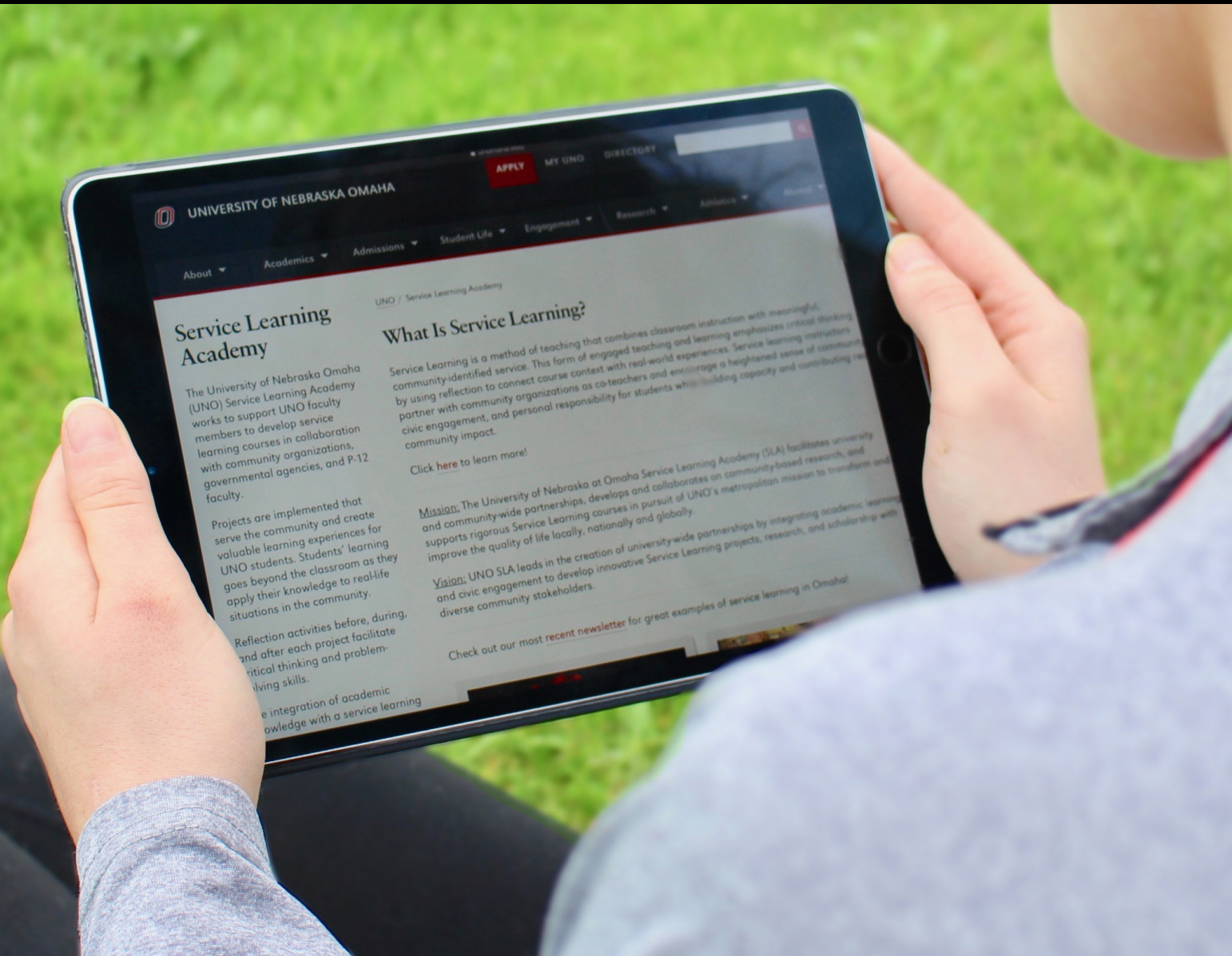




NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 10 | ISSUE 2 | SPRING 2020



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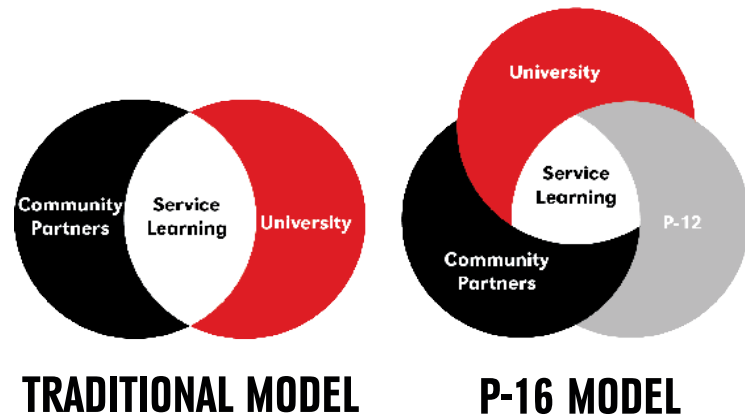
July 2020

Don't forget to register for the Service Learning Seminar. During the seminar, participants have a front row experience to learn all about service learning.

Typically a 4.5 day professional development experience held at the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center, the Service Learning Seminar will be condensed to a virtual format during the week of July 13-17, 2020, and provide an opportunity for P-12 and after-school teachers, administrators, and UNO full and part-time faculty members to understand the fundamentals of service learning and to develop a service learning project. Register at sla.unomaha.edu to reserve your spot.

