

# REFLECTIONS

## REFLECTIONS

On Learning and Experience

University of Illinois at Springfield

Newsletter of Experiential and Service Learning Programs

Fall 2008

### AST TRAVELS ABROAD: A Missions Trip To Africa with UIS Student Howard Kang



The AST Office has access to a number of opportunities that allow UIS students to travel and work abroad to earn academic credit. One student took advantage of an such an opportunity and found a great reward from his experience. UIS Business Administration student Howard Kang performed his AST during the summer of 2008 with New Missions Systems International, a missions group that allowed him to travel and work in the African nation of Kenya. Howard spent over 2 months living and working in a Maasi village, where he taught 5th grade students and worked with the native people in building their community. His AST was a ‘life-changing experience’ that gave him the opportunity to experience both working as a team and a chance for self-discovery.

For Howard, the experience allowed him to learn about himself and find value in things that we may often overlook in our modern society. “Being so far removed from America, I really just had time to learn about myself and what I wanted to do, to find the things that were important to me. Now that I’ve been there, my whole direction in life has changed.” As one can imagine, the African landscape doesn't offer the comforts often found in modern America. The lack of comforts Howard noticed were a lack of electricity, running water and other basic amenities that many of us take for granted. Although it was challenging, the reward of overcoming these challenges and seeing your hard work come to fruition made the effort worthwhile.

Howard is currently planning to join New Missions Systems after his graduation this coming May. For other students seeking to do an AST, Howard encourages them to find an interest and once you have “to hold nothing back, give all of yourself to serve.” His story is proof that life-changing experiences can come even while in far-off places.

