Welcome to the Spring edition of Co-Curricular Connections!

As we look forward to warmer weather, the Division of Student Affairs would like to share some timely news and upcoming events during the spring quarter with the university community.

A Day with Vincent, a revamped program offered by our University Ministry departments and Human Resources, allows faculty and staff to take a day to reflect on spirituality and mission as it relates to their work. In this edition of Co-Curricular Connections, we review the program and its benefits, and invite you to attend one of the upcoming Day with Vincents to renew your spirit and engage with your colleagues. Also, please note that Vincentian Service Day is Saturday, May 4, and faculty, staff and students are invited to participate.

In Student Affairs, our focus is on student learning and reducing barriers to college success. In our spring edition, we take a look at two programs in the division that are tailored toward the support and success of specific populations. I hope you enjoy reading about our Students Together are Reaching for Success (STARS) peer mentors in the Office of Multicultural Student Success and the veteran liaisons in Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs. Both programs have an important impact on student success at DePaul.

Looking back, each winter, dozens of students and tens of faculty and staff mentors travel to locations throughout the U.S., Central and South America as part of the winter break service immersion trips offered by the Vincentian Community Service Office. Through service, students have an opportunity to explore indignities and injustice, engage in difficult dialogue and unite in solidarity behind social justice, while their faculty and staff mentors help them reflect on their experiences. Please take a moment to read about the winter 2012 trips and consider how you may be able to support the program and the students who participate.

In this edition, you will also find information about higher education trends, important dates and members of the Student Affairs team. I hope you can take a moment to catch up on what’s happening in Student Affairs!

Sincerely,

Cynthia Summers
Interim Vice President for Student Affairs
Day with Vincent Retreats: Growing in the Vincentian Mission
Contributed by: Courtney Curby, Coordinator, Vincentian Community Service Office

The Thursdays with Vincent program, facilitated by University Ministry in Student Affairs, has engaged over 400 faculty and staff in day-long, mid-week retreats since 2008. The format has changed to a Day with Vincent and now gives faculty and staff members varied programmatic options to choose from, but continues to focus on spirituality and mission. The Day with Vincent held on February 22, 2013 offered attendees the opportunity to engage in and reflect on a day of service in the Chicago community.

“The day was really centered around the opportunity for meaningful human interaction with the often neglected, or those placed on the margins of society,” said Courtney Curby of the Vincentian Community Service Office via email, “whether it was playing with young children, communicating with ESL adult learners, or laughing with elderly companions, our staff and faculty were able to learn the importance of the human bond that St. Vincent so often exemplified.”

Thirty-one faculty and staff from colleges and departments across the university participated in the first-ever faculty- and staff-only service day this past February. The volunteers served at Marillac House in East Garfield Park, St. Joseph Services in Humboldt Park and Fred C. Matthew’s YMCA Senior Housing on Chicago’s South Side. The reflection after the retreat took place at the St. Vincent DePaul Parish community room. Faculty and staff explored the needs of those served, as well as considered the events from a Vincentian perspective and explored what inspired, surprised and challenged them, as well as what made them feel deeply and care.

In addition to helping faculty and staff reflect more deeply on Vincentian spirituality and mission, A Day with Vincent also gives them a chance to meet and engage with other faculty and staff from across the institution.

The next Day with Vincent will take place on Friday, April 26, and is a day-long retreat focusing on Catholic spirituality and Vincentian mission.

For more information on A Day with Vincent, or on the upcoming retreat, please contact Mark Laboe at mlaboe@depaul.edu or 773.325.4004

STARS peer mentors: Preparing first-year students for success
Contributed by: Christopher Aleman, Graduate Assistant, Office of Multicultural Student Success and Eric Mata, Assistant Director, Office of Multicultural Student Success

The Students Together are Reaching Success (STARS) program in the Office of Multicultural Student Success is helping first-year black and latino/a students stay in school, earn high GPAs and complete more credits. A large part of the success of the program is due to the work of the program’s student leaders.

Long-term data analysis suggests that black and latina/o students who participate in the STARS program at DePaul, the longest running program in the Office of Multicultural Student Success, have a better first year retention rate than black and latina/o first year students who do not participate. Furthermore, these same groups complete more credits and attain a higher GPA in their first year than their peers do. Over 300 students per year who are first generation, low income or of color participate in the (continued on page 3)
STARS Peer Mentors (continued from page 2)

25-year old STARS program, a program that directly supports Vision2018 by enhancing academic quality and supporting diversity.

