

# CAMPUS CORPS CONNECTIONS



A Montana Campus Corps publication



Montana | Campus Compact

Volume 2, Issue 3

August 2006

## 2005/2006 Campus Corps Awards Presented to Exceptional Members

### Participating Campuses:

- Blackfeet Community College
- Carroll College
- Flathead Valley Community College
- Fort Peck Community College
- Miles Community College
- MSU-Billings
- MSU-Bozeman
- MSU-Northern
- Montana Tech
- Salish Kootenai College
- UM-Missoula
- UM-Western
- University of Great Falls

### Objectives:

- Academic Mentoring
- Mentoring
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Volunteer Generation
- Member Development

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Layout and writing in this issue by Administrative Associate Gini Aten Erving. Many thanks to members who contributed photos or great stories that appear in this issue!

At the Student Training Institute and Campus Corps Graduation, held at Flathead Valley Community College in April, the program's annual awards were presented to three members whose service during the past year has been commendable.

The Award of Exceptional Leadership was presented to **Seth Quigg**, Team Leader at **Montana Tech of The University of Montana**. Seth's Supervisor had this to say when she nominated him: "Seth was a national AmeriCorps recruit who brought new vision and enthusiasm to the Montana Tech Campus Corps team. Seth has a hands-on approach with mem-



Seth Quigg, MT Tech Team Leader, accepts the Award of Exceptional Leadership at Campus Corps graduation in April.



FVCC Campus Corps Team Leader Mystel McKinley (left) and a CASA staffer pose with the many gifts generously donated by the FVCC community to the CASA Holiday Giving Tree.

ber and community partners. The team members love him and he is a natural at approaching community leaders and finding the heart of the community. Seth was instrumental in setting up the project undertaken at the former Butte YMCA building during the AmeriCorps All-Member Gathering in February. He has brought the Montana Tech Campus Corps program to new heights; it was a memorable year for the program."

The Outstanding Service Project Award went to **Mystel McKinley**, Team Leader at **Flathead Valley Community College**, for **Seussville University**, a day-long

event celebrating Dr. Seuss's birthday, during which 250 third-graders from local schools tour the FVCC campus and participate in Dr. Seuss-oriented activities—art, games, music, theatre, and storytelling. The event is designed to promote literacy. Mystel recruited 35 volunteers, who divided themselves into four subcommittees and worked for two months to organize the event.

The Award of Excellence was presented to **Oakley Clark-Snustad**, a **Montana Tech** member who has worked with the Technical Outreach office since 2002, when he arrived at Tech as an Upward Bound student. He served as a Campus Corps summer member with a local Boy Scout troupe, was a Raise Your Voice Student Leader in 2003, and has served as a part-time Campus Corps member with the Reintegrating Youthful Offenders (RYO) program in Galen, MT, since 2004. Throughout his term with RYO, Oakley has recruited volunteers to work with incarcerated youth, as well

(Continued on page 3)

## Alternative Spring Break Trip Takes Campus Corps Members to New Orleans to Help Rebuild

During Spring Break 2006, students from **The University of Montana—Missoula** made the long trip to New Orleans, not to visit the beach and partake of typical spring break activities, but to lend their skills to the rebuilding effort in the region following the devastating hurricane season of 2005.

UM—Missoula's Team Leader, **Mandy Murphy** (*sorting boxes, right*), led a group of eleven students on an Alternative Spring Break trip that found them volunteering with the New Orleans Rescue Mission to assist the organization in providing transitional housing for people who were returning to New Orleans to try to rebuild their homes and lives after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The group also helped with a community feeding (see *photo below*) and with the distribution of boxed food and



water to those in need. At that point, it had been seven months since the storm and Mandy commented that "it looked like it happened just yesterday."

She continues: "Being down there changed me, both good and bad. It definitely made me more cynical towards how the situation was handled by our own government. I saw first-hand the effects that the deci-

sions made by officials had on the people of New Orleans. People are currently living in cars, in garages, in mold-infested houses. To see miles and miles of destruction and loss of life stirred up emotions that I never thought I had. The sheer frustration and anger that I felt was overwhelming for the duration of the trip and the weeks following my return home. On the other hand, the trip also made me feel empowered, by realizing that I was able to help and can continue to help. New Orleans has a long road ahead of it and it's going to take people like us to get it back to normal.

I feel fortunate that I was able to help during my time there and see the situation that the city and its people are in. This was definitely one of the most important parts of my AmeriCorps term of service. It strengthened my commitment to service and also my social awareness of natural disaster situations. The college students that were in our group were amazing and outstanding individuals. I felt fortunate to be able to engage this group in a life-changing service project that opened their eyes to the situation of New Orleans. I think that they are all more civic-minded and committed to service now, and will continue to be so for the rest of their lives."



*UM Alternative Breaks New Orleans trip participants with Bernard, local contact for the group working on transitional housing with the New Orleans Rescue Mission.*

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### August 31

Last day for summer members to perform service hours to be counted toward completion of term

### September 1

August timesheets due  
Campus Corps 2006/2007 Program Year begins

### September 5-7

Team Leader orientation and retreat, Canyon Ferry Lake, Helena

### September 8

2005/2006 4th Quarter Progress Reports due  
Campus-Based Supervisor training and orientation, Canyon Ferry Lake, Helena

### September 14

Supervisor Conference Call, 1 pm

### September 15

Team Leader Conference Call, 10 am

### September 22-24

Building Engaged Citizens conference, Helena

### October 6

September timesheets due

### October 9-11

Trainer Toolbox, Missoula

### October 13

Team Leader Conference Call, 10 am

### October 19

Supervisor Conference Call, 1 pm

### Various dates in October and November

Campus Corps site visits

## Habitat University at FVCC Teaches Kalispell Youth About Homelessness

On April 18, 2006, 125 Kalispell Junior High School students journeyed to **Flathead Valley Community College** to attend the first annual *Habitat University*, a day-long event providing awareness about Habitat for Humanity and homelessness. The students rotated through five different sessions: they role-played a variety of people experiencing homelessness, with the goal of obtaining housing (roles ranged from 78-year-olds finding housing to 35-year old fry cooks); they viewed a presentation showing photos of homeless people around the world and then participated in a discussion; they made paper houses and wrote letters to law makers advocating for affordable housing; and they participated in two building projects—making seedling pots for the Forest Service and constructing the Cans for Habitat aluminum can collection bins. Lunch was served soup-kitchen-style.

The event was planned and coordinated by **Patti Miles**, a truly amazing two-year/900-hour Campus Corps member. She is a mother, full-time student, and was planning her wedding while planning for Habitat University. She put on the event to replicate the college's longstanding *Suessville University* (see page 1). Twenty-eight college student volunteers gave over 200 hours to help Patti realize her dream. Patti, herself, spent two months on the street with her two young daughters, before moving to Montana, and wanted to create an event geared at teaching young people more about Habitat for Humanity, homelessness, and housing issues in the Flathead Valley and across the country.



Kalispell Junior High School students help to build collection bins for aluminum cans during Habitat University at Flathead Valley Community College in April 2006.

## Volunteers Participate in 11 Service Projects During Third Quarter



During National Youth Service Day, the youth of Butte came out in force to clean up trash on the streets and hillsides of Uptown.

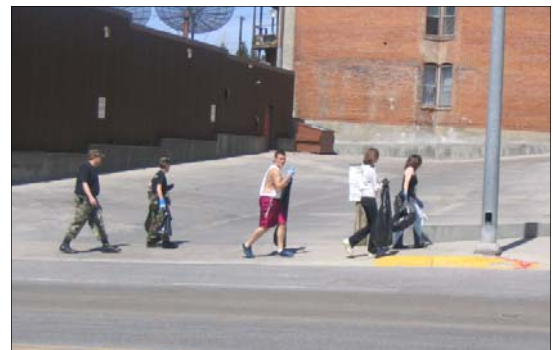
During the third quarter, **570 volunteers** were engaged by Campus Corps members to serve **5,307 hours** on **11 service projects**. The projects included:

- An Alternative Spring Break trip to New Orleans (read more on page 2);
- National Youth Service Day/Earth Day, with numerous projects in multiple communities (read more on page 5);
- Easter Basket creation on the Blackfeet Reservation;
- An Early Childhood Screening Event in Havre;
- Habitat University in Kalispell (read more this page);
- Read Across America Day/Dr. Seuss's Birthday;
- A Blood Drive in Billings;
- And an Awareness of Animal Cruelty event in Billings.

### 05/06 Campus Corps Awards (continued from Page 1)

as planned two Saturday life-skills activities per month. Outside of his AmeriCorps commitment, Oakley is the leader of the Boy Scout Troupe 15 Adventuring Group. He has been honored by the Boy Scouts of America with the Venturing Leadership Award, the Advisor Award of Merit, and the Youth American Award for his work with the group. Congratulations to all of the award winners!

A full **85%** of the volunteers felt that their service was worthwhile, **63%** felt that their contribution was helpful to the organization for which they were volunteering, and **70%** said that their experience would lead them to volunteer again in the future.



## Campus Corps Members Participate in Relay for Life Activities Across Montana During 2005/2006 Program Year

On May 5, 2006, **The University of Montana—Missoula** hosted its first annual American Cancer Society Relay for Life and Montana Campus Compact (MTCC) staff energetically participated, including Campus Corps Team Leader **Debbie Saylor**, who served as the UM Relay Committee's Team Recruitment Chair and engaged more than 300 people to partake in the American Cancer Society's largest annual fundraiser.

The UM community raised more than \$30,000 during its first Relay, ranking it among the top schools for its size in the western division according to money collected. Relay for Life is typically a team event that lasts between 12 -24 hours. Those teams that participate will generally camp at the event, decorating their campsites in the theme of their choosing, with each member taking turns walking or running around a track or, in the case of UM – around the Oval.

For their first year of participation, the MTCC Network Office staff dressed up as the Village People and invited friends and family to join their team, in support of their theme: it takes a village (people) to fight cancer. As a group of 17, the team contributed more than \$700 to the cause and was able to enjoy the free music, food, and games provided by the Relay for Life Committee and donated by local businesses and individuals. Governor Schweitzer was present during the



Scenes from the first annual UM-Missoula Relay for Life, held May 5-6, 2006, on the UM oval, with MTCC Network Office team above (Campus Corps Program Manager Molly Collins is on the left, Team Leader Debbie Saylor is on the right).



opening ceremony and kicked off the survivor lap, which is a way to honor those who have won their fight against cancer or who are currently battling the disease. After the first lap, 30 teams joined in behind the survivors, demonstrating their dedication toward finding a cure for cancer. The event lasted for 12 hours, with the final lap at 6:00 a.m. on May 6.

The Montana Campus Compact Network Office was not the only Campus Corps affiliate to participate in Relay for Life events this year. UM—Missoula Team Leader, Mandy Murphy, acted as the Office for Civic Engagement's team captain and organized her Campus Corps members to be involved in the festivities. Two other Campus Corps teams were also involved with Relay events across the state. At Montana State University—Bozeman, Team Leader **Kelsey Sharpe** and the Office for Civic Involvement participated in the second annual Relay for Life at MSU-Bozeman during the month of February. At MSU—Billings, Team Leader **Jessi Bennion** organized the campus involvement in the Billings Relay for Life, held during the month of July. **In total, Campus Corps members helped to raise more than \$558,000 across Montana this year for the fight against cancer.**

Campus Corps debuted a new survey tool for exiting members during the 2005/2006 program year. Results obtained for members who exited during the third quarter show that 97% of members feel that their service with Campus Corps increased their citizenship skills and enable them to become more aware of the needs and resources of their community. One example of the comments received from members regarding their service: "My definition of being civically engaged is to be involved. Simply that. I mean that it can be as intense as volunteering on a non-profit's advisory board to as passive as voting. No matter the level of involvement—as long as you are doing something to be informed."

## National Service Day Activities Across Montana Engage Youth in Service

On April 22, 2006, also known as National Youth Service Day (NYSD), a total of **1572 youth volunteers** across the state gave **5117 hours of their time** to help beautify and better the communities in which they live. This great show of participation and service happened in 10 communities: Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Havre, Helena, Kalispell, Miles City, Missoula, and Polson. Of these, **6 sites were coordinated by Campus Corps members**. The University of Montana—Missoula had 7 service projects in Missoula. Volunteers chose from a variety of activities, including: food and book drives, moving an organization’s offices, decorating building studs for Habitat for Humanity, educating citizens about not putting anything harmful down city drains, repairing used bikes, cleaning up a senior center, and assisting the Humane Society with an event called the *Mutt Strutt*. A total of 63 volunteers assisted on the projects.



Mayor John Engen speaks to volunteers during National Youth Service Day activities in Missoula.



National Youth Service Day participants in Billings prepare to do some planting at the Conservation Education Center.