**AST POSSIBILITIES: PAST AND PRESENT AST PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

182nd Airlift Wing Security Forces	Gateway Foundation	Kerber, Eck, & Braekel LLP	Richland Community College	UIS Veteran's Affairs Office
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library	Gathiga Children's Hope Home Africa	Ketterman Communications	Rivstor Real Estate Development	UIS Visual Arts Ceramic Lab
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum	Globetrotters Engineering Corp	Kevin Jones Properties	Rockstock Company	United Cerebral Palsy
Advanced Correctional Healthcare	Gorenz and Associates, Ltd.	Komatsu America Corporation	Rogers' HR Consulting	United States Secret Service
Affina	Gottlieb Memorial Hospital	L & F Electric, Inc.	Sangamon Co Community Resources	University of North Carolina
AFLAC	Green Lincoln Mercury Mazda	Lakeshore Learning Center	Sangamon County Adult Probation	US Cellular
Amcure Bank	Greene Studios of Tucson, Arizona	Laketown Animal Hospital	Sangamon County ETSD (911)	UTG Inc.
American Lung Association	Gregory A. Toelle CPA PC	Legislative Information Systems	Sangamon County Juvenile Center	VeriFone, Inc.
American Red Cross-Illinois Chapter	Grundy County Courthouse	Lincoln Home National Historic Site	Sangamon County Sherriff's Dept	W. W. Grainger, Inc.
Archer Daniels Midland Company	GSI Group	Lincoln Land Community College	Scott County Commissioners	Wal-Mart
Assoc of Illinois Electric Cooperatives	Hampton Inn	Lincoln Memorial Garden	Scoville Zoo Decatur	WAND TV
Avanti! Gift Boutique	Hanson Professional Services, Inc.	Little Angels Daycare Center	Sears Holding	Washington Construction
Big Brothers Big Sisters	Health Hero Network	Los Angeles City College Skill Ctr	Shop n' Save	Washington County Sheriffs Dept
BKD LLP	Henson Robinson Zoo	LPGA State Farm Classic	Sikich LLC	Wellpoint, Inc.
Boys & Girls Clubs of Springfield	Home Builders Association of Illinois	MADD Illinois Court Monitoring	SIU School of Medicine	WICS News Channel 20
Boys and Girls Club of Bethalto	Hyperion Computers	Management Resource Specialists	SIU SimmonsCooper Cancer Institute	
Bright Beginning Childcare	IBM	Mann Urrutia Nelson CPA's	Sojourn Shelter & Services	
Calvary Temple Christian Center	Illini Country Club	Marcom/Bloomington (Pii)	South Side Office of Concern	
Camelot Community Care	Illinois Agricultural Auditing Assoc	Marsha Holzhauser, Atty	Soy Capital Bank & Trust	
Camp ASPIRE	Illinois Assoc Technical Accident	Marshall Unit School District	SPAWAR Systems Charleston South	
Capitel Communications	Investigators	Maxmedia Design Tech, Inc.	Carolina	
Caterpillar, Inc.	Illinois Auditor General's Office	McFarland Mental Health Center	Springfield Art Association	
CEFCU	Illinois Bankers Association	Memorial Health Systems	Springfield Chamber of Commerce	
Central Community Church of God	Illinois Counterdrug Task Force	Merck Undergraduate Research Prog	Springfield College in Illinois	
Child Advocacy Center	Illinois Department of Agriculture	Methodist Medical Center Peoria	Springfield Ctr for Independent Living	
Childrens Healthcare	Illinois Department of Corrections	Mid West Family Broadcasting	Springfield Lawn Barber	
Christian County Sheriff's Office	Illinois Department of Military Affairs	Mid-Central Community Action	Springfield Police Department	
City of Jacksonville Police Dept	Illinois Department of Public Health	Military Intelligence Systems	Springfield Public School Dist 186	
City of Springfield Waste & Recycling	Illinois Department of Revenue	Mission Trip Norway/Iceland	Springfield Urban League	
CNR Consulting, Inc.	Illinois Department of Transportation	Montessori School Training Program	St. Mary's Greenhouse	
City Water Light & Power	Illinois Dept Healthcare & Family	Museum of Funeral Customs	State Bank of Lincoln	
Coast 2 Coast Marketing	Services	National Center for Supercomputers	Stellar Systems, Inc	
Codeworx Design Studio	Illinois Dept of Corrections	National Electrical Contractors Assoc,	Summer SCOPE Spfld School Dist 186	
Colleen Callahan for Congress	Illinois Dept of Natural Resources	National Government Services	Sungard Higher Education	
Comcast Media	Illinois Emergency Mgt Agency	Nestle	Swedish Covenant Hospital	
Community Behavioral Healthcare	Illinois Governor's Office	New Mission Systems Intl (Africa)	Taylorville Correctional Center	
Computing Made Easy	Illinois Manufacturers' Association	NSWC Dahlgren	Tazewell County Juvenile Probation	
Consumers Energy	Illinois Mutual Life Insurance	Office of Congressman Ray LaHood	The Baby Fold Bloomington	
Corporate & Endowment Solutions	Illinois Office of the Governor	Office of State Appellate Defender	The Children's Home Assoc of Illinois	
Country Insurance	Illinois Petroleum Council	Office of U.S. Rep. John Shimkus	The Hope Institute	
Creative Writing Project AST	Illinois Policy Institute	Office of U.S. Senator Barack Obama	The State Journal Register	
Daniel P. Freeseimer, DC	Illinois Prisoner Review Board	Office of U.S. Senator Richard Durbin	Ticomix, Inc	
De Paep Law Office	Illinois Secretary of State	Orbitz Worldwide	TMI Analytical Services, LLC	
Decatur Adult Transition Center	Illinois State Bar Association	Orthotic & Prosthetic Assoc Central Ill	Tower of Refuge	
Decatur Police Department	Illinois State Historical Society	OSF Saint Francis Medical Center	Town & Country Bank	
Design Ideas, Inc	Illinois State Library	PATH Crisis Hotline Center	U.S. Rep Phil Hare Washington DC	
Devine for State Senate Campaign	Illinois State Museum Art Dept	Peoples Bank and Trust	UBS Financial Services, Inc	
Disney World College Program	Illinois State Museum Geology Dept	Peoria County Juvenile Detention	UIS Athletics Program	
Dixon Police Department	Illinois State Police	Peoria County Juvenile Probation	UIS Biochemistry Research Project	
Dominick's Finer Foods	Illinois State Police Analytical Support	Peoria County Sheriff's Office	UIS Campus Garden Project	
Downstate Illinois Innocence Project	Illinois State Police Dist 9	Peoria Emergency Communication Ctr	UIS Campus Relations Department	
Dr. James David D.M.D	Illinois State Police Motor Vehicle Unit	Peoria Police Department	UIS Criminal Justice Department	
Dreams for Seniors	Ill State Police Terrorism Taskforce	Peoria T-Mart	UIS French Class Teacher's Aide	
DSM Desotech	Illinois State Senate Democrats	Plano City Municipal Court Judge	UIS Graphic Design Computer Lab	
E! Entertainment	Illinois Treasurer's Office	Plum Creek Supportive Living	UIS Journal	
Eck, Schafer, & Punke, LLP	Illinois, Upward Mobility Program	Police Benevolent & Protective Assoc	UIS Library	
Ekam Yoga Studio (Madrid, Spain)	INET	Prairie Eye and Lasik Center	UIS Microbiology Lab	
Elizabeth Ann Seton Program	Isringhausen Motors	Prairie State Bank and Trust	UIS Office of Student Life	
FCA Manufacturing	ITT Technical Institute	Precinct Committeeman	UIS Police Department	
Federal Companies	Jewish Federation of Chicago	Premier Air Center	UIS Recreation & Athletic Center	
Federated Funeral Directors	JJ Braker & Sons	Rapps Engineering & Applied Science	UIS Service-Learning Program	
Franklin Bank	Johnson Development Company	RE/Max	UIS Student Life Graphic Designer	
Full Service Insurance Agency Inc	Joint Defense Facility Australia	Reg Ellen Machine Corp	UIS Tech Support	
G&D Integrated	K Design Photography	Regional Inst for Community Policing	UIS Theatre Program	
	Karmack, Inc	Richardson Manufacturing	UIS Undergrad Academic Advising	

