

**The Slay Fund for Social Justice at Drake University  
Report on Grants Awarded and Completed, Academic Year 2011/12  
Submitted by Professor Renee Ann Cramer, March 15<sup>th</sup>**

Between January 15 – February 15, the Slay Fund for Social Justice received seven requests for funding, via a call for “Major Grants” (designated as amounts over \$500) and “Minor Grants.” Grant requests totaled \$34,245. We determined to fund four of those grant proposals, and decline funding to three proposals.

The declined proposals all came from faculty or staff, and we encouraged those applicants to begin coming to meetings of the Working Group for Infusing Global and Multicultural Understandings, in order to better understand the student-centered, justice-seeking approach we are hoping to foster in the work of the Slay Fund.

The funded proposals are attached – you’ll see a wide range of styles and modes of communication, as befitting the fact that we funded two student-initiated projects, one project coming from administrative staff, and one from a community partner. A brief synopsis of the funded proposals is below.

***Funded Proposals***

**Cara Pratt, Senior Honors Student, double majoring in Environmental Science and Policy (ENSP), and International Relations.** To travel to Gulf Coast for Honors Thesis research on governmental response to disaster after Hurricane Katrina and the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

**Samantha Carlson and Natalie Smith, on behalf of 10 students.** To partially fund an “Alternative Spring Break” trip to Alamosa, Colorado, to work with Habitat for Humanity and La Puente on a major service project.

**Amanda McReynolds, Service Learning Coordinator.** To create and fund the first year of the Drake University Summer of Service Learning and Social Justice Program, placing five students in five community agencies, for six weeks this summer.

**Indira Blazevic, former Drake student and Intimate Violence Prevention Coordinator of LUNA, Iowa, with four student co-sponsors.** To offset facilitator training costs associated with a student service learning project: teaching Healthy Relationships classes in the Polk County Juvenile Detention Center, and at the Youth Emergency Shelter, in Des Moines.

**Student Assistants, Working Group to Infuse Global and Multicultural Understandings**

We have committed funds by hiring three student assistants to work 10 hours per week, at \$8.50 an hour, from March 15 – December 15, 2012, with limited but ongoing summer hours. These students responded to a job advertisement that emphasized our need for increased campus communications, and deep cultural change, around issues of globalization, multiculturalism, poverty, mental health, diversity and social justice. Of the seven applicants, the cover letters and resumes turned in by these three students showed them to be outstanding. We conducted a two-

hour group interview with these students, to assess their group dynamics, and get a stronger 'feel' for their aptitudes. We were pleased to offer these students the positions:

Katie Bell, a junior Law Politics and Society major with a double major in Sociology, who has studied abroad in Ecuador, and currently interns at Lutheran Social Services, working with refugee populations. She is especially concerned about the isolation that recent female migrants experience, and the mental health consequences of that isolation.

Amelia Piecuch, a junior International Relations major with several campus leadership positions, including working with incoming and admitted students in an advisory capacity. Amelia comes from a multi-racial family, and is especially interested in creating conversations around racial and ethnic diversity on campus.

Intisar Nasir, a junior finance and accounting major in the Business School. Intisar is an international student, and is particularly interested in helping international students feel a part of the Drake community, and sharing the message of multiculturalism within international student organizations, building links to Drake student organizations focusing on diversity.

We were pleased that all three students have previous experience with a diverse range of social movement and organizational structures, and that all three could articulate a link between multiculturalism, internationalization, and social justice. We look forward to working with them, as the semester moves forward! We also look forward to your meeting these students, and the grant award winners, the next time you are in Des Moines.

Finally, we have charged these three students with designing and implementing a plan for a community-wide event on social justice, to be held in the Fall. We've set aside funding for the students to work with on that front – for materials, publicity, speakers' fees, food, travel, etc. We'll keep you apprised of where they go with this idea – and we'll be alert to the potential to tie the event to the hoped-for appearance on campus of the Carters.

Respectfully submitted,  
Renee Ann Cramer

On behalf of the Working Group for Infusing Global and Multicultural Understandings, and the Slay Fund for Social Justice Awards Committee