



CPE Briefing

Helping Refugees Make New Homes

Nonprofit honors College for its work with families seeking a new start in the Chicago area.



Senior **Chelsay Browning Endres** has been involved in the Exodus Service-Learning Program since her freshman year.

Elmhurst College has received the 2011 Open Arms Volunteer Service Award from the nonprofit group Exodus World Service for its work with refugee families.

Each year, 50 to 60 Elmhurst College students volunteer to help refugee families settle in the Chicago area as part of Service-Learning projects, according to Dr. Mick Savage, director of the College's Service-Learning Program. Students and faculty members present newly arrived refugees with a "Welcome to America" pack, paid for by the Service-Learning Program, which includes basics such as kitchen utensils, towels and shower curtains.

The students, under the leadership of Dr. Mary Kay Mulvaney, professor of English and director of the Honors Program, greet the families when they arrive at their new home, help them unpack and set up housekeeping.

The award was presented at the Exodus World Service "Celebration of Hope" banquet in April at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Rosemont. The agency honored the College's students and staff for welcoming 56 refugee families from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burundi, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Myanmar, Russia and Somalia during the past five years. Elmhurst has worked with Exodus World Service since 1998.

Exodus World Service, founded in 1988 and based in Itasca, is an international ministry drawn from many

The students greet the families when they arrive at their new home, help them unpack and set up housekeeping.

denominations that educates and connects volunteers with refugees through service projects. The organization helped more than 9,000 refugees, many of them fleeing terror and persecution in their native countries. It also trains volunteers to advocate for refugees at schools, government agencies and other organizations. It operates in more than 25 states and in a number of countries including Australia, Austria, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Mulvaney said some students have stayed in contact with refugee families beyond their Service-Learning term. One example is Chelsay Browning Endres of Lincoln, a business administration and political science major who will graduate in May.

Endres has been involved in the Exodus Service-Learning Program since her freshman year, assembling "Welcome to America" packs and greeting families when they arrive. One highlight was spending time with a family from Myanmar (formerly Burma).

"I was one of the first people they met here and helped them get settled in Glen Ellyn," she said. Endres stayed in touch with them under the follow-up New Neighbor program, meeting the family weekly for an academic year—beyond her initial 12-week commitment—to answer questions and be a friend. "I really enjoy the Exodus work," she said.

TRUE PROFESSIONALS

Established in 1997, the Center for Professional Excellence (CPE) aspires to build true professionals. What does that mean? It means students who take advantage of the many services and rich experiences offered by the CPE will be better prepared for their future careers—as well as being effective contributors to society. The CPE is proud to connect mentors and organizations with students from one of the top tier master's universities in the Midwest (as ranked, repeatedly, by *U.S. News & World Report*). It is one of the many ways that Elmhurst College demonstrates its synergy between liberal arts learning and professional preparation.

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Palestinian-Israeli Diplomacy 101

During a January Term course in Washington, junior Rachel Nelson learns from a first-hand view of the seemingly intractable dispute.

For two intense weeks in January, Rachel Nelson '12 immersed herself in the decades-long Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

A political and religious justice major from Ithaca, New York, Nelson attended the Camp David III seminar through the nonprofit Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars in Washington, D.C.

Nelson, along with 27 other college students, received off-the-record briefings from officials close to the conflict, and then simulated an international peacekeeping conference.

"I learned that both sides have legitimate points, but their positions are skewed by emotions," Nelson said. "It's hard to be as objective as you need to be to save lives."

Nelson has studied some of the world's hot spots such as South Africa and Bosnia, and is interested in learning how diplomatic or resolution techniques from those conflicts might be used to calm other disputes. She is president of the College's Spiritual Life Council and a fellow at the nonprofit Interfaith Youth Core, which brings together young people from different faiths and traditions for service and dialogue. Nelson spearheaded the yearlong Better Together Campaign at Elmhurst, an interfaith community service initiative through the Interfaith Youth Core.

Nelson learned of the Washington Center program last fall, while attending the National Collegiate Honors Council

in Kansas City. "I had looked at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict through a religious lens, but I thought it would be important to learn about the political dynamics," she said.

For the first week and a half, the students heard views from across the political spectrum, including the Syrian and Egyptian ambassadors to the United States, an expert on Hamas and a Zionist. Through French representatives, students heard the position of the European Union, which she concluded is "left of middle," as compared to the United States' "right of middle" stance.

