

Cooperative Times

March 2011

Building Connections Through Communications

Showing Heart For Valentine's Day

By: Kathleen O'Neill—ELL Teacher



For eight Valley Green Adult ELL and GED students, VALENTINE'S DAY was not just about showing "heart" with romantic love; it was about showing "heart" through positive community actions. They did this by volunteering with the Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) organization located in Chanhassen on Wednesday, February 16th. Eight students from the Valley Green Adult Education ELL and GED programs, and their ELL instructor, Kathleen O'Neill, volunteered and found the experience fun and worthwhile and a great way to SHOW heart. With their eager hands and hearts, these volunteers packed over 5,000 meals, which are now on their way to feeding children in Haiti.



The idea for volunteering with FMSC came from an Adult ELL student, Maria Gonzalez. She made the suggestion after the positive experience she had volunteering with her husband and his company at FMSC. On Wednesday, February 16th, eight students from four different countries volunteered from 12:00—2:00 p.m.: Bopharoth Doul and Kamphorsbopha Doul from Cambodia; Cindy and Kam Chan and Lu Gan from China; Giuliana Lozano and her niece Camila from Peru; and Maria Gonzalez from Mexico. When they first arrived, they watched a video explaining FMSC, its history and the many children's lives—from all over the world—they have saved. FMSC is a locally grown, non-profit Christian organization committed to feeding hungry children in body and spirit. Their approach is simple. Children and adults work together to hand pack meals, formulated specifically by food scientists, that are shipped to 70 countries around the world.



The meal packing is well organized and operates like an assembly line. Each volunteer had a different task: some scooped up four kinds of dried food; some bagged the food into plastic bags; some weighed the food; some heat sealed the bags and then some stacked the bags into boxes ready for shipment to Haiti. Along with a church group from South Minneapolis, the group packed 24 boxes loaded with 36 meal bags and each bag feeds six children. At the end of the two hours, everyone

cheered as the last bag was put into the box. The group had prepared over 5,000 meals. As one student said, "It was a happy and wonderful day for me because we saw in the video how poor and starving these children are. Now, I feel satisfied I have helped." Another student said, "We brought a smile and hope to children we have never met, but now they know someone cares." After the boxes were assembled into a large shipping container, a FMSC staff person and the students laid their hands on the shipment and prayed that it would reach Haiti safely. All felt their hearts tug thinking about the food's journey to Haiti and its hungry children. After the blessing, the students got to sample the food and agreed that it was delicious! It was an unforgettable Valentine's celebration and a great way to show "heart." The students have now decided to keep this action going and will volunteer once a month at FMSC. Join us!

Come Along and Dunk the Junk!

By: New Beginnings Students



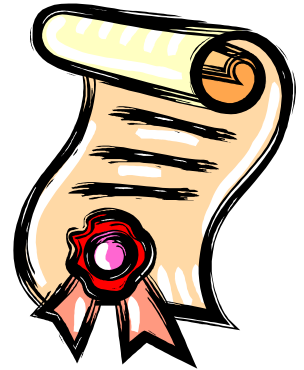
Over at New Beginnings we learned how as a small community we can make a big differ-

ence. Dunk the Junk is a project we created to help educate people on household hazardous waste, junk mail, and its effects on our environment. We've presented our power point and skit at a couple of church events, and at New Beginnings a few times. Following our presentations, we ask that the group answer our survey, which has had a lot of results coming in. Our green and blue buttons and our mail shirts have been a huge hit following our presentations. To help better educate ourselves on the subject, we will be touring the Environmental Center in a few weeks, which we are all extremely excited about. We hope that you will take on our passion for the environment and help us reduce, reuse and recycle.

Minnesota Professional of the Year Award from the Division for Early Childhood

Chris Hansen, Special Education Manager for the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative, has won the Minnesota Professional of the Year Award for 2011 from the Division for Early Childhood (DEC). DEC is an international membership organization for those who work with or on behalf of young children with disabilities and other special needs. The organization's mission is to promote policies and advance evidence-based practices to support the optimal development of young children with special needs. DEC is a Division of the Council for Exceptional Children—the voice and vision of special education.

