

Penn State Altoona HUDCOPC

www.altoona.psu.edu/hudcopc

Penn State Altoona and the Altoona Housing Authority (AHA) continue to work together to promote community based learning for Penn State students while improving the quality of life for Altoona Housing residents at Green Avenue, Eleventh Street Towers, and Fairview Hills .

Student Participation

Penn State Altoona enrolled approximately 3,500 students in each Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 semester. In our first year, with a total of 357 students from fall and spring we have participation from approximately 10 percent of all current Altoona College students in credit-bearing coursework with the Altoona Housing Authority partnership.

According to Penn State Altoona's official student records and the Office of Institutional Research, we had enrollment of 204 students in the Spring 2006 in COPC courses. Four of these enrollments are double enrollments, due to the same students showing a deeper level of involve-

ment. A total enrollment of 196 students were enrolled in COPC courses. Over 93 percent of the 204 students enrolled were new students. The group of four students that were double enrolled were the students that we targeted for internships. The majority of the other students were getting their first exposure to the service learning. With this exposure we increased the chance for the students to connect with the community in a personal and civic way.

Data for this component has been developed by Ms. Jean Lasinski, Institutional Research and Registrar's Office, Penn State Altoona. She has used official university enrollment and course

data to compile baseline information for the Altoona COPC. The interest of our Chancellor's Office and Registrar's Office, and their willingness to support our project is another example of how Penn State Altoona is institutionalizing this project.



Faculty Participation

We have offered 11 courses through the fall and spring semesters, totaling 22 courses. In these courses a significant portion of the student's grade was based on a project that focused on needs of public housing residents. Each of the six faculty members taught at least one course, and most taught multiple courses each semester.



Resident Participation

Residents at the Green Avenue and Eleventh Street Towers make up the elderly population targeted in the COPC grant's goals. The total resident population is approximately 367. Both Towers have an active resident's council that is well attended. Penn State Altoona presented five programs over the Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 semesters among the Human Development and Family Studies, Nursing, and Criminal Justice disciplines. Of the 367 residents in the towers, 133 residents participated in programs, or 36 percent of the population in our first year of effort.

Residents at Fairview Hills make up the low income family population targeted in the Altoona COPC. The total population is approximately 170 families. Penn State Altoona presented programs in Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) and Criminal Justice. During the Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 semesters the active participants have been the Fairview Hills youth. Both HDFS teen-oriented and after-school programs have each reached between 10 and 20 students on a regular basis.

Computers

Strengthen Volunteer Service Learning Opportunities

COPC Grant coordinator, Ms. Susanna Tomlinson, met with Athletic Department staff to identify mentoring and public services roles for college athletes. She has also met with church related and religious groups on campus to identify possible partner activities.

Penn State Altoona and Altoona Housing Authority Staff continue to meet with David Wertz of PC Works Plus, the IT contractor for the Housing Authority. There are PCs in labs within the Altoona Housing Authority (AHA) located at Fairview Hills, Green Avenue Tower, and Elev-

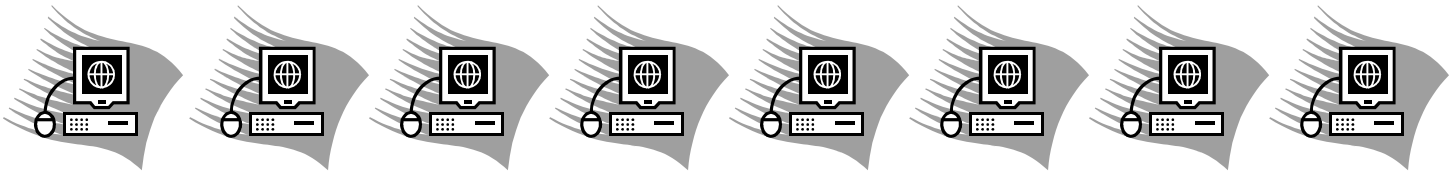
enth Street Tower. The computers are equipped with Windows XP operating systems. A draft set of “policies and procedures” were reviewed and approved by the AHA staff and residents.



Web Site Clearinghouse and Web Resources

<http://www.altoona.psu.edu/hudcopc> Students in Introduction to Life Span Human Development (HDFS 129) and Adult Development and Aging (HDFS 249) searched out quality websites on topics of interest to public housing residents. Acceptable web site links were loaded to the Altoona HUD COPC server.

