexes of human achievement. What remains?
- Both Israel and the U.S. are building border walls. To what effective end?
- Many see the election of Barack Obama as boundary-breaking. But in what ways?
- We build prisons to hold those who sin against us.
- What are the parameters of criminal behavior?
- Who determines what is criminal?
- Is the designation of mentally ill a way of protecting or oppressing those afflicted? Who knows what the boundaries of "sane" are?

This is a starter list. We believe that dozens of activities, ideas, speakers, films, books, and campus-wide discussions will give us the opportunity to examine how we operate both within and outside of walls.

To give focus to our year-long discussion, we are hosting a "campus read" featuring Marjane Satrapi's award-winning memoir *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*. We invite faculty to use *Persepolis* as a class text and we invite faculty, students, and staff to join one of the many book chats to be organized in the Fall 2009 semester.

Fill the Food Pantries: Food Donation Week

By Jared Popoli, AmeriCorps Member at Cortland Soil and Water Conservation

The SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps program is holding a non-perishable food drive from May 9th through May 16th to help replenish local food pantries. This program is in observance of the National AmeriCorps Week of Service to benefit local communities. The goal of this drive is to help Cortland County through hard economic times by providing an avenue to do so. With the difficult times being faced by many throughout the United States and Cortland County, food pantries are seeing a dramatic increase in people being served.

Show support for your community, come together and help fight hunger. Please drop off non-perishable foods for our community at the following locations: The Blue Frog Coffeehouse, County Administrator's Office, Cortland Junior/Senior High School, SUNY Cortland Miller Building (Admissions), Main Street SUNY Cortland (9 Main St., Cortland), Rural Health Network (Cincinnatus), United Methodist Church (Maple Ave., Cortland), Memorial Church, Homer Center for the Arts (South Main St., Homer), Cortland City Youth Bureau (35 Port Watson St., Cortland), and Price Chopper (Saturday, May 9th only).

Service-Learning

Service-Learning Coordinator : John Suarez

The Office of Service-Learning is located in the Learning Commons, which is on the first floor of the library just beyond the Bookmark Café.

During this academic year, the Office of Service-Learning developed new partnerships, professional development projects, presentations, and a grant proposal.

New Partnerships. The Office promoted developmental programs at three elementary schools, the Cortland Jr./Sr. High School's *Drop-Out Prevention Program*, the Cortland County Ombudsman Program's *Long-Term Care Program* for Senior Citizens, and Cortland Regional Medical Center's *Patient Child-Care Project*.

Professional Development Projects included

Reflections on Reflection – a series of discussions during May and June 2008 that dealt with the nature and structure of reflection. These discussions led to a redesign of fall 2008 reflection activities.

Service-Learning Orientations for faculty and students (October 2008) in which participants discussed service-learning best practices.

The *Inside-Out Learning Workshop* (October 2008). Workshop facilitator Nora Heaphy (Program Director for Service-Learning at the City College of New York) guided nineteen participants, including four Cortland community partners and seven faculty from four other SUNY institutions through an informative team-based experience. The Workshop was made possible by the generosity of SUNY Cortland's Office of Institutional Advancement.

The *State of Poverty Simulation* (fall 2008 and spring 2009). The Office of Service-Learning partnered with the Community Outreach Program of Cortland County (CAPCO) to conduct The *State of Poverty Simulation* three times for SUNY Cortland faculty, staff, and students in a variety of classes. Participants learned at the intellectual and "gut" levels that living in poverty is difficult, in part because it is expensive. Faculty gained explored ways of incorporating simulations as a pedagogical tool.

SUNY Community Service and Service-Learning Coordinators' Association: SUNY Cortland is one of the founding members of this new SUNY-recognized professional organization. The Association

promotes service-learning through advocacy and professional development activities. John Suarez is the Association's Professional Development Coordinator

Presentations and Meetings

Beth Halem, the Office of Service-Learning's Intern, and Tim Rodriguez, Main Street Building Administrator and a SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps member, designed and presented *The State of Poverty Simulation: A Creative and Effective Service-Learning Tool* at the March 2009 ACES ("Active, Civically-Engaged Scholars") Conference at Cornell University.

The Office participated in NYPIRGs February 2009 *Global Warming Teach-In* with a speech entitled "Global Climate Change: Effects on the Poor." In April's Scholars' Day event, Suarez presented a paper entitled "Imagination and Emotion: Neurological bases for role-playing's effectiveness."

The Office sponsored two Sandwich Seminars: In November, Patricia Martinez de la Vega (ICC) and John Suarez (Office of Service-Learning) presented "Global Service-Learning: Local and Distant Approaches."



In April, Hongli Fan (ICC) presented "Service-Learning in the ESL Classroom." The Office also hosted three Civics Education Panel Discussions: "Health Care Financing," "Creative Thinking in Net-based News," and "Post-Election Civic Engagement Strategies: Working for Health Care Change."