Chris has 36 years of experience as an amazing educator, administrator and supporter of young children with special needs in Carver County. She was nominated for this award by the Early Childhood Special Education Birth through Two teams from Norwood-Young America and Watertown-Mayer schools. Congratulations Chris!



Foundation Corner

By: Jennifer O'Brien

Busting the Fundraising Myths

I have been reading these fundraising articles lately, and they seem to acknowledge what we already know: this is a tough economy for giving. According to the Minnesota Council on Foundation's Giving Outlook 2010 published in December (with data from the 2009 reporting year), individual donations decreased by 7.7% (\$4.02 billion) from \$4.4 billion the previous year. Individual giving accounted for 74% of all charitable giving in Minnesota. When you consider that almost all of CSE Foundation's donations come from individuals, there's certainly a reason to be worried, especially heading towards our annual fundraising luncheon. And as I ask your help in this process, consider the following myths from the book *Fundraising Mistakes That Bedevil All Boards*, by Kay Sprinkel Grace.

1. *Myth: A good cause attracts donations.*

Fact: A good cause isn't enough. We also need to inspire trust through accountability and good governance of our foundation, and evoke passion by effectively communicating about our mission. At the Enriching Lives Luncheon, we work hard for our guests to become passionate about our mission. If you know a fantastic story of overcoming diversity, let me know.

2. *Myth: We can't raise money because we don't know any rich people.*

Fact: I have heard this so many times, but you can help raise money without ties to great wealth! You'll need to get the message out so it highlights the impact of what we do in the community: talk to your neighbors, family, former students, parents—tell our story. Fundraising starts with building relationships and the relationships you currently have are great resources. If you are willing to talk about the CSEC and need help fine-tuning your story, let me know.

3. *Myth: Not everyone has to be involved in fundraising.*

Fact: Not every staff member has to be directly involved in the ask itself. However, everyone has to play a role in raising money, including sharing names, opening doors, thanking donors, etc. Opening your address book can be a huge help as we try to bring new prospects into the fold. If you want to share your contacts, let me know.

For most of us, the 'ask' is a daunting task. However, 'fundraising' encompasses many things. Sharing our story, and opening your address book are important components to our success. With your help, we might be able to beat the giving outlook.



Minnesota Jobs Skills Partnership Grant

CSEC, in partnership with Ridgeview Medical Center and Dakota County Technical College, has received a grant from MJSP in the amount of \$270,000.

With these funds a Health Services Academy will be developed for individuals at RMC, CSEC and DCTC by combining existing medical career classes with new medical training creating a sequence of courses in the medical careers pathway. Technology will be utilized as a means for more advanced medical training. Over the next two years, a Nursing Assistant Registered program will be created at the CSEC Main Campus, and a Certified Medical Assistant program currently available at DCTC will be modified to become more available to residents in this geographic area. The Nursing Assistant course, and as many components as possible within the Medical Assistant Program, will be developed in an online format. In addition, “Making the Most of Technology, a Three Tiered Approach” will be created for current and future employees of RMC. One of these courses, Introduction to Online Learning, will be available to CSEC adult education students. The Health Services Academy will develop an online or hybrid Certified Medical Assistant Refresher course for those who have completed all coursework in the CMA program but have not taken the national certification exam.

The other main focus of the project will be to help RMC preserve their patient and family-centric legacy by creating an assessment to analyze the opportunities and threats to the organization and by developing curriculum based on these findings.

- Students are applying to and being accepted to a variety of Colleges and Universities.
- Students and families are filling out their FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) and receiving grants, scholarships, and student loans to help pay for college.

All of this *future planning* has been possible because of Project Scholar. Project Scholar is a grant funded initiative that the CSEC received through the MN Office of Higher Education to expose, promote and prepare our high school students for postsecondary education. The goals of Project Scholar are to increase the CSEC graduation rate, increase the number of students that apply to and attend a postsecondary institution, increase the percentage of students who achieve passing grades in all of their core classes, have each student identify a caring adult outside of school that will provide support and encouragement to them, and to keep in touch with our graduates and continue supporting them as they go to college and enter the work force.

