

*LEDUC CENTER  
ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012*



*Building the Bridge Between Learning & Community*

## WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

The Leduc Center for Civic Engagement at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth is proud of the work that our students, faculty, staff, and community partners have achieved this academic year. It has been a banner year for civic engagement as UMass Dartmouth was recognized as among the elite Universities in the country (top 10) by the Presidents Higher Education Honor Roll. More recently, Washington Monthly ranked UMass Dartmouth 25th in the nation for Masters granting Universities for our efforts at civic engagement, keeping education affordable, and serving our community.

In the 2011-12 academic year, UMass Dartmouth students performed **192,133 hours** of service in our community. Eighty-four percent of our student body was involved in this work. The value of that service is estimated to be over \$5.2 million. Roughly one half of that service was service-learning (96,220 hours) - classroom-based instruction accompanied by student work that has a direct benefit to the community. The remainder of the hours came as community service by volunteers involved in student organizations, clubs, and service activities organized by the Leduc Center. This report highlights some of that work. These figures and the aforementioned accolades are impressive, but the impact of this work is even more impressive because it is cojointly empowering our students and changing the lives of people in our community.



This spring we had the honor of dedicating our Center as the *Robert and Jeanne Leduc Center for Civic Engagement*. The generosity of these two selfless individuals will ensure that actively engaging our students in the community will continue to be the hallmark of a UMass Dartmouth education.

*M.H. Roy*

Matthew H. Roy, Ph.D.  
Director of the Leduc Center

## SERVICE-LEARNING

### *Defining Service-learning and Linking to UMD Strategic Plan*

Service-Learning is defined at UMass Dartmouth as a pedagogical method used in credit-bearing courses that is designed with the dual mission of:

- a) Student attainment of discipline-specific knowledge through creatively designed, active-learning community-based projects and
- b) Community benefit through the thoughtful identification and completion of community-based service.

The methodology of Service-Learning requires a clear link between academic objectives and service experience that is mutually beneficial to the goals of the course and community need. Student reflection as a means to gain a greater understanding of course content and a broader sense of civic responsibility is also necessary.

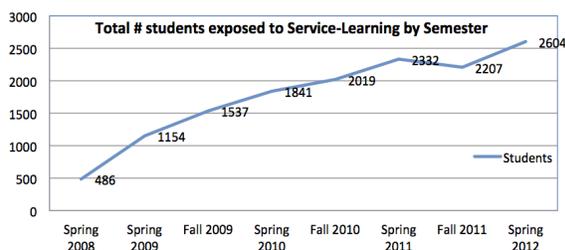


Figure I

Figure I shows the total number of students exposed to service-learning each semester. The figure shows a positive trend of increased student exposure to service-learning. In the Spring of 2012, we reached a new high with 2,604 students exposed to service-learning pedagogy.

Service-Learning (SL) and civic engagement are clearly identified in the University's strategic plan as we seek to "utilize the intellectual capacity of our faculty and students to positively impact the community." This manifests itself in a goal that every student will graduate with a minimum of one service-learning experience.

### *Faculty Fellows Program*

Students do not get exposed to SL pedagogy without faculty understanding of and commitment to this method of teaching. We have always recognized the need to build internal capacity to offer SL classes via the development of a faculty knowledgeable in SL methods. The primary means to do that has been through the Service-Learning Faculty Fellows Program. The program has grown from 6 faculty members in FY2008/09 to a total of 43 faculty members involved today. However, not all faculty using SL are SL Fellows. Figure II shows the increase in faculty, classes, and class sections offered from last year (2010/11) to this year (2011/12).

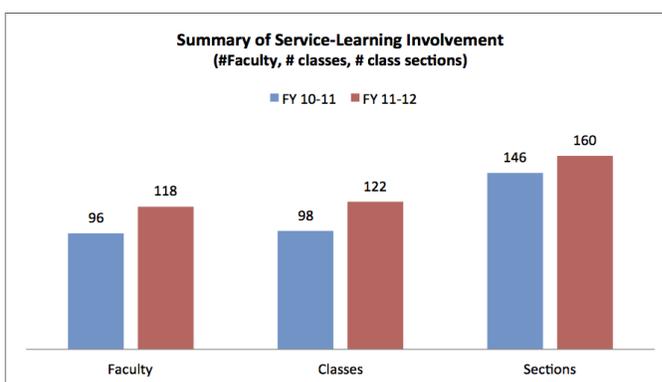


Figure II

The data shows an increase in the number of faculty offering service-learning classes, number of different classes offered and the number of class sections offered. Roughly 2/3rds of the class of 2012 met the goal of graduating with at least 1 SL experience.