The Office also held its now-traditional "Shop Talk" and end-of-semester "Reflections on Civic Engagement" discussions, some of which generated new partnerships and projects.

Regional Grant Proposal: The Office of Service-Learning has led the creation of a regional grant proposal whose purpose is to better prepare marginalized youth for employment opportunities by coaching them in the development of people skills. Community agencies with people-skills programs will deliver those programs' lessons to service-learning students at SUNY Cortland, Onondaga Community College, and Le Moyne College; those students will then deliver those lessons to young adults in Cortland County and in the City of Syracuse. The proposal will be submitted when Learn and Serve America funding, funneled through the New York / Pennsylvania Campus Compact Consortium, is made available this summer.



SUNY Cortland Athletics' 4th Annual Youth Day

By Dan Anadio, Loose The Shoes Coordinator at SUNY Cortland

April 18th saw SUNY Cortland Athletics' 4th annual Youth Day, and once again the event was a great success. Area children visited the SUNY Cortland athletics complex on the busiest day of the spring semester for the athletics programs. Children arrived at 10 a.m. where they were met by members of the Women's Volleyball team for open recreation activities while registration took place. Attendees then had the opportunity to take part in the Cortland Classic Track and Field Meet where they ran the track as numerous spectators and college athletes cheered them on. From the track meet, kids moved to football practice where members of the football team welcomed them with an obstacle course and then joined them for lunch. The Women's Ice Hockey team and Blaze, the Red Dragon Mascot, helped the kids make signs which they brought to the Baseball game vs. Oneonta State and the Women's Lacrosse game vs. Morrisville, which concluded a busy fun filled day!

Research & Economic Development



People are looking up on Main Street, encouraged by a newly available brochure. Shoppers, diners, visitors and employees, intent on their destinations, seldom cast an upward glance at facades, and in so doing miss the architectural details created by artisans as long ago as 125 years. The intent of the brochure is to develop an awareness of what is often taken for granted and an appreciation, not only for the designs on buildings, but for the efforts of owners to meet historic guidelines.

"An Historical Walking Tour of Historic Downtown, Cortland, N.Y." published by the Cortland County Historical Society and Cortland Downtown Partnership, is available just in time to take advantage of the warm weather. A numbered map corresponds to brief histories

Cortland Downtown Partnership Executive Director (and Main Street Building Administrator): Adam Megivern

The Research and Economic Development activities are operated from Main Street SUNY Cortland which is located at 9 Main Street

Walking Tour of Historical Downtown Cortland

of buildings. Artist Andrea Wilkinson has sketched some of the features that may be found, from gargoyles to whimsical pine trees, but it is up to the walker to find the specific locations. And there are many more, not illustrated, to keep ones' interest.

The brochures are placed throughout Cortland and Tompkins Counties, or may be found at the Historical Society (corner of Homer and Maple Aves.), the Cortland Downtown Partnership (9 Main St.), and the Convention and Visitors Bureau (37 Church St.). Organizations or agencies anticipating functions with attendees from other areas are invited to ask for copies.

Funding for the project came from the National Parks Service and a grant from the county occupancy tax.

Community Outreach

Main Street Community Outreach Coordinator: Timothy Rodriguez

Power of 10 Update



The month of April may be hectic, but it is also very exciting in the community. The *Power of 10* civic engagement program came to an end, highlighting the various ways people can be involved with their communities with a total of 57 participants. Some examples included Festivus, Girl and Boy Scouts, lobbying in Albany, and traveling south to build homes with Habitat for Humanity. The feedback has been great as well. A *Power of 10* participant said that the activities were "not only fun, but also educational and an important part of being a citizen." The people involved with the *Power of 10* should be congratulated for remembering and commemorating the students at Virginia Tech, who lost their lives in April 2007. They also helped create a more involved community that builds solidarity, which may foster positive rather than negative community actions. It is important to remember that each of us has a creative way of expressing ourselves in communities, so we should continue to explore new and positive ways of civic engagement.

"Developing a Good Heart in STEM" The 1st Summit on Incorporating Social Justice and Service-Learning into the STEM Curriculum

New York Campus Compact and Pennsylvania Campus Compact, with support from Learn & Serve America and Ithaca College, are collaborating to engage faculty members in the disciplines of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We invite STEM faculty members and other interested colleagues to participate in the event "Developing a Good Heart in STEM - The First Summit on Incorporating Social Justice and Service-Learning into the STEM Curriculum." The summit will take place **June 11-12, 2009** at Ithaca College (Ithaca, NY). Click here for more details: <http://www.paccompact.org/News-STEMSummit.htm>

Paint the Town Purple

By Timothy Rodriguez, Community Outreach Coordinator

May brings flowers, and also brings purple to Cortland County. Preparations for the Cortland County Relay for Life, which takes place on June 19th, begins with a week-long event called "Paint the Town Purple." From May 1st thru May 8th, everyone including merchants, restaurants, bars, schools, beauty/nail salons, and other businesses are encouraged to raise awareness about Breast Cancer and the Relay for Life event by decorating, having discounts, and

providing special services that revolve around the color purple. There will be special community events throughout the week as well, such as "Bangle, Bags & Bling" on May 2nd, a proclamation by Cortland City Mayor Thomas Gallagher on May 5th, and a "Get Ready to Relay" party at the Stone Lounge on May 8th.