SLA APPROACHES

What is the difference between traditional and P-16 service learning courses taught at UNO? The traditional service learning projects focus on a collaboration between community partners and a UNO class. P-16 service learning courses focus on the collaboration between a UNO class, a P-12 class, and a community partner. Throughout the newsletter, projects are identified as traditional or P-16 based on their project structure. The articles are authored by members of the Service Learning Academy team.



MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS

Not only do service learning projects provide connections to curriculum, but many also align directly with the six issue areas that encompass the community engagement work at UNO and in the Omaha community. Throughout this newsletter, these indicators will show a project's connection to one of these six issue areas.



LETTER FROM THE PAUL SATHER DISTINGUISHED DIRECTOR



This issue of the Service Learning Academy newsletter comes to you from a very different world view. As the semester began, we had no idea of the devastating COVID-19 impacts on our world.

This newsletter focuses on how faculty members and community partners have continued their teaching, service, and research in remote and online environments. I have been so impressed with the way in which our faculty members and community partners have teamed to continue their work. Our students, both P-12 and UNO, have been flexible to see their community work through.

As we look into the summer and fall semesters, we know there is a lot of unknown. However, I want to share a few things that I know:

- Service learning classes will be offered in remote, in-person, and online formats at UNO. These classes will provide rigorous, intentional learning linked to community-identified opportunities that provide real-world application of student learning.
- We will listen to our community partners about how we can best partner as everyone navigates safety and service delivery. As partners, we stand next to you and are able to be flexible to meet needs as best we can.
- Safety is our #1 priority. All service learning courses and collaborations will be thoughtfully constructed with the safety of clients, students, partners, faculty members, and staff in mind.
- And, finally, the Service Learning Academy team is available and excited to plan with you.

I hope you enjoy reading the stories about how our partners were creative and collaborative together, and how students advocated for change in and outside of a pandemic. That the Service Learning Academy is committed to innovating, no matter the delivery platform, is what we hope you read in these stories.

Julie Dierberger, Paul Sather Distinguished Director



Ralston High School and UNO students visit the W. Dale Clark Main Library to collect historical data on Blackstone District businesses.



P-16

DISCOVERING HISTORY IN OMAHA

By: Ali Al-Ghaithi

Every “place” has a story. Through their partnership, UNO faculty member Lucy Morrison’s *City of Omaha* course, Ralston High School teacher Andrea Hartman’s *Civic and Environment* class, and the Blackstone Business Association brought history to life in the Blackstone District so the public and business owners could learn about the history of the neighborhood. Students discovered and told the stories behind the buildings of the Blackstone District businesses and shared them by developing QR codes and web pages with the information.

The Blackstone District is one of the most crowded spots in Omaha during the last few years, as it has become home to around 53 businesses and countless entrepreneurs. As a part of their collaboration with the Blackstone Business Association, UNO students partnered with Ralston High School students to conduct research and to learn about the history of the Blackstone District.

Students visited the W. Dale Clark Main Library and the Durham Museum to collect data. Students also visited the individual businesses they were assigned by taking a trip to the Blackstone District and getting answers to their questions from the business owners themselves. The students met several times at UNO to discuss and plan for their semester-long project and put all the pieces together.

After UNO moved to remote teaching and learning, students and partners adapted to the online platform smoothly. At that point, the

only remaining step of the project was to build the web pages for the businesses. A final online celebration allowed the students to reflect on the influence they had on their community and what the project taught them in the process—they have the knowledge and research skills to be educational resources for their city.



Students navigate and explore the businesses within the Blackstone District.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE LEARNING

By: Amairany Fuentes

How can our community come together to celebrate the incredible service learning achievements of both students and educators during a global pandemic? The Service Learning Academy (SLA) asked themselves this question while planning the annual Service Learning Showcase, an event to recognize achievements and research in service learning.

In response to the university’s transition to online and remote learning, the SLA was required to reimagine the Service Learning Showcase in an online environment, while continuing to provide an interactive



UNO faculty member Ramazan Kilinc presents during the Showcase on Zoom.

experience for presenters and the audience. The SLA also wanted to be mindful of the resources available to presenters, including support and engagement. Keeping these goals in mind, the SLA team encouraged the Service Learning Showcase presenters to create a VidGrid presentation, which was presented through Zoom and followed by a live Q&A session.

This is the definition of community. I was so impressed by what is being done by an organization like MSForward, [UNO], and King Science. All of the pieces were important as the others. – MSForward Founder Daryl Kucera

After recruiting presenters for the new online format, the final list of presentations included a wide range of UNO and P-12 educators and students, including a King Science & Technology Magnet Center 8th grade student, UNO faculty members and students, and the SLA Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA.

By moving the annual Service Learning Showcase online, the SLA enhanced their ability to share how remote service learning is happening at UNO. The presenters demonstrated the resiliency of both students and educators and the ability of service learning courses and activities to flourish in an online format.

REMOTE AND ONLINE SERVICE LEARNING HOW CAN STUDENTS SERVE?

Service learning in remote or online teaching environments present a unique opportunity for students to become engaged with their community in new ways. For examples of how UNO faculty members teach service learning classes in remote and online environments, please visit unosla.unomaha.edu. The following are ideas for online service learning activities for students.



