

By Carole L. Kilcher and Loretta B. Johns

Integrating

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Visiting nursing home residents is one of the activities of the service learning classes.

An essential element of the mission of Seventh-day Adventist education has always been to prepare graduates to serve in their homes, churches, and communities. During his first inaugural address, President Bill Clinton challenged young Americans to “a season of service.” Was the type of service he suggested one that our schools could adopt? Does Christian service, modeling Jesus’ example to humankind, really make a difference? This article will ex-

plain the steps Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan) is taking to integrate service into its curriculum and what world service means in different contexts on this campus today.

In 1993, the General Education Committee (GEC) began to re-evaluate the focus and content of the general-education curriculum required of all undergraduate students at the university. Through self-study and many meetings, it was decided to make some major changes.

After carefully reviewing the mission

statement, members of the GEC determined to formalize the university’s commitment to service by making it the central focus of the Andrews general-education plan. The members felt strongly that it was important for students to understand our philosophy of service. The GEC voted that any student enrolling at Andrews under the 1996-1997 bulletin and beyond will be required to register for a new two-credit course called “Philosophy of Service.”

Oystein LaBianca, the first of the teaching instructors for this course, gives

Service Into the Life of a University:

THE ANDREWS UNIVERSITY STORY

as its purpose “to establish in the minds of each student a compelling connection between service to others and a life filled with meaning,” and “to inform of the critical connection between prosocial behavior and healthy communities.”

During the quarter that the student is taking the Philosophy of Service course, he or she is required to participate in a “mini” community service project. After completing the course and before qualifying to graduate, students must participate in a “fieldwork experience,” or larger service project. The fieldwork options include, but are not limited to, the following: being a student missionary, serving as a taskforce worker, working at the Community Services Assistance Program (CSAP) co-op, or registering for one of the “S”-designated courses that will span the disciplines.

Student Missionary and Taskforce Programs

The Andrews University student missionary program dates back 30 years. In that time, the university has sent 930 student missionaries to 86 countries. During

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the 1996-1997 school year, 59 students are participating in international mission service. They can also register for 12 credits of course work while serving as a student missionary.

In 1979, the student taskforce program was instituted in a full-scale way at Andrews. This program allows students to register for 12 credits of course work at the university while filling a vacancy at one of the many academies and other selected organizations in the North American Division. Andrews has 13 taskforce workers this school year.

Community Services Assistance Program

The CSAP co-op program allows students to provide service to nonprofit off-campus organizations or agencies. The student earns a wage paid from grants Andrews University sets aside for this purpose. In the 11 years since this program began, CSAP has reduced the prejudice against Seventh-day Adventists among thought leaders in southwestern Michigan who appreciate the quality of student workers they can obtain by simply calling the CSAP office. While the agencies or organizations do not pay for the students’ services, many do subsequently offer them internship opportunities or hire them after they graduate.

The newest service options are being introduced over a three-year period. Students will also be able to meet their community service fieldwork requirement by enrolling in a course that includes a learning-through-service component, known as an “S” class. (See the sidebar on page 32 for the 19 courses established so far.)

Andrews owes the implementation of

the “S” classes in part to a generous grant from a local foundation. Chris Carey, the university’s associate director of foundation and corporate relations, submitted a proposal for a service-learning incentive grant to the Frederick S. Upton Foundation, one of four major foundations located in southwest Michigan. As a result, in 1995 the university received a \$90,000 grant renewable every year for three years as an incentive to the faculty to integrate public service into the academic curriculum. The goal is to have 30 on-campus courses with a service component by the end of the three-year period.

Faculty may redesign existing courses or develop brand-new classes in their discipline. At least 25 percent of the course work in the “S” classes must relate to the service requirement.

Students thereby focus on their civic responsibilities and obtain opportunities for hands-on experiential service as part of the learning strategies of the course.

While Andrews has always had practice and clinical experiences for nursing, education, physical therapy, social work, architecture, and science majors, the grant stipulates that the service component supplement normal requirements.

The grant further stipulates that the target populations for service projects be nearby schools, organizations, and agencies serving the public rather than those operated entirely by and for Seventh-day Adventists. For example, if a faculty member wants students to serve local schools, he or she may not target only SDA classrooms.

Because the Upton Foundation is local, it has a vested interest in these reports. At the end of each school year, foundation President Stephen Upton is invited to a luncheon at the university. The university president, members of his cabinet, and the service-learning committee members listen to reports by the

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Andrews University nursing students gain experience and put service-learning concepts into practice at a local homeless shelter.

10 faculty whose students have been involved in public service. Mr. Upton is given an abstract of each course and a summary of student comments.

