DU UNDERGRADUATES USE THEIR URBAN GEOGRAPHIC SKILLS IN TWO COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH PROJECTS

By: E. Eric Boschmann, PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Geography and the Environment

During the Spring 2015 quarter, students in the GEOG 3410 Urban Applications of GIS (Geographic Information Science) course found themselves exploring an understanding of the human world through the scale of the city and the neighborhood. Many urban geographers argue that the beauty of examining the world through the city and the neighborhood lies in the reality that this is where the matters of the production and reproduction of everyday life occur. It is here, then, where practical research questions need answering, and 14 geography undergraduate students applied their knowledge and skills to help tackle two community based research projects relevant to Denver-area non-profit organizations. Relationships with community partners were established through the Science Shop at DU’s Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning (CCESL), a highly useful clearinghouse that connects community organizations with DU students and faculty, to help address local issues. A CCESL mini-grant supported this community engaged learning experience.

Our community-based research projects worked with two local organizations: A Little Help and Reading Partners – Colorado. Both organizations needed research conducted to better understand where to expand their services in the near future. The student groups worked for 10 weeks: from client needs assessment, to project design and implementation, and final production of deliverables, which included large format maps, a final report, and an oral presentation to the community organization.

Continued on page 2
These excerpts from student final reports highlight the research conducted for each organization:

**Reading Partners Colorado: Analysis of Volunteer Demographics And Suggestions For Future Recruitment**

"Based on data collected by Reading Partners Colorado, we constructed four maps and three graphs with the purpose of answering our two research questions. To address our first question, ‘what does the average Reading Partners volunteer look like?’, we used the created figures of volunteer data to get an idea of who current volunteers are from both a socio-demographic and a locational standpoint. These figures display physical location, proximity to schools, and some demographic information about Reading Partners Colorado and are also used to address our second research question, ‘where should Reading Partners look to recruit new volunteers?’ To address this second question we also used ESRI Tapestry Segmentation data to analyze the top five lifestyle classifications for areas where current volunteers live. This analysis is used to suggest new areas in which to target recruitment.”

**Aging Populations along the Colorado Front Range: A report prepared for “A Little Help”**

“A Little Help (ALH) connects aging adults who need extra assistance with neighbor volunteers to prolong senior independence, as well as to promote intergenerational involvement. Currently ALH operates in Denver only, but has aspirations to expand into high-need neighborhoods across the Front Range. This project assessed where ALH should focus their efforts for successful expansion in the short and medium term...First, the current state of members in Denver was mapped, showing that ALH is firmly established where the organization was established; the majority of members concentrate in the 80210 and 80209 zip codes. Additionally, the most recent census data was used to map current aging populations in Denver, Boulder, Lakewood, and Colorado Springs, as these are all areas of interest to ALH’s expansion. Second, aging population projections were mapped across the aforementioned cities for the years 2020, 2025, and 2030, in order to determine where growth of aging adults will be greatest.”

After receiving the final reports of the student research, one community organization leader said, “These findings will be very useful moving forward as we make strategic decisions to launch in different areas of these new cities, as we work with donors and volunteers, and as we recruit members to receive services. There are myriad uses for these deliverables to be implemented to benefit our organization, grow our impact, and help our mission thrive.”

And finally, throughout the quarter all students were asked to reflect upon their role as GIS/geography scientists in the context of community based research. At the end, one student commented: “I never considered the social implications of GIS prior to this class. Now, however, I know that I have the ability to positively affect an individual, an organization, or my community because of my access to specific technologies and training. With this access, I personally believe that a level of social responsibility is also gained.”

**SAVE THE DATE...CCESL OPEN HOUSE**

Monday, September 21, 2015
Suite 22 & 18, Driscoll South (Under the Bookstore)
Join us and meet our staff, faculty and students while enjoying great games and prizes and light refreshments!

Check our [website](#) and the Fall Public Good Impact Newsletter for further details
High School Students Attend Annual DU Public Achievement Summit

By: Dionna Hudson, Public Achievement Coach

April 10, 2015, students from South High School, STRIVE Prep SMART Academy, and College Track joined together with Public Achievement coaches and Team Leads on DU’s campus for the annual Public Achievement (PA) Summit. Throughout this event, the students were able to interact through icebreakers and conversations, hear about their coaches’ and Team Leads’ personal experiences in college, attend engaging and educational workshops, and develop their leadership skills through presenting their campaigns.