Conduct research, gather best practices, or collect information requested by the community partner(s)



Tape, record, or stream educational workshops or performances to benefit the community partner(s)



Create or edit digital and social media content



Undertake an assessment evaluation through the collection of feedback via phone or online

SERVICE LEARNING THROUGH PICTURES

By: Talia Smith

Peter Szto, 2019 Service Learning Faculty Fellow, launched a research project using photography as a creative medium to study and evaluate the service learning process, which addresses part of the SLA's mission to develop and collaborate on community-based research. Szto is a Professor of Social Work in the Grace Abbott School of Social Work at UNO.

The goal of Szto's research project was to create a visual narrative of service learning. To do this, he photographed students and faculty while they engaged in service learning courses such as faculty member Jodi Benenson's *Strategic Planning and Evaluation* course and faculty member Lucy Morrison's *City of Omaha* course.

"My hope is to visualize the value of service learning so that the Omaha community can see [its impact] on students, faculty, and community partners," Szto said. "Photographic images will fill in the blanks about what happens behind-the-scenes to evoke empathy, understanding, and motivation."

Bringing the outside world into the classroom is a challenge that is resolved through service learning. It brings the classroom out into everyday experiences.

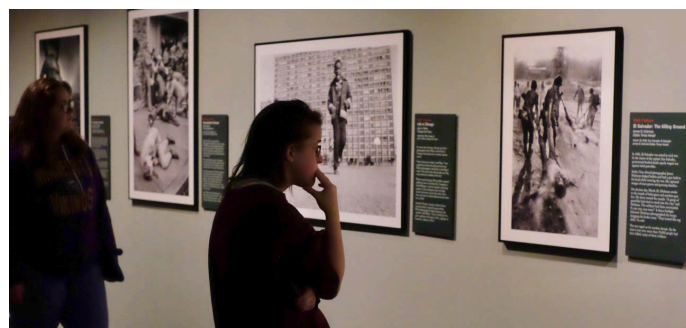
While working on the research project, Szto also had the opportunity to attend the SLA's Service Learning Seminar training to network with community organizations working to improve the quality of life throughout the Omaha community. His innovative work reflects the commitment of the SLA and its partners to promote community engagement and address social issues. Szto's choice to study service learning was informed by his position and background at UNO.

He said, "My role as a social work educator is to understand the world and to then create learning opportunities for my students to deepen their understanding. Bringing the outside world into the classroom is a challenge that is resolved through service learning. It brings the everyday into the classroom and brings the classroom out into everyday experiences."

The SLA looks forward to witnessing the continued success of Szto's project to document the service learning process and journey of students.



UNO students discuss the Hispanic Cultural Festival. (Photo Credit: Peter Szto)



Ralston High School students tour Durham Museum. (Photo Credit: Peter Szto)

TOUGH CONVERSATIONS

By: Claire Fischer



P-16

What is implicit bias, and how do you address it? UNO faculty member Rosemary Strasser's *Introduction to Psychology* course collaborated with Uta Halee Academy *Teach 4 Change* students to discuss this issue and create podcasts in the "Tough Conversations" service learning project. The goal of this project was to teach both the students and podcast listeners about the importance of establishing norms and ground rules for having "tough conversations" about bias.

To kick off the project, students were introduced to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an organization committed to addressing issues of prejudice and discrimination to secure justice and fair treatment for all people. The ADL Education Director Ayanna Boykins presented to the UNO and Uta Halee Academy students about bias. She led an activity called "This Is Where I Stand" which challenged students to consider why they think a certain way about people or issues. The project continued as students took notes and researched biases in small groups throughout the semester. Each group chose a unique topic, which included the Halo and Horn Effect, ageism, and gender bias to present on during their podcast episode.

While the students originally planned to share their finished podcasts during a final celebration meeting, the project was modified in response to the university's transition to online and remote learning. Instead, Uta Halee Academy students sent over their portion of the research to their UNO partners who were able to combine the information into a final virtual presentation. Students concluded by presenting on each topic and participating in a reflection about the project. As this project's name suggests, discussing biases can be a tough conversation; however, the students now have the right mindset and skills to address the topic of bias for themselves and others in the future.

