



The Joint Educational Project

JEP – An Internationally Recognized Service-Learning Program

By Tammy Anderson

Recently, JEP welcomed faculty and administrators from Kansai University of International Studies and Kochi University in Japan who came to learn more about service-learning at USC.

The delegation from Kansai University included USC alumnus, Dr. Yasuko Koshiyama, who is currently a professor in the department of English Education: Dr. Atsushi Hamana, the University's President, was also part of the four-member group. The visitors spent half a day with JEP staff. Additionally, Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs, Gene Bickers discussed the importance of service-learning and civic engagement at USC with the group. One of the highlights of the visit was a visit to 32nd Street School to observe their after-school program sponsored by JEP/Readers^{Plus}.

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Joint Educational Project

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Challenge Accomplished!

Last fall, the faculty and staff of USC College of Letters, Arts & Sciences were given a unique opportunity: to support both the Joint Educational Project and the Good Neighbors Campaign (GNC). An anonymous USC alumnus challenged all faculty and staff in the College to increase its GNC participation rate to 50%. Since the challenge was met, the alumnus is donating a \$1 million gift to the endowment fund for the Joint Educational Project.

The College's GNC participation grew from 26% to 56%.

On behalf of the JEP staff, our participating students, and community partners

Thank you College Family!

*Tammy Anderson
Executive Director of JEP*



Reconnecting to the Past Through Facebook

Dear JEP House...

I am a Trojan. Class of 1991.

I participated as a mentor in the JEP program from 1989 - 1990. I worked with a little boy at the middle school (or the elementary school, but he was in 6th grade at the time) around the corner for the whole of that year.

I had all but forgotten about this particular student, not necessarily that I participated as a mentor in JEP, but certainly the specifics of my time in the program.... After all, it was 18 years ago...

That is, until last night.

By the power of the Internet and social networking sites (Facebook as a specific) my mentee found me after all these years, and reached out to me. I wanted to tell YOU what he had to say... in his own words:

I've been trying to find you forever. I could only remember your first name and my best friend told me to try Facebook. I just wanted to thank you for coming into my life and showing me something different. You just don't know how you could change someone's life for the better. I live in Dallas, Texas now; I have three children. I am a music promoter. I still have that piece of the Berlin Wall you brought back, and guess what... I take my kids to Disney World every spring. Thank you so much for changing my life.

-- Jerry, JEP program participant

We know what we are doing when we volunteer and reach out—we know it is a good thing. But rarely do we see the fruits of our labors develop and grow. After the school year ended, I went to Europe with my friend, and I did in fact bring back a piece of the (at the time recently fallen) Berlin Wall back for my mentee. I had also made him a promise that if he was able to do something (can't remember what—perhaps not quit on school or fail) I would take him to Disneyland for the day. I made good on my promise to do so... something he said his family was both unwilling and unable to do for him.

I am writing to you now because I had to share with you all just how truly meaningful and impactful what you do is to the kids you touch. Even if you don't see it right away. Even if it does not feel like it at the time.... Yours is a ministry of presence. Don't ever stop!

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Jerry went on to tell me that many of the students he know—his friends—ended up either dead or in jail. He said only 3 of his close friends from school “made it out”.

We may not be able to save the neighborhood... or the school... or the class... but if we can save just one... that is an amazing thing.

Fight On!!!

Samantha Jensen, MA, MAEd

Editor’s note: Samantha is now a middle school teacher in Scottsdale, Arizona. We thank her for taking the time to share this incredible story, and for letting us share it with you.



**JEP-ReadersPlus
Relay for Life Team**

Support our team
[http://main.acsevents.org/
goto/readersplus-jep](http://main.acsevents.org/goto/readersplus-jep)

You can still donate!

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Three visitors from Kochi University included author, columnist, and interpreter, Kaz Kawazoe (another USC alum), Hiroshi Tsujita (University Vice President), and Ishizutsu Satoru, (Professor of economics and social sciences).

Colleges and universities in Japan are looking for ways to cure social ills. Service-learning has emerged as one effective way of getting large numbers of energetic, idealistic young people engaged in this mission. The Japanese government is giving funds to universities to study various service-learning programs in order to implement this pedagogy more widely in the country’s institutions of higher education.

Visitors from both campuses focused many of their questions on the technical assistance JEP offers faculty members who implement service-learning in their courses, including the methods we use to help students make the connection between their community assignments and their coursework. We shared sample syllabi, weekly “academic questions” and typical student responses to those questions, as well as lessons we have learned from three decades of service to the university and the community.