On one occasion, Mr. Upton participated in a community-service outreach program. He sat in an Andrews University computer lab along with members of the local Chamber of Commerce and other business leaders who were for the first time surfing for information on the World Wide Web. Students planned, organized, and ran the “Web Fair” for business leaders, administrators, and teachers from local public and private schools.

In a variety of ways, “S” courses will enable students and instructors to meet academic and personal goals while providing public service in local communities. Grading will not be based on the level of difficulty of the service project, but rather on an assessment of the overall individual learning experience. A key component in this process is the student-faculty reflection experience.

Ernest Boyer,¹ a commentator on higher education, argues that colleges

need to reaffirm their long tradition of serving the purposes of society. He argues that higher education has abandoned its original mission of reaching out to the community. In a similar way, Andrews University was reminded by the Upton Foundation of the need to move beyond the boundaries and safety of our own comfortable campus to serve the greater populations of southwestern Michigan, which includes the community of Benton Harbor, a place that has been rated one of the least desirable places in the nation to live.

How It Works

How do we serve the public? The campus ministries office oversees the student missionary program and the student taskforce program. The Community Services Assistance Pro-

gram has a full-time director and support staff. A team of faculty teaches and monitors the Philosophy of Service course. A grant administrator² oversees the day-to-day operations of the “S” course program and is paid a stipend out of the grant. The grant administrator also chairs the University Service Learning Incentive Program Committee (USLIC) made up of faculty, staff, and university administrators who approve faculty proposals and monitor the grant. An office manager³ in the dean’s office at the College of Arts and Sciences handles the bookkeeping. The director of the CSAP also consults with “S” class faculty as they select their service sites and actively monitors any problems that might result as faculty assign or transport students off campus.⁴

Each year, the university calls for faculty proposals for “S” classes. When the faculty proposal is accepted by the USLIC, the grant allows the faculty member to receive \$500 with no strings attached as a line item on his or her paycheck. A one-time unrestricted award of

\$900 is also made available to the faculty member for course development. Each faculty must determine which resources best fit the needs of his or her service-learning course. To date, teachers have used the grants to purchase supplies and equipment, attend professional conferences, purchase a library search, obtain books for faculty enrichment in the particular course area, and provide transportation for students to community sites.

At the end of the quarter, faculty must submit a document reflecting on the students' and his or her own reaction to the service-learning component of the course. When these documents are received and reviewed by the grant administrator, the final \$500 is placed on the faculty member's payroll account. The total incentive of \$1,900 is given as a one-time, one-course payment, but with the understanding that the course is to be repeated as an "S" course thereafter.

Will the integration of service into the total curriculum at Andrews be successful? We are committed to that end. We have the student missionary program, the student taskforce program, and the CSAP for inspiration. Someday, we would even like to have a one-stop center where students could have their needs for church or public service met. Programs like "YouthNet," sponsored by the North American Division, and Maranatha could thus have a more visible home on our campus. We want to constantly expand our vision of what service can mean in many more contexts at Andrews.

The campus newspaper, the *Student Movement*, reports that students in the Community Services Assistance Program "have logged more than 193,545 service hours in 131 different agencies and put \$1,000,000 back into the local economy."⁵ These students are combining their efforts to make a difference in Berrien County.

As educators, one of our tasks is to help students discover and develop Christian virtues of tolerance, empathy, patience, mutual respect, and cooperation and to apply them effectively in the world around them. Williams College President Harry Payne explains that "the Latin word *virtus*, which means strength

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or capacity, . . . [is] nothing in and of itself. It is always related to a task at hand. It is a well-formed capacity to accomplish something necessary and desirable."⁶ Some of our students are even motivating us educators to become more civic-minded and involved in public service.

The General Education Committee at Andrews University believes that understanding the philosophy of service and participation by students in service-focused activities with their instructors makes textbook theory come alive. It enables students to assimilate Christ-like virtues into their characters and apply them to real-life activities much more effectively than in any classroom setting. Students with this experience have the potential to make a significant contribu-

tion in the workplace as well as in their local or global communities.

Payne also asserts in the same article that virtuous character promotes intellectual virtue. He states that "one cannot be a determined and effective inquirer without the character virtues of empathy and humility. One cannot be a successful intellectual explorer without the character virtue of courage. One cannot find the best expressions of one's thoughts without the character virtue of integrity."⁷

Not a Fad

Is it too early to validate Payne's theories at Andrews? We don't think so. But, like him, we see our educational impact on students as having a much loftier purpose than a mere grade or a colorful honors cord. Service at Andrews is not a passing academic fad. It is a intricate strand in the educational fabric. It's what's being "Christian" is all about.

It's true that we are writing this article without unpacking all of the problems that have occurred to date, before we know if every aspect of the new flooding of service into the curriculum will stand the test of time. We are sharing a process that we have used and that others may want to adapt to their geographical location and curriculums.