Students apply to be STARS mentors during the winter quarter each academic year through the Campus Job Board. Once selected as a STARS mentor, students are trained year round through a weekly, learning outcomes-based professional development curriculum. OMSS supports the development of these student leaders through partnerships within the Division of Student Affairs and across the university including, but not limited to, the Career Center, Financial Fitness, the Office of Financial Aid, and the Office of Academic Advising Support.

Campus partners provide STARS mentors with informational and developmental workshops to help the mentors learn how to utilize on-campus resources effectively so they can provide timely and accurate guidance to the students they serve. During the workshops, the mentors practice using new information and grow as leaders through role play, interactive activities, and reflection.

Recently, Dominic Rollins, Assistant Dean of Students, facilitated a workshop on allyship for the mentors. The workshop provided participants with the opportunity to learn about their common purpose, and helped them define what it means to be an ally within the role they serve as mentors.

As one mentor reflected in a post-training feedback survey, “being an ally at DePaul is not limited to the LGBTQ community but it is also standing in solidarity with other marginalized and underrepresented minorities on campus.” Another mentor stated, “It was helpful to think about how big of a role I want allyship to play in my future career.”

With over 100 hours of training and professional development throughout the academic year, STARS mentors become strong student leaders. Their ability to support first year students inspires those students to give back to the DePaul community by serving as STARS peer mentors to the next generation of DePaul students.

Data Points

DID YOU KNOW?

⇒ Over 300 students per year who are first generation, low-income or of color participate in the STARS program.
⇒ The STARS program is 25 years old, and the oldest program in the Office of Multicultural Student Success.
⇒ STARS peer mentors receive over 100 hours of training over the course of an academic year from partners across the university.

Winter break service immersion trips help students connect to the mission

Contributed by: Joyana Dvorak, Coordinator, Vincentian Community Service Office

Over winter break, 89 students and 10 faculty and staff members participated in a service immersion trip to one of eight different locations in the U.S., Central and South America. The trips are designed to get the students to see the world differently, to embrace the dignity of every human being and to give them the opportunity to connect with the Vincentian family and the Catholic, Vincentian mission of the university. Organizers say that students are frequently transformed by the trips, as they become more aware of injustice, engage in difficult dialogue and unite in solidarity behind social justice.

Students and faculty and staff mentors traveled to communities in Colombia and El Salvador internationally, and Denver, Colo.; Tuba City, Ariz.; Los Angeles, Calif.; Indianapolis, Ind.; East St. Louis, Ill./St. Louis, Mo. And Chicago in the U.S. During the trips, students examined the realities of homelessness, explored the effects of poverty on marginalized communities, and devoted themselves to community and educational development.

“Service immersion was an eye-opening experience. As a person of faith, it forced me to recognize I am one out of many in this vast organism. My actions, my language, my life has a ripple effect on my immediate circle and those farther away,” said Drake Manolo, a student who participated in one of the trips. Reflection also allows students to explore their connection to their faith and spirituality. Student Nicole Lind said “the service immersion trip allowed me to better discover my faith through my participation in service work in a new community. I was able to build my Vincentian values while working with my fellow peers who are committed to social justice.”

For more information about the service immersion trips, or how you can become a faculty or staff mentor, contact Joyana Dvorak in the Vincentian Community Service Office at 773.325.4772.
Liaisons help growing student veteran population
By: Jessica Peterson, Communications Coordinator, Student Affairs

Close to 500 returning veterans are accessing their GI Bill benefits at DePaul University, and growth in this population is expected to continue. Veterans returning to school deal with issues such as adjusting to civilian life, finding accommodations for disabilities, coping with mental health diagnoses, and managing finances. The veteran liaisons in the office of Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs are in place to help these students with the transition and encourage their college success.

“In the military, you go somewhere, you do what you’re told, and it’s all for the greater good. But when you come back [to civilian life]...sometimes it’s a little intimidating and frustrating, because there are so many different things you can do, and you’re not sure what to do.” Josh Gautiran, a veteran liaison who served 4 years active duty with the United States Marine Corps and is a sophomore psychology major, said in an interview. The veteran liaisons can help students figure out how to get things done at DePaul, reduce their frustration and help them succeed here.

The liaisons are current students with prior military experience who help veterans at DePaul connect to helpful resources at the university and elsewhere, as well as manage paperwork and navigate the systems of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the GI Bill.