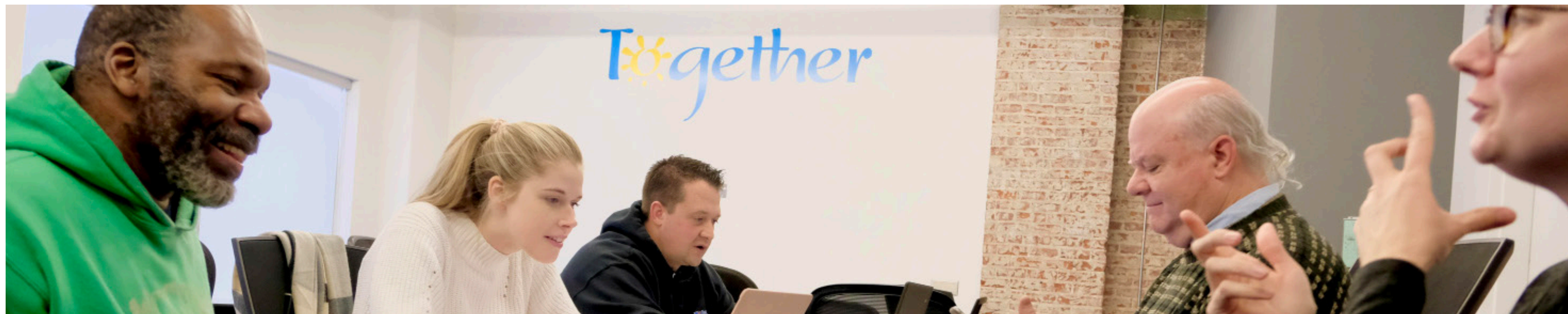
CAREERS: READY TO LAUNCH

By: Amairany Fuentes

The Service Learning Academy (SLA) hosted CareeRockIt at UNO this semester. The Greater Omaha Chamber created CareeRockIt as a series of workshops to educate Omaha area students about the diverse academic and professional career paths available in Omaha. Agencies are able to participate by hosting CareeRockIt and sharing more information about the future opportunities available through their field of work. The SLA wanted to demonstrate to students the wide range of academic and professional opportunities available through service learning and civic engagement within higher education.

The SLA was partnered with a group of middle school students from Millard Central Boys and Girls Club for CareeRockIt and planned a full-day of activities for the students including an interactive workshop, lunch-and-learn with the SLA staff, and a tour of UNO's Dodge campus. Through hosting and planning the workshop, the SLA team realized the importance of learning about career opportunities early on. "It was not until I was in college that I knew there were jobs that could bring civic engagement and higher education together," the SLA P-16 Initiative Coordinator Dr. LaTrina Hall said.

During the workshop, the SLA used social media to communicate the opportunities involved with civic engagement and service learning to the middle school students. In particular, students used TikTok, an online video-sharing social media service, as a learning tool. Rather than guiding students through a traditional PowerPoint presentation about service learning, the SLA team required student groups to create and record their own TikTok that reflected their service learning knowledge. Students created a TikTok both before and after the workshop and concluded by watching their videos side-by-side. Students could see firsthand how their knowledge of service learning and possible academic and professional paths transformed by participating in CareeRockIt.



UNO Public Administration graduate students partner with Together to determine an evaluation plan and metrics for the organization. (Photo Credit: Peter Szto)

THE MAVERICK PHILANTHROPY INITIATIVE

By: Grace Nelson



Traditional

The student philanthropy model is a form of service learning that links charitable giving with student voice and course instruction. Community organizations provide expertise on community-identified issues and solutions by submitting funding applications, which are chosen and advocated for by students. Initiated in the 2019 Fall semester, the Maverick Philanthropy Initiative has allowed students to participate firsthand in building community capacity through advocacy and has awarded a total of \$16,000 to community causes.

As observed in the Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 semesters, the process of the Maverick Philanthropy Initiative involves multiple stages. First, community organizations in the Greater Omaha Metropolitan Area submit funding applications which the UNO students use to help them select a community organization that addresses a social issue they are curious or passionate about. Next, UNO students conduct background research on their selected organization and participate in an interview with a representative from the organization to learn more about their work within the Omaha community.

After gathering information, students apply the skills and knowledge learned in their UNO course to develop a service learning presentation to deliver to their classmates that emboldens the mission and funding need of the community organization. At the final stage of the project, students cast their vote to determine which presentation and affiliated organization will be awarded the grant.

During the Spring 2020 semester, ten sections of the *Public Speaking Fundamentals* course participated in the Maverick Philanthropy Initiative. After the community organizations applied to participate, the UNO students worked individually or in dyads to develop a persuasive speech on behalf of an organization of their choosing. Through their speech presentation, students attempted to captivate and convince their fellow classmates to support their selected organization's call to action. After the speeches were finished, each course section of students participated in a vote to determine which speech and affiliated organization had the most alluring cause and call to action. The winning organization in each class section was awarded a \$1,000 grant. The awarded nonprofit organizations from the Spring 2019 semester are listed to the right.

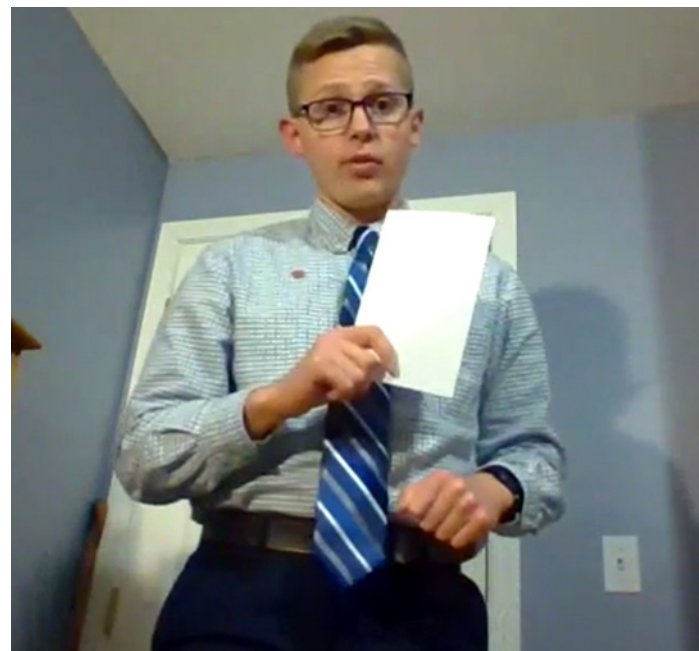
This spring, the *Public Speaking Fundamentals* instructors adapted the project in response to UNO's online and remote learning mode. This required students to expand their virtual and professional communication skills. Interviews with the organizations were conducted via Zoom, email, or a phone call, and the final speeches were given online.

