University of Wisconsin
PLATTEVILLE
PIONEER ACADEMIC CENTER FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
PACCE

The Pioneer Academic Center for Community Engagement empowers students, faculty and community partners to experience, grow and make a difference through collaboration on real community challenges with real results.

Behind every PACCE experience is a great story. Here are just a few.
... we want to continue to work with students from UW-Platteville to educate kids and parents about the program.

Don Shaw, principal at Westview Elementary School
SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL IMPACTS COMMUNITY

In collaboration with the city of Platteville, UW-Platteville students assisted in the implementation of a Federal Highway Administration program called “Safe Routes to School.” The program focused on the engineering, enforcement, education and encouragement of providing safe walking and bicycling routes to students in K-8 schools.

“This project is a great illustration of how PACCE can meet a community need and it’s also a unique opportunity for interdisciplinary work among our students,” said Kathy Neumeister, PACCE communications and events coordinator.

Seventy-eight UW-Platteville students from education and engineering were part of this project. The engineering students conducted walk-ability and bike-ability audits on the city streets and roads, determining where the safest and most pedestrian-friendly paths should be. Education students communicated the importance of being active and stressed safety issues to the children.

Kristina Fields, UW-Platteville assistant professor of civil engineering and faculty advisor for the project, said, “The project started when a senior design team wrote a grant to implement the planning of such a program. How a person gets from place to place impacts the quality of their daily life. It is a great opportunity for our students to know how they, as future civil engineers, can help people in such an important way.”
The activity box went through a few design considerations which involved choosing a light pattern, overall size of the device and different hand peg designs that would best benefit the student. Daryl Logan, mechanical and industrial engineering professor
Dr. Daryl Logan’s mechanical engineering students were presented with a challenging concept for their PACCE senior design project – conceptualize and design a device to improve a high school student’s environmental awareness and motor skills. The student had been diagnosed with a brain tumor at age 8. Operations to remove portions of the benign tumor had resulted in damage to his optic nerve and losses in motor control and function. Therapists working with this young man were hoping the University of Wisconsin-Platteville students could create a tool that would stimulate his hand-eye coordination and enhance awareness of his environment.

The six-person design team brainstormed a variety of solutions and proposed to create a Visual Light Activity Box. The box had a 15-peg hole design with three LED lights surrounding each peg. Each peg hole had a switch inside that would turn off the lights when compressed. The LEDs were controlled by a microcontroller that lit them in random order. One set of LEDs will light, and once the peg or tennis ball is inserted in the hole, the lights turn off and another set lights up.

The student and his therapists were thrilled with the activity box. The student’s eyes lit up even brighter than the lights on the box when he realized he was able to successfully navigate and track the random lights. The UW-Platteville students are now among the ranks of engineers who create assistive devices that are making a positive difference in people’s lives.
We observed a positive difference in the lives of those in the Mississippi Delta area and the students who journeyed there. Dee Bernhardt, Catholic Newman Community
Forty-four UW-Platteville students spent a portion of their winter break in the Mississippi Delta working on various projects aiding the communities of Lexington, Greenwood, Jonestown and Tutwiler.

PACCE partnered with the Catholic Newman Community to sponsor the trip. “This year, we are especially grateful for the PACCE grant which covered the cost of our coach bus,” said Dee Bernhardt, coordinator of the trip. On past trips, students spent the 16-hour drive on a school bus. Having the coach bus enabled the students to sleep on the way and arrive rested and enthusiastic to work.

Once in Mississippi, students began construction and outreach projects in the three communities. A major project was saving a local church from collapsing; students reinforced its foundation.

Another group repaired porches, fixed doors, organized a second-hand clothing store, helped disadvantaged people shop, and worked on Habitat for Humanity projects. They also visited local schools and tutored students.

“Seeing how others live with so little had a genuine impact upon everyone in our group,” said Bernhardt.
The students went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art and were able to see works that we studied in class. Having become familiar with these pieces via slides in Art Survey, interacting with them in reality was a rich experience for the students.

Carole Spelic’, PACCE liaison for the College of Liberal Arts and Education
Carole Spelic’, PACCE liaison for the College of Liberal Arts and Education, designed a short-term program through PACCE to take students to New York City in the spring of 2010. The students stayed at the international youth hostel, which gave them the chance to meet with people from all parts of the world while they assisted three artists with their current projects.

“I was teaching an Art Survey class in which we always joked about visiting the different countries we were studying,” Spelic’ said. “One student raised his hand and asked if I would take them to New York to study art. I said OK, and we made it happen. PACCE helped us make it a reality.”

Students learned about the pre-planning, labor, and meeting of form and function that goes into art. “What we do in the studio is constant problem solving and analysis,” Spelic’ said. “It is not just inspiration; it is hard work.”

Five students, all non-art majors, participated: Corey Daehling of Lodi, Kwynn Fisher of Seneca, Kevin Luty of West Allis, Brian Molini of Wauzeka and Ben Zielke of Mount Prospect, Ill. Spelic’ added that she credits the students for being entrepreneurial. “It was their idea and they committed themselves to it. They did a lot of research before we left and a lot of work after we arrived.”
PACCE GOES GLOBAL

A Winterim class led by Annie Kinwa-Muzinga, professor of agriculture, and Patricia Foster, director of the Patricia A. Doyle Women’s Center, traveled to Ghana, Africa. Students visited rainforests, farms and markets, and also worked on two projects, one of them funded by PACCE.

