



University Service Learning

WINTER 2011 NEWSLETTER

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\$20 Changed My Life: Romonia Dixon, Boys and Girls Clubs of America's 2010-2011 National Youth of The Year

Romonia Dixon, better known as Mona, was named Boys and Girls Clubs of America's (BGCA) National Youth of the Year in September 2010, rising up through local, state and regional levels to win the honor. She acts as spokesperson and motivational speaker, and has rubbed elbows with the likes of Denzel Washington, Ashanti, Cuba Gooding, Jr., Martin Sheen, and of course, President Obama (see left). A supply chain management major at ASU and dedicated volunteer in addition to her duties as National Youth of the Year, Mona reflects on how her life's events brought her to where she is today.



Mona with President Obama in the Oval Office

“Twenty dollars changed my life,” she says. After being homeless for a period of time while growing up, Mona and her family were able to move into Section 8 housing and lived behind the Boys and Girls Clubs of the East Valley in Tempe. “It looked like fun, so after I’d been living there a year, I went up to a lady there and asked her how I could become a member,” Mona remembers.

“She told me it was \$20 a year, which I couldn’t afford, so I started to walk away.” The lady must have seen something in Mona’s face, because she called out “Wait! Come back!” She ended up paying the fee for Mona to become a member that year. Now, BGCA awards Mona over \$100,000 in scholarships to attend ASU.

A point of pride for Mona is “getting to show what the product of the Boys and Girls Clubs is” by representing the 4.2 million kids who are part of BGCA worldwide. As part of her service learning work for USL 210, her current project at the Tempe site is to establish ongoing clothing donations to help kids who are in the same situation she was. “Life is not about obstacles; it’s about how you overcome them,” Mona reflects. “People use their backgrounds as an excuse. Growing up being homeless is not my excuse, but is my motivation to strive for my greatest potential.”

USL Featured in President’s Community Service Honor Roll

Arizona State University was named to the 2010 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with Distinction by the Corporation for National and Community Service. Service Learning was a prominent feature of the application. In 2009-2010, 235 students in of service, while 225 America Reads student metro Phoenix communities.



The Honor Roll recognizes higher education institutions that reflect the values of exemplary community service and achieve meaningful outcomes in their communities. Selection to the Honor Roll is recognition from the highest levels of the federal government of the commitment to service and civic engagement on our campus and in our nation. Congratulations to ASU and to all the students who serve our community!

ASU Math Department's Service Learning Class Helps 6th Graders Exceed Arizona Math Standards



Nahomy Bojorquez (left) and Nordia Matthews work on fractions together

“Dare to reach out your hand into the darkness, to pull another hand into the light.”

-Norman B. Rice, first African American mayor of Seattle

“Our goal is to eliminate math anxiety,” states Olga Klem-DeLeon, 6th grade teacher at Sunland Elementary School in Phoenix. “Mrs. K’s” classes have done more than that, judging by the AIMS (Arizona’s Instrument to Measure Standards) test scores, which are reported in terms of four performance levels. On a scale ranging from “Falls Far Below” to “Exceeds,” 22 out of 29 students in her class last year exceeded AIMS standards, with six students earning perfect scores. Her students also earned runner-up status at the regional 6th grade Math Challenge in early April 2011.

Mrs. K’s secret is the ASU tutors from Darcy White’s MTE 402 Service Learning class. Twice a week, nine ASU students travel to South Phoenix. Each week a different tutor is assigned to create and teach the lesson plan for the day; each of the tutors works on the day’s exercises with a small group of 3-4 students. “Kids feel safer in a small group,” explains Mrs. K. “The tutor is not evaluating them, and they have someone with whom they can practice and get reinforcement on their skills.”

Mrs. K and Mrs. White do not run a traditional classroom. They emphasize hands-on work, discovery, and inquiry, including keeping year-long math journals and an electronic portfolio of learning. But the greatest credit belongs to the tutors. “These tutors are the biggest gift that have been given to me as a teacher. I could never place a value on it,” Mrs. K declared. “What it does for my kids, I could never do.”

Lizbeth Romero, Rebeca Escobar, Carlos Garcia, and others look on as ASU tutor Andrew Bumgardner writes a word problem on the board



Home Delivered Meals Program a Delicious Success

Tempe Community Action Agency Home Delivered Meal Program (TCAA HDM) delivers over 200 meals daily to the doors of homebound seniors and disabled adult residents of Tempe and Scottsdale. The primary purpose of the TCAA HDM program is to increase and maintain the well-being and self sufficiency of the elderly and disabled by delivering a nutritious noonday meal to the individual’s residence. The meal delivery also provides a wellness check opportunity for those who have limited outside contact.

The TCAA HDM program operates with a small, dedicated staff, but relies heavily on the support of volunteers from the community to function as delivery drivers. ASU Service Learning students assist the program as volunteers while acquiring valuable real world experience. TCAA’s current University Service Learning student, Skyler LaLone, is a great example of how the ASU program connects students with local non-profit organizations to provide meaningful impact in the community.