Through the Maverick Philanthropy Initiative, students are able to practice creativity, build community connections, and advocate for a social cause from the very beginning stages of the project. A Spring 2020 student said, "It's neat to be able to make a difference while also advancing my education."

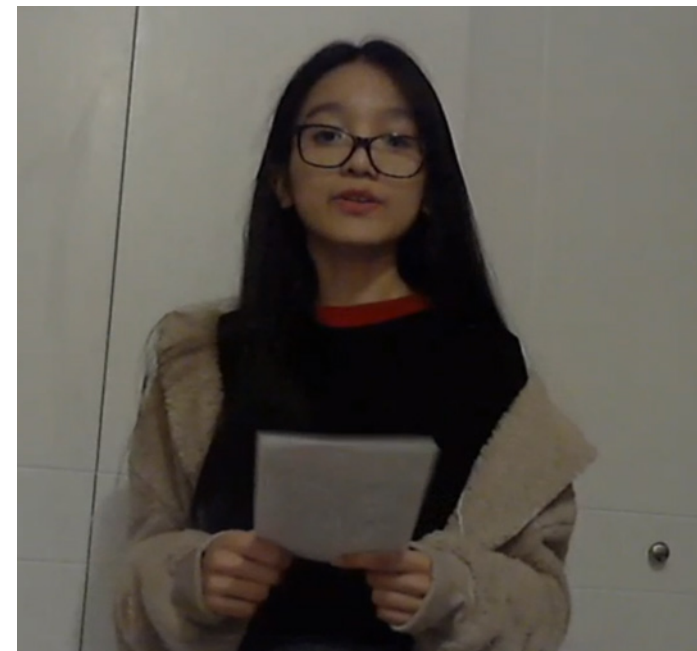
Learn more about the Maverick Philanthropy Initiative or get involved by visiting sla.unomaha.edu.



Arianna "Ari" House presenting on behalf of Nebraska Humane Society.



Adam Tjeersdma presenting on behalf of Lauritzen Gardens.



Patrice Virata presenting on behalf of Learning For ALL.

SPRING 2020 AWARDED ORGANIZATIONS

1 TeamMates Mentoring Program
UNO Faculty Member Allison Wakin, Course Section 22

2 Refugee Empowerment Center
UNO Faculty Member Allison Wakin, Course Section 10
UNO Faculty Member Amy Freshman, Course Section 21

3 Film Streams
UNO Faculty Member Casey Riesberg, Course Section 36

4 Open Door Mission
UNO Faculty Member Casey Riesberg, Course Section 36
UNO Faculty Member Amy Freshman, Course Section 14

5 Completely Kids
UNO Faculty Member Stephanie Larsen, Course Section 37

6 Helping Other People Everyday Heals Inc.
UNO Faculty Member Stephanie Larsen, Course Section 38

7 A Time to Heal
UNO Faculty Member Stephanie Larsen, Course Section 39

8 Child Saving Institute
UNO Faculty Member Amy Freshman, Course Section 40

9 Lolo's Angels, Inc.
UNO Faculty Member Amy Freshman, Course Section 21



UNO and Crestridge Elementary students discuss redlining and prepare for their upcoming Table Talk presentation.

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

By: Katie Pankonin



P-16

UNO implemented remote learning mode which required service learning projects to migrate into a new delivery platform. In the “Redlining Conversations” project, students and instructors successfully envisioned their final Table Talk conversations to fit the new online platform.

to redlining and its continued impact on areas such as the economy, education, housing, health, segregation, transportation, employment, and current realities for communities in Omaha. The Table Talk series took place over four online sessions that each began with an online icebreaker and transitioned into breakout rooms, where groups further discussed that week’s redlining topic.

Students from UNO faculty member Gerry Huber’s *Teacher Scholars Academy Human Relations* course and Craig Wiles’ 5th grade students from Crestridge Elementary worked with Inclusive Communities to explore how redlining impacts communities in Omaha. Inclusive Communities is an organization focused on human relations work that confronts prejudice, bigotry, and discrimination.

The “Redlining Conversations” project is a true testament to the power of service learning—even in unprecedented times, we can come together to both learn and educate.

In the fall, students traveled to The Union for Contemporary Art to visit the “Undesign the Redline” exhibit. This was an introduction to the topic of redlining for both student groups and allowed them to fully witness the history of redlining across the nation and specifically in the state of Nebraska.

This semester, both student groups met on UNO’s campus to discuss and prepare for their presumed in-person Table Talk to present at the end of the semester as a culminating project. When restrictions for social distancing prevented students from meeting in-person, the project’s planners and students persevered.

“[This situation] can actually tie back to the teaching profession itself,” a UNO student said. “Sometimes things happen that you can’t plan for, and as a skilled teacher, you have to be innovative and make new plans in order to get the job done.”

In the new online format, UNO students led the Table Talks via Zoom with the 5th grade students. UNO students prepared questions related

WHAT IS REDLINING?

Redlining refers to the practice of the New Deal era Home Owners’ Loan Corporation (HOLC) marking neighborhoods with minority occupants in red deeming them “high-risk for mortgage lenders” according to Camila Domonoske in an October 2016 article for NPR.

