Students Re-Visit Hurricane Katrina Sites

Dr. Charlie Chatterton and students Justin Brown (SLM, 2009), Monica Rochon (SLM, 2009) and Ryan Rossi (SLM, 2009) traveled to New Orleans in early February to work on various community projects including Habitat for Humanity in the Upper Ninth Ward at the Musicians’ Village. This is the fourth such post-Katrina trip for Dr. Chatterton and a group of students. They found substantial improvement in some parts of the city, though sadly, there are many areas that still look as they did two years ago. The group drove by the Habitat house ECSU worked at on a previous trip and a family is now living there.

Dr. Chatterton and the students also participated in events related to the annual New Orleans Marathon. Ryan and Justin ran in the half marathon. It was Justin’s first long race and Ryan’s fourth; Monica volunteered again as a race assistant. Dr. Chatterton ran the full marathon and is now at 24 completed marathons with just 14 to go to reach his goal of 38.

His group also visited local schools, met with students and faculty at the University of New Orleans, and toured some of the storm-damaged areas of the city. They were hosted by Jim Miller, the Athletics Director at UNO. Dr. Chatterton feels we are very fortunate to have students like Justin, Ryan, and Monica who are willing to travel to New Orleans, learn about the area and then volunteer their time by giving back to the community.

Outstanding Students and Future Professionals

The Connecticut Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance awards two generous scholarships each year to high school students who pursue careers in these related fields. This past fall, incoming ECSU students won both Benevento/CTAHPERD Scholarships: Jamie Kohn and Jessica DiManno. To demonstrate their worthiness, they BOTH earned GPAs above 3.65 in the Fall 2008 semester at ECSU.

Congratulations to Christina Amato (SLM, 2009) and Molly Desjardais (PE, 2009) who were selected as Eastern’s two Outstanding Future Professional candidates last fall. Both were honored at the CTAHPERD conference in November 2008. At the conference, Christina was selected as one of Connecticut’s two Outstanding Future Professionals in HPE by CTAHPERD.

Over the past year, Dr. Charlie Chatterton has been delivering sessions at state and regional conferences and ECSU students have been co-speakers with him. Students who have made professional presentations over the past year include Christina Amato (SLM, 2009), Justin Brown (SLM, 2009) Ashley McFetridge, (SLM, 2009) and Meagan Puzacke (SLM, 2009).
Eastern Students Teach at Hartford Middle School

On November 18, 2008, students from Dr. Greg Kane's HPE 104 Foundations of Health and Wellness class traveled to a Hartford public school to lecture on topics of health and wellness. The eleven Eastern freshmen spoke on several topics, including drug and alcohol abuse, prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, identifying sources of stress, and stress and time management. Their audience included 100 seventh- and eighth-grade students from R.J. Kinsella Magnet School of Performing Arts.

“This is an amazing group of Eastern students, who in their initial year of university study, felt confident enough to get up in front of middle school students, and make presentations on these difficult topics. I couldn’t be happier or more proud of these first-year students,” said Dr. Kane. Above right, Rian Sullivan and Alex Clark provide eighth-graders with a PowerPoint presentation on sexually transmitted diseases.

Alumni Notes

The fifth annual ECSU PE/SLM Reunion was held at the CTAHPERD Conference in Cromwell, CT, in November 2008. Approximately 75 former students now employed as teachers and recreation professionals stopped by to visit with each other and faculty members. As always, it was great to see everyone again and catch up on their professional and personal progress.

Alumni Return as HPE Faculty

Several ECSU alumni are now working part-time in the HPE Department, teaching courses in the in new GER/LAP. All of them are full-time public school teachers in our area and teach afternoons, evenings, and weekends. Among them are Rose (Otten) Paggioli (PE, 1990), Tim Jonasch (PE, 2002), Anne DeFranco (PE, 1999), Jennifer (Fonner) Feldman (PE, 1998), Justin Van Gelder (PE, 1999), Cindy (Baker) Kobus (PE, 1999), Crispin Fresco-Hawes (PE, 1995), Jim Lackner (PE, 2003), Paul Vallone (PE, 2006), Jodi Petrozak (PE, 2007), and Sara (Tourtellotte) Gustavesen (SLM, 2004). Ms. Gustavesen, a former SLM Major of the Year at ECSU and Outstanding Future Professional award-winner from CTAHPERD, is also teaching full-time in the HPE Department for Spring 2009.

