Learning about life through service

In the spirit of The Milwaukee Idea, UWM's Institute for Service Learning is bringing students out of their classrooms for some real-world learning and a chance to be of service.

For Maggie Schell, a UW-Milwaukee freshman majoring in Occupational Therapy, service learning began simply as a requirement for one of her introductory classes.

But over the fall semester, she's realized it's much more than that. In addition to simply fulfilling her class assignments, Schell says her service learning experience has not only reaffirmed her career choice, but also landed her a job with Easter Seals Southeastern Wisconsin, the organization she's been serving with as part of her Introduction to Occupational Therapy class taught by Dr. Noralyn Davel Jacques.

"I love it," she says. "Not only am I working with people with disabilities at Easter Seals, but it's a lot of fun and it gives me a taste of what I'll be doing in the future."

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Schell is in good company. She is one of more than 1,800 students who have served at community agencies in and around Milwaukee since the service learning program began four years ago. Currently, more than 60 community agencies offer service opportunities to UWM students. As part of her course, Schell and the other students in her class are required to provide 14 hours of service with a community organization of their choice. And for Schell, the choice was an easy one: "I wanted to pick something new," she says.

"A lot of the choices were things I've done before, like reading to or tutoring kids," says Schell, an Oak Creek resident. "So I chose Easter Seals because it was a chance to work with adults, which was really different than what I've done before."
Consortium for Economic Opportunity

The Consortium for Economic Opportunity (CEO) continued to support and strengthen economic development agencies, small businesses, entrepreneurs and community groups to help expand business and job growth in metropolitan Milwaukee, particularly in low-income neighborhoods. CEO helped community partners obtain funding to support business and job creation, and produced strategic plans to help partners enhance their economic development capacity. In addition, research conducted by the Consortium broadened the knowledge base needed for sound economic development policy-making in the metro area.

Highlights:

• Worked on 32 major economic development projects with community organizations, local governments and economic development agencies. These include strategic planning and resource development for the Milwaukee Industrial development Corporation, a neighborhood marketing analysis for the North Avenue Community Development Corporation, assistance creating marketing materials for the City of Brookfield, providing data on changing neighborhood economic conditions to the Wauwatosa Residents Coalition, assisting the City of Milwaukee’s Department of City Development in its study of the Fond du Lac corridor and research on minority business ownership in metro Milwaukee for the Milwaukee County Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Office.
• Increased the volume of small business counseling and training by 40%, with 161 clients receiving counseling assistance and 398 clients attending 53 training sessions run by the Consortium’s Small Business Development Center.
• Provided $350,000 worth of in-kind technical assistance to more than 30 community partners, among them the Hunger Task Force of Greater Milwaukee, Brewers Hill Neighborhood Working Group, Wisconsin Legal Action, Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee, Milwaukee Urban League, Initiative for a Competitive Inner City, Waukesha County Economic Development Corporation and the Greater Milwaukee Convention and Visitors Bureau.
• Expanded knowledge of economic development issues in the metropolitan area with research on such subjects as minority business ownership, diversity and management in metro Milwaukee’s private industry, the effect of welfare reform on the utilization of emergency service in greater Milwaukee and the economic impact of the child care industry in Milwaukee County.
• Expanded the consortium’s entrepreneurial training program, which gives emerging entrepreneurs a chance to gain critical business skills, write business plans and attract financing. In 2001-02, the program had 106 new students, produced 56 graduates, 12 new business plans and 2 new business start-ups.

Institute for Urban Health Partnerships

Launched in Spring 2001, The Institute for Urban Health Partnerships is a collaborative effort bringing together professionals, community residents, and policymakers to enhance health and the quality of life in urban communities. The initiative draws on the resources of UWM’s School of Nursing, which partners with a wide variety of community agencies and institutions in the greater Milwaukee area. The Institute was built on a strong record of successful collaborative efforts, among them UWM’s nationally recognized community-based nursing centers, adolescent pregnancy programs and school-based health programs.