## SERVICE-LEARNING

### Assessment of SL

Each year the Leduc Center surveys students across all the colleges to determine the impact of SL classes on civic knowledge, skills, and abilities; class learning objectives, and desire to stay at UMD. The data has been overwhelmingly positive. This academic year we surveyed 424 students.

Sixty-three percent of respondents reported that their SL class experience had a strong positive impact on their attitudes regarding the importance of being involved in a program that works on community problems, being concerned about local community issues, and taking responsibility for finding solutions. College participants reported increases in their civic skills following their participation in service-learning classes. The following table shows the difference in the civic skills of participants before and after program participation. The means below are based on a 5 point scale, with 1 being “I cannot do this at all” to 5 being “I can do this very well.” Mean scores of skills before and after program participation were compared using a paired samples t-test. The t-test shows that there is a positive relationship between participation in the service-learning classes and reported gains in civic skills relating to addressing social problems.

**Table I**

<b>Civic skills</b>	<b>Pre- Mean Skill Score</b>	<b>Post- Mean Skill Score</b>
Organize other students to take action on a community problem*	2.66	3.53
Know who to contact about a community problem *	2.45	3.44
Persuade other students that a community problem is important *	2.62	3.47
Create a plan to address the issue *	2.68	3.64
Get people to care about the problem *	2.75	3.59
Organize and run a meeting *	2.79	3.66
Make a public speech *	2.83	3.53
Find and examine research related to the issue *	3.03	3.74
Express my views in front of a group of people *	3.03	3.76
Apply what I learned in my service-learning class*	2.70	3.84

\* p<.001

Perhaps more importantly, Table II shows that an overwhelming majority of students (65%) responded that their service-learning class is associated with their desire to graduate from UMD.

**Table II - SL and Retention**

<b>Student Retention “As a result of my service learning class here...”</b>	<b>Cum Totals: Agree &amp; Strongly Agree N</b>	<b>% of total</b>
I will be returning next semester or year	175	41.3
I am more involved in the campus community	150	35.4
I have gotten friends involved in service	165	38.9
I feel a part of the UMD campus	213	50.2
I am choosing to graduate from UMD	274	64.6
I feel part of the local community	243	57.3

In addition to the aforementioned findings on retention, 62% of respondents answered that they are “thinking about/preparing for a career that helps my community.”

The University of Massachusetts Dartmouth has made great strides toward achieving its Service- Learning strategic goals. We are recognized in our region and nationally as being at the forefront of engaged educational processes. There has been significant growth in faculty involvement and co-jointly a considerable increase in the number of class offerings using this pedagogy. We have grown service-learning to a point where 62% of our graduating class in 2012 was exposed to this pedagogy. Service-learning classes have helped the community address critical issues of educational attainment, environment, community development, youth development, health, economic development, and public safety.

Perhaps most importantly an assessment of SL classes has shown its positive impact on student civic participation and skills, connection to UMD, intention to continue and graduate from UMD, and intent to embark upon a career that helps others. Clearly, SL classes are assisting the University in meeting its goals of educating our students to be active citizens beyond graduation.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE

### *AmericaREADS*

Our AmericaREADS program places college student tutors in community centers, local middle and elementary schools to provide classroom support and individual attention to struggling and at-risk students. Our program continues to grow with the assistance of transportation services, improved training, and a streamlined application process. During the 2011-12 academic year, 160 UMass Dartmouth students provided over 17,600 hours of tutoring and mentoring in the region. This year's sites included:

Alma del Mar Charter School, New Bedford  
Boys and Girls Club of Fall River  
Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Bedford  
Harbour House Homeless Shelter, New Bedford  
Samuel Watson Elementary, Fall River  
Sargent William H. Carney Memorial Academy, New Bedford  
St. Andrew's after-school program, New Bedford  
William S. Greene Elementary School, Fall River  
YMCA of Greater Fall River



Preliminary reports indicate high UMass Dartmouth student satisfaction and that our partner sites believe the mentoring/college positive value of the program is of high importance.