To kick off the 2015 PA Summit, students from each school shared what their social justice issues were and the campaigns that they were using in order to effect change within their schools. College Track students, whose coaches were Jackie Curry, Neda Kikhia, and Arimus Wells, presented on their “I AM >” campaign. This is a campaign that students used in order to show that they are greater than what others label them as. Also, one of the South High School AVID classes presented their campaign to educate students on Restorative Justice, an alternative to harsh school discipline. The ability of the students to present on these campaigns helped them not only to see what others were doing, but also gave students a chance to reflect on all of their own hard work.

Students were also able to attend workshops of their interest that really began to show what a true college experience is. These workshops were given by other organizations on DU’s campus that collaborated with PA. First Generation Students was a workshop that was led by Paige Mills, MA student of Higher Education Programs, and Molly Sarubbi, PhD student of Higher Education Programs, who both spoke to their own experiences of being first generation college students. They also described what the process for a first generation student looks like and provided the students with several resources that would help in the process. Several students who either are the first in their family to attend college or whose family members might have attended college in another country attended this workshop. The students created a dialogue with Paige and Molly by asking questions and expressing their hopes and fears for their future college experiences.

After the workshops, the students met for one final time in Lindsay Auditorium, where emcee and PA coach Sarah Porter summed up the day’s events. The 2015 PA Summit gave students a more meaningful introduction to the college experience and allowed coaches and Team Leads to share with them their personal college stories. Not only this, but the 2015 Public Achievement Summit created a place for students to have meaningful conversations and develop skills that are center to the Public Achievement philosophy.
BOOK DRIVE BENEFITS CHILDREN THROUGHOUT COLORADO

By: Ryan Hanschen, CCESL Program Coordinator

Throughout April 2015, CCESL participated in the Colorado Reads Book Drive in collaboration with Serve Colorado – Governor’s Commission on Community Service and Executives Partnering to Invest in Children and collected over 240 books.

The Colorado Reads Book Drive supports grade level reading for Colorado children by collecting books for newborns through fifth graders.

CCESL partnered with four DU units for this book collection drive: Daniels College of Business, External Relations; Fisher Early Learning Center; Students for Educational Equity; and Undergraduate Admissions, International Student Admission. A huge thank you to everyone who participated by contributing books!

DU PUKSTA SCHOLARS PROGRAM WELCOMES INCOMING STUDENTS

By: Ryan Hanschen, CCESL Program Coordinator

CCESL is proud to welcome six first-year students into the University of Denver Puksta Scholars Program!

The Puksta Scholars Program is a four-year, developmental civic engagement program and intentionally diverse community. The program requires meaningful commitment to social justice and community work; development of civic identity and skills; and the creation of sustainable community partnerships, mentor relationships, and public work projects.

To learn more about the University of Denver’s Puksta Scholars Program, please visit www.du.edu/ccesl/development/pukstascholars or contact the Program Manager, Ryan Hanschen at ryan.hanschen@du.edu.
SPRING QUARTER 2015 – SPRING FORWARD WITH MEANINGFUL SERVICE

By: Sarah Yaffe – Co-President of DU Service & Change

Spring Quarter at the University of Denver is the most beautiful time of the academic year to volunteer outdoors – weather permitting!

In May, DU Service & Change launched a new project – Project Accelerate. DU Students apply for funding by DUSC to host and participate in their dream day of service, supported and guided by DUSC leadership. DU Student Kiira Walsh explored the problems of food justice in Colorado and brought 8 students to Denver’s own GrowHaus to package boxes of fresh produce for local communities in Denver that do not have access to affordable fresh ingredients.

Project Action engaged DUSC Volunteers in the beautiful Garden of the Gods area in Colorado Springs. Partnering with the Rocky Mountain Field Institute, 8 students helped repair trails and dissuade hikers from hiking off-trail. Their work and reflection was centered on Earth Day and keeping our beautiful backyard protected. Also for Earth Day, Co-President Neda Kikhia cosponsored an event with the Denver Parks and Recreation team. Ten volunteers helped mulch trees to support tree growth and prevent lawn mowers from destroying new trees. The community service work and critical reflection was geared towards Earth Day and how to be mindful when bringing together technology and nature.

Project Depth was busy both with the African Community Center (ACC) and with the Bridge Project. At the African Community Center, students work directly with refugees new to the United States with tutoring, mentoring students with college decisions, and of course playing games during down time. Additionally, Project Depth Co-chairs planned a DUSC DAY meeting where DU students could make bookmarks for ACC and Bridge Project students.

Project Immersion partnered with the graduate program, Center on Rights Development (CORD) to immerse volunteers in Native rights. DU undergraduate and graduate students volunteered at the Four Winds Indigenous Garden to learn and practice holistic ways of gardening. It was a beautiful day to serve and reflect on the earth during Spring Quarter.

