Greetings ACE Alumni and Friends,

This year, the ACEs facilitated service-learning experiences for over 1,500 students. Without our team of ACEs, most agencies wouldn’t have adequate human resources to manage this number of service-learners. ACEs increase the potential for students to perform service in agencies, ensuring the service provides a learning opportunity for those students.

This was our fourth year of working with the Jesse and Beulah Cox Foundation to provide Cox Scholarships for ACEs, and the first year for seniors to train freshmen ACEs in their agencies. Giving the seniors the responsibility to train the freshman frees up the agency supervisor to focus on agency needs, and gives the senior a chance to pass on valuable knowledge gained over previous years. This also makes it easier for an incoming freshman ACE, who can focus on getting to know the agency before diving into the work of managing service-learners. Many seniors felt their biggest success was the work they did mentoring their freshman. For students who spent three full years supporting fellow students in service-learning experiences, their enthusiasm for training a younger ACE into their position shouldn’t be surprising, but we were pleased with this outcome.

This is also our first year of having ACEs with our program for four full years. We already miss our seniors, but we are excited about their future. This year, we asked Colleen Rose, a former ACE and ACE Coordinator, to write an essay for the ACE Alumni Spotlight. I have often wondered what our seniors will take with them as they enter the world of work. In her essay, she wrote, “The program provided me the space and opportunity to learn about and develop my strengths, look honestly at my own privilege, and consider how I might be a force for good in the world not only during my time as an ACE, but throughout the rest of my life.” Colleen’s perspective is incredibly valuable, and we are lucky that she continues to influence and guide the ACE program through her role as a member of the Service-Learning Advisory Board. I suspect that, like Colleen, each of our ACEs will be able to bring the lessons they learned as ACEs on into their professional lives.

We look forward to another year of working with our ACEs, who never cease to impress us with their ability to balance their school work, their personal lives, and their passion for supporting fellow IU students and community members alike.

—Una Winterman, ACE Coordinator, IU Service-Learning Program
Sophomore ACE Marina Young dedicates time outside of class at Indiana University to work with service-learners and volunteers at the Hoosier Hills Food Bank (HHFB). HHFB serves community members and agencies that help fight food insecurity in the Bloomington area and 5 surrounding counties. In 2014, HHFB distributed 4 million pounds of food to 100 agencies, churches and pantries. Marina recalls the first time she visited HHