

UAA Center for Community Engagement & Learning

Fall 2008 Community-based Learning & Research Minigrants

Project Summaries

Gabriel Garcia, a professor in Health Sciences, will launch a seminar series on Asian and Pacific Islander (API) issues. This seminar is intended to increase awareness and initiate community-university partnership for research that serves API community needs. Seminar participants will be able to identify key issues and experiences as well as build a network of peers. The intended result will be a developed infrastructure for a sustainable university-community partnership that promotes, encourages and supports research, education, service and creative projects that serve API populations.

Suzanne Womack Strisik, a professor in the Psychology Department, is redesigning the Community Based Interventions course. Working with Forensic Nursing Services of Providence (FNPS), Professor Strisik's students will have the opportunity to apply research-based best practices interventions and work therapeutically with professionals experiencing stress related to their work with victims of trauma. Experiences in the community-based activity will be discussed and integrated; students will receive advanced training as well. The hands on work will increase the motivation of students to master a challenging phenomenon as well as allow nurses to share their experiences in a therapeutic environment.

Kathi Trawver, a professor in the School of Social Work, is continuing development of outcome evaluation for the Anchorage Project Homeless Connect (PHC). PHC is a national model that utilizes cross-community collaborations to provide a one day event designed to provide housing, services, and hospitality in a convenient one-stop venue for people experiencing homelessness. Professor Trawver will work collaboratively with UAA Social Work students, the Project Homeless Connect Steering Committee and the Mayor's Office to provide much needed follow-up outcome data to determine if the referrals the event provided resulted in actual service delivery. The design, collection and presentation of this data will not only raise awareness of homelessness issues in our community among UAA Social Work students, it will also inform future PHC program planning committees in their efforts toward ending homelessness.

Frank von Hippel, Biological Sciences professor, is redesigning his Conservation Biology course to develop restoration activities for the Chester Creek watershed. Analyzing data collected by past Conservation Biology students, Professor von Hippel's class will work with various community partners in order to restore impaired sections of the creek. This plan will not only provide hands on experience for the students, but also assist the community in fulfilling its mission of improving the habitat quality of Anchorage area creeks.