The liaisons hold quarterly Veteran Connections meetings, where veterans raise questions and issues and the liaisons from Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs field the questions and otherwise offer support. The office also develops and offers programs for veterans, and the liaisons are available to meet with veterans one-on-one by appointment. Currently, DePaul has 3 veteran liaisons whose part-time positions are funded by a work study program through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Other resources for veterans at the university include a dedicated staff member in Financial Aid and admissions counselors who offer special support in the Office of Admissions. The office of Adult, Veteran and Commuter Student Affairs also offers community building events for women veterans, as well as a mentorship program. The Student Veterans Union, a student organization at DePaul whose president also happens to be a veteran liaison, offers activities and events for veterans, as well.

For more information about programs and services provided by the veteran liaisons, call them at 312.362.5656, or visit their office in the Loop, DePaul Center 11012.

Student Learning and Engagement

Book review: Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today’s College Student
Contributed by: Peggy Burke, Associate Vice President, Student Affairs

Arthur Levine and Diane Dean, in their book Generation on a Tightrope: A Portrait of Today’s College Student, report the results of their research and argue that the current generation of college students “requires a different brand of education that will enable them to attain their personal dreams and serve the society they must lead.” The authors believe that this brand of education “will entail educating students for living in a time of profound change, an increasingly digital society, a diverse and global community, and an evolving information economy.”

Levine and Dean studied 5,000 college students and student affairs practitioners from 270 colleges across the U.S. to come to these conclusions, and painstakingly detail their work in the book.

The study showed that college students today are similar to their predecessors in that they are optimistic about their personal future, pessimistic about the future of the country, committed to the American dream and are minimally involved in campus life.

(Continued on page 5)
Generation on a Tight Rope (continued from page 4)

The similarities end there, though. The world that current undergraduate students have grown up in, and the world that they will inherit, is quite different from that of previous generations.

These students are the first generation of digital natives and they believe that undergraduate education would be improved if there was a greater use of technology in the classroom. They understand file sharing and collaboration, but do not understand cheating and plagiarism. They are diverse and global in their perspectives, leading to less polarization. And they are the most connected generation, but they feel more isolated: contemporary student life is less about the campus and more about social networks found on smart phones and tablets.

The authors believe that colleges are ill-prepared to educate these students for success in the twenty-first century, given their distinctive characteristics and the current pedagogy at most universities. They argue that institutions of higher education have to switch gears and educate current students to function in a world of constant change, which means a focus on critical thinking, creativity and continual learning. Levine and Dean also believe that universities have to embrace teaching technologies, define diversity for their campus and develop comprehensive plans of action for diversity, and establish goals for internationalization.

Levine and Dean also argue that higher education needs to prepare students for an evolving information economy through enriched majors, practical minors, multiple internships and robust career counseling. Finally, current college students need an education for civic engagement that includes communication skills, human heritage, the environment, individual roles and the nature of relationships, and values.

Levine and Dean visited DePaul University on Thursday, April 4 as part of the President’s Book Club and Student Affairs Speaker Series to discuss their work. Rich Whitney, professor in the College of Education said in an email, “This Presidential Book Club selection for Spring 2013 was the perfect selection to support Vision 2018. Reading this book exhibits our dedication to the student experience and preparing our students to contribute to society. [The] book helps re-acquaint the DePaul community with the students of today, and offers concrete suggestions for how to frame our work for now and the future.”

Higher education professionals must understand today’s students as we shape an education that will best meet these critical challenges of the future. Levine and Dean offer us a reasonably comprehensive picture of current undergraduate students, and a place to begin shaping a new education with their outline for an “education for the 21st century.”

“The world that current undergraduate students have grown up in, and the world that they will inherit, are quite different from that of previous generations.”

“[Today’s college students] are diverse and global in their perspectives, leading to less polarization. And they are the most connected generation, but feel more isolated.”

Students taking part in the fall 2012 Lincoln Park Involvement Fair
There are a number of trends at the national level that have a significant impact on the university’s and the division’s work with students. In this edition, we highlight the trend of the growing number of student veterans at DePaul University.

More U.S. military veterans attending college, bring need for tailored services with them

Results of the annual survey of college freshman conducted by UCLA’s Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) showed that veterans are significantly less likely to engage with their instructors and fellow students. Forty percent of them are expected to have low involvement in college life generally, compared with 26 percent of non-veterans. Twenty-four percent of veterans, in the fall of their freshman year, said they had not yet asked a faculty member for advice after class, compared with 13 percent of non-veterans (Brainard, 2011).

