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



Carnegie Foundation
Elective Classification in
Community Engagement



Light It Up Cortland

On Saturday, October 27, to celebrate Make a Difference Day, SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps members and volunteers with the Institute for Civic Engagement and Sustainable Cortland distributed 500 energy efficient light bulbs and educational packets to city of Cortland residents. This event, “Light It Up Cortland,” was a collaborative effort between the college and community to promote energy efficiency and conservation by city residents.

Each of the 500 homes received one Compact Florescent Light bulb (CFL) and a variety of educational materials, including: an “Energy Action at Home” workbook from the New York State Energy Efficiency and Development Agency (NYSERDA); information regarding public transportation and the new Cortland 211 system from Seven Valleys Health Coalition; and information from the Chamber of Commerce on buying locally to save energy and support local businesses.

The event began at Main Street SUNY Cortland with a line-up of speakers on the topic of living sustainably – how to save energy, save money, and reduce your carbon “footprint.”

The speakers included Barbara Lifton, Assemblywoman, district 125; Barbara Henza, Cornell Cooperative Extension Cortland; Jonathan Wood, Green Sun Solar; Frank Kelly, Co-Chair of the Environmental Advisory Committee, City of Cortland; and Janeille Franzenburg, AmeriCorps member with the Seven Valleys Health Coalition. Mayor Brian Tobin provided a closing before sending out the volunteers.

Volunteers took to the streets for two hours of door-to-door awareness building and distributing of light bulbs and information to 500 homes in the City.

The overall goal of this citywide campaign was to reduce energy use of, and save money for, Cortland households. If all 500 homes installed the compact florescent light bulbs (CFLs) from their energy packet, \$5,264 could be saved annually and 47,190 pounds (23.6 tons) of carbon dioxide emissions could be avoided (the equivalent of taking 4 cars off the road, or saving 592 trees).



AmeriCorps members and volunteers getting ready to deliver energy efficient light bulbs and educational packets to Cortland residents.

Cross-Cultural Miscommunication Panel Discussion

“Language cannot function without culture, and culture cannot function without language; the two are inseparable.”

On Wednesday, October 24, The Institute for Civic Engagement and the Clark Center for International Education hosted a panel discussion on Cross-Cultural Miscommunication as part of this year’s International Week events. The discussion featured five panelists, each of whom shared a narrative regarding experience with cross-cultural miscommunication; a large group discussion followed.

Thirty-five students attended the discussion, including a student from Ireland and two students from China, both of whom offered to participate in a similar event planned for spring semester CPN 103 students.

Students in classes ranging from Speech Pathology, Education, English

Composition, Sociology, and Marketing attended the event.

A wide variety of observations were made by both the panelists and audience members. Some of these observations included: language cannot function without culture, and culture cannot function without language; language and culture are inseparable; connotative meanings of common words can complicate communication; mispronunciations can cause embarrassment; we need to be sensitive to our image as Americans; in another country, remember that you are an invited guest; and demonstrations of respect are important in every culture.

New Service-Learning Course: PWR 410

Students interested in technology-related careers in economics, communication, or professional writing will be interested in a new service-learning Professional Writing Course, *Digital and Technical Writing for Community Development* (PWR 410), offered for the first time this spring by Dr. Guiseppe Getto.

Students of the course will prepare for jobs in fields such as technical communication, information design, and web design.

As professionals in those fields, students would not necessarily be computer programmers, Getto notes; rather, they “would be like translators between technicians and end users,” serving in roles such as project coordinators, consultants, team leaders, and grant writers.

Dr. Getto (ENG) designed PWR 410 to be a project-based course that emphasizes the importance of local resources. Getto says that “students don’t need to think of giants like Google when looking for jobs, they just have to look in their backyards.”

To emphasize his point, Getto has partnered with Professor Kathleen Burke (Economics) to create relevant and meaningful service-learning projects for students by recruiting local organizations through the Cortland Business Innovation Center (CBIC), which Burke coordinates. In that role, she serves as liaison between SUNY Cortland and local businesses.