Highlights:

• Conducted community health assessments for several areas, including Caledonia and Wauwatosa.
• Created “Give it Up to Live it Up,” a community-based program to help African-American women reduce their risk for diabetes and cardiovascular disease.
• Provided primary health care and health education at community-based nursing centers located at the Silver Spring Neighborhood Center, House of Peace and Riverwest/Pierce School.
Cultures and Communities

Cultures and Communities, the curricular component of The Milwaukee Idea, offers undergraduates a new set of foundation courses emphasizing cross-cultural understanding, interdisciplinary study and community-based learning. CC prepares students for a global workplace and encourages development of the intercultural communication skills necessary to succeed in fields ranging from education to business, to health care, to law. Since its inception in 2000, more than 1,200 students have completed one or more Cultures and Communities courses. Among them are freshman seminars on oral traditions and multicultural America and upper level studies exploring such subjects as global communication and gender and the media.

**Highlights:**

- Launched the Cultures and Communities Certificate, which gives students a chance to put multicultural understanding and community involvement at the heart of their studies.
- Made more than 25 “mini grants” to projects that extend the Cultures and Communities Program beyond the borders of campus and classroom, joining the community and university in innovative ways. Among them are a multicultural arts show at Latino Arts Inc., a dance collaboration with the Milwaukee Public Schools and a criminal justice study to be conducted with the Benedict Center.
- Created a Hmong American Studies initiative that brings Hmong organizations together with UWM faculty, staff and students to address education and other issues of particular concern to the Hmong community.
- Provided funding for two major community partnerships: an oral history project in the city’s Walnut Street area gives students a chance to learn about Milwaukee’s oldest African American neighborhood and supports neighborhood revitalization efforts, while a collaboration with Riverside University High School has helped more than 100 students acquire critical computer skills as they learn about and create “virtual museums.”
- Provided more than 75 students with service learning experiences, bringing a real-world dimension to their studies and vital service to community organizations.

KnowledgeFest

KnowledgeFest offers the community a lively opportunity to learn about the full breadth of research and scholarship at UWM, the state’s only urban research university and the variety of ways it is working to improve the quality of our lives.

**Highlights:**

- Connected UWM programs and scholarship to the community through booths and programs at six ethnic festivals in Milwaukee. Exhibits featured a variety of community-university projects and partnerships.
- Developed preliminary plans for a major event to showcase UWM research and scholarship to the public, private, and nonprofit sectors in Greater Milwaukee.
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Women’s Health Research Collaborative

Launched late in 2002, The Women’s Health Research Collaborative aims to substantially advance research and expand community partnerships in the study of women’s health as well as increase educational opportunities in the field. The initiative builds on research now being done at UWM in such areas as the impact of welfare reform on the health of low-income women, promoting healthy lifestyles, cardiovascular disease, adolescent pregnancy prevention and exercise physiology. The Collaborative encourages research efforts that incorporate all aspects of women’s lives and seeks ways to decrease health disparities and improve the health and health care of all women.

**Highlights:**

- Sponsored a conference for the community and campus to raise awareness of the need for women’s health research.
- Developed a survey to identify areas of interest in women’s health research.
Partnerships for Education

Partnerships for Education is a community-wide effort to revitalize our urban schools through quality teaching and learning. UWM, the Milwaukee Public Schools and other educational institutions throughout southeastern Wisconsin are joining forces to prepare more students for college, particularly those from culturally and linguistically diverse families, create a strong teacher work force ready for the challenges of urban schools and integrate information technology into teacher education programs.

Highlights:

• Taking a lead role in the Milwaukee Partnership Academy, a powerful and unprecedented alliance of community partners working to insure that all children in Milwaukee Public Schools perform at or above grade level in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Partners in the Academy include the Milwaukee Public Schools, Milwaukee Teachers’ Education Association, Milwaukee Board of School directors, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, Private Industry Council, State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and Lt. Governor’s Office, Milwaukee Area Technical College, and Alverno College.

• Developed several programs to train teachers to be effective in the urban school environment.

• Partnering with the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) to recruit and train a total of 105,000 tutors with the goal of providing a tutor for every MPS student who needs one.

• Operated successful partnership programs including the UWM & Milwaukee Public Schools Arts for Credit Program, READ 2000, Gateways Portal, Early Childhood Alliance and Information Technology 2000.