Each group left campus with new ideas and a real respect for the JEP model of service-learning, including the great number of university-community partnerships that we have developed.



JEP Partners with Kanye West Foundation

By Joseph A. Collins, Chief Executive Officer, Kanye West Foundation

“I fervently believe that, as someone has said before, ‘when you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.’ I want to change the way young people look at school and, hence, the way they look at themselves and their futures.”

– Kanye West

According to *TIME Magazine* and *The New York Times*, 1 in every 3 students will drop out of high school. For African American and Hispanic students, that statistic increases to 1 in every 2 students. Up to 50% of our nation’s youth (and in some instances, more) are dropping out of high school. These rates are alarming not just because in and of themselves they are staggering, but because kids who drop out of high school frequently end up in dead-end jobs, unemployed, on the streets, in jail, or dead.

Singer and songwriter Kanye West established the Dr. Donda West Foundation as a permanent tribute to his mother. The Foundation partners with schools and community organizations to provide underserved youth access to music production and academic support programs that will enable them to unleash their creative ability and reach their full potential.



Photo: Getty Images

The Foundation understands the critical role education plays in the success or failure of our youth as well as how illiteracy or ill preparedness impacts us individually and collectively. Therefore, the Foundation is committed to the ongoing development of this program and envisions the day when the high school dropout rate in cities across this nation will be virtually nonexistent.

The Foundation’s partnership with USC’s Joint Educational Project has proven to be a meaningful asset to meeting this goal. Several pioneering JEP students have chosen to volunteer with Loop Dreams, a music production program housed at the Challengers Boys and Girls Club. Through the program, kids study hip hop dance and videos in addition to the history of hip hop, and the biographies of hip hop artists, the positive and negative impact of hip hop language, the art of graffiti. They also explore various career options in the entertainment industry such as entertainment law, business man-

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agement, artist management, sound engineering, and lighting design.

Loop Dreams students are required to demonstrate the five habits of mind which are fundamental to the program: commitment, self-discipline, integrity, respect, and responsibility. Through music production and other art-related activities, the program opens students' minds to creativity, taps into their unlimited potential, and motivates them to remain focused on the importance of education so that they stay in school and graduate.

In addition to volunteering with the Loop Dream program, JEP students tutor, facilitate workshops, and develop meaningful mentoring relationships with the students at the Challengers Boys and Girls Club. Our hope is that this relationship with JEP will become a core element of our work as we strive to meet the vision of Kanye and Dr. West.

To learn more about this phenomenal organization, including information on the Loop Dreams program and how you can become involved, please visit our website at www.kanyewestfoundation.org.

Best Wishes to all the graduating student employees on staff here at JEP!

Lorna Alkana
Paula Berg
Alexi Coppinger
Marc de Jong
Caitlin Fitzgerald
Aakriti Garg
Nancy Godoy

Elina Khodorkovsky
Lorense Knowland
Kelsey Kopro
Casey McAlduff
Lauren Middleton
Madhu Muppidi
Lindsey Palmer

Whitney Pepper
Eva Rivas
Kristen Robles
Valerie Rubio de Gonzalez
Jordan Scott
Bhavna Shah
Marisol Siegel

Jeffrey Skinner
Agnes Tang
Randi Thompson
Marysol Valle
Claire Velasquez
Alice Marie Villaseñor
Angela Vimuttinan

32nd Street Poetry Reading Presentation

Come join us for our annual poetry reading featuring original works from the elementary students at 32nd Street School.

April 23, 2009 6pm SGM 123

Thanks to the JEP volunteers!



Joshua Bass

David Burge

Cassie Cappuccio

Joseph De Neu

Tracy Dubin

Nicholas Hartley

Abedes Ibarra

Lindsey Nelson

Jazminne Orozco

Hillary Rood



Notes from the Classroom: Visual Storytelling in a Composition Course

By John Murray MPW, Ed.D. and Stephanie Bower, PhD.



Our idea first took shape from our desire to integrate service learning into our writing classes. Placing writing in a real-world context teaches students that writing matters. It allows them to see the value of writing rather than viewing their assignments as empty exercises designed to please the arbitrary or subjective demands of their professor. We imagined partnering our students with local community groups to develop research projects that would emphasize the connections between academic rhetoric and “real world” issues. In our vision, the writing that they would do for this class would help them see their larger place in social systems, as part of the conversation that makes up our democracy, emphasizing in particular the way that writing functions as a form of social action.