Our hope is to continue to build upon and grow the activities and attitudes that Project Scholar has offered to and encouraged in our students. We, the staff, can then bring our students’ future into the present so they can do something about it now.

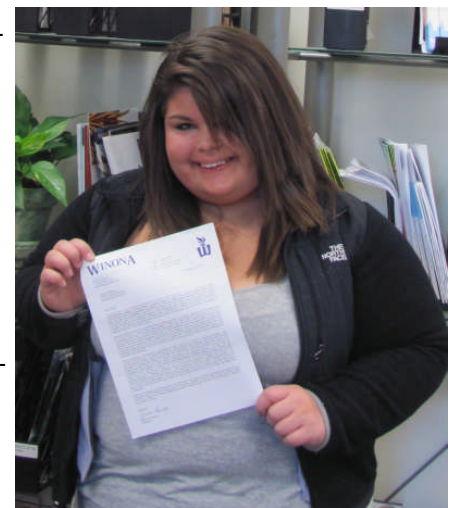
Project Scholar

By: Tara Halvorson

Planning is bringing the future into the present so that you can do something about it now. - Alan Lakein

Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative students are doing great things! Did you know that during this school year:

- 5 students have enrolled in PSEO (post secondary enrollment option) and have taken college classes at Normandale Community College and Hennepin Technical College earning them both high school and college credit for free.
- A majority of our students have created an MCIS (MN Career Information System) account and participated in a variety of interest inventories matching them with possible career and college options.
- Students have visited Hennepin Technical College, McNally Smith College of Music, MN School of Business, Institute of Production and Recording, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Art Institute International, Normandale Community College, ITT Technical Institute, South Central Community and Technical College, Mankato State University, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud Technical College, Dunwoody, Dakota County Technical College, Ridgewater College, Rasmussen College, Empire Beauty School and attended the National College Fair.
- We have had classroom visits and presentations from ITT Technical Institute: Technology Careers, MN School of Business: Financing Your Future, Art Institute International: Art and Culinary Careers, National Guard: Planning Your Future, Argosy University, Empire Beauty School, Rasmussen College, WyoTech, UTI, Bemidji State University, McNally Smith College of Music, DeVry University and military recruiters.



Kaycee Hammer, a student at Carver-Scott High School was recently admitted into Winona State University.



From The Executive Director...

Dr. Randall Zitterkopf

I have just finished reading a little book, [Our Iceberg Is Melting](#), by John Kotter and Holger Rathberger. The book is a fable about a colony of penguins. The story begins when one of the more intellectual penguins studies the structure of the iceberg where the penguins enjoy living. The problem that is discovered is that the iceberg is in danger of falling apart. Indeed, the survival of the colony may be at stake.

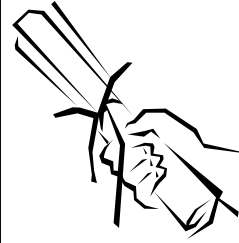
The observant penguin takes the information to the colony's leaders. As is the case in many organizations, there are various reactions. Some question the validity of the data. Some deny there is a problem. Some think the problem will go away. However, because of the persistence and clear-headed thinking of several of the penguin leaders, the problems regarding the disintegrating iceberg are addressed.

The penguins develop and utilize a step-by-step process, including the necessary action strategies, to stave off disaster. The problem-solving steps include common-sense approaches such as creating a sense of urgency, working as a team, communicating effectively, and utilizing the various talents of individuals in the group. As a result of a collaborative effort, the penguins migrate to another iceberg; and, the colony survives.

Aside from the planning process that is prescribed in the book, another theme is that personal, professional, and organizational change is inevitable. Accepting this inevitability makes it easier for an organization to adapt when circumstances dictate that it must do so. Indeed, as [Our Iceberg Is Melting](#) concludes, the penguins see themselves as nomads who realize that their current iceberg providing safe residence may not necessarily be permanent.