Project Volunteer hosted two large-scale events on campus that encouraged students to address issues prevalent both in Denver and around the world. DUSC helped to spread awareness about hunger issues to DU students by hosting the Second Annual Oxfam Hunger Banquet. DUSC co-sponsored with DU-Environmental Team and DU Students for Sustainable Foods to challenge our ideas of poverty.

Project Volunteer helped to plan the third annual Day of Action. This year, Stein Elementary and Smith Elementary students and families attend the University of Denver for a day. They attended college-focused demonstrations led by DU student organization and faculty, participated in campus tours, and learned about resources for attending college. 80 DU students volunteered, 15 student organizations and faculties demonstrated, and over 140 elementary school students and family members attended.

Thanks for a terrific 2014-15 year! For more information about upcoming service opportunities for fall quarter 2015, like DUSC on Facebook or contact du.service.change@gmail.com.
THIRD ANNUAL DAY OF ACTION

By: Sarah Yaffe – Co-President of DU Service & Change

Day of Action is an annual event on the University of Denver’s campus planned by DU Service & Change, The Center for Multicultural Excellence, and CCESL. Day of Action is a day of service for DU Students, facility, alumni, and community partners to reflect and serve the problem of college access inequality. Nine months of planning lead up to this day of action!

125 DU volunteers ask themselves, is college an opportunity that all students should have access to? As volunteers welcomed students from Smith Elementary and Stein Elementary, shouts of “College? For certain!” were repeated and emphasized to encourage the students. This phrase is the heart of Day of Action. Every demonstration for the students and parents, every conversation, and every game played is to highlight that college is an opportunity that is possible with the right resources. Day of Action is a day to encourage families to plan for college while getting students excited about higher education.

The morning of, volunteers arrive in waves starting at 7:30am to set up to welcome students and their families. As the schools arrive on yellow buses, volunteers cheer the students on by shouting encouragements and giving high fives. The students and their families find a seat in Davis Auditorium where key note speakers from DU Service & Change and The Center for Multicultural Excellence spoke of personal college experiences and outlined the day.

Students and their families attended two unique college demonstrators led by DU student ran organizations and by DU facility members. These demonstrations showed how college is more than just book learning, college has countless opportunities. Many of the demonstrations were hands on like a soccer lesson presented by Student Activities, a lesson of sound waves by the Society of Physics Students, and a dance lesson by Dance Dance DU. In total seventeen partners demonstrated how unique our college experience can be.

During lunch, students ate food from a Denver food truck, Pink Tank, which was sponsored by DU Programming Board. After eating the elementary school students had the opportunity to ask the volunteers questions about college. “What do you eat if your mom doesn’t cook for you?” “You live here?” “Why are all of your classes in different buildings?” While students asked questions on college; their families attended a session on the logistics of college. Led in both Spanish and English these sessions answered questions like, what is a FAFSA, and how to register for other types of financial aid.

Finally, families and students met up for a student led tour of the University of Denver’s campus. Weaving in and out of buildings, discovering the dining halls, and exploring the massive Ritchie Center students are always amazed by the wonders of college. As the day winds down, students and volunteers have become friends and mentors. Day of Action is a day that these students will not forget and hopefully will remember as they become the graduating classes of their colleges in the future. Thank you Smith Elementary and Stein Elementary. And remember College? For certain!

For more information about upcoming service opportunities for the next year or to join DUSC leadership contact us at du.service.change@gmail.com.
CCESL students present at the Undergraduate Research Symposium

By: Michael Gooch, CCESL Social Media Intern

On Wednesday, May 6, students from different programs within the Center for Community Engagement & Service Learning (CCESL) had the opportunity to present their research on various topics at the Undergraduate Research & Scholarship Symposium.

The symposium is annually hosted by the Undergraduate Research Center and is dually sponsored by CCESL this year. The event aims to showcase the exemplary scholarship of DU’s undergraduate population across multiple academic fields and programs.

“This year we are collaborating with the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning to broaden the scope of the scholarship represented at the Symposium,” according to the Undergraduate Research Center. Thirteen CCESL-affiliated research presentations were showcased at the symposium by a total of 28 students. Associate Director, Cara DiEnno and Program Coordinator, Ryan Hanschen both served as faculty advisors for the projects.

Public Achievement coaches spoke about the work they did with and shared their different findings. Different topics the students covered included racial discrimination, using art for change, and restorative justice at Denver South High School. Another group shared their work with STRIVE Smart Academy to combat hunger in their community. The coaches that work with College Track students presented on their research on the education of gender identity and expression through social media.