During the final three days, the students assumed the roles of diplomats as they convened the mock peacekeeping conference. Nelson played the role of former U.S. Sen. George Mitchell of Maine, a U.S. special envoy to the Middle East.

"I chose Senator Mitchell because I wanted to understand the U.S. perspective on the conflict," she said. Mitchell served as chairman of a presidential committee on the conflict, which called for the Israelis to dismantle settlements and urged Palestinians to crack down on militant activity. Known for his even-handed approach, Mitchell also helped broker the historic accord that ended violence in Northern Ireland.

Nelson hopes to pursue a career in academia and would like to develop conflict resolution strategies that could "make the world a more just and peaceful place."

"I learned that both sides have legitimate points, but their positions are skewed by emotions."

Rachel Nelson '12



Rachel Nelson, third from left, played the role of Middle East Special Envoy George Mitchell in a simulation of an international peacekeeping conference.

Spotlight on Undergraduate Research

At a national conference, students present abstracts on civil rights, Turkish nationalism and the metastasis of breast cancer cells.

While taking a January Term course in historiography, Gina Kachlic '11 became interested in how the civil rights movement of the 1960s played out at Elmhurst College.

Kachlic, a pre-law student from Brookfield majoring in political science and history, developed the theme for her senior thesis, "Elmhurst College During the Civil Rights Movement: A Place of Acceptance, Equality and Hope." One particular incident piqued her curiosity—an investigation of discrimination charges against the football team by African American players.

At one point during the investigation, President Donald C. Kleckner and football coach Wendell Harris met with the aggrieved black players. But were the president and the coach actually held hostage in a Hammerschmidt Chapel room? Although Kleckner and Harris denied they were held against their will, the confrontation became known as The Chapel Incident and part of campus lore.

Kachlic presented an abstract of her research, "The Chapel Incident: Elmhurst College During the Civil Rights Movement," at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) in Ithaca, New York,



Senior Gina Kachlic presented an abstract of her research on how the civil rights movement of the 1960s played out at Elmhurst College.

at the end of March. She was among eight Elmhurst students to present their work. Overall, 3,400 students from across the country presented.

The annual conference, held at a different college each year, is dedicated to promoting undergraduate research and scholarship. Dr. Mary Kay Mulvaney, professor of English and director of the College's Honors Program, said the Honors Program encouraged juniors and seniors who have completed in-depth Honors Independent Research projects to submit a proposal to NCUR. Each proposal abstract was reviewed by NCUR reviewers who are professors in different disciplines. This year,

eight of nine Elmhurst proposals were selected, representing seven academic disciplines. This is the second year that the College has presented at NCUR.

In addition to Kachlic's research on civil rights, students presented the following abstracts:

- "A New Era: The Transformation of Turkish Nationalism Since the Rise of the AKP" (Political Science); Chelsay Browning Endres '11

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A Look at Elmhurst's Service-Learning Program

What is Service-Learning?

The Service-Learning Program offers a range of opportunities for students to serve the community. Students draw upon the knowledge they have acquired in the classroom, but also learn about the world beyond the campus. In the process, they learn about themselves. These experiences in turn enrich their academic work.

What are some examples of Service-Learning projects?

Students tutor elementary school children; they volunteer at Public Action to Deliver Shelter (PADS), the service for the homeless. They serve at assisted-living facilities for senior citizens and work with children with special needs at the Easter Seals child development center in Villa Park.

Are there Service-Learning opportunities abroad?

Yes, here are a few: Students go to South Africa to care for children whose parents have died of HIV/AIDS. Others travel to Puerto Rico to help build houses for the homeless and teach English. Still others visit Jamaica, where they teach in elementary and high schools and work at the Montego Bay Boys and Girls Clubs.

How do students sign up for Service-Learning?

The program's director, Dr. Mick Savage, visits classrooms to describe the various types of Service-Learning opportunities that are available. Students can sign up for a project of their choice over spring break, January Term, summer or a full term.

How many students are involved in the program?

At any given time, around 300 students are involved in a project, whether in DuPage County, outside the Chicago area or abroad.

What do students get out of their Service-Learning Experience?

In almost all cases, they quickly find out that they do at least as much learning as they do serving. As one student said, "I was clear on what I thought my service would be, but I didn't think I would learn anything. Was I wrong! This is an experience everyone should have."