Thanks to the support of the Writing Program, the College, the Institute for Multimedia Literacy, and JEP, we piloted the course in the spring of 2008. Tammy Anderson, Susan Harris, and the staff at JEP arranged a meeting with several community partners, and we pitched our ideas for the course, including what would be involved for our partners. We made no guarantee of the project’s success, since we had little more to offer than a detailed plan and an excess of ambition. Still, the community members’ response was overwhelmingly positive, and we were able to coordinate an agenda that would be most beneficial to all involved.

To complement the writing, we integrated a community-based documentary as a course requirement. The documentary enabled us to move beyond the versions of service learning most often used in the composition classroom, typically structured around either a “writing for” or “writing about” approach, either helping community organizations with students’ expertise as writers and thinkers or using the community as subjects for our students’ research. We wanted to do something different, something that would engage the community as partners rather than clients or subjects because each partner bringing something to learn and something to teach. We wanted to challenge rather than confirm the implicit hierarchy that values only the expertise, knowledge and discourse produced by the university. Partnering students with community groups—high schools, nonprofits, juvenile detention facilities—and asking them to collaborate on five-minute documentaries positioned our students as facilitators rather than as experts, mutually engaged in the project of using stories to experience the world through unfamiliar perspectives.



Photo: by Jameson Yu



Working with their community partners, students identified issues pertinent to the community, such as disparities in public education, safety at inner-city schools, racism, the achievement gap, and the juvenile justice system. They then researched these issues using both community and academic voices as experts. This in-depth exploration of the social, political, ideological, and economic forces gave them a backdrop for the visual stories they would tell in their documentaries, stories which would make these more abstract forces real. This real-world experience, in turn, enhanced the quality of our students' academic research and written assignments—it humanized their research papers and impassioned their “call to action” essays.

Last year, we secured a grant from the Center for Excellence in Teaching which, combined with our continuing collaboration with JEP, allowed us to offer an improved version of “Writing in the Community” in the spring 2009 semester. Although we still encounter the inevitable challenges, the course continues to be more rewarding than we could ever have expected, for both teachers and students. This is a class where the students truly construct knowledge and the instructors orchestrate the learning while helping students to make sense of their own experiences and reactions.

Overall, our students evaluated the class with enthusiasm. One student wrote: “I feel like this is the class college students talk about that changed their life in some way. This class gave me the privilege to work with and help kids from the local community and that felt so great. Making that documentary helped me feel like I was making a difference, even if it was a small one.” Another student wrote: “This has been one of the best classes that I have taken so far at USC. It has been a transforming experience and I hope to use all that I’ve learned in future endeavors.” Still another claimed that she “never had a learning experience like it.” She continued, “Not only did I learn a lot about good researching, writing, and documentary-making, but I learned more about society and my own values and passions.”

As our students adjusted to working with people whose life experiences were very different from their own, so our community partners tried to figure out exactly what we were doing, their enthusiasm about working with USC students tempered by wariness about our commitment to a mutually beneficial learning experience. Even so, the response from our community partners has been equally positive.

We look forward to continuing and expanding these partnerships for the spring 2010 semester, the next time we teach the course.

Stephanie Bower Ph.D, and John Murray MPW, Ed.D are both Senior Lecturers in the Writing Program at USC.



To see some of the videos from the course, search YouTube for “Disparity in Public Education,” “In the Rough,” “Skin Deep,” “Experimental Learning at West Adams,” “Safety First,” and “Design and Education at West Adams.”



TIPS FOR DEVELOPING REFLECTIVE EXERCISES FOR SERVICE-LEARNING STUDENTS

We consider the following criteria when we develop exercises for reflection for our service-learning students. While constructing reflective questions that “do it all” is challenging, it helps to consider the following guidelines when developing a set of prompts for students to respond to over the course of the semester:

Does the question draw upon material from the class (e.g., assigned readings, lecture materials, films, methodological approaches, theories, terms, data, etc.)?

Does the question ask students to apply, integrate, and/or contextualize their community experiences in relation to their course work?

Does the question anticipate students’ experiences in community-based assignments? Is the question broad enough to accommodate a wide range of experiences, yet focused enough to guide students’ experiences?

Does the question provide the opportunity for “personal” as well as “academic” reflection?

Does the question allow for a range of possible “correct” responses that challenge and/or encourage students to go beyond stereotypes and commonsense responses? In other words, does the question challenge students to think critically about their experiences?

Does the question allow room for students to be creative in their responses and to offer unique observations and interpretations about the issues addressed in the question?

