Learning Together: University of Alabama and Walker County

Summer 2011

Walker Area Community Foundation
Paul Kennedy and Cristy Moody

UA New College Student Interns
Amelia Brock, Abbie Hyche, Kelsey Kimberly, Sarah Watson

UA New College Faculty
Lane Busby McLellan
From the front porch to the forefront of education...
Finding Possibilities
Through Partnership
Components for UA New College Community-Based Research Internship in Walker County

- Embedded Community Experience
- Survey of Academic Literature
- Student Learning Exchanges
- Local Individual or Team Projects
Live with host families as a Walker County resident for the summer
Live All Things
JASPER
Work alongside community members to address local concerns
Survey of Academic Literature

- 10 am - 2 pm class in Jasper one day each week
- Class taught by UA professors and guest speakers
- Learning exchange lunch
- Subjects covered
  - Non-Profit Management & Grant Writing
  - Community-Based Research Methods
  - Civic Engagement Principles and Practices
Student Learning Exchanges
Local Individual or Team Projects

Objectives

• Develop and execute project designed in collaboration with local nonprofit partner

• Work 200 on-site hours with a local nonprofit

• Write a grant proposal for a specific community project for local nonprofit
SUMMER 2011 PROJECTS

INTERNS AND NONPROFIT PARTNERS

Tornado Long-Term Recovery Committee of Walker County
Partner – Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) of Walker County, Paul Kennedy, Chair
UA Intern - Sarah Watson

Creativity Camp for Children with Autism
Partner – The ARC of Walker County, Angela Washington, Director of Children’s Services
UA Intern - Kelsey Kimberly

English Camp for elementary age, non-native speakers in Jasper City Schools
Partners – Walker Area Community Foundation and Jasper City Schools, Cristy Moody, Director of Operations, WACF and Suzanne Snow, Principal of TR Simmons Elementary School
UA Interns - Amelia Brock and Abbie Hyche
English Language Summer Camp
Project Goals

• Reach out to the Latino/Latina community
• Address problems facing ESL students
• Improve students' reading, writing, and speaking skills
• Increase students' confidence level
• Foster a comfortable learning environment
What do the kids have to say about camp?
Interns

Lessons Learned

• How to implement the practices of civic engagement learned in the classroom.

• How to develop effective programming.

• How to make use of available resources.

• The importance of community partnerships.
Recommendations for Enhancing Internship Program and Partnership

Begin traveling to Walker County during spring semester to build relationships and set up projects so interns are familiar with the community and nonprofit partners when they get there in June.

Begin matching host families to interests of students via spring semester Meet-and-Greets.

Begin summer internship with a retreat.
Recommendations - continued

Have a Teaching Assistant (TA) live in Walker County to organize for interns:

- fun weekend activities in the community

- additional volunteer projects

- exchanges with WACF staff for mentoring and for developing sense of connection and responsibility to represent WACF and keep them informed of intern whereabouts and general activities outside of meetings.

- trips out into areas of the county where interns are not working

- chances to meet community members from a broader range of incomes (ex: Covered-dish Dinners or Meet-and-Greets).

- opportunities to meet local people of similar ages, e.g. AmeriCorps VISTAS, Bevill students, etc.

- weekly informal meals with interns (and maybe UA professor) to relax and debrief, so weekly learning exchanges and class time with professor and guest speakers can focus on specific issues - and meet fewer hours!
Recommendations - continued

Instead of only 15 hours/week increase the number of nonprofit service hours to 25/week. Interns need to go into the nonprofit office or “on-site” almost every day. This will increase opportunities to make connections locally and forge a stronger connection to the nonprofit.

Have interns eat with other non-hosting families once a week and the TA once a week to relieve meal burden of host families.

Brand the program for long term purposes - NEED A NAME!
POSSIBILITIES OF PARTNERSHIP?

ENDLESS!