A Wrenching Visit to Holocaust Sites

Students learn about a horrific period in history through visits to concentration camps in Eastern Europe.

"It was an emotionally tough journey, and it was difficult to understand how people who lived around the camps couldn't know what was going on."

Alysia Olvera '13

Eight Elmhurst students spent their January Term on a dark journey as they toured sites of concentration camps and other Holocaust sites in Germany, Austria, Poland and the Czech Republic.

The 22-day course, Understanding, Remembering and Memorializing the Holocaust, explored the origins of the Holocaust; the motivations of the killers; how the Holocaust has been remembered in words, museums and memorials; and why the resistance often failed.

"We also emphasize that the vast majority of Germans were not murderers but bystanders, which helps students to see that everyday people can make a choice that makes a difference," said Dr. Wally Lagerwey, director of international education in the Center for Professional Excellence and a trip leader. "Realizing this, students can make a direct tie to their own choices about whether or not to get involved in their own communities."

For Alysia Olvera '13 of Addison, a speech-language pathology major, the trip was particularly meaningful. Her German-born grandparents, who immigrated to the United States in 1951, had been put to work in death camps during World War II, although they were not Jewish.

"I took a Holocaust course in high school, but I still didn't know what to expect," Olvera said of the trip. "It was an emotionally tough journey, and it was difficult to understand how people [who lived] around the camps couldn't know what was going on."

Tiffany Ducato, a senior from Naperville majoring in exercise science and psychology, said she became interested in the Holocaust during middle school, and that her interest grew during high school and college. She says she was particularly moved by the Auschwitz camp in Poland. "The hair, personal effects and luggage of the victims are on display," she said. "I'm absolutely going to share this experience with others."

The for-credit course, offered through the Upper Midwest Association for Intercultural Education (UMAIE), included students from four other UMAIE colleges and universities. In all, 25 students went on the trip.

Lagerwey, who has taken students on the Holocaust course five previous times, led the course with Dr. Mary Kay Mulvaney, director of the Honors Program. She has made the trip three times.

The students completed several required readings and spent an hour each day in class discussions. "Dr. Mulvaney and I also made ourselves available every day so the students could talk about their experiences," Lagerwey said. The Elmhurst students discussed their trip in presentations during the College's Holocaust Education Week in April.

Said Felipe Prada '13, a computer science major from Costa Rica, "Seeing Auschwitz, which is so huge, with its gas chambers and crematorium had a big impact on me."



Students visited the site of the Birkenau concentration camp in Poland.

An Easy Partnership

An after-school program in Bensenville helps families and provides service opportunities for Elmhurst students.



The Easy Care team from left: Julie Nearing, sophomore Meghan Johnson, junior Jennifer Vujanovic, junior Jamie Dobkowski, sophomores Emily Fuchs and Sarah Wesley and Laura Wilmarth Tyna.

Julie Nearing '01, coordinator of education enrichment in the College's Center for Professional Excellence, was looking for a safe place for her 11-year-old daughter to go after her school day ended at Blackhawk Middle School in Bensenville.

Meanwhile, Nearing's church, First United Methodist in Bensenville, was seeking to serve the need for after-school care in the community, where 60 to 65 percent of residents live at or below the poverty level. Nearing and Laura Wilmarth Tyna, director of leadership, service and engagement at the College, teamed up during the fall with First United Methodist to launch Easy Care, a free after-school program for students at Blackhawk Middle School.

Blackhawk students come to the church after school Tuesdays through Thursdays. Elmhurst undergraduates, serving as interns, oversee the daily operations and supervise student volunteers who help with homework, play games with the students, and lead arts and crafts projects. There is no course credit for Elmhurst interns, although they receive a stipend. Volunteers from the church also are on hand to open and secure the building and to respond

in case of an emergency. Wilmarth Tyna and Nearing meet weekly with the interns to review and assess the program.

Jennifer Vujanovic '12, an elementary education major from Oakbrook Terrace, and Melissa McCarthy '11 of St. Louis, an international business major, were among the program's first interns. "It was nice to know you were helping with homework and after-school activities," said McCarthy, who worked as an intern during the Fall Term and returned during January Term.

The church contributes space in its building. Community support for the program comes from Blackhawk Middle School, School District 2, and Bensenville's Public Library, Park District and Police Department. Easy Care expenses, such as supplies and stipends for interns, are funded through a United Methodist Foundation grant and through the College's Service-Learning Program and Office of Leadership, Service and Engagement.