• Assisted with the development, writing and implementation of the curriculum and administration of the new Lynde and Harry Bradley School of Technology and Trade with other educational and business partners.

Partnerships for Environmental Health

Partnerships for Environmental Health targets threats to our health from environmental sources such as air and water pollution and occupational toxins. The initiative is bringing UWM to the forefront in the study of the genetic effects of environmental toxins with its pioneering research on zebrafish. Other areas of concentration include lead poisoning in children, creating public information programs on environmental hazards and strengthening public school science curriculums.

Highlights:

• Formed a partnership with the Medical college of Wisconsin and the National Institute of Environmental Health Science that will greatly expand understanding of how changes in the genetics of zebrafish exposed to toxic chemicals relate to changes in humans and other mammals.

• Constructed one of the largest zebrafish animal facilities in the United States to support the initiative’s research efforts.

• Continued work supported by a $750,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health to enhance the knowledge and leadership skills of middle school science teachers and enrich middle school curriculum. Partners include the Milwaukee Public Schools, UWM’s Departments of Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Curriculum and Instruction, Psychology and the Great Lakes WATER Institute.

• Continued work on a project supported by an $800,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health to provide critical public information about the risks of eating contaminated fish from local and regional waters. Partners in this effort are Milwaukee’s 16th Street Community Health Center, the Hmong American Friendship Association and several UWM departments.
Milwaukee Industrial Innovation Center

Drawing on the substantial research capability of UWM, the Milwaukee Industrial Innovation Center (MIIC) fosters the development of new technology in partnership with state and local industry. A key element of the MIIC is the Center for Intelligent Maintenance Systems which uses web-based techniques that allow machines to monitor their own performance and predict breakdowns before they occur.

Highlights:

• Formed the Center for Intelligent Maintenance Systems as a National Science Foundation Industry/University Cooperative Research Center with the University of Michigan.

• Forged partnerships with diversified industries including automotive, software, automation, precision machinery, power generation, semiconductor, building systems and medical services. More than 40 leading industries are represented in the Center’s membership and sponsorship, among them Rockwell Automation, Intel, General Motors, Harley-Davidson, Xerox, We Energies and Hitachi.

• Developed predictive tools to forecast performance problems in machines, processes and systems. These tools are being evaluated in a variety of industrial settings, including Harley-Davidson and We Energies.

• Received five major National Science Foundation research grants totaling more than $830,000. They include support for a workshop on tether-free technologies attended by 150 representatives of industry, government and academia and a grant to support students and researchers conducting short-term collaborative research projects in Asia and Australia.

• Hosted the 5th international conference on Managing Innovative Manufacturing 2002, attended by over 200 members of industry, academia, and government agencies from around the world. This was the first time the conference was held in the U.S.

• Won the 2002 Milwaukee Idea Award for exemplary accomplishment embodying the goals and spirit of the Milwaukee Idea.

Global Passport Project

The Global Passport initiative makes UWM a gateway to the world, offering the state’s only undergraduate degree in global studies, bringing more international students and faculty to campus, greatly increasing the number of opportunities for study abroad and hosting an array of programs on international issues that reach thousands, including members of the community at large as well as educators around the state.

Highlights:

• Increased study abroad participation by 33% in 2000-01 and by 34% in 2001-02.

• Signed 17 new or continuing exchange agreements, for a total of 65, with universities in China, Japan, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Russia and Sweden. These agreements create expanded opportunities for UWM students and faculty to study abroad and for international students to enroll at UWM.

• Co-sponsored a variety of mini-conferences, international film festivals, lectures, and other public events, with total attendance estimated at over 3,000. Events included the Asian Film Festival, the French and Latin American Film Festivals, a Chinese New Year celebration, and lectures by noted scholars from around the world.

• Reached more than 600 teachers (including 18 from Japan) with programs and Internet resources ranging from a global studies summer institute to a six-part series on teaching about East Asia to a workshop for teachers attending a model United Nations program for high school students.