Other projects included developing research on access to higher education. Three different students researched this in depth for economically disadvantaged people, refugee students, and African American males. Co-presidents of DU Service and Change also spoke on their organization and the research they conduct on various community issues.

This event allows the center to share with the rest of the undergraduate community the public work that is being done and according to the Undergraduate Research Center, “is a celebration of the University of Denver as a place where students and faculty become partners in the co-production of knowledge.”
SAVE THE DATE!
COMMUNITY ORGANIZING INSTITUTE (COI)

Friday, October 2, 2015
9:00am – 3:00pm
New Location! Driscoll Ballroom

Check our website and the Fall Newsletter for further details on the 2015 COI. Read about last year’s COI here.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2014-2015 KIMMY FOUNDATION AWARD WINNERS

Emily Thomas graduated from the University of Denver in June of 2015 with a Bachelor of Arts with a major in International Studies and a minor in Sustainability. The marriage of these interests led Emily to become immersed in community engagement through programs such as Public Achievement and the Sustainability Council. Using community organizing principles, she coached two 9th grade classes on issues of gang violence and youth gang involvement. Her contributions led to the development and implementation of a community event called “Games not Gangs.” She helped to utilize feedback from this community-engaged research project to enhance future partnerships. Both during her time abroad and while at DU, Emily served as a leader in efforts to find sustainable solutions to broad reaching social and environmental problems.

Tanner Mastaw completed his Bachelor of Arts in International Studies and Public Policy at the University of Denver in June of 2015. During his 4 years as a Pioneer, Tanner served as a Public Achievement Coach working with high school students on civic engagement. As a process-oriented thinker, Tanner has used his learning to encourage systemic and structural change in international educational communities in Rajasthan and Tanzania. He also contributed to the launch of Wisconsin’s 8th District Office’s first annual Youth Leadership Conference in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Green Bay. He bridged his community activism with his experience at DU by participating in University Student Government and by developing numerous service-informed research papers and presentations.

JOB POSTING: PART-TIME RESEARCH COORDINATOR

Former Public Good Grantee, Dr. Yoli Anyon in the Graduate School of Social Work, is hiring a part-time (15 hours/week) Research Coordinator for a collaborative project, “Spotlight on Success,” with Denver Public Schools to identify effective school discipline policies and practices. You can learn more about the Research Coordinator position on Dr. Anyon’s portfolio page: http://portfolio.du.edu/yanyon. If you have experience with qualitative methods, familiarity with equity issues in education, and strong organizational skills, please consider applying! Dr. Anyon is accepting resumes and cover letters via email (yanyon@du.edu) until August 10th.
Earlier this year, we celebrated DU’s 2015 Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation. That accomplishment marks at least two important things. First, a significant deepening of community engagement across the university from 2006 to 2014. Second, the beginning of new efforts to deepen community-engaged work at DU. To the latter, CCESL is abuzz this summer with planning for the 2015-2016 Academic Year. Our programming and efforts are organized around seven strategic goals:

1. Advance Community-Engaged Scholarship and Creative Work
2. Advance Community-Engaged Learning
3. Champion the Civic Mission of Higher Education as a Means to 21st Century Careers and Communities
4. Engage DU in Service with Communities
5. Develop Distinction in Community-Engaged Pedagogy, Scholarship, and Practice
6. Maximize Community Impact
7. Build Financial, Resource, and Collaborative Strength

Related to the first two goals, we have updated several faculty development opportunities for next year.

**Public Good Fund.** The Public Good Fund promotes faculty community-engaged scholarship at the University of Denver. The AY 2015-2016 RFP is now available [here](#). While we have had fall and spring deadlines in past years, we are moving to a single deadline this year. Proposals must be submitted by noon on **Tuesday, January 19, 2016**. Proposals will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary panel of DU faculty.

**Community-Engaged Teaching and Learning.** CCESL offers faculty a variety of ways to get involved with community-engaged learning, from mini-grants to support service learning in classes to faculty development workshops. Visit our [website](#) for details on the AY 2015-2016 suite of opportunities.

**Staff Update**

Please join me in welcoming [Kate Powers](#) to our team as CCESL’s new Office Coordinator. From communications (such as the newsletter) to processing applications and everything in between, Kate will be your go-to person. A DU alum (International Studies, 2010), Kate comes to us after 4+ years serving as an office manager for a nonprofit agency, Outreach Uganda.

In welcoming Kate, we say goodbye to [Iman Jodeh](#), who was CCESL’s Administrative Assistant for the last four years. Iman’s fingerprints are everywhere, ranging from the new “hub” in Suite 22, which is now a vibrant group space, to this newsletter. We thank her for her many contributions to CCESL and wish her the very best in her exciting new adventures.