Of her experience, Skyler says, “Participating in the home delivered meals program has been an incredible learning experience for me. It has given me the chance to meet people of varying ages and backgrounds with whom I normally would not have the opportunity to interact. Interacting with these wonderful people has taught me valuable lessons in communicating with others while encouraging me to discover our similarities rather than our differences.”

She continues, “Most of all, this experience has made me recognize the need for programs like this and how important they are for hundreds of people in the community who would not be able to function without them.”



Another delicious, nutritious meal from TCAA is ready for delivery from Skyler LaLone

Kelly Wanless Helps Kick-Off Fall at New Way Academy

For 43 years, New Way Academy, a 501(c)(3) school, has taught children with learning differences to reach their potential. A learning difference is a neurobiological disorder which affects a person's ability to speak, listen, read, write, recall, organize information or do math. The school teaches students in grades K-12 how to manage or remedy their learning difference and be successful in academics and in life. They may have dyslexia, ADHD, ADD, Asperger's Syndrome or motor skills challenges.

New Way Academy welcomed Kelly Wanless from Kick-Off, where all of New Way's families come to event was a complete success. Kelly served on the tored the Dunk Tank and JAIL. Kelly has also written



ASU University Service Learning to help plan the Fall together for a Western Barbecue and Hoedown. This registration and welcoming committees and monitored articles and designed brochures for the Fall Newsletter.

Kelly is currently working on designing the tour and collateral materials for our POWER OF POTENTIAL Tour Program, where community leaders are invited to tour our campus and meet the wonderful students and teachers at New Way Academy. The tours are held on Wednesdays throughout the year. The tours culminate with a gala in April at the Bentley Projects in Downtown Phoenix on April 21, 2012. New Way Academy is proud of Kelly and its partnership with University Service Learning!

New Path Leads Roci Doncheva to Perfect Fit with USL



Roci Doncheva,
University Service
Learning

Even as a Design Studies and Management major, Roci couldn't have drawn up the twists and turns that have happily brought her to University Service Learning. After tutoring and supervising tutors with America Reads/America Counts, plus a part time job as an Activity Coordinator for an after-school site in Mesa, however, she found it hard to leave. In the Spring of 2011 Roci worked as a Management Intern for the afterschool tutoring program and USL was excited to hire her on full-time as Administrative Assistant at the end of the Spring semester.

"I volunteered as I could, but I didn't know a lot about Service Learning before I started tutoring," Roci admitted. "Now I really enjoy being able to share what I have." She recalls one time she taught a boy to tie his shoes. The next time she came to the site, the boy came up to her and crowed, "Roci! Look! I tied my shoes!" "It was simple to me, but it was huge to him," Roci recalls.

These days, Roci's work is far from simple, but she keeps University Service Learning running seamlessly, which comes as no surprise to those who know her. "Every job that Roci has held in this program, she's exceeded expectations," says Dana Brown of America Reads. "You know that you always get 110% effort with Roci." USL couldn't have imagined a more perfectly designed fit.

University Service Learning Quick Facts

USL 210 / 410 / 402: <http://servicelearning.asu.edu/internships>

Students learn about their community and the effects of social injustice through weekly seminars, coursework, and 70-100 hours of community service at an approved Title I school or community organization. Students address a broad range of needs including education, health care, immigration, social services, environmental concerns, poverty, homelessness, and much more.

America Reads/Counts: <http://servicelearning.asu.edu/america-reads>

Offers paid positions to students receiving Federal Work Study aid. Students tutor and mentor children attending under-resourced schools in reading, writing, math, and other academic subjects.

During Academic Year 2010-11, 608 students contributed 45,948 hours of community service while participating in University Service Learning programs.

Changemaker @ ASU

Get the scoop on **Changemaker Central** - the place to learn about all of ASU's community and national service, Service Learning, and entrepreneurship programs!

Changemaker Central is open on all four campuses and serves as a key gathering space for ASU's social innovators

ASU has over 600 student organizations, 120 classes on entrepreneurship, plus 3 funding opportunities for students to develop ideas and ventures

The *10,000 Solutions Project* aims to see what can be accomplished when passionate people join a collaborative community that builds upon each other's innovative ideas

Changemaker Central's mission is to develop and nurture students by providing the opportunities and resources to inspire, catalyze and sustain student-driven social change.

8 Student Leaders comprise the foundation of Changemaker, while 26 Change Agents across the four campuses keep things running on a day-to-day basis

Students who enter the *Innovation Challenge* can win up to \$10,000 to make their innovative project, prototype, venture or community partnership ideas happen.

Email changemaker@asu.edu to learn how to get involved!

Thank you to our major donors:

**Jim & JoAnn Armstrong
Armstrong Family Foundation
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Thank you to all our amazing Community Partners for hosting our ASU students!

THANK YOU!

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