Red Dragon Athletes Successful On and Off the Field in 2008-2009

By Michael Discenza, Athletics Coordinator for Student Services

SUNY Cortland Athletics enjoyed yet another successful year of competition in 2008-09. Division III is the largest division in the NCAA with over 430 members, and Red Dragon Athletes were among the top of that list in the NACDA Director's Cup which measures the success of the entire Athletics program. That type of astounding success comes from a great deal of time and energy being focused on practice, and, given the rigors of academics, a student athlete's time becomes a very precious commodity. With that in mind, it may not be the great success that SUNY Cortland Athletics achieved this year that is so notable, but rather the fact that SUNY Cortland Athletes devoted 2,649 volunteer hours to helping others in the Cortland Community during the academic year.

Over the course of the last 8 months, SUNY Cortland Athletes have embarked on over 30 separate community service projects ranging from free sports clinics to putting Thanksgiving dinner together for 18 area families as part of a department wide initiative. During the Thanksgiving season Cortland Athletes collected donations, purchased Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings, and delivered the food to 18 families in Cortland County. Along with Loaves and Fishes, there were several other local agencies that Cortland Athletes worked with throughout the year, including Homer Little League, the Cortland Youth Bureau, the American Cancer Society, Relay for Life, National Bone Marrow Registry, Caring Bridge, and Habitat for Humanity. Along with working together with these groups, Cortland Athletes also took on mentorship roles through other programs such

as Girls' Day Out, where young women from across the county visited campus too take part in a day of activities with Cortland's female athletes.

While these events were organized by several teams within the Athletics department, there were additional projects organized by individual teams that were important to these people who participated. Such projects included: Men's Basketball's "Empty Bowls" work with Loaves and Fishes, Football's Bone Marrow Registry Campaign, Gymnastics' weeknight clinics, Men's Ice Hockey Jr. Camp, Women's Lacrosse work with a Cortland County Child Advocacy program, Softball raising \$2,290 for Relay for Life, Swimming and Diving painting homes for Habitat for Humanity, Volleyball and Women's Basketball support of breast cancer awareness through "Pink" campaigns at home games.

The coaches and players for these teams are part of an organization that has the ability to provide service to others given its prominence within the community. Cortland athletes not only understand that this is a responsibility, but, more importantly, they enjoy the intrinsic reward of helping people. With success on the field and in the classroom, coupled with Athletics' focus on service, it can be said with certainty that Cortland Athletes are a resource and asset to the Cortland community.

"Plant the County Red" Spring 2009 Campaign

By Jo Ann Wickman, Chair PR.Com

April is Alcohol Awareness Month and the beginning of the annual prom and graduation season. Proms and graduations have served as rites of passage for decades. Participation in these festive, memorable events signal that young people are moving into adulthood. All too often, these spring celebrations are marred by tragedies caused by illegal underage drinking, binge drinking, and/or use of other drugs. Cortland Area Communities That Care Coalition (CACTC) recognizes that parents and other concerned adults play critical roles in protecting area youth from dangers associated with these behaviors. It is essential for parents, guardians, and other caring adults to discuss these matters with the younger residents of our County.

To support such conversations, CACTC is launching its Plant the County Red Spring 2009 Campaign. The Coalition is sponsoring two contests, the Tulip Photo Contest, where photos of red tulips within

Cortland County will be photographed and prizes will be awarded for the best entries and Find the Tulips contest which consists of listing locations where red tulips are found in Cortland County and the winner will be the list with the most locations of red tulips. Entries for both contests must be submitted by May 25th, 2009 to Judie Murphy at jmurphy@ccocc.org or mail to Judie at CACTC, 33-35 Central Ave., Cortland, NY 13045.

For additional information, go to the Coalition website at www.cortlandareactc.org or contact Project Coordinator Judie Murphy at jmurphy@ccocc.org or at Catholic Charities 756-5992 ext 25. Thank you for your kind attention and support!



The activities of the Institute for Civic Engagement and Main Street SUNY Cortland are made possible through the support of the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Associate Provost, the Office of Sponsored Programs, the Faculty Development Committee, the MacDonald Foundation, the New York State Music Fund, the Appalachian Regional Commission, the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Cortland Fund, the Cortland College Foundation, the Division of Institutional Advancement, and the Auxiliary Services Corporation.

<http://www.cortland.edu/civicengagement/>