Two-by-Two and UWP teach compassion

By Ian Clark

The University of Wisconsin-Platteville’s Pioneer Academic Center for Community Engagement takes part in hundreds of projects every semester, teaming students, faculty and community partners together to enhance the community and provide students with service-learning opportunities, where they can incorporate classroom learning with real-world projects and programs.

One such project PACCE is involved in reaches out to second- and fourth-graders to teach empathy, responsibility and respect. Two-by-Two Inc., a nonprofit educational organization, instills these lifelong skills through a hands-on program that utilizes the humane care of animals and their habitats. Children in the program become foster pet parents who care for a stuffed toy dog or cat. Over a five-week period, students must effectively demonstrate through journaling, reading and mathematics how they are caring, responsible people and good pet parents.

“Two-by-Two Inc. was founded by Kristin Woodward in 2006, and has been in operation for several years now, and has watched their inaugural class move into the fifth grade.

“As the saying goes, if you’re good to animals, you’re good to people. 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.

“Two-by-Two’s philosophy is to be proactive and preventative through direct, hands-on educational programming. When people understand how the concept of teaching people to be empathic and respectful to all living creatures will transfer into becoming a more caring and compassionate society, we will know we’ve accomplished our goals.”

“The students from UWP have been a great help. It can be hard to get a nonprofit organization moving forward, but the students have done so much work behind the scenes and in the classroom. They put in many productive hours,” said Woodward.

Susan Price, a professor of animal science at UWP, is the faculty advisor for the Two-by-Two PACCE project. She saw Woodward present the Two-by-Two program to the campus community about a year ago and was moved by her presentation.

“As the faculty member of the PACCE trio, I have the privilege of watching the experience happen between the community partner and students. The students grow by being able to apply their classroom learning and the community partners experience the quality of students here at UWP.

“These projects are always a positive experience for me as well because they are an affirmation of what I’ve known for the last year and a half.”
There are multiple times when Pioneer Engagement Scholars project proposals can be submitted for funding consideration. This provides flexibility to teachers and students, some of which want to submit and be approved prior to the semester beginning and some that must wait until later in the semester to determine class needs and priorities.

Once a proposal is submitted, the PACCE Review Committee will evaluate the proposals for funding. The goal is to get word back to the faculty member within a week to 10 days of submission.

Reminder! There is a PACCE-college liaison whose job is to assist faculty in developing, writing and submitting proposals. The PACCE-college liaisons are:

- **BILSA**: Jodi McDermott (mcdermoj@uwplatt.edu) 342.1366
- **EMS**: Carol Beals (beals@uwplatt.edu) 342.1561
- **LAE**: Carole Spelic (spelicc@uwplatt.edu) 342.1314

Following are the due dates for the next few semesters including Winterim and summer terms.

**Due Dates for Pioneer Engagement Scholars Project Proposals**

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Kathy Neumeister Joins PACCE Staff

Kathy Neumeister recently joined the Pioneer Academic Center for Community Engagement as the communication and events coordinator. A graduate of Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa, Neumeister’s professional background has been in business, marketing and advertising. “I like to make connections between ideas and people and bring them together to achieve goals in creative ways. That is the essence of PACCE so this is an incredibly exciting opportunity for me”.

Neumeister will also be involved in coordinating projects and events to study the feasibility of developing an Entrepreneurship Center, which is a separate entity apart from PACCE but connected by their basic ideals of community involvement and creative thinking.

In addition to participating in her family’s varied pursuits, Neumeister has been involved in a number of area organizations including the Grant County Tourism Council, the Community Leadership Alliance and Platteville Area Chamber of Commerce, which awarded her their Community Service Award in 2002. She is also a member of the board of directors at American Bank.

Neumeister’s office is at 2511 Ullsvik Hall. She can be reached at 608.342.6020 or neumeisterk@uwplatt.edu.