This discriminatory practice fostered a pattern of arbitrarily denying or limiting financial services to specific neighborhoods and people of color in Omaha. The SLA is addressing redlining as a theme in various service learning projects.

REMOTE REDLINING TOUR

By: Amairany Fuentes



Traditional

How can students learn about the historical system of inequality during times of uncertainty? Prior to UNO’s transition to online and remote learning, College of Engineering faculty member Stuart Bernstein planned to facilitate a tour of Omaha in his *ENGR 2000: Professionalism and Perspective* course to give the engineering students a foundational understanding of the impact of redlining in Omaha.

Bernstein planned to lead students on a bus tour throughout Omaha that would allow students to grasp the reality and impact of redlining firsthand; however, the physical tour would not be compatible with online and remote learning.

In an effort to maintain quality learning in the course while online, Bernstein joined forces with the Service Learning Academy to create a VidGrid lecture, which allowed Bernstein to piece together a virtual tour of Omaha for his students including photographs, videos, and personalized narration.

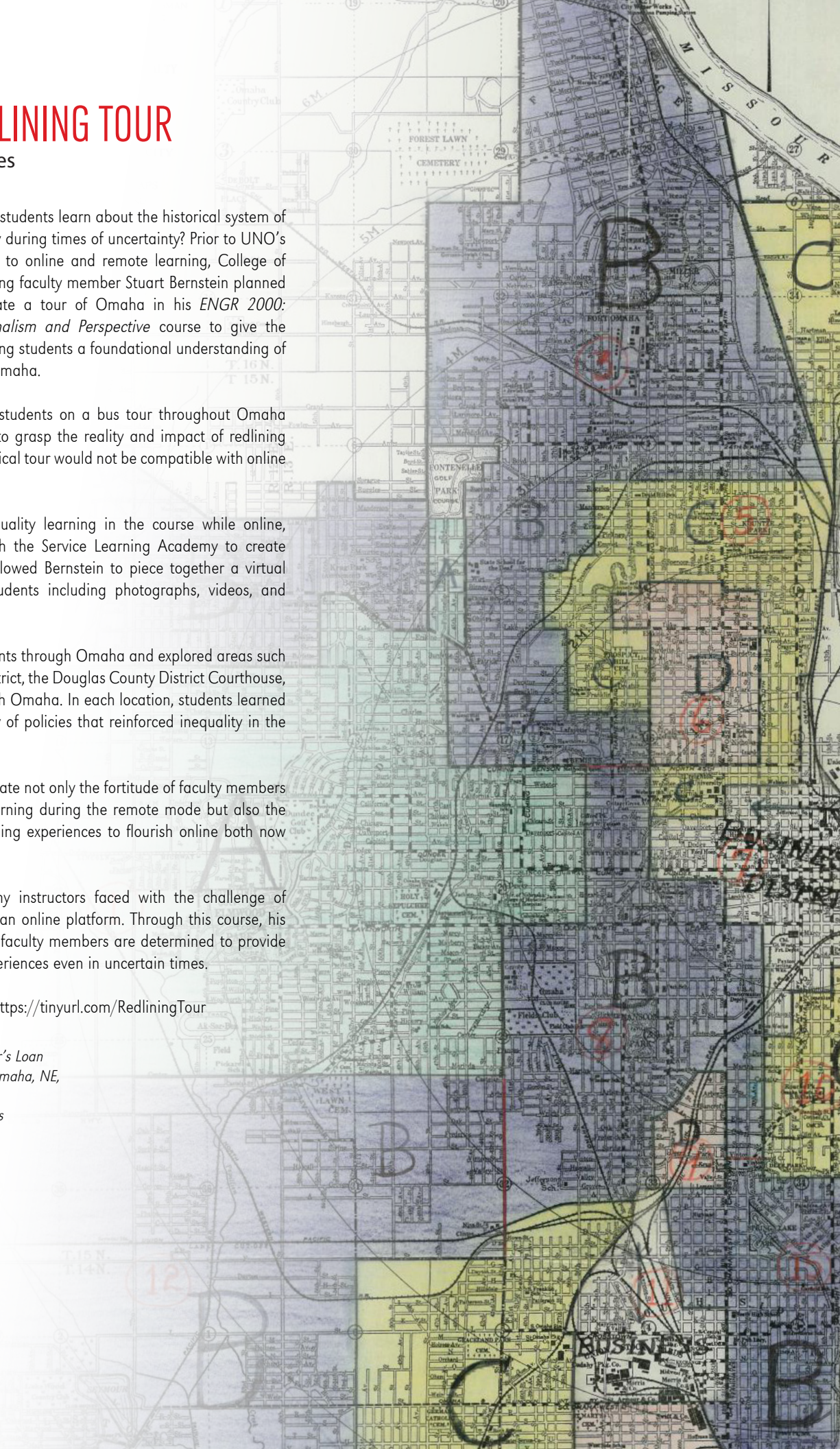
The virtual lecture led students through Omaha and explored areas such as UNO, the Blackstone District, the Douglas County District Courthouse, North Downtown, and North Omaha. In each location, students learned about the important history of policies that reinforced inequality in the community.

Bernstein’s efforts demonstrate not only the fortitude of faculty members to ensure quality online learning during the remote mode but also the opportunity of service learning experiences to flourish online both now and into the future.