Does the set of questions offer multiple opportunities for reflection—and feedback?

Does the set of questions incorporate a developmental perspective?

(For end-of-semester assignments): Does the question allow students to reflect on their classroom and community experiences as a whole and ask them to integrate what they have learned over the course of the semester?

International Reading Festival

Date: Saturday, April 18th from 9-12

Place: Founders Park

New this year—Sample tastes and flavors from around the world with international cuisine sponsored by the USC Francophone Resource Center.





Profile Spotlight: Elise Balanche

by Marc De Jong

JEP Service-Learning Liaison

In August 2008, Elise Balanche, a 23-year-old French teacher and graduate student in Education (French as a Foreign Language) at the University of Strasbourg, began a one year internship at the USC Francophone Research and Resource Center. The Center was established in 2004 as a joint venture between the French Embassy and the French Department at USC. Under the direction of Dr. Béatrice Mousli Bennett, the Center organizes symposia, lectures, and conferences which serve to develop ties between the United States and Francophone countries.

In 2005, the Francophone Research and Resource Center began a collaboration with the Joint Educational Project (JEP). Through this collaboration, JEP students were given the opportunity to teach children in neighborhood schools about French language and culture. JEP students are able to make use of the resources offered by the Center. The Center also organizes activities for the children at the schools. For instance, it has held a perfume making workshop for the youth from the Manual Arts High School.

Elise is the point of contact for JEP students who are interested in using the Center's resources. In addition to working with JEP, she helps with the Center's website, writes their newsletter and organizes activities to promote French language and culture, including workshops for high school teachers. After learning about JEP's service-learning mission and working with JEP in 2008, Elise decided to become a Program Assistant (PA) herself in the spring of 2009. Program Assistants guide and evaluate JEP volunteers in mentoring and designing subject-specific lesson plans to be taught in the local school classrooms. This allowed her to work with the students directly and to encourage them to make use of the resources the center has to offer.

One of the main reasons Elise wanted to work at JEP as a PA is because of her interest in service-learning — a concept that is not yet well known in France. She is interested in bringing a JEP-style program back with her to France once her internship has come to an end in May. Elise believes that French students and the community will both benefit from service-learning; especially students who are not certain whether they want to become teachers or not. Due to the hands-on experiences, participating in service-learning will help students decide whether the teaching profession is a good fit for them.



Elise Balanche

Since the Francophone Research and Resource Center began working with JEP in 2005, the number of French students participating in the program jumped from 16 in the fall of 2004, to

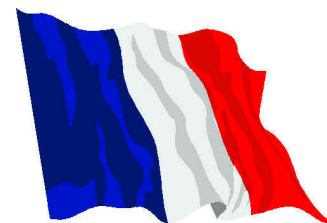
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35 in recent semesters. The number of participating Faculty in the French Department also increased: from 2 in 2004, to 14 in the last few years. The increase in students and Faculty participating in JEP is a positive development says Chair Natania Meeker, whose Department wholeheartedly supports the collaboration with JEP.

Elise says she is amazed by the commitment JEP students put into their assignments and feels that they are excellent ambassadors for French language and culture. She maintains that children in the community who are currently being taught French by USC students are more likely to choose French as a foreign language because they will remember their great experience with JEP.



Job Announcement
Readers^{Plus}
Math Advocate

Graduate position for creating hands-on lesson plans for one-on-one tutoring and group projects

Apply www.usc.edu/jep

TEACHFORAMERICA

Congratulations to all the future Teach for America Teachers who are currently student employees at JEP

Lorna Alkana
 Kelsey Kopro
 Marisol Siegel
 Jeffrey Skinner
 Randi Thompson

The Community Based Learning Collaborative

The USC Community Based Learning Collaborative (CBLC) was formally initiated in 2003 when staff, students, faculty, and community organizations across the university and the city came together to discuss how to build a university-wide support structure for experiential learning opportunities at USC.

The CBLC is currently a joint venture between USC Civic and Community Relations (CCR); the Joint Educational Project (JEP); the Volunteer Center; Student Affairs; faculty who have a specific interest in community-based learning representing USC Viterbi School of Engineering, USC Marshall School of Business, USC School of Policy, Planning and Development, The College, USC Annenberg School for Communication, Keck School of Medicine at USC, and USC Gould School of Law, and a number of community-based organizations with missions ranging from economic development, education, housing, health care, civic engagement, and legal/social empowerment.

If you are interested in learning more about the CBLC, please email cblc@usc.edu or call 213-740-1837.