## Real World Experience!

In the Fall of 2007, UIS Biology major Mindy Weaver performed her AST with the Scoville Zoo in Decatur, Illinois. The following is an interview highlighting her AST experiences.

### Why did you choose to do an AST?

I wanted to gain animal care experience and earn credit toward my degree.

### What were some interesting things that you were able to do?

I learned how to with various animals including Cheetahs, Wolves, camels, birds, monkeys, reptiles and domestic farm animals.

### What were some professional skills you learned that could be applied to your future career choices?

I learned how to provide daily care to all species. I learned how to administer medication. I learned how to provide enrichment to animals in order to make their lives in captivity better. I learned how to prepare diets. I learned how to educate the public about animals and conservation.

### Most exciting?

Our zoo has several animals that were hand raised. This allows us to go in with the animals and interact with them. I also joined the American Association of Zookeepers. This group helps save endangered species.

### What were some challenges you faced?

I worked as a visitor service employee for 8 years before moving over to the zookeeper side. The two positions were very different.

### How did AST help you to decide on your career goals?

I knew exactly what my goals were, but without the AST I may not have been given the opportunity to move.

### What was most rewarding from the experience?

After my AST was complete, one zookeeper moved on to another zoo and I was offered that full time swing keeper position.

### What advice would you give to a student looking into the AST program?

It is a great program!! It not only helps you earn elective credit, but it may be the one thing that gets you the full time position you are looking for. The AST I did at UIS made my dreams possible!

### What are your future plans?

I will stay at Scovill Zoo for several years to gain full time zookeeper experience. Once I have that, my possibilities are endless. I could move to almost any city and find a zookeeper position.



Mindy Weaver with Lexi, a Canadian Lynx.