Bernstein was one of many instructors faced with the challenge of converting their courses to an online platform. Through this course, his efforts demonstrated UNO faculty members are determined to provide quality service learning experiences even in uncertain times.

Watch the tour by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/RedliningTour>

This image is the Home Owner’s Loan Corporation (HOLC) Map of Omaha, NE, from 1937. Redlining aided in the devaluation of communities and ultimately reinforced the borders of segregation.



THE SHAPE OF COLLABORATION

By: Jared Torrell



UNO and Black Elk students interact with Autism Center of Nebraska clients.



p-16

The beauty of collaboration is that it incorporates individuals with unique backgrounds and strengths. In this way, collaboration can take on many different shapes. During the “Shape of Collaboration” service learning project, Educational Leadership graduate students in UNO faculty member Tami Williams’ *School Community* course and 5th grade students of Danielle Elsasser’s Black Elk Elementary *Science* class engaged in science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics (STEAM) activities to create collaborative projects with the Autism Center of Nebraska (ACN).

The ACN provides services and support for individuals of all ages who have autism or other developmental disabilities. This semester was the first time for these three partners to work together. The project consisted of five meetings total among the UNO students, Black Elk Elementary students, and adult clients of ACN. Before each in-person or virtual meeting, UNO students developed interactive STEAM activities for the group to complete collaboratively. Examples of activities included making origami, slime, and building structures with various objects. The 5th grade students utilized Skype, an online conferencing tool, to attend the majority of their meetings.

The “Shape of Collaboration” project provided an opportunity for UNO students to gain experience in both developing lesson plans and working with elementary students and adults with developmental disabilities. All students engaged in fun and inventive activities focused on STEAM, collaboration, and problem-solving, while the ACN clients benefited by practicing and participating in appropriate social interactions.

To conclude, the team had a dinner celebration together. The UNO students presented two light-up trees with origami butterflies hanging on them to Black Elk Elementary and ACN. Each project participant learned that one thing is for sure—collaboration comes in all different shapes.

[Through service learning], students are provided an opportunity to... build new relationships and learn compassion about organizations within their own community. – UNO Student

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHT

By: Mustapha Barry

This semester, team members in the Service Learning Academy (SLA) collected and analyzed service learning research. The data committee team comprised of graduate assistants Grace Nelson, Sanaa Ahmed, Talia Smith, Amy Zeller, Anni Zou, Ali Al-Ghathi, Jared Torrell, and Mustapha Barry and undergraduate assistant Haley Jessen. The committee separated into two teams to develop poster and paper proposals, which were both accepted for the Community Engagement Symposium at Kansas State University (K-State). The symposium theme was “Student Success and the Public Good”.

The poster explored how service learning experiences transform students’ identities related to their community and academic paths. The research was conducted by analyzing and coding qualitative answers submitted by UNO students in the spring and fall semesters of 2019. The paper presented a case study that examined how the SLA utilizes its faculty and project support structure, relationships, and processes as means to overcoming institutional barriers of service to optimize student success.

While the Community Engagement Symposium was scheduled for March, university operations across the nation, including UNO and K-State, transitioned to remote learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The conference hosts rescheduled the Symposium for an online platform at a later date.

Results of the research indicated the most frequently occurring theme expressed by UNO students was that of “deepened sense of civic responsibility and increased pro-social behavior.” 62.8% of respondents indicated that their service learning experience increased their interest in engaging with their community and encouraged them to be more mindful of their contributions to the community. Additionally, nearly half of the participants indicated that their service learning experience expanded their knowledge of and connection to the community. These participants developed an awareness of community resources and social issues, and/or formed meaningful relationships with individuals in the community.

STUDENTS BECOME ADVOCATES

By: Anni Zou and Maria Jimenez



Students testify at the State Capital in Lincoln concerning the plastic bag ban.

Advocacy has the potential to influence legislation and impact the community in critical ways. Advocates provide information to policymakers and community leaders to assist them in making decisions. This semester, service learning students became advocates by providing information to policymakers and community leaders in hopes of impacting future decisions to benefit Nebraska.

In UNO faculty member Jeff Knapp’s *Social Work and Civic Engagement* course, UNO students collaborated with Together, a local nonprofit, to advocate for the awareness and reform of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Together’s mission is to combat homelessness and food insecurity. In addition to its other programs, Together helps

families in Omaha navigate SNAP, which is a federal program that aims to raise the nutrition levels among low-income households by providing assistance to purchase food.

Through their advocacy efforts, UNO students created and recorded podcasts featuring interviews with key stakeholders and community members involved with SNAP. Their podcast topics included the logistics of SNAP, SNAP and the economy, serving the elderly, food pantries, and SNAP’s impact on grocery stores. Prior to the podcast interview, students researched the topic and determined appropriate questions. Together will publicize the finished podcasts to raise awareness of the importance of SNAP and educate the public on needed reforms.

Students in another service learning project similarly used advocacy to impact local policy decisions. In UNO faculty member Steve Rodie’s *Landscape Appreciation* course and Rachael Arens’ Northwest High School *AP Environmental Science* class, students joined forces to gather information related to the City of Omaha’s potential plastic bag ban ordinance. They worked collaboratively with Nebraska State Senator Wendy DeBoer to draft and propose a bill to the Nebraska Legislature. In January, students had the unique opportunity to testify at the State Capital in Lincoln to the LB 905 bill committee concerning their research on the plastic bag ban.