• Co-sponsored “Talk with the Peacemakers,” a conference which drew more than 15 major peace building organizations, including the Carter Center, U.S. Department of State and the World Wildlife Fund.

• Continued to generate new exchange opportunities through the Hessen (Germany)-Wisconsin Sister State Program. They include a seminar on teacher training at UWM for a delegation from Hessen and a program in Wiesbaden, Germany for study abroad advisors from the University of Wisconsin System.
Healthy Choices

Healthy Choices addresses the personal and public health consequences of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use and abuse with a variety of strategies, including community education, research, and evaluation of treatment services. Housed at UWM’s nationally recognized Center for Addiction and Behavioral Health Research, Healthy Choices continues to be a force for helping people make positive decisions about their health.

Highlights:

• Created a new course on healthy choices. Called, “From Personal Health to Community Action,” the course focuses on issues of young adulthood and the importance of service to the community.

• Launched a study on the UWM campus to determine whether giving students accurate information about alcohol use can lead to a decrease in misperceptions and high-risk alcohol consumption.

Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management

The Helen Bader Institute for Nonprofit Management is a multi-disciplinary, university-wide, academic center launched in 2001 with a generous lead grant from the Helen Bader Foundation. It’s goal is to strengthen nonprofits through a variety of activities, including creating degree and non-degree educational opportunities in nonprofit management and leadership, carrying out applied research on the nonprofit sector and promoting diversity in nonprofit organizations, both locally and nationally.

Highlights:

• Created a Professional Certificate in Nonprofit Management in collaboration with UWM’s School of Continuing Education. More than 175 professionals working in nonprofit organizations have attended 12 workshops since the program’s inception. Forty-nine students have declared their intention to complete either the entire certificate or a mini-certificate program.

• Developed and operated an organization called ENTECH, or Empowering Nonprofits in Technology, to aid nonprofits in the effective use of information technology. ENTECH has conducted technology assessments for 60 organizations and published a report on the status of information technology in nonprofits.

• Developed a comprehensive website in collaboration with community partners called the “Nonprofit Portal,” a first stop entry point for information about nonprofits.

• Created a Leadership Council for the Helen Bader Institute that includes seven representatives from UWM and six from Milwaukee area nonprofit organizations. The council stands as a new model for overseeing community-university partnerships.

• Launched the new Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management, an academic credit program offering graduate level courses on such topics as nonprofit accounting, financial management and governance.
Center on Age and Community

Age and Community brings UWM together with a network of community partners and the Helen Bader Foundation to find innovative ways to improve the lives of seniors in metropolitan Milwaukee and throughout the state. With the number of people over age 60 expected to double in the next 25 years, Age and Community is working to develop new degree and non-degree programs in gerontology, expand research and scholarship on aging, and train practitioners in the latest techniques for working with older adults.

**Highlights:**

- Added two nationally recognized experts in the field of aging to the UWM faculty: Rhonda Montgomery, Ph.D., was named to the Helen Bader Endowed Chair in Applied Gerontology and Anne Basting, Ph.D., to the directorship of the Center on Age and Community.
- Hosted a distinguished speaker series that brought leaders in gerontology to the UWM campus.
- Developed a noncredit training program in partnership with the Milwaukee Aging Consortium for new professionals entering the field of aging. The program offers a comprehensive overview of gerontology basics and the systems that serve older adults in Milwaukee.
- In collaboration with the Milwaukee Aging Consortium, completed a survey identifying the needs of 1,000 professionals working in the field of aging.
- Provided support for the development of a new course in aging called “Creativity at 70 and Beyond” which will be offered by the English Department in fall, 2003.
- Offered more than $10,000 in mini-grants from the Center to support short-term projects and activities that promote UWM faculty research, scholarship and development.

Freshwater

The Freshwater initiative focuses on the preservation and sustainability of local and global freshwater resources. With its Great Lakes WATER Institute and its location on the world’s largest system of freshwater lakes and rivers, UWM is becoming an international leader in expanding knowledge and learning about critical freshwater issues.