The students have carefully selected a brief list of links, so that a beginner user will be assisted and an experienced user can save time on searches.



Senior Internship Program



Anglia Bendahan, intern at Penn State Altoona and Sherry Symmons, Resident Service Coordinator working with a senior resident.

Two COPC-sponsored internships were successfully completed during the Fall 2005-Spring 2006 semesters. Both were senior-level students in Penn State Altoona’s Human Development and Family Studies (HDFS) baccalaureate degree program. The fall 2005 semester intern worked with residents of the Altoona Housing Authority (AHA) Fairview Hill’s facility, and was supervised by Child Advocates of Blair County (Head Start). The spring 2006 intern worked with residents of AHA Green Avenue and Eleventh Street Towers, and was supervised by Blair Senior Services.

Family Development

During Spring 2006 Kevin Galbraith's HDFS 496 attempted two programs at Fairview Hills that were not well received; Fatherhood Activities Program and Toddler Time. The response from residents was minimal and so these efforts were a learning experience for the students on generating interest and recruiting residents. Students were also involved in identifying credible web sites with good literature related to parenting and family life. Links to these web sites are in the process of being posted to the home page for the Altoona Housing Authority. Also a series of nine newsletters were delivered to the 177 homes at Fairview Hills. HDFS 496 with Lauren Jacobson was developed in order to extend activities be-

gun in Fall 2005 at Fairview Hills. Students collaborated with the instructor to design two evenings and one afternoon of social/mentoring activities. Jacobson's HDFS 239H and HDFS 433 had seven students provide assistance to Fairview Hills after-school program.

Crime Prevention and Personal Safety

The goals for the Criminal Justice project are in the areas of crime prevention and personal safety. The groundwork has been laid for expansion of services to the communities and increased involvement from students. There is a need for further development of appropriate educational materials and surveys on crime. Our short term goal, to establish a baseline of information through crime mapping and resident surveys, is in progress. Initial resident surveys are complete. Surveys regarding crime perceptions among residents are complete and awaiting approval from the University's Human Subjects Office (IRB). Educational pamphlets for Fairview Hills on bullying, gangs, and conflict resolution have been developed and are ready to be utilized in the Fall 2006 semester.



Criminal Justice student from Penn State Altoona talks with residents about safety

Nursing Overview

During the Spring 2006 semester, students enrolled in NURS 417, NURS 418, and NURS 496 planned, publicized, and implemented Healthy for Life programs. This program includes blood pressure and weight screenings, educational programs, and a survey of educational needs with residents at the Eleventh Street and Green Avenue Towers. Students enrolled in NURS 200W critiqued research articles regarding weight management for young and middle aged adults in

preparation for program development for Fall 2007. The new program should be implemented in Spring 2007 at Fairview Hills.



Penn State Altoona nursing students works with senior residents on health issues.



Educational Achievement

“Mentoring for Post Secondary Education” (MPSE). Shannon Beaver, work study student, established a partnership with the Guidance Department of the Altoona Area School District. Community partner agencies went to Fairview Hills for a meeting with youth and are implementing plans to expand the mentoring program for Fall 2006.



Penn State Faculty and Students work with Resident Council

Barbara Weins-Tuers, Associate Professor of Economics, was a presenter at a Green Avenue Tower Resident Council meeting. Students from Econ 351 talked to residents about money and banking.

Resident Councils

Resident Council meetings are scheduled once a month at the Altoona Housing Authority facilities. A representative of Penn State COPC attends and updates the residents and managers on the student driven activities that will be presented to the residents.

Based on conversations with residents, Dan Lago and Beth Seymour began the “Guided Autobiography Group” (Birren, 2004) with interested residents from the Green Avenue and Eleventh Street Towers.

Executive Council

The COPC Grant Executive Council nomination process was completed in January 2006. The Council is a blend of community and academic partnerships. The Council’s first meeting was March 24, 2006 on Penn State Altoona campus.



If you have questions or suggestions please contact the Project Coordinator, Susanna Tomlinson at smt133@psu.edu or call 814-949-5367, or Project Director, Dan Lago at djl@psu.edu or 814-949-5524.