

Inside Outreach  
December 2005

*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.*  
Winston Churchill

Colleagues:

It is now over two years since I've joined Penn State Outreach. During those two years, I have been continually impressed by my Outreach colleagues—by your dedication to our mission, by your constant commitment to achieving our vision, and by the everyday examples of Outreach leadership. But I have also come to realize that your commitment and caring extend well beyond your Outreach work. As we approach the holiday break, I'd like to recognize and thank all of Outreach for your generosity of spirit. Let me share with you just a few examples of the many giving initiatives going on within Outreach.

Outreach Client Development is leading an effort to provide much-needed items to the youth of the Stepping Stone Transitional Living Program. This program assists homeless youth ages 16 to 21 who do not have the support of their families. With a goal of self-sufficiency, young people living at Stepping Stone can continue their education, obtain employment, and learn the life skills necessary to ensure their independence. The giving effort is being coordinated by Denise Gladd, who reports that the Outreach response has been “amazing.” Client Development has collected gifts and donations, which will be used to purchase many of the “wish list” items suggested by the Stepping Stone youth. This project is a great example of Outreach staff recognizing a need, and using their leadership skills to meet that need.

For the past three years, World Campus staff members have participated in a special community outreach project for the holiday season, sponsoring a special gift-gathering activity for Centre County families. Because the response of World Campus staff was so tremendous in the past, the effort was extended this year to include more families. Working through the local Children and Youth Services group, Theresa Krise and Melanie Roland have organized five World Campus units to provide gifts for five area families. True to their technology focus, World Campus staff members generated a web site so that each unit may find its family, check the gift list, and record purchased items. Gifts are then delivered to Children and Youth social workers for delivery to the families. What a wonderful community assistance tradition for World Campus to continue each year!

Earlier this season, a call for supplies came to the families of Army Reserve personnel from the 14th Quarter Master Detachment stationed at various bases in Iraq. Responding to the request, Penn State Public Broadcasting pitched in and donated critical items for U.S. soldiers. Organized by Rebecca Stover, the PSPB effort collected medical supplies such as thermometers, personal hygiene

items including toothbrushes, and food supplies such as Tootsie Rolls and cookies. Roberta tells me the ice pops sent to the troops were a big hit! Very recently, the 14<sup>th</sup> Quarter Master Detachment arrived home from their 12 month deployment in Iraq—all safe and accounted for, and all very appreciative of the generous PSPB donations.

Just as Outreach extends across the Commonwealth, so do our giving initiatives. Coordinated by Penn State Cooperative Extension, Pennsylvania 4-H clubs have been working with their communities to aid victims of Hurricane Katrina through a number of projects. The 4-H youth development programs build leadership, citizenship, and life skills. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, 4-H club members across Pennsylvania took these lessons to heart and raised money and aid packages for displaced Gulf residents. In Cambria County, the annual 4-H Livestock Sale raised over \$3,800 for victims of Hurricane Katrina. The 4-H members of Armstrong County collected over 280 pounds of Care boxes containing everything from toothbrushes to school supplies to be sent to Mississippi 4-H clubs—see the inspiring picture below and attached of these enthusiastic 4-H members. The Clarion and Venango County 4-H programs collected books for after school literacy programs in Mississippi. In addition, Venango County Extension staff members traveled to Bay St. Louis, Mississippi to assist with construction efforts, and to deliver essential supplies to the Hancock County Extension office. York County Extension representatives have made two trips to Gulfport, Mississippi and will be returning the week of December 26. And in Erie County, the 4-H program sponsored a Mardi Gras-themed Achievement Night Celebration to raise funds for those affected by the Gulf hurricanes. These are just a few inspiring examples of how Outreach is facilitating help for those families and services devastated by recent natural disasters.

Here at University Park, Outreach has also focused its giving on the victims of Hurricane Katrina. To meet the needs of Katrina families who have relocated to the Centre County area, over 200 gifts and gift card donations were collected at the Outreach Building—just look at the picture below and attached to see the piles of gifts collected! Upon receiving the gifts delivered by Outreach staff, one woman hugged the delivery team and the men shook hands and expressed deep appreciation.

Among the gulf coast residents who relocated to Centre County is the family of Bruce Clark, Penn State football player and 1980 alum. Bruce played professional football for the Green Bay Packers and the New Orleans Saints from 1980 to 1989. Bruce serves as the heart of his 52 family members relocated here in Centre County, and they are still searching for one other family member left homeless by Katrina. Bruce asked the organizers of the effort to thank everyone in Outreach for their generosity. After meeting Bruce, his family, and the other families, Tami Mizikar, Outreach organizer, noted, “We really touched people’s lives with our gifts...we have never been so proud to be part of such a giving

group of people.” The gifts collected for the Hurricane Katrina families represent only a portion of the giving efforts going on within Outreach, but they serve as an example of the many generous ways Outreach employees are making a difference in their communities.

I am very proud and humbled by the generosity of my Outreach colleagues who find creative and meaningful opportunities to help those in need. I thank each and every one of you for your efforts to make life better for those less fortunate. Enjoy the break and have a Happy New Year!

Best wishes!  
Craig