**Highlights:**

- Continued work on a multi-year $2 million grant from the United States Department of Defense to create a Center for Water Security that supports extensive study on safeguarding the nation’s drinking water supply systems.
- Received a $250,000 challenge grant from the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewage District. The grant is part of an intergovernmental agreement to create a permanent research scientist position in the field of environmental health and aquatic resources at the WATER Institute.
- Received $1 million in matching support from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation’s James D. and Dorothy Shaw Funds to recruit several freshwater scientists expert in cutting edge biotechnology. The scientists will study problems of freshwater supplies, security and issues related to human and environmental health.
- Began planning for a new Department of Freshwater Sciences at UWM – a graduate program that will be unique nationally and will provide outstanding training opportunities in freshwater studies.
Campus Design Solutions

Campus Design Solutions (CDS) brings experts from UWM's School of Architecture and Urban Planning together with municipalities, nonprofits and neighborhood and business associations to bring new vitality to the metropolitan landscape. CDS is involved in an array of activities, from building The Milwaukee Idea Home, a prototype for low-cost, energy efficient, urban housing to operating a "Quick Response Team" of students, who with faculty input, share their expertise with nonprofit organizations and neighborhood groups seeking design help. Campus Design Solutions also funds faculty research, instruction and community service projects ranging from studies on options for the design of the Marquette Interchange to supporting multidisciplinary approaches to measuring and improving human health.

Highlights:

- Stimulated community development by partnering with the city of Milwaukee to provide façade and streetscape designs to several commercial areas. Projects included designs for the Layton Boulevard West Neighbors and the North Avenue Development Corporation.

- Implemented the Maryland Plan, a collaborative effort to improve relationships between the UWM campus and surrounding neighborhood. Since implementation, building code violations have been reduced.

- Completed 19 community and 9 campus projects through the initiative’s Quick Response Team. The team, which is composed of students, faculty and staff, provides an efficient response to nonprofit organizations and community groups seeking help with design issues. Among the groups the team has worked with are the Walnut Way Conservation Corporation, Oakland Avenue Business District, Havenswoods Business Council, Burleigh Street Community Development Corporation and the Milwaukee Public Schools.

- Created a renovation design for use of the Modjeska Theatre as an arts facility. The design is now being used to raise funds for the renovation itself.

Rewards of Service Learning  continued from page 1

Schell spends a few hours on Thursday nights working with adults with disabilities in a ceramic recreation program. On an average night, Schell will assist adults with limited motor skills in making ceramic plates, coffee cups and even soap dispensers, which both she and the adults enjoy. "We have a lot of fun, but they're the ones who get to take home what they make," she says jokingly.

Next semester, Schell will officially begin working for Easter Seals as a recreation assistant, which will include helping other staff with field trips, dances, and other social activities. Overall, her service learning experience has taught her a lot about life, she says. "I've gotten a new appreciation for life through this program, plus it gives me a good idea of what I'll be doing in the future." Schell adds that she first became interested in occupational therapy in high school.

But it's not only Schell who benefits, she says. "I'm also really glad that the people I work with have Easter Seals to go to because it gives them a place to get things off their mind and have a good time."

Schell admits that service learning is much different than her previous service experiences, which is why she has enjoyed the program as much as she has, she says.

"It's a great experience, it gives you new appreciation of life around you and in the community and just really opens your eyes to new things."

- Stephen Potter, Institute for Service Learning

www.uwm.edu/Dept/ISL
By Fran Bauer and Beth Stafford

The recent naming of two respected scholars in the study of aging to posts at UWM is expected to greatly enhance the work of the Milwaukee Idea's Age and Community Center as it seeks to chart a better future for Wisconsin seniors.

Rhonda J.V. Montgomery, internationally known for her work in caregiving and dementia, is the first person to occupy UWM's new chair in gerontology in the Helen Bader School of Social Welfare. The chair is endowed by The Helen Bader Foundation. At UWM, Montgomery holds faculty appointments both in Social Welfare and in the Sociology Department of the College of Letters and Science. Montgomery comes to UWM from the University of Kansas, where she was chair of the Ph.D. in Gerontology program and director of the Gerontology Center.