The CBLC is co-chaired by Sharon Stewart (Director of Community Outreach for USC Civic and Community Relations) and Gene Bickers (Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs and Professor of Physics).



2009 Spring Program Assistants

Aakriti Garg MDA, SOCI, THV	Jonathan Ou GEOL	Marisol Siegel CLAS, SPAN
Alice Ma: ALL STARS, GEOL, Vol	Joshua Real PSYC, SOWK, Vol	Monika Langarica SPAN
Anna Whitmey GEOG, PPD	Kanika Jain SOCI	Nikki Sharma PSYC
Brooke Holmes GEOL	Kelley Lowe CSCI, MATH, Vol	Rachel Thom SOCI
Clare Velasquez ANTH, HIST	Kelly Cuen PSYC, SOWK, Vol	Rebecca Ferdman SOCI, SWMS
Denver Guess BISC, CHEM, EXSC, GEOL	Kelsey Kopro EDHP	Robert Lee EALC, PHIL, SOCI
Elise Balanche FREN	Kelsey Larsen IR, Vol	Sabrina Fung PSYC, SOCI
Janet Lin THV	Kyndal Hargrow EXSC	Stephanie Norman EASC, ENGL
Jennifer Chow HFL, HP, MDA	Lindsay Palmer PSYC, SOCI	Thomas Siu Hong Chow IR, SOCI, Vol
	Lorna Alkana ENGL, POSC	

2009 Spring Participating Courses & Professors

ANTH 200	Yamashita	GEOL 130lxg	Paterson	PSYC 361	Borders
BISC 102lxg	Kiefer/ Sullivan	GEOL 150lxg	Lund	PSYC 433	Manis
BISC 150lxg	Baker/ Shugarman/ Susskind	GEOL 240lxg	Sammis	PSYC 462	Lau
CHEM 105bl	Parr	HIST 200	Shammas	PSYC 464	Baucom
CLAS 280	Collins	HP 405	Courelli	SOCI 142gm	Emeka
CSCI 105	Crowley	IR 210	Lynch	SOCI 150gm	Kaplan
EALC 130	Birge	IR 304	Godinez	SOCI 200m	Albright
EASC 150	Rosen	IR 308	Rathbun	SOCI 305m	Sternheimer
EDHP 585B	Tzoytzojrako	IR 316	Tickner	SOCI 320	Albright
ENGL 261	Cervone	IR 318	Becker	SOCI 350	Sternheimer
ENGL 304	Bendall, Woloch	IR 325	Graham	SOCI 351	Sternheimer
ENGL 404	Woloch	IR 344	Godinez	SOCI 360	Hashem
ENGL 406	Bendall	IR 384	Lynch	SOCI 369	Casper
EXSC 2021	Girandola	MATH 108	Vorel	SOCI 420	Gomez-Barris
EXSC 205lg	Girandola	MATH 116	Vorel	SOCI 475	Ransford
EXSC 300	Vallejo	MATH 126	Montgomery	SOWK 400	Salcido
FREN 250	Keaveney	MATH 218	Haskell	SPAN 220	Beas, Cano-Britto, Fiedler-Vierma, Gallego, Hakoupian, Parra, Paus, Reinholtz, Stepanyan, Tejada, Velasquez, Halberstam
FREN 300	Showrai	MDA 100b	Quinn		
FREN 330	Mousli-Bennett	PHIL 140g	Schroeder		
FREN 381	Mousli-Bennett	POSC 130	Auerbach		
GEOG 100	Dear	PPD 372	Watson		
GEOL 105lg	Jordan/Platt	PSYC 100	Lindsey, Borders	SWMS 210	
GEOL 107lxg	Berelson	PSYC 201	Monterosso		
GEOL 108lg	Davis	PSYC 355	Barone, Read		
GEOL 125lxg	Corsetti	PSYC 359	Barone		



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The Joint Educational Project (JEP) is one of the oldest and largest service-learning programs in the United States. JEP is based in USC's College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and works with faculty across the university. The program is designed to connect academic courses with schools and community-based organizations in order to provide students with out-of-classroom experiences that complement and enrich what they are learning in the classroom while simultaneously providing a valued service to the community.

Each year, JEP partners with approximately 50 schools and agencies to place nearly 2,500 students in the university park campus neighborhood as mentors, "mini-course" instructors, translators, research assistants, teaching assistants, and aides to other helping professionals.

For more information about the services available through JEP, please contact our staff or visit our website at www.usc.edu/jep

