

**The Slay Fund for Social Justice at Drake University
Report on Grants Awarded and Completed, Academic Year 2012/13
Submitted by Professor Renee Ann Cramer, January 15th**

The past six months have been an exiting period for those of us working in conjunction with the Slay Fund. President and Mrs. Carter's visit to campus was a highlight in the fall semester, and helped to mobilize interest in the work of social justice on campus. We were honored to host them, and your family, in September, and are grateful for the your initiation, support, and funding of the event. Building on the interest generated from that event, we hosted two grant proposal workshops to help students, faculty, and staff at Drake begin to dream bigger about how to bring social justice initiatives to campus. We hope you will agree with us that the quality and scope of the grants we funded recently are a testament to the increased interest in this work, at Drake.

Between February 15 and December 15 (2012), the Slay Fund for Social Justice received eleven requests for funding, via two calls for proposals, issued in late spring and early fall. Grant requests totaled \$35,764. We determined to fund eight of those grant proposals (at a total amount of \$29,414), and decline funding to four proposals.

Funded Proposals

Kelsey Lepperd (Junior English major) and Professor Carol Spaulding-Kruse. Funding to help defray costs associated with a community-based publishing project, in collaboration with Latina/os al exito (LaE). LaE is an organization in Iowa that provides a space of leadership and community for young Latino/as, currently reaching five communities in Iowa: Clarion-Goldfield, Belmont-Klemme, Des Moines, and Marshalltown. Through various organization events such as the Latino Leadership Conference held in the late Summer, or Día de la Familia held in the Spring, and the after-school meetings facilitated by older Latina women, LaE gives young Latino women and men the opportunity to reflect on and communicate about their identity, their desires, their hardships, and joys. This organization, as seen through the young women who spoke during the Leadership conference this summer, has played an integral role in the educational advancement of many young Latina women. The publishing project will involve students in Sociology, English, Journalism, Marketing, and Graphic Design, working in consultation with the leadership and membership of LaE on a long-term, sustainable, and needed community-based publishing project.

Student Coordinators, Office of Service Learning. Funding for Alternative Fall Break activities at the following Des Moines locations: Social Justice Tour--Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran Services in Iowa, Children and Family Urban Ministries, Dress for Success, Young Women's Resource Center, and the Iowa International Center.

Claudia Frazier, Librarian at Cowles Library, Drake University. Funding for a series of speakers and events relating to The Freedom Riders exhibit at Cowles library. These speakers included documentarian Stanley Nelson, photojournalist Eric Etheridge, and Drake alumna Patti Miller. The Stanley Nelson event was one of the most well-attended events to be held in the library's Reading Room, and all of the speakers engaged in significant class time collaboration and learning with Drake students from across the university's disciplines.

Anna Schmitt, Junior double majoring in International Relations, and Law, Politics, and Society. Costs associated with a summer of service and collaborative learning about genocide in Rwanda, as a delegate with Global Youth Connect, an international non-profit organization. Each international delegate worked closely with their Rwandan counterparts to develop a shared understanding of human rights, and their importance in everyday life. They met with grassroots human rights activists, and members of governing institutions in Rwanda, to learn that they were doing to protect human rights locally and internationally.

Christina Johnson, Sierra Gedler, Christopher Johnson (graduate students in the School of Education) and Assistant Professor Bengu Tekinalp. Funding to bring a two-day Compassionate Listening Project training to campus. The Compassionate Listening Project is a non-profit organization dedicated to facilitating skills in peace-building and reconciliation for families, communities, and workplaces. Funding will enable a two-day training for 25 Drake faculty, staff, and students who will then lead compassionate listening circles at Drake and within Des Moines. This training will take place in April, 2013, at Drake.

Kevin Clark, Drake junior. Costs associated with "Inspiring Scholars," a collaboration between Kevin, the Drake Coalition of Black Students, the Young Legends, Creative Visions (a community organization), the Drake Black Law Students Association, and Black Student Association at Grandview University. "Inspiring Scholars" provides mentors to ten 9th grades, African American males, at McKee Alternative Learning Center in Des Moines, a school for students who have (for behavioral and learning disability reasons) been removed from their neighborhood schools. The mentoring program will focus on skill and confidence development, as well as introducing these young men to alternative ways of envisioning their future. With field trips and bi-weekly mentoring meetings, Kevin hopes each mentor-mentee pair will forge strong and meaningful relationships.