Robin Mayrl, vice president of the Helen Bader Foundation, says of the appointment, "Not only is Dr. Montgomery an outstanding scholar; her applied research in dementia care makes her a perfect fit for this position. In fact, she is exactly the type of scholar that our board had hoped UWM would recruit when we made this gift in memory of Helen Bader's professional work with older people suffering with dementia."

During the last 20 years, Montgomery has conducted scores of regional and national studies focusing on public policy and the role of the family in providing long-term care. For 11 years, she has evaluated federally funded projects across the country that explore new ways to provide training and support to caregivers of those with dementia.

Families are struggling, Montgomery explains. "As a society, the challenge we face is how to support four-to-five generation families where many of the women hold jobs outside the home. How will these families be able to care for the growing number of people living into old age? These families are providing care as a gift. We can't afford to let them become burned out and frustrated.

"I look at how we can create bridges not there before, to gather and share what works, and get more people talking and sharing together," she says. "We tell communities and the federal government of the patterns we see and what we're learning about the family, so they're able to do more and be more effective."

Anne Basting joins the Age and Community Center as its director. She too has gained recognition for her work on dementia, particularly for the TimeSlips project, an effort begun at UWM which examines the effect of creative storytelling on people with dementia and those who care for them. Basting returns to UWM from a position as a fellow at the Brookdale Center on Aging in New York City. She will also serve on the faculty in the Peck School of the Arts.

She is well known to the UWM community. UWM Film Professor Dick Blau, who knows Basting from his own work on TimeSlips, says, "Anne's work cuts across many academic disciplines, and she has deep connections among those who provide health care services to seniors in our community."

From 1995-96 she was a Rockefeller Fellow in Age Studies at the Center for Twentieth Century Studies. She has also served as an adjunct assistant professor, guiding students through independent studies with the TimeSlips storytelling project. In the spring of 2000, Basting produced the TimeSlips art exhibit at the Charles Allis Museum and a related play at UWM. The following summer she moved to New York City to produce the TimeSlips exhibit and play as part of a large-scale public education endeavor.

"This is really a tremendously exciting opportunity," she says. "We stand poised to set the pace for the next generation of centers on aging, by placing collaboration between the community and university at the core of our mission. I'm energized and eager to use and grow my skills to grow the center."
Milwaukee Idea generates excitement and dollars

Since the launch of its first initiative just three years ago, The Milwaukee Idea has helped bring more than $40 million to the UWM campus and the community to support a broad array of projects and research.

Partnerships for Education, a community wide effort to strengthen urban schools, has received more than $15 million from the federal government for programs that prepare more students for college, train teachers for the challenges of urban schools and integrate information technology into teacher education programs.

The money has come from local and national foundations, federal agencies and the private sector. It is fueling efforts on fronts as diverse as finding ways to preserve and protect our precious freshwater resources, revitalize our urban schools, spur prosperity in the central city, insure the best quality of life for our older citizens and educate our students for a global workplace.

Milwaukee’s Helen Bader Foundation has been generous in support of Milwaukee Idea initiatives and projects. It has contributed $5 million to fund an endowed professorship in gerontology for the study of issues in aging and along with the Greater Milwaukee and Faye McBeath Foundations, has provided close to $2 million for the Nonprofit Management initiative.

Equally impressive is the support that the Healthy Choices initiative is receiving for research on preventing and treating drug abuse, including $6 million from the National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse and nearly $1 million from the National Institutes of Health.

The Milwaukee Idea’s Freshwater Initiative is also garnering strong support with nearly $2 million coming from the United States Department of Defense for extensive study on safeguarding the nation’s freshwater. The initiative is also the recipient of a $1 million grant from the Milwaukee Foundation’s James D. and Dorothy Shaw Fund, which will bring three new scientists to the Great Lakes WATER Institute.

“These are just a few examples of the kind of support the Milwaukee idea is attracting,” said Stephen Percy, Chancellor’s Deputy for The Milwaukee Idea.

“We’re gratified that the work of the Milwaukee Idea—connecting the community and the university in partnerships that build a better future for all of us—is being so strongly recognized. The financial support Milwaukee Idea initiatives have received so far is a trust we take very seriously as we strive to achieve positive and measurable benefits.”