Robert D. Putnam in his article, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," points out that communities whose members are actively engaged in civic-oriented activities powerfully influence the quality of public life and the performance of social institutions. He states that "researchers in such

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Andrews University service learning students participate in a street ministry in an impoverished area of nearby Benton Harbor, Michigan.

fields as education, urban poverty, unemployment, the control of crime and drug abuse, and even health have discovered that successful outcomes are more likely in civically engaged communities.”⁸

Community service-learning is not new to higher education. If you find you need a little booster rocket to get something new off the ground on your campus, there are professional journals, Internet listservs, Web sites, and people like us willing to help anyone who asks. There are funding opportunities and calls for proposals for grant money if you look and network in the right places. Maybe your school can tap into a local foundation.

One place to get ideas is through the National Information Center for Service Learning, an ERIC site.⁹ Located at the University of Minnesota, NISL also has a National Service-Learning Cooperative Clearinghouse for K-12 teachers. Another Web site that leads to still other public service sites is <<http://www.cns.gov/index.html>>, the home page of the Corporation for National Service.

You could also call your nearest state university, as many have people-and-

The Community Services Assistance Program allows students to provide service to nonprofit off-campus organizations or agencies.

paper resources they are more than willing to share. In Michigan, Andrews is in a consortium of 24 universities and colleges called the “Michigan Campus Compact” (MCC), which provides opportunities for collaboration, networking, professional development through continuing education, and electronic discussion via listserv. MCC also publishes a

professional journal made possible in part through funding from the Corporation for National Service. There are similar organizations nationwide. You may wish to browse the Alphabetical Listing of Service Learning Programs on the World Wide Web.¹⁰ The grant manager is on MCC’s Curriculum Development Committee and communicates electronically with 41 other faculty from state and private colleges. Andrews is currently the only Seventh-day Adventist presence on MCC.

There is much to be gained by having our graduates understand and commit to a life of service. *For it is in giving that we receive* is more than a famous quote or song. It is a truth borne out by the life and teaching of Jesus, who lived that principle. The results speak for themselves.

We are sharing the Andrews story because we have received so much from being involved. We would be pleased to hear your stories, too! ✍

Carole L. Kilcher is Associate Professor of Communication at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan; E-mail address: carole@andrews.edu. Dr. Loretta B. Johns is Assistant Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the university; E-mail address: johns@andrews.edu.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Ernest Boyer, “Creating the New American College,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (March 9, 1994), p. A48.
2. Dr. Loretta Johns was the first grant administrator. When her duties of overseeing the new general-education program were expanded, Carole Kilcher succeeded her and is the current service-learning grant administrator. A stipend from the grant is reserved for the grant administrator.
3. Linda Bauer is the grant comptroller and is paid a stipend from the grant.
4. Larry Ulery serves as liaison and receives a stipend from the grant.
5. Kristi Straw, “CSAP Providing Opportunities for Students to Help,” *Student Movement* (January 15, 1997).
6. Harry C. Payne, “Can or Should a College Teach Virtue?” *Liberal Education* 82:4 (Fall 1996), p. 21.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
8. Robert D. Putnam, “Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital,” *Journal of Democracy* 6:1 (January 1995), p. 66.
9. They also can be contacted by phone at (800) 808-SERV (7378); by E-mail <serve@maroon.tc.umn.edu>; and via the World Wide Web at <<http://www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu>>.
10. URL <<http://csf.colorado.edu/sl/alphaguide.html>>.

1995/1996 Awardees for “S” Classes at Andrews University

Lenore Brantley	EDPC545	Administration of Guidance Services
Paul Brantley	EDCI519	Field Work in Curriculum and Instruction
Shirley Freed	EDTE420	Diagnostic and Corrective Reading
Elsie Jackson	EDPC656	Assessment of Children
Carole Kilcher	COMM456	Group Dynamics and Leadership
Kimberly Pichot	MDTG444	Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations
Laun Reinholtz	CNST200	Construction Repair and Service
Arlene Saliba	NRSG305	Physical Assessment
Curt VanderWaal	SOSR345	Projects in Community Intervention
Elizabeth Wallace	RELG360	Topics in Religion—Spiritual Healing

1996/1997 Awardees

Luanne Bauer	COMM460	Principles of Development
Larry Burton	EDTE457	Elementary Methods: Science/Health
Georgina Hill	ENGL407	Literature for Children
Eileen Hutchins	MUPF164-464	Applied Music—Piano
Katherine Koudelle-Joslin	AGRI345	Issues in Animal Agriculture, Research, and Medicine
Oystein LaBianca	BHSC100	Philosophy of Service
Arpad Ronaszegi	ARCH356	Intermediate Architectural Design II
Rilla Taylor	NRSG324	Perspectives of Nursing II
David Village	PHTH520	Geriatrics