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President's Higher
Education Community
Service Honor Roll
Member
With Distinction



Carnegie Foundation
Elective Classification in
Community Engagement



National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement (NASCE) Survey Results

In the spring of this year, SUNY Cortland participated in the National Assessment of Service and Community Engagement, an online survey of our undergraduates administered by Siena College's Research Institute. 1,169 of our students participated – many thanks to those of you who took the time to “stand up and be counted.” We also appreciate the support of our Provost, Dr. Mark Prus; Associate Provost, Dr. Carol Van Der Karr; and our Director of Institutional Research and Analysis, Dr. Stephan Chemsak. Their contributions were instrumental to the success of the survey.

Of those who responded, females and juniors and seniors were overrepresented (in relation to their proportion of the SUNY Cortland undergraduate population). The Childhood/Early Childhood, Kinesiology, and Physical Education departments had the most respondents. About half of the respondents live on campus and the other half live off campus.

What did we learn? Here are some highlights from the survey findings:

Over half of our students participate in some form of community service, 53%. “SUNY Cortland has a higher percentage of students serving in college (53%) compared to the national sample of 29,443 students (47%)” Compared to campuses our size, we are even higher – 53% vs. 40% (Johnson and Levy, 2014 NASCE).



Congratulations to the grand prize winner of the \$500 ASC gift card for the NASCE survey.

Amanda Fossli is a senior, majoring in Education (ASP major- Adolescent Education, Spanish). She is currently student teaching at Murray Hill Academy High School in New York City. Amanda spent last semester abroad in Madrid teaching Spanish to a variety of age groups. Amanda is originally from Yorktown Heights, New York in Westchester County.

However, about 47% of Cortland's service contribution is performed by 10% of its student body, indicating that a relatively small number of students contribute the lion's share of the service hours. “While Cortland should continue to focus on increasing the number of students who engage in service, it should simultaneously develop and maintain institutional structures that promote service on more frequent and deeper levels, moving students

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Newman Civic Fellows Award Goes to SUNY Cortland Student Nicole LaFreniere

SUNY Cortland student, Nicole LaFreniere, a 2012-2013 AmeriCorps member, has received The Newman Civic Fellows Award. The Award honors inspiring college student leaders who have demonstrated an investment in finding solutions to challenges facing communities throughout the country through service, research, and advocacy. These students represent the next generation of public problem solvers and civic leaders. They serve as national examples of the role that higher education can—and does—play in building a better world.

Newman Civic Fellows are recommended by college and university presidents to acknowledge motivation and ability in public leadership. Newman Civic Fellows awards are made in memory of [Frank Newman](#), who dedicated his life to creating systemic change through education reform.

Nicole LaFreniere’s service has focused on economic development and entrepreneurship. In so doing, she has helped address one of the most fundamental issues facing our community – opportunity. As an AmeriCorps member in 2013, Nicole worked with the Cortland Downtown Partnership (CDP). In that capacity, she worked to sustain and expand business opportunities and jobs in our downtown area.

Nicole was instrumental in developing and promoting downtown events such as “Chill-A-Bration” and “A Taste of Downtown.” Both events were highly successful. Nicole also helped further promote downtown by developing a social media campaign.



She created a Facebook page for the CDP and wrote a weekly column called “Monday’s with Nicole.” Each Monday she featured a different downtown business. Her column drew upwards of 500 readers. In addition, she worked on projects to promote new businesses and entrepreneurship, coordinating an entrepreneurship contest for Cortland county high school and college students.

Nicole also coordinated several clean-up days around Cortland, including Cortaca clean-up, for which she recruited approximately 30 volunteers, and obtained donations of refreshments, t-shirts, and gift cards from area businesses as incentives for volunteers.

Nicole is also very active on campus. She conducts campus tours for the college’s admissions office and has worked various events, such as the spring open house. She has served on the financial board of the Student Government Association (SGA) and is currently running for the office of treasurer. She is a dual major in Business Economics and Communication Studies. She has maintained a high GPA while donating 900 hours as an AmeriCorps member and participating in multiple campus activities.