Whether through creating podcasts or testifying at the State Capital, these hands-on experiences gave students the confidence and skills to take a stand for the causes they believe in. These lessons will transcend well into their future as they become change agents on their campuses and in their communities.

REMOTE AND ONLINE SERVICE LEARNING TOP 3 TIPS FOR FACULTY

The Service Learning Academy compiled our top 3 tips for faculty to consider while planning or teaching online and remote service learning courses.

Connect Openly with Partners

Respect your community partner’s limits in working with your students. Consider and ask what future guidance or information sharing is reasonable on their end to help you narrow your students’ project activities. Remember high quality service learning isn’t about logging a certain number of hours, it is about being responsive to community partner needs.

Prioritize Reflection

Prioritize reflection with your students. Reflection allows students to communicate feelings, experiences and learnings before, during and after the action phase. This step is a key component to community-based learning and will allow your students to consider more deeply the impact of their online work.

Seek Support

Remember to seek support and guidance. The Service Learning Academy team is available to support you in navigating the new reality of online learning. Contact the SLA Community Liaison Kirsten Case at kcase2@unomaha.edu to develop your online service learning course or the SLA at unosla@unomaha.edu.

SERVICE LEARNING AWARD RECIPIENTS



Outstanding Service Learning Faculty Sachin Pawaskar

Sachin Pawaskar, Senior Research Technology Fellow in the College of Information Science and Technology, has been deeply involved with service learning since he began teaching at UNO in 2016. Having worked with a diverse group of community based organizations and government departments, his service learning projects provide students with community-identified IT issues and challenges that allow his students real world experiences to develop not only solutions but also a ready, tested and experienced resource pool. His philosophy of teaching is to create, promote and nurture critical thinkers. Highly regarded by his community partners, one shared, "His heart for his students was something I had never seen before. He truly wanted them to be successful once they graduated and felt personally responsible for setting the foundation."



Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Service Learning Graduate Student Tanner Chilson

Tanner Chilson, graduate student in the School of Music for Bass Performance, is the recipient of the Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Service Learning. Tanner has participated in two service learning projects in the past three semesters, "Sound Health: Bringing Music to Medicine" and "Partners in Performance". Both are collaborative projects in partnership with Omaha Public Schools, the Fred & Pamela Buffett Cancer Center Healing Arts Program, and Omaha Area Youth Orchestras.

Tanner has been a role model and leader to UNO students during "Partners in Performance" school residencies, as well as "Sound Health" school residencies and performances. The success of both these projects could not be possible without the dedication, hard work, and many contributions of Tanner Chilson.



Chancellor's Award for Outstanding Service Learning Undergraduate Student Jabin Moore

Jabin Moore, a junior majoring in Entrepreneurship in the College of Business Administration, led the Freshman Leadership Council (FLC) in their service learning collaboration with Nathan Hale Magnet Middle School over the last two semesters. Dedicated to making improvements to this partnership and service learning project to create a more meaningful experience for FLC members at UNO, Jabin met frequently with the Service Learning Academy staff to develop strategies that would better link curriculum and leadership to this project.

The award nominator shared, "Of the students I have worked with over the years, Jabin has been one that stands out the most in his leadership and dedication to understanding the impact of service learning for our students and the community." Jabin also presented at the 2020 Service Learning Showcase this spring.

RESEARCH SHARING FORUM

By: Stephanie Diaz

The Service Learning Academy (SLA) hosted a Research and Resource Sharing Forum to provide information to professors, P-12 teachers, and community partners regarding the intersection of service learning, education, and poverty. The forum showcased service learning theories, trends, and resources related to education and poverty, which were gathered as part of the SLA's Campus Compact AmeriCorps VISTA Initiative. A major theme discussed during the forum was the importance of delivering intentional service learning projects and resources when working with students and communities experiencing poverty.

The Impacts of Service-Learning on Youth, Schools and Communities Report released by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (1990-1999) stated students who participate in service learning experiences demonstrate increased school and civic engagement. Additionally, schools that sponsor service learning programs reported school attendance increased each year over a three-year period of time. Low-income high achieving students, despite graduating from high school on time, are less likely to attend more selective colleges than their high-income peers, graduate from college, or earn a graduate degree according to a report released by the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation and Civic Enterprises (2007). In light of these statistics, forum participants discussed how intersectional partnerships between community partners and schools through service learning present an opportunity that may lead to exceptional learning experiences for students.

The forum also included testimonies from a panel of partners who have engaged in service learning projects including the Blackburn Alternative Program Service Learning Coordinator Cathy Nelson.

"Students who are usually the recipients of services, through service learning, can become the givers and take ownership and make a difference through advocacy," Nelson said. "Through service learning projects, students can teach others about fresh food and sustainability."

Nelson's testimony resonated with others who were interested in using service learning to increase student engagement. In addition to increasing academic engagement, service learning experiences can increase students' commitment to developing the assets of their schools and communities. As Nelson said, service learning turns the tables and allows students the confidence and skills to become the doers themselves.

For resources and best practices that address the intersection of service learning and poverty, visit <https://www.unomaha.edu/service-learning-academy/covid-19/vista-anti-poverty-work-in-a-virtual-world.php>

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SERVICE LEARNING ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

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Cover Photo: In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNO implemented remote learning effective March 30th for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester, which required service learning courses to migrate into a new online delivery platform.

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