## APPLIED STUDY TERM...WHY DO IT?!

There are many reasons for you to do an AST. Your Applied Study Term is an opportunity for you to learn from experience and to learn from doing. You will be refining your ability to learn on your own, out of a classroom environment. Those who choose to do an AST are given the opportunity to get out of the lecture and classroom routine and get hands on, real world experience. Focusing on the process of learning will allow you to identify your strengths and weaknesses which can help you to become a well-balanced learner. All of these skills are transferable to any of life's experiences.

Many students have used their AST to advance themselves professionally and/or academically. For example, the AST experience can be a springboard into a new career, or it can be utilized to determine if further graduate study is needed to advance in a particular field. By doing an internship in your major area of study, you have the opportunity to discover if you want a career in that field. A student can use the AST experience as a way to create a whole new aspect to his/her job.

## SERVICE-LEARNING PROGRAM

### Interview with Service-Learning Student

Service-Learning student Rebecca Brown shares her experience:

Q: What type of service project did you do?

*Rebecca: I volunteered my time for Beacon Hope Hospice in Davenport, IA. For my service project, I worked with 14 girls in the Girls Scouts of America to make special crafts for the patients of hospice. The idea behind this project was to make others who were in hospice to smile. The kids loved it, and so did*

Q: How did completing this project change your views about community service (if in fact it did)?

*Rebecca: Until my Grandfather died, I didn't know much about Hospice and how important it is to our community. Through this experience, I learned how necessary it is to be a part of the community, and how we must utilize our knowledge of such organizations as Beacon Hope to help others in need.*

Q: What social issues did you become aware of while participating in this service?

*Rebecca: I learned that unfortunately not a lot of people are comfortable with talking about death, but it is a part of life. Perhaps, if we could learn about organizations that emphasize dignity for those in need, we could come together and realize those that are dying are NOT dead yet, and they need to live life the most comfortable as they can.*



Q: Describe the value of the experience to you.

*Rebecca: I feel this experience has really impacted my life, because it taught me to grow as a person and appreciate the value of life. By helping others in our community, it has left me with hope to help with social change.*

Q: What type of impact do you feel your service project have on the community?

*Rebecca: I feel it made an impact to everyone involve. The younger generations are those who will take care of us in the end. To express kindness, and community service importance, I feel we will have a better change at making a difference.*

Q: How has this experience affected your personal beliefs, values, etc.?

*Rebecca: I have always been raised to "treat others as you would like to be treated". This experience allowed me to give back to the community and really feel that it made a difference for those less fortunate.*

Q: Has the experience had an impact on your future community service plans or your career path?

*Rebecca: This experience has made me want to continue the growth. Personally, it has helped me grow as a person. I am so glad I had this experience and that it gave me a moment in time to touch others life. I know that God put me here to do good to his word. I have learned that the more love you put into everything, the more it will grow.*

*The future depends on what we do in the present. --Mahatma Gandhi*

## Help Others While Recycling Your Old Stuff



The Service-Learning Program is dedicated to building relationships between the University of Illinois at Springfield and the community service agencies in the area. One way that we are fostering these relationships is by collecting various needed items for agencies. The first collection project that the Service-Learning Program has launched is directed at St. John's Breadline, located downtown on 5<sup>th</sup> Street. This project consists of collecting plastic grocery bags and 16oz. or bigger plastic containers for the Breadline. These bags and containers are used to provide carry-out meals and carry-out soup for the consumers. The Breadline goes through dozens of these materials everyday and they are in constant demand.

The Service-Learning Program started collecting for the Breadline at the start of the Spring 2008 semester and the program has seen a lot of support from the faculty, staff, and students at UIS. We have currently donated over 9 thousand plastic grocery bags and 400 plastic containers. Due to the increased interest on campus the Service-Learning Program has initiated 2 more collection-donation projects. We are collecting used printer cartridges for the Habitat for Humanity; this agency recycles the printer cartridges and takes the money and puts it towards building houses for underprivileged families. It may seem like a small effort to collect printer cartridges to pay for a whole house. However, Habitat for Humanity can raise enough money to build a house in three years from just recycling printer cartridges. The other collection project the Service-Learning Program is implementing is a collection of cell phones for Special Olympics. Like Habitat for Humanity, Special Olympic recycles the materials that are donated to them. Special Olympics uses the income they receive from recycling to help pay for all of the programs and events that Special Olympics holds.