The transition from military service to a college campus can exacerbate post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression, as student veterans often feel socially isolated and struggle to relate to others (Lipka, 2011).

More than a half million veterans who served after September 11, 2001 were enrolled in college classes during the 2011-12 academic year under the Post-9/11 GI Bill, and thousands more are expected to enroll when millions of additional veterans return to the United States from Afghanistan and Iraq (Sander, 2012).

The number of post-9/11 veterans returning to DePaul continues to increase. According to the summer 2012 figures from Financial Aid, there were 338 students accessing Chapter 33 benefits at DePaul, while there were only 242 in spring 2012, and 74 in the fall of 2009.

The number of students accessing Veterans Affairs at DePaul has also increased significantly with 325 students accessing the office from August 2011 to fall 2012. According to office intake forms, most students had questions about GI Bill benefits, or they were there to meet other veterans.
Get to Know Our Team

In this edition of Co-Curricular Connections we are profiling two areas in the division: Student Development and University Ministry. Student Development consists of the departments of New Student and Family Engagement, Residential Education, Student Involvement and the Student Leadership Institute. University Ministry consists of Catholic Campus Ministry, Religious Diversity and the Vincentian Community Service Office.

Student Development

The Office of New Student and Family Engagement works to help ensure the quality of the student experience at DePaul by providing programming and services which aid in students’ transition and integration into the university. Each year, the office helps students and their families transition to DePaul through the Premiere DePaul and Transition DePaul orientation programs. The office also recruits and trains the student leaders and staff professionals who partner with faculty to teach Discover Chicago and Explore Chicago courses. Additionally, the office coordinates DePaul’s annual Family Weekend celebration.

Deb Schmitz-Rogers
Director
Residential Education

Residential Education is responsible for responding to the issues on-campus residents face through social and educational programming initiatives, emergency and crisis response, student advocacy and referrals, the residential student judicial process and informal contacts with students. A live-in team of professional and paraprofessional staff members is available 24 hours a day to respond to the needs of students.

Suzanne Kilgannon
Director
Student Involvement

The Office of Student Involvement fosters student learning and success by providing opportunities for engagement through a wide variety of campus activities and organizations, holistic and intentional advising of student leaders, and the development of purposeful and mutually beneficial partnerships across the university and City of Chicago to maximize access and resources to a rich DePaul campus experience.

The Student Leadership Institute provides leadership education and development through leadership workshops, a certificate program, the Inspiring Voices Speaker Series, the annual Winter Leadership Conference and customized workshops for university organizations and departments. Students acquire and develop leadership skills they can use to provide socially responsible leadership within various professional and organizational settings. The office also conducts StrengthsQuest workshops, which help students, faculty and staff discover their talents and achieve success, and annual voter registration drives.

University Ministry

Catholic Campus Ministry provides a range of programs and resources directed toward supporting the spiritual lives of Catholic students and those interested in learning more about the Catholic faith. Housed on the first floor of the Lincoln Park Student Center, CCM is a welcoming home for students from many backgrounds to form friendships and connect with others in a strong and supportive community of peers for whom faith, service, prayer and good conversation are important.

Sr. Katie Norris
Director
Catholic Campus Ministry

The Office of Religious Diversity provides pastoral leadership, support and advocacy to the diverse religious and spiritual communities and persons of DePaul by cultivating a faith- and interfaith-friendly culture, providing pastoral and organizational support to all our Student Religious Organizations, and sustaining interfaith leadership, programming and cooperation on the Lincoln Park and Loop campuses, as well as through online resources.

Fr. Guillermo Campuzano
Director
Religious Diversity

The Vincentian Community Service Office empowers students to promote the inherent human dignity of all people, especially marginalized communities, by educating students to cultivate relationships rooted in service, faith and justice. The office provides students with service opportunities to communities in need, while encouraging students to develop their faith lives in light of their service involvement. Through reflection, students find a safe place to examine questions of social justice.

Siobhan O’Donoghue
Director
Vincentian Community Service Office

Co-Curricular Connections is a publication of the Division of Student Affairs at DePaul University. Inquiries and comments are welcome. Please contact us at 25 E. Jackson Blvd Suite 1400 or via e-mail at depaulsanews@depaul.edu.

Please take a moment to tell us how we are doing