Burke explains that she and Getto “will be offering services through the CBIC for businesses and for not-for-profits that are seeking help in areas such as web site design and design of promotional materials.” (Continued on page 3)

Community Partner Spotlight



Sustainable Cortland is a community-based organization dedicated to sustainable solutions for Cortland County by advocating for the health and well-being of our residents, environment, and local economy.

Our SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps program currently has a member serving who works as a sustainability outreach and program coordinator at Sustainable Cortland.

Sustainable Cortland hosts educational events regularly that are open to the public. Recent events include: a farm-to-school program at Homer Elementary; a sustainable living tour in Marathon; and a how to plant and grow your own garlic seminar.

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Students will also partner with iFixit.com, which Getto describes as “the largest free online repair manual for electronic devices, with 50,000 people contributing to the development of the guide.”

Through their projects, students develop needs analysis and advocacy skills; they will also learn a revision process common to the technical communications field in which they collaborate with their classmates as a way of addressing their professional challenges.

In addition, they recently co-sponsored Light It Up Cortland, and A Campus Conversation on Climate Change with the Institute for Civic Engagement and SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps.

Monthly Meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Main Street SUNY Cortland, 9 Main St., Cortland at 6:30pm.

For more information about Sustainable Cortland, volunteer opportunities, and upcoming events visit their website, www.sustainablecortland.org



Sustainable Living Tour:
Twin Oaks Dairy

During these collaborative discussions, Getto will couch conversation in terms of best practices for community development, especially those involving technology.

The course meets 3:00-4:15 on Mondays and Wednesdays, with a two-hour lab on Mondays from 4:20 to 6:20 p.m. during which students will work on their projects.

For further information, contact Professor Getto at guiseppegettoatwork@gmail.com.

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AmeriCorps Gets 5th Year of Funding

By: Micheal Bersani

SUNY Cortland's AmeriCorps efforts will provide a boost to local community organizations for the fifth straight year, employing up to 25 workers in 2012-13 through a federally funded program run through the College's Institute for Civic Engagement.

The College's newest AmeriCorps crop will be funded by a \$235,187 grant recently awarded by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and administered on the state level by the Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS). Workers will spend the year serving one of more than a dozen not-for-profit locations in Cortland County.

"We are extremely happy to have been awarded a fifth year of funding," said Richard Kendrick, the local AmeriCorps project director and the director of the SUNY Cortland Institute for Civic Engagement. "The program is having a huge impact in the community. For that reason, if no other, we're very pleased to be able to continue."

SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps, which received its first grant in 2008-09, is a community-based coalition that seeks to increase civic involvement through service. AmeriCorps members agree to devote up to a full year to tutor and mentor disadvantaged youth, operate after-school programs, maintain the outdoors, provide health education and a fill a wide range of other community needs.

Local organizations that will benefit from AmeriCorps support include: Catholic Charities, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Cortland Child Development, the Cortland City Youth Bureau, Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District, Family Counseling Services, Lime Hollow Center for Environment and Culture, the Seven Valleys

Health Coalition, SUNY Inclusive Recreation, Sustainable Cortland and the YWCA, and for the first time the Homer Center for the Arts.

"The groups that we've had working with us — some of them have been with us the entire five years — have just done a fabulous job," Kendrick said. "It's impressive the type of individuals we have working in our programs."

SUNY Cortland was awarded funding equivalent to 19 full-time positions for 2012-13, which it can allocate in different ways. Kendrick said SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps expects to hire between 20 and 25 people in a variety of full- and part-time positions.

In return for their service, full-time workers will receive an annual stipend of \$12,100 to help with housing and food. After completing a year of service, they receive \$5,550 to put toward college costs.

SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps is headquartered with the Institute for Civic Engagement in Main Street SUNY Cortland, the College's downtown building at 9 Main St. It is part of the College's effort to play a positive role in the community while providing potentially transformational educational experiences for students. SUNY Cortland this year was named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with distinction for a second year in a row. It was the College's sixth consecutive year on the honor roll.

The SUNY Cortland Institute for Civic Engagement is currently accepting applications for positions.

For more information, interested people may contact Wendy Burton, the program coordinator for the Institute for Civic Engagement, at (607) 753-4270. Possible volunteers may also apply online by searching programs in New York state and looking for SUNY Cortland AmeriCorps.