### To sum up...

#### What are we collecting?

- Plastic grocery bags and containers for St. John's Breadline
- Used Printer Cartridges for Habitat for Humanity
- Old Cell phones for Special Olympics

#### Where are we collecting?

BRK 482

#### When are we collecting?

Now until the end of Spring 2009 semester



## Community Partner Profile

This year's community partner profile is on the City of Springfield, specifically the Division of City Waste and Recycling, which is managed by Wynne Coplae. Wynne is in charge of administering all waste and recycling programs, which covers a wide variety of activities. She manages service contracts for free yard and waste pick-up, large waste pick-up, as well as reports on waste hauling and recycling. Also a large part of her time is dedicated to public and school education. The mission of the City of Springfield Division of Waste and Recycling is to basically educate people on what services are available and what they can do to decrease their impact on the environment. A large part of fulfilling this mission is administering their annual Environmental Awareness Fair, which has been held for the last 16 years. Another part of the Division of Waste and Recycling's mission is to run those programs that reduce our environmental impact.

The City of Springfield Division of Waste and Recycling works with "anyone and everyone" as Wynne put it. They work a lot with businesses, non-profits and service groups on education and environmental awareness. There is a big focus on youth and the division does a lot of outreach in the schools to get young people informed and involved. Volunteers help the division complete many of its functions, such as waste and recycling tasks and education, like adopt a block program and neighborhood cleanups, but their biggest contribution is at the Environmental Awareness Fair. The Division of Waste and Recycling utilizes volunteers to help with the set-up, running, and clean up of the fair. Wynne reports that it is the volunteers that determine whether or not the event is a success.

Spring 2008 students from the Service-Learning course AST 201: Learning and Serving the Environment assisted with the Environmental Awareness Fair. The students were divided up into three action groups. One group recruited HS students to come and participate in the event and helped with advertising and other tasks at the event. Another group did storm drain stenciling and stenciled "Do not dump, leads to stream" on storm drains in Springfield. A third group recruited businesses to donate printer cartridges to Habitat for Humanity and ran a booth promoting the project at the fair.

So, what can one learn by serving for the City of Springfield Division of Waste and Recycling? As Wynne put it, you learn as much as you give. You learn that a little bit of effort can make a big difference in a community. One thing that Wynne believes that all citizens would benefit from knowing is that everyday counts and every choice matters...things will only get better if we work to make things better and everyone needs to make the daily choices to be more sustainable.



## CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING



### THE CPL EXPERIENCE

Teresa Hunt of Decatur, IL was a participant in the Credit for Prior Learning Program during the fall 2007 semester. Teresa works full-time as Program Coordinator for the Illinois Small Business Development Center at the University of Illinois Extension's Decatur and Champaign locations while attending classes, and she will graduate in spring 2008 with Bachelor of Business Administration degree from UIS.

Teresa first heard about CPL from an informational, campus-wide email, and thought it might be a good fit for meeting her educational needs. She originally decided to take the CPL class, AST 305 Prior Learning Portfolio Development, for the purpose of meeting an elective requirement, but Teresa stated that she had no idea how valuable the course would be for her. The CPL class is online and self-directed and Teresa described how it is each student's responsibility to stay on task and complete the readings and assignments. Teresa said this was valuable to her because it helped not only her writing and communication skills, but also her organizational, multi-tasking skills and time management skills.

As she worked to complete her portfolio, Teresa admitted that she felt some trepidation at times, but that the instructor (Holly McCracken) was always willing to help and was readily available for assistance and feedback. Teresa stated that she gained self-confidence from the completion of her portfolio.