Letters from Alumni

Lauren Proniewich (PE, 2005) writes that she will be getting married this spring and has finished her Master's at Adelphi University in Exercise Physiology. This is also the tenure year for her elementary physical education teaching job on Long Island. She has one more observation for this spring and then expects tenure in September!

To the ECSU HPE faculty: Although I am not employed at a school right now, both my education at ECSU and the leadership skills I cultivated there serve me well in many areas of my life. I am grateful, not only for the many opportunities I was afforded in the HPE department, but also for the confidence my professors had in me. Thank you. Sincerely, Amie Stuart Giguere (PE, 1988) (Ms. Giguere was a teacher at RHAM in Hebron, CT, but resigned her post to take on full-time care of her children. Ed.)

And another from an alumnus:

Marty Kokoszka (PE, 2007) writes: I am teaching at Bullard-Havens Technical High School in Bridgeport, CT. I am also coaching junior varsity basketball at my school with Eastern alumnus Anthony Taddei (PE, 1989). I love every second of teaching and coaching. This is my second year at the school and the physical education department has been transformed with the hiring of new staff. Bullard-Havens had only 20 students pass the Connecticut Physical Fitness Test in 2006. More than 65 students passed in each of the past two years. I absolutely love what I’m doing and “thank you” to everyone for all they did for me during my college years.

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Student-Athletes on College Bowl Team

Eastern Connecticut State University student-athletes Meagan Puzacke, (SLM, 2009) and Christina Amato, (SLM, 2009), both seniors, and junior Kim Church, (PE, 2010) represented Eastern at the fifth annual “College Bowl,” sponsored by the New England chapter of the American College of Sports Medicine at its annual fall meeting in Providence, RI.

This marked the first time that Eastern’s team was comprised exclusively of student-athletes. Puzacke is a member of the field hockey program; Amato is a tri-captain of the basketball team; and Church is a member of the soccer program and a softball letter winner.

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Registration for Fall 2009

Hard to believe, but next semester’s registration process will begin in a couple of weeks. Please watch your emails and the bulletin boards for dates and times of group advisement sessions.

NO registration codes will be given out except at these meetings. Furthermore, please make note of all the course prerequisites, including acceptance into CARE and Professional Development Points. Information is always available in the Sports Center.

Where did they go? Student teaching!

The following seniors are doing their practice teaching and are all in area schools doing both elementary and secondary placements this term:

Mallery Andreozzi, Michael Brady, Dan Brierly, Kelsey Caliento, Jennifer Cody, Krystle Denny, Molly Desjarlais and Brian Drinkard.

Also: Kostas Efthimiou, Scott Garafalo, Tom Gentile, Bruce Gudelski, Kris Johnson, Jen McNulty, Justin Monahan, and Dennis Reid.

And: Norm Riley, Kristen Rinas, Natalie Ruggiero, Joe Serfass, Patrick Stone, Brandon Strout, Dustin Yakoubian, and Doug Ysewyn.

This is the second consecutive year we have had more than 20 student teachers in one term.

Holly Zimmerman Memorial Award

Senior SLM major Ashley McFedridge has been selected as this year’s recipient of the Holly Zimmerman Award. This award, in memory of Holly Zimmerman, an ECSU student who passed away in the spring of her senior year in 1993, recognizes significant academic, athletic and community achievements, as well as outstanding personal attributes.

Students Assist Dr. Tummers in Research Project

Fifty-four female students from Eastern and a group of at-risk girls from Windham High School and Journey House (Natchaug Hospital’s residential home) participated in an eight-week stress management and mentoring program called “The Sisterhood Project” in Fall 2008. SLM major Christina Amato (2009) was the project coordinator and Ashley McFetridge (SLM, 2009) served as an assistant with Dr. Tummers on her sabbatic leave project.