### *College Positive*

The College Positive Program is dedicated to helping local youth achieve the dream of a college education by assisting and advising students on the college-bound path. This year we provided transportation services for our UMass Dartmouth students and implemented a new curriculum to engage Durfee students. In total, ten UMass Dartmouth students assisted eighty Durfee High Juniors and Seniors with the college search, selection, and application process.

For the second year, we received a Massachusetts Campus Compact\*Summer VISTA grant to help us engage over 200 middle school students in our college positive program with workshops and specialized campus tours.

### *Leadership*

We applied for and received 6 Massachusetts Campus Compact AmeriCorps Leaders In Service (ALIS) awards. ALIS offers our students a \$1,000 education award in exchange for 300 hours of service. Our AmeriCorps Leaders worked at Harbour House, the Community Economic Development Center, Allen's Pond Wildlife Sanctuary, the United Way of Greater New Bedford, and marketing/advertising for SouthCoast Serves.

We successfully placed 30 Endeavor scholars at service sites that resulted in 4,510 hours of service.

### *VITA*

Our Volunteer In Tax Assistance (VITA) Program is run jointly with the Community Economic Development Center. The program is sponsored by the IRS and generally offers free tax help to people who make \$50,000 or less and need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. Our program successfully recruited 34 UMass Dartmouth students who completed the IRS training and a total of 1,632 service hours at the Community Economic Development Center of Southeastern MA resulting in a total of \$1,691,629 in tax refunds.

## SOUTHCOAST SERVES

SouthCoast Serves (SCS) is a collaborative facilitated by the Leduc Center that fosters service and volunteerism to meet the needs of our community by leveraging resources, expertise and capacity to maximize impact. SCS continues to grow and develop, with the addition of many new partners and events, including:

### *9/11 10th Anniversary Event at the YMCA Dartmouth Share the Harvest program*

- Dedication of a memorial cherry garden
- Harvest of 4.5 tons of fresh vegetables (the equivalent of 11 weeks of work in just two hours)
- Making dozens of cards for our troops abroad.
- In total, 222 volunteers served over 444 hours.

### *MLK Day of Service*

- 537 volunteers served over 2,000 hours preparing over 500 “gift packages” of new and gently used donations for distribution to needy children and families in the region.
- Launch of MLK Jr. Day pledge resulted in 30 individuals pledging 1,500 hours for 2012
- Emergency preparedness presentations were made to over 100 individuals
- Completion of an MLK video project, featuring an original spoken word piece, by the community-based organization Dream Out Loud

### *Time Banking presentation by Dr. Edgar Cahn*

- Held in conjunction with UMass Dartmouth’s Sustainability Office
- Successful application for a two-person VISTA grant for three years to develop time banking programs in the region

### *Inaugural National Volunteer Week Celebration*

- Involved 386 volunteers from UMass Dartmouth and the local communities who served 1,433 hours
- Impacts included:



- Clean up of the Mass Audubon Stone Barn Farm Property and preparation of their garden for planting
- Transplanting cedar trees in the Copicut Woods in Fall River
- Planting a peach tree orchard at the YMCA Farm in Dartmouth
- Creating a mural with local artist Lynne LaBerge at the Community Economic Development Center that expanded to a makeover project utilizing an additional 15 volunteers for over 45 hours and leveraging over \$700 in resources.
- Preparing and planting flower and vegetable gardens at the Boys and Girls Club of Greater New Bedford
- Cleaning up the streets of Ward 3 in New Bedford as a part of Operation Clean Sweep
- Helping children and families of the local community at ArtWorks! in New Bedford make earth art in honor of Earth Day, which was then displayed around the City of New Bedford.
- Completing a large community art project utilizing bottle caps, collected by SCS partner, Mercy Meals, to create a colorful 3x4 mermaid that was given to Mercy Meal to brighten up their space.

### *Marketing Analysis by Professor Jack Chopoorian*

- Resulted in the plan to launch a “SouthCoast 60” program encouraging area residents and students to complete 60 hours of service during the year.