Integrating STEM into Service-Learning

SUNY Cortland is increasing the number of service-learning learning communities in teacher-education programs that include STEM (Science / Technology / Engineering / Mathematics) disciplines.

SUNY Cortland already uses service-learning in Secondary-Education STEM teacher-education programs. For example, instead of “observing” in classrooms (as had been the practice until recently), secondary-education Chemistry and Mathematics majors now work alongside teachers and children during regular school hours, and they tutor children afterward.

These students “process” their experiences through written and spoken reflection. They are, in other words, service-learning students.

Now, the School of Education and the Institute for Civic Engagement are partnering with area schools to provide fall 2014 Childhood/Early Childhood Education majors with service-learning experiences in the context of learning communities that incorporate STEM topics; they are doing so through a \$10,000 grant from Bringing Theory to Practice.

The grant, which focuses on the development of psycho-social well-being among participating SUNY Cortland students and faculty and their Cortland Enlarged City School District partners, incorporates two Mathematics courses. Fall 2014 first year Childhood/Early Childhood Education majors will be in one of two sections of a learning community that includes The Cortland Experience (COR 101),

Concepts of Elementary School Mathematics I (MAT 101), and Writing Studies in the Community I (CPN 102, a service-learning course).

In the spring, these same students can continue in the learning community: The spring session will include Concepts of Elementary School Mathematics II (MAT 102), Gender, Race, and Class Issues in Education (FSA 103), and Writing Studies in the Community II (CPN 103).

These new learning communities are being organized as a part of the Explore: Education Field Experience Program, in which first-year Education majors gain field experiences that begin as early as the students’ first semester.

Currently, for example, Education majors are tutoring Mathematics at Barry and Virgil Elementary schools. Other Education majors are serving at the Tully Regional Enrichment Program, which is an experiential STEM program in which children have built and launched air-powered rockets, and have programmed robots, among other projects. Through such programs, our Education majors are practicing hands-on STEM pedagogies.

In addition, Inclusive Special Education majors in this spring semester’s Introduction to Urban Education/Writing Studies in the Community II learning community will conduct poster sessions as part of SUNY Cortland’s Green Days celebration.

These sustainability-oriented posters and hands-on demonstrations are

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(LaFreneire, continued from page 2)

In her spare time, Nicole competes in Ultimate Frisbee events.

Nicole continues her dedication to community service as an intern. She is involved with a student group working to create branding and marketing for Cortland Corset Building and its many unique businesses.

Nicole serves SUNY Cortland and the Cortland community for the best

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away from ‘one-shot’ service events towards service on a recurring basis.”

Our strengths are in the areas of economic and environmental issues, as well as issues pertaining to health, hunger and nutrition, and youth. In particular, we are strong, relative to other institutions that have participated in the survey, in the areas of youth and health.

Service on our campus is done predominantly through volunteering, “Looking at the total amount of service performed by Cortland students, 51% of it is done through clubs, organizations, or sports teams, while 27% is through courses or academic programs.”

Many students cite as an obstacle to their participation that they were not asked. We need to do a better job asking our students to participate in our programs of service and community engagement, because nearly all of our students say that “it is important to contribute to addressing the needs of people who require assistance.” And an overwhelming percentage of our students, 97.5% say that they are motivated to be involved because “it is the right thing to do.”

reason: because it is the right thing to do.

Nicole is someone who is capable of inspiring and engaging others. She leads by example as well as through the application of her expanding repertoire of leadership skills, particularly her positive outlook and her persistence. We congratulate Nicole on a well-deserved award: she is the ideal person to represent SUNY Cortland as a Newman Civic Fellow.

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designed to show pre-service teachers how they can incorporate sustainability lessons into their own elementary school classrooms.

Some of these students might qualify for acceptance into SUNY Cortland’s Noyce Scholars Program, which nurtures the teaching skills of talented pre-service and in-service STEM teachers.

President Obama’s 2015 budget proposal calls for a 3.7 percent increase in funding (to \$2.9 billion) for STEM education, including money for recruiting and preparing STEM teachers, research on STEM teaching and learning, and improving undergraduate STEM education.

This investment could support SUNY Cortland undergraduate and graduate students’ research into effective STEM-teaching pedagogies.

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