The lessons of [Our Iceberg Is Melting](#) are relevant to the Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative (CSEC). Changes in our educational environment are readily observable: financial constraints, changing demographics, economic uncertainty and fear, and many others. Consequently, CSEC must also adapt as most other school districts do the same. And, CSEC can become a strong, improved, and more unified organization as a result of the changes. I recall the adage: Change does not guarantee improvement; however, without change, improvement is impossible.

Incidentally, CSEC administrators will be using [Our Iceberg Is Melting](#) as a basis for their inservice activity/retreat to be held in the near future.



CSE Foundation Scholarships

CSE Foundation scholarships are available to graduates of Carver-Scott Educational Cooperative programs. The primary purpose of these scholarships is to encourage outstanding CSEC students and to applaud perseverance in education despite obstacles.

For the 2011-2012 school year, a total of 8 scholarships will be awarded.

\$1,000 will be awarded to each scholar paid to an accredited post-secondary school of the student's choice. A second award of \$1,000 each is available to scholars who continue to demonstrate achievement in their post-secondary education.

Distribution of scholarships will be made in the following way:

- 1 awarded to Carver-Scott High School graduate
- 1 awarded to Spring Lake ALC graduate
- 1 awarded to Waconia ALC graduate
- 1 awarded to a graduate from the Passage or Transition programs
- 1 awarded to a Career and Technical Education graduate
- 1 Doris Urke Memorial Scholarship to a graduate of the New Beginnings Program
- 1 Maria Rifley Memorial Scholarship awarded to a Cosmetology student
- 1 Lawrence St. John Memorial Scholarship awarded to a GED program graduate

Scholarship selection is based upon the following:

- A personal narrative essay
- Letter of recommendation
- Copy of acceptance letter from an accredited post-secondary school
- Interview with scholarship committee of CSE Foundation Board
- Willingness to meet with a mentor during the 2011 summer and 2011-2012 academic year
- Willingness to return and talk to current CSEC students during the 2011-2012 school year about the college experience

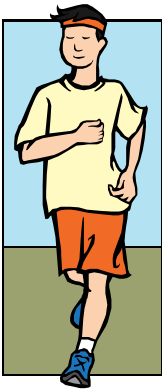
20 students have applied for a CSE Foundation Scholarship this year. Interviews will be conducted over the next few weeks. Scholarship recipients will be announced at the CSE Foundation Ask event on April 27, 2011.

*Building Connections
Through Communications*

***Enriching Lives
Through Education***

**401 East 4th Street
Chaska MN 55318**

**Phone: 952-368-8800
www.cseced.org**



CSEC Wellness Committee



A CSEC Wellness Committee has been formed to develop/implement a wellness policy and address other health-related priorities for CSEC staff. Funds available through the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) may be used to aid in this endeavor. The Wellness Committee is looking at various options to help promote health and wellness for CSEC staff (ie. healthier foods in the vending machines, making available maps of the walking trails near CSEC buildings, sharing tips for healthy living, etc.).

Current members of the Wellness Committee are: Penny Brown, Debbie Clark, Joyce Eissinger, Cindy Finke, David Fuller, Scott Hennen, Tina Jeurissen, Jill Peters, Jodie Pleinis, Maggie Rasmussen, Stephanie Ringdahl, Sue Schmidt, Bob Schneider, Jeff Theis, Jeff Trick, and Jill Wilson,

Also, thanks to funds received from SHIP, CSEC is now a member of the Minnesota Employee Recreation & Services Council (MERSC). Our membership is active through 2011.

Employees of CSEC, as well as immediate family members and retirees, are eligible for MERSC discounts on entertainment, theater tickets, products and services.

For information on MERSC discounts, go to their website: www.mersc.org.

To obtain MERSC discounts, tell the vendor prior to purchase that you are an employee of a MERSC member company. Be prepared to show proof of employment with a MERSC member company, such as an I.D. badge or recent pay stub.