Amelia Eckles, Katie Bell, Kylynn Mowell (Drake Seniors with various majors). Costs associated with a Refugee Swim Clinic to be held at Drake, spring 2013, using student lifeguard volunteers, in cooperation with EMBARC (the Ethnic Minorities of Burma Advocacy and Resource Center) Lutheran Social Services Refugee Assistance, and the Red Cross. The need for this clinic was made manifest after the drowning deaths several Burmese children, in a regional river, last spring.

Eric Gudmonson (Interim Coordinator of Student Activities, Office of Student Life) and William Hatchett (New Student Academic Facilitator, Office of the Provost). To attend the Midwest Culturally Inclusive Conference at University of Wisconsin-Platteville. Accompanied by two Drake student leaders (Carly Kinzler and Samantha Carlson) Eric and William attended this two day conference in early September. Highlights from their trip included their time spent learning from students and staff at other regional institutions, about their inclusion efforts, gaining knowledge about "micro-aggressions" and how to react to them, learning about how to make programs accessible, challenging their personal thoughts and assumptions about diversity, and crafting an "Inclusivity Agreement."

Upon return to campus, the conference attendees planned a dialogue session (open to all of campus) on inclusivity and are continuing to develop other initiatives that are strengthened by the knowledge gained through attendance.

Student Assistants, Working Group to Infuse Global and Multicultural Understandings

As we reported previously, 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. You had the opportunity to meet Katie, Amelia, and Intisar on two occasions last year; we have been tremendously pleased with their work for and with the Working Group to Infuse Global and Multicultural Understandings, and on behalf of the Slay Fund. We were privileged, too, to watch their growth in the position over the last year.

The students coordinated a major **Fall Festival** event. The event used Slay Funding as well as in-kind donations, and more than 100 Drake student volunteers to provide an afternoon of safe, family-friendly fun for local children and their families, on Drake's campus. Community members were treated to pumpkin carving, dynamic movement and drumming, health testing and information, and nutritious snacks. While turnout was lower than we had hoped and expected, the all of us involved learned valuable lessons about community partnering, community needs, event planning and organization, and the capacity of Drake students and faculty to develop and implement powerful programs.

We are pleased that **Amelia Piecuch** will remain for a third semester as a Student Associate. She will be joined by two students, hired in the last weeks of December, to begin in late January 2013. These students are:

Randy Kane, a sophomore from Wilmette, IL, working toward a bachelor's degree in Public Relations with a minor in Advertising from Wilmette, IL.

Randy currently serves as the president of Drake Hillel, is a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity and is very active in leadership education at Drake, having participated in the Emerging Leaders Program and Adams Academy.

Randy is also involved in the Des Moines community as a member of the Jewish Community Relations Commission.

McKenzie Leier, a sophomore from Fargo, ND working toward a bachelor's degree in Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology with a minor in Business Studies and a concentration in Global and Comparative Health. McKenzie served as a summer Orientation Leader and Peer Mentor/Academic Consultant for Welcome Weekend, and she is also active in Alpha Phi sorority, Collegiate DECA and Habitat for Humanity. She applied for a student associate position because she was interested in "learning more about social and cultural injustice both around the globe, and in our own country."

McKenzie, Randy, and Amelia will continue the work of the Student Associates with the Working Group, and we look forward to seeing our presence and visibility on campus and in the community increase even more, given their aptitudes with social media, and their ties to the greater Des Moines metropolitan area.

In all, the Slay Fund dispersed (or has committed) **\$35,814.00** from February 2012 until the close of the year, funding individual student projects, faculty/staff/student collaboration, and several collaborations between students and the greater Des Moines community. We saw growth in

interest in social justice on campus, and look forward to seeing the work of the Fund continue in 2013.

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