Teresa highly recommends this course to other students, especially non-traditional students. She explained that by taking the course, she was able to evaluate her academic path in depth, and to consider options for her future. Regarding the CPL program and class, Teresa says, "It's a wonderful opportunity for students returning to school to gain credit for learning gained from a work profession and/or community services."



Hailing from Peoria, IL, Patrick Doyle was also a member of the fall 2007 Credit for Prior Learning Program. Patrick holds a degree in graphic design and has been involved in the advertising and marketing fields for over 20 years. For the last 10 years he has co-owned an advertising agency and he is also an advertising consultant with the Marine Engine Division of Caterpillar in Mossville, IL. When Patrick is not busy with his advertising duties he enjoys spending time with his wife and 2 young sons. He also enjoys hiking, traveling, reading, writing, woodworking and cooking.

Patrick first heard about CPL from a coworker. Because he had several past learning experiences, he thought CPL might be a good path to take to earn credit. Patrick narrowed down his experiences and decided to focus on developing his CPL portfolio around his prior small business ownership. Patrick stated that by developing his CPL portfolio, it gave him an "opportunity for me to academically legitimize a valuable period of intense learning in my life."

To Patrick, writing his learning autobiography was the most rewarding part of his portfolio development, because he was able to look back and see where certain events or people contributed to his life learning, although he did not realize it at the time. He described this as a "sense of discovery" that to him, was very exciting. Participating in the CPL program also allowed Patrick to realize that he has enjoyed numerous, unique and interesting learning experiences, and that he actually enjoys the process of learning!

Patrick said that as a result of completing the CPL course, AST 305 Prior Learning Portfolio Development, he has learned to seek out "teaching moments" in practically every experience. He also described how he holds a deeper appreciation for those individuals who have contributed to his learning throughout his life. Patrick described the CPL process being similar to "sorting through and old scrapbook of your life" examining different "snapshots" of past experiences and deciding how they contributed to your life.

Patrick suggests that CPL would be beneficial to someone who has a few years post-high school life experience. That being said, he also thinks that if a person has an open mind, there is likely to be areas of past learning that may have been taken for granted and would work well for CPL. It did for Patrick Doyle!

## Possible Experiences That Qualify for CPL:

Professional Training  
Certification  
Volunteer Work  
Military Service  
Individual Research/Independent Study  
Hobbies  
Travel  
Community Service  
Work Experience

### From the Director of Experiential and Service-Learning Programs

Dr. Elaine Rundle-Schwark has been with the University of Illinois at Springfield since 1991. She has served in her current role of Director of Experiential and Service-Learning Programs since 2003. Dr. Rundle-Schwark's passions are teaching and learning as well as crafts and genealogy, and last, but definitely first in her mind, her family.

Elaine believes that all three programs in the Experiential and Service-Learning unit to be vital parts of the university's academic programs. Each provides an important vehicle for meeting the needs of learners.

Credit for Prior Learning provides an opportunity to validate learning acquired from experience. Students develop a prior learning portfolio, the method by which UIS assesses lifelong learning experiences, in a four credit hour course, AST 305/501 Prior Learning Portfolio Development, which is offered each semester.

The Applied Study Term program provides a wide variety of field experiences (mostly internships) providing students with the opportunity to apply practice to theory, expand knowledge, determine additional academic needs, explore careers and develop civic engagement and an appreciation of diversity.

The Service-Learning Program provides students with opportunity to be oriented to the concept of service-learning through participation in semester-long community service enhanced by academic learning. This summer Service-Learning will be offering its first "immersion service-learning program" in Los Angeles with the issue of hunger and homelessness.

Dr Rundle-Schwark advises that all of the courses will meet the ECCE Engagement and/or ECCE Elective requirements in addition to the university requirements.

For more information on Applied Study Term, Credit for Prior Learning or Service-Learning, please contact EXS-L Programs at [exsl@uis.edu](mailto:exsl@uis.edu) or stop by our office, located in Brookens 482.

*"Our ambition should be to rule ourselves, the true kingdom for each one of us; and true progress is to know more, and be more, and to do more." -Oscar Wilde*