Through a PACCE grant, the students developed a biodiversity project by working on cocoa farms. With the support of the Cocoa Research Institute of Ghana personnel and cocoa farmers, many of whom were female, students identified a channel for earning extra income using material from cocoa beans and pods. Students were also able to witness Ghanaian cocoa farming techniques, which are done by hand with baskets, not with tractors.

Students presented their project outcome to the administrators at CRIG on how to help farmers get the most of research findings by utilizing the extension personnel. The students’ suggestions were well received.

Kinwa-Muzinga was born and raised in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Africa, and said that when students think of Africa, they think of poverty. She said that her goal was to help students become more globally active. “We gave them an experience they won’t forget,” said Kinwa-Muzinga. Foster agreed. “This program is about the students,” she said. “I loved seeing how our students benefited and grew from the experience.”
As the faculty member of the PACCE trio, I have the privilege of watching the experience happen between community partners and students. The students grow by being able to apply their classroom learning. The community partners experience the quality of students here at UW-Platteville.

Sue Price, professor of animal science and PACCE faculty advisor
In partnership with Two by Two Inc., a nonprofit educational organization in Dubuque, Iowa, the PACCE program helps to reach out to second- and fourth-graders to teach empathy, responsibility and respect. They instill these lifelong skills through a hands-on program that focuses on the humane care of animals and their habitats. Children in the program become foster pet parents and must effectively demonstrate through journaling, reading and mathematics how they are caring and responsible pet parents.

“If you’re good to animals, you’re good to people,” said Kristin Woodward, who founded Two by Two Inc. in 2006. “We want to not only teach children the character and humane behavior required to care for their pets properly, but to also build the foundation for respectful, responsible and empathetic adults.”

Susan Price has found these projects to be a positive experience, noting each one as an affirmation of what she has known for the last 21 years – that UW-Platteville has exceptional, dedicated and hardworking students.

Carissa Gjermo, an alumna from Deerfield, Wis., assisted at Two by Two. “In the classroom, the children learned about compassion for animals and the responsibilities of having pets,” she said. “This PACCE project reinforced a lot of what I did while at school on many different levels.”
This internship has helped me see my potential and to branch out of what I’m used to doing and reach for the stars.

Michelle Dubert-Bellrichard, student
A WISCONSIN MAGICAL HISTORY TOUR

Michelle Dubert-Bellrichard tapped into her love of history as a summer intern for the Wisconsin Historical Society. Her studies, made possible through a PACCE grant, placed Dubert-Bellrichard at two historic sites in southwestern Wisconsin: Stonefield, in Cassville, and Pendarvis in Mineral Point.

In an effort to promote regional tourism, Dubert-Bellrichard began a blog, which chronicled and shared her adventures and observations about her summer immersed in history. Titled “Michelle’s Magical History Tour,” the blog is both a record of her experiences and a proposal from the author to “discover Wisconsin together.” Dubert-Bellrichard’s blog can be found at michellesmagicalhistorytour.blogspot.com/.

Stonefield features a 1901 farmstead, an agricultural museum, a re-created rural farm village and Governor Nelson Dewey’s summer estate. Dubert-Bellrichard worked primarily in the confectionary, selling ice cream and phosphates to tourists. At Pendarvis, she assisted with curatorial work, with a focus on preserving rugs.

“It was refreshing to see that work could be fun,” she said. “The people I met and worked with this summer were so welcoming and made me feel comfortable right away.”
For Austin, it appears that both the practice and the conversation are a natural complement to his education. UW-Platteville is to be commended for offering its students professional internships.

Peter Flanary of Foundry Arts, Mineral Point, WI
ART STUDENT INTERNS WITH FOUNDRY ARTS

Austin Glendenning, a UW-Platteville art major from Darlington, Wis., recently completed a PACCE summer internship with Peter Flanary of Foundry Arts in Mineral Point, Wis. Flanary primarily works with stone and bronze media and his sculptures have been installed throughout the Midwest as well as in Ireland.

“My internship has been a great learning experience,” said Glendenning. “We would typically work an eight-hour day in and around his studio doing various jobs like working on sculptures and building a crane for heavy lifting.”

Glendenning noted that prior to the internship, he didn’t realize how labor intensive the projects at Foundry Arts could be. “It’s like working in a rough construction zone, but on top of that, one must possess the creativity and intelligence to integrate ideas into a physical object.” Glendenning added that when he looks at sculptures now, he has a renewed appreciation for how much work went into constructing them.

During the fall 2010 semester, Glendenning will be studying abroad in Italy, where he will study art history and the Italian language. Upon graduation, he intends to pursue a career in the art field. He added that he has been pleased with his university education. “The professors are extremely helpful and really urge you to expand your mind. It’s a lot of hard work, but it’s quite satisfying in the end.”
Behind every PACCE experience is a great story.

Kevin Bernhardt, Director of PACCE

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