## SPEAKER SERIES, SUMMIT & SERVICE PLACEMENTS

The past year has been one of creation and growth, with the start of new programs, extensive community outreach and the beginning of the construction of the infrastructure of a New England-wide network for internships and job placements for our graduate students. Last year, we held our first public interest law panels, guest speaker series, as well as our annual civic engagement summit, exposing UMass Dartmouth students to many different aspects of and avenues for civic engagement.

### *Public Interest Law Panel Discussions*

Panel discussions are hosted monthly at the Law School to expose students to various practitioners in the numerous areas of public interest law. While the panel discussions are open to the entire student body, it is particularly geared towards our Public Interest Law Fellows. Students with this fellowship are required to work in public interest law area for four years after graduation. Some of the topics that were covered were criminal prosecution and defense, municipal law, court administration, and legislative issues.



### *Guest Speaker Series*

Guest speakers are hosted at the main campus and/or the law school. In November 2011, we hosted Attorney David Simas at both the main campus and the law school, where he shared his experiences as a local resident who has worked for the Massachusetts Governor and is currently working for the President of the United States. He spoke to a class on leadership as well as the law school student body.

### *Internships and Placements*

More than 50 graduate students were placed in both paid and unpaid internships from July 2011 to date. This was achieved through a variety of different programs, including the law school field placement program, summer stipend program, and the traditional internship placement program. A substantial amount of time was spent building the infrastructure to dramatically increase the internship opportunities for graduate students over the course of the next several years.

### *Civic Engagement Summit*

The fourth annual Civic Engagement Summit was held at Woodland Commons on April 26th with over 200 attendees. The event included two keynote speakers, Dr. Robert Caret, UMass President and Shirley Sagawa, the first Chief Operating and Policy Officer for the Corporation for National and Community Service. The speakers were followed by workshops from university and community partners about their individual service-learning partnerships.



## GRANT WORK

From July 2011 to date we have received \$63,100 in grants, we have two grants outstanding totaling \$126,000 and applied for an additional nine grants that were not funded totaling \$5,296,491. We received \$24,000 from the Commonwealth Corps to have eight university students work in elementary and middle schools in Fall River that will engage 240 students in service-learning, community engagement, and increase aspirations for higher education with our UMD CARES (Community Action Requires Engaging Students) program. We also received \$1,500 for MLK Week and \$5,000 for National Volunteer Week and engaged over 386 volunteers (students and community members) in numerous activities over a time span of six days.

We've applied for \$89,160 in funding from State Farm to start a bicycle recycle program in the Fall River Public Schools (not funded), \$50,000 from Raytheon Corporation for STEM related service-learning projects in the Fall River Public Schools (pending), \$10,000 from the Association of American Colleges and Universities to measure the psycho-social well-being of students in thematic community service housing compared to students in non-community service housing (not funded), and finally, a \$236,000 grant from the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education to increase service-learning and community service opportunities for students and increase the number of Service-Learning Fellows in each department that incorporate service-learning as a pedagogy into their curriculum (pending).

On-going projects include the final year of our \$1.4 million five campus grant from Learn and Serve that increased service-learning, economic development initiatives, and mentoring and tutoring of K-12 students; the LEADS (Leadership for Educational Attainment Developed through Service) program with \$30,000 in funding from Bristol County Savings Bank that engaged 150 students this past year in service-learning projects that address community issues, such as, hunger and homelessness; a collaboration with the New Bedford and Fall River School Department and the Office of Sustainability to have 160 students, 80 eighth grade students from New Bedford and 80 fourth through sixth grade students from Fall River, attend the summer sustainability camp and get a tour of campus; and finally, working with the five UMass campuses on a \$1 million grant proposal to the Kresge Foundation.

The LEADS program is a collaboration between the Leduc Center and the Fall River and New Bedford Public school systems. LEADS is designed to empower middle school children to believe in themselves while they actively work to make the community a better place to live. Students develop a service-learning project that is important to them through research of their community needs. This year, they chose hunger and homelessness. After defining their project, the LEADS team members (college students) create fun activities that integrate leadership, communication, and teamwork skills, where children also learn about the importance of education and self-discovery through reflection.



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