

Spotlight on ILA Members

ILA Members are doing amazing leadership work around the world, from starting new degree programs to nurturing young people who make a difference, from running innovative workshops and seminars to fostering organizational change. We are pleased to shine an ILA spotlight on the programs of our members. If you would like to nominate yourself or another ILA institutional member to be featured on these pages, please contact ILA at ila@ila-net.org.

Spotlight on Colorado State University - Pueblo :

President's Leadership Program

The President's Leadership Program (PLP) at Colorado State University-Pueblo aligns with the other seven Colorado-based programs networked through the Colorado Leadership Alliance, but it stands as a unique center of opportunities as well. CSU-Pueblo's cohort-based minor is centered in service learning and civic engagement as well as diversity in the scholar selection process. Five years into the program, two cohorts have completed their leadership studies minors through a series of practical and service-focused experiences and projects.

Initiated through a grant from El Pomar Foundation in Colorado Springs, the program evolved through grassroots planning, centered in a model of service learning and community interaction. In addition, then campus president Tito Guerrero II focused on the need and desire for a cadre of young leaders that would support growth and vision for Colorado while addressing the university's diversity initiatives.

The minor in leadership studies requires that all students complete four program-based courses. Each course



was designed and approved based on its service learning core. For example, the introduction to leadership course requires students to take on a community project, to volunteer hours of service to one or more campus/community groups, and to participate in a holiday project that offers Thanksgiving baskets to the poor. In subsequent courses, students learn about organizations, critical thinking, leadership styles, and decision-making in a class entitled "Leadership in Service Organizations." Leader-scholars shadow a local leader or mentor for 30 hours each term. The junior year course is an internship where students work in the field with a leader in their discipline.

Two noteworthy community projects fit the service learning mold particularly well. In these cases, community partners—working with campus leaders and students—develop guidelines for projects that can be completed in a four-month semester, but can later be institutionalized in ways that benefit the specific organization.

In Fall 2003, a group of seniors developed a volunteer program for El

Pueblo, an adolescent treatment center. Working with the director and marketing coordinator, students prepared a volunteer solicitation package. One senior followed up the project by serving as a marketing assistant the following term.

A recent project with El Centro de los Pobres in rural Pueblo County took students into classrooms to tutor bi-lingual children, and the students left a tutorial center as their legacy. Another team built a soccer field for a nearby elementary school, utilizing donated materials and labor, plus the energy and enthusiasm of co-leaders.

"As we increase the visibility of our program and projects, we find that organizations—especially non-profits—come to us with really wonderful projects. Our concern now is making choices among lots of good ideas that



will translate into viable community action now and in the future" concludes Shelly Moreschini, PLP executive director.