At Carroll College, AmeriCorps members and other volunteers put together an Earth Day/NYSD celebration. Governor Schweitzer opened the event and then 60 volunteers left for 5 different service sites, including the Prickly Pear Land Trust, the Good Samaritan Thrift Store, the YMCA, the SAVE Foundation, and the Community Works Garden. Campus Corps members at Montana State University—Northern recruited 4 volunteers to assist with fire safety and alcohol awareness events. In Butte, the Campus Corps team engaged local youth in cleaning up the area known as Uptown (see photos, page 3). Kalispell youth participated in *Habitat University*, an event coordinated by FVCC Campus Corps member Patti Miles (see story, page 3). And in Billings, youth helped with planting projects at the Conservation Education Center, among other projects performed in their community.

**As of the end of the Third Quarter, Campus Corps members had collectively served almost 33,000 hours during the 2005/2006 Program Year! (And that doesn't even include the hours served by volunteers that members recruited!)**

### Carroll College Team Leader Mentors Helena Youth with Link Crew

**Jacqui Smith**, 2005/2006 Campus Corps Team Leader at **Carroll College**, has been involved with the Link Crew, a peer mentoring and freshmen orientation program, at Capital High School in Helena for five years now, since she herself was a junior at the school. The program began with the idea of having just a Freshmen Orientation and a peer mentoring class. Today, the Link Leaders volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters at two elementary schools and tutor at another, run Freshmen Orientation, put on activities for freshmen to get them involved at the school, and volunteer at many community events. Along with community service and mentoring, Link Crew has also taken on prevention and awareness campaigns, working with the Health Department and other organizations to promote tobacco use prevention and the awareness and prevention of teen dating violence. Link Crew not only helps the community, it is beneficial to the Link Leaders as well, by giving many of them opportunities that they would never have received otherwise and helping them learn the benefits of service that will make them want to volunteer for the rest of their lives.

### Campus Corps Initiatives Provide Academic Support for Montana Youth

The third quarter typically wraps up tutoring and mentoring projects for Campus Corps. It is during this quarter that the academic year ends and members collect post-project data. According to surveys compiled this quarter, students in Campus Corps academic mentoring projects showed a **cumulative 44% increase** in reading ability, math ability, and in science and other academic subjects. For example, students increased their positive attitude toward math by 80% and problem solving ability by 45%. In reading, students increased their ability to comprehend stories by 50% and ability to read by 42%.

Time during this quarter is also typically spent on thanking volunteers, ending tutoring match relationships, and beginning to plan for future years. The member working with Lakeside Reading Buddies (an FVCC project) organized a

"Race for the Reader" event which was held on March 11 at the Blacktail Ski Area. She received donations of \$320 to help with the administration of the Reading Buddies program. Members working on the America Reads\*Counts program at MSU—Bozeman are some of the most hard-working and dedicated members. Two part-time members coordinate the tutoring program, which typically places 50-100 tutors in matches with over 250 students. The coordinators held two tutor roundtables this semester as well as a tutor recognition ceremony where they presented over 20 awards. They were also able to share valuable information about their successful program with other members during a presentation at the Student Training Institute in April.

### Members Collaborate with Community Organizations to Get Things Done for Montana

Twenty Campus Corps members have been placed with 16 community organizations this year, including Habitat for Humanity, UM Drama/Dance Service-Learning Program, Volunteer Connections of SW Montana, MSU—Billings Office of Community Involvement, Discover Zone, Friendship House, Special Olympics, Missoula Cable Access Television Media Arts Program, Poplar Wellness Center, Dillon YMCA Spaceward Bound, Reintegrating Youthful Offenders, and Northern Rockies Outdoor Center in Butte. New this quarter were members on the Blackfeet and Ft. Peck reservations who are working with the Blackfeet Community

Development Corporation and the Fort Peck Senior Centers. Of community-based partner organizations surveyed during the third quarter, **50% believe that Campus Corps members have increased the capacity of their organization.**

Here is a snapshot of what some of these members are working on during this quarter: Members working with Habitat for Humanity (in Billings and Kalispell) assisted with Habitat University, spring break projects, Act Speak Build Week, and recruited volunteers for all of the activities. The member serving with the MSU—Bozeman Office of Commu-

nity Involvement helped plan 5 NYSD projects.

The member serving as a service-learning liaison with the UM Drama/Dance department successfully placed all drama students with Missoula classrooms. Members serving with the Poplar Wellness Center continued promoting health and diabetes awareness. By providing aerobics, nutrition, and weight-lifting classes to Native American college students and community members. Members serving with senior centers in Poplar and Frazier held various Sunday craft activities for Native American elders.