The project also included two student researchers, Stephanie Norell (PE, 2011) and Matthew Lance (PE, 2011). Matt and Stephanie presented preliminary research results at the CTAHPERD annual meeting in November 2008 and will travel with Dr. Tummers to make a formal presentation at the AAPHPERD National Conference in Tampa, FL, in April 2009.

Eastern alumnus Mike Pietruszka (PE, 2005) was featured at Eastern as a guest speaker earlier this month. His topic was “Education in Russia,” and he focused on comparing educational systems in the USA and Russia. He is shown here with Dr. Gerich.

During this past fall, Mike received an invitation and traveled to Russia to present a series of workshops and seminars in Moscow. His topic for Russian school teachers was “Strategies for Inclusion” into physical education programs. Mike is a Connecticut physical education teacher working with special needs students at the Capital Region Education Council in Hartford.
Faculty Professional Development Activity

Just as we expect students to be active in their field of study, HPE faculty are also required to participate in professional development activity:

In January, Dr. Darren Robert conducted an in-service workshop for the entire staff of the Riverfield Elementary School (Fairfield, CT). The workshop (“Moving a Little and Learning a Lot!”) was aimed at classroom teachers and presented ideas about how to include movement opportunities into daily classroom curriculum and routines.

Dr. Robert also recently presented at the Southern Early Childhood Association Conference in Myrtle Beach. His co-presenter was long-time associate Bill Yongue from Florida. Approximately 100 people attended the session titled “Completely Harmless Movement Activities for the Existing Classroom Environment.”

Dr. Nanette Tummers went to St. Lawrence County in upstate New York in early February to conduct a workshop for area school district Wellness Policy team members including school board members and administrators. In 2006, the US Congress passed a federal mandate requiring all school districts to put a wellness policy in place and to set practical goals to improve student nutrition and physical activity.

Ms. Mary Chalupsky recently earned certification to teach both Pilates and Zumba. She will be teaching Zumba (aerobic dance movement done to Latin rhythms) for the campus recreation department this semester. Mary can also provide the First Aid certification required for graduation. Students should contact her to set up a class.

Dr. Charlie Chatterton has now completed 24 marathons (each one is 26.2 miles) over the past two years as part of his Brake the Cycle of Poverty efforts. His goal is to complete a total of 38 marathons overall. He most recently finished events in New Hampshire, Cape Cod, Hartford, Philadelphia and New Orleans. He has his sights set on completing the next 14 races within one more year.

Dr. Anita Lee has been very active over the past few months. She: presented "Olympic education: Experience of China and the United States" at the EDA of AAHPERD in Lancaster, PA (February); presented "Integrating the Olympic movement in physical education: Increasing awareness of internationalization, an experience from the Beijing Olympics" at the CTAHPERD annual conference, Cromwell, CT (November); was appointed as a Review Board member of the Journal of Coaching Education; was appointed as Review Board member of the Journal of Measurement in Physical Education and Exercise Science; and was appointed as an Alliance Assembly Delegate by AAHPERD for 2009.

Dr. Daniel Switchenko recently has made several keynote speaking presentations. He has been featured at high schools throughout New England and his topics have included: “Leadership;” “The Effects of Substance Abuse Upon Academic and Athletic Performance;” and “Influences for Success.” Dr. Switchenko also was a featured speaker at the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association Sportsmanship Summit at the Patriots’ Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, MA, on November 21, 2008.

Dr. Greg Kane will be presenting two topics at the 2009 North American Society for Sport Management conference in Columbia, SC. The titles are “Cell phones as a pedagogical classroom tool: Don’t get hung-up on students’ phones, dial them in;” and “Technology and Classroom Instruction: The tension between technological measures to protect exclusive ownership rights and fair use.” Dr. Kane has begun writing a book for Bent Tree Publishing entitled Leadership and Problem Solving in Sport Management.