"The way things grew was happenstance, which was organic and exciting," Wilmarth Tyna said. "I had students who were looking for volunteer opportunities, and Julie needed interns for her project."

While the program is designed to make after-school care easy, it is named in memory of Nearing's brother Eric "Easy" Fredenburg, who was killed in 2007.

Nearing pointed out that Easy Care fits into the College's Strategic Plan by expanding the College's service to the community and developing collaborative relationships with local institutions. It also provides Service-Learning and other pre-professional opportunities for Elmhurst students.

Only a handful of Blackhawk students currently participate in Easy Care, in part because the church closes at 5:30 p.m., before many parents pick up their children. However, Nearing has been working with the Pace bus system and Bensenville officials to initiate an inexpensive program of door-to-door rides, which she believes will make the program more attractive.

"This is still a work in progress," Nearing says. "It's been a good learning experience for all of us. I think we'll really see it take off next fall."

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- "The Dinner Table: Nourishing Mind, Body and Soul" (Communications); Andrea Cladis '11
- "Configuration and Geometry of the RWALP15 Transmembrane Peptide in a Lipid Bilayer (Chemistry); Jared Kafader '12
- "Running Economy Comparisons of Natural Fore-Foot, Mid-Foot and Heel Strike" (Kinesiology & Exercise Science); Jennifer Rehbein '11
- "A Complete Feminism: Acknowledging Differences Between Female and Male Brain" (Philosophy & Ethics); Krista Wiley '11
- "The Role of DNMT3B7 and ?DNMT3B6 in Metastasis of Breast Cancer Cells" (Cell & Molecular Biology); Lauren Williams '11 and Amy Du '11

Dr. Mulvaney and Dr. Russell Ford, assistant professor of philosophy and assistant director of the Honors Program, led the trip to Ithaca.



Dan Zarlenga works for Opportunity International, which helps entrepreneurs establish businesses and climb out of poverty.

Pursuing His Passion

As a researcher at a nonprofit that funds entrepreneurs in developing nations, Dan Zarlenga continues the work of the club he founded.

As a student at Elmhurst, Dan Zarlenga '10 discovered that his deepest passion was easing the plight of the poor. Since his graduation, he has continued to follow his dream as an employee of Oak Brook-based Opportunity International, a nonprofit organization dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty in third-world countries.

"At Elmhurst, I found others with a strong commitment to helping those in need, and they inspired me," said Zarlenga, referring to the College's strong tradition of service.

In his new job at Opportunity International, Zarlenga researches potential donors to the organization. The nonprofit provides financing and services to small businesses in 20 nations throughout the developing world—a variety of loans and insurance in small sums to help entrepreneurs establish businesses and climb out of poverty. A network of loan officers and other staffers in those countries provide financial advice and training.

As a prospect researcher, Zarlenga collects research on wealthy individuals who are interested in helping developing countries and feeds the information to regional directors who cultivate the relationships. "It's behind-the-scenes work," he says. "I provide ideas and leads."

Zarlenga's job grew out of an internship with Opportunity International during his senior year, when he researched potential donors and also worked on grant proposals.

As a junior, Zarlenga launched the Global Poverty Club, which grew to a 20-member group that sought to educate the Elmhurst College community on ways to lessen the suffering caused by poverty. In the club's first year, students raised \$500 for a clinic in Ecuador and collected more than \$2,000 in loans for Kiva, an organization that funds entrepreneurs in developing countries, much like the work of Opportunity International.

Zarlenga meanwhile is working to expand the Global Poverty Club to other area colleges. The club applied for nonprofit status, and Zarlenga plans to approach colleagues at small liberal arts schools in the Chicago area. He hopes some chapters to be launched by early next year.



Meet Dr. Mick Savage, director of Service-Learning and professor of kinesiology. Savage has taught at Elmhurst for 13 years and has directed the Service-Learning Program for eight. A native of Sydney, Australia, he holds an undergraduate degree from Emporia State University in Kansas, a master's degree from the University of Idaho and a Ph.D. from Purdue University. Savage says the Service-Learning Program at Elmhurst works well "because of the active participation of the students and the faculty who make it happen. They strongly believe that Service-Learning is a way to be a greater part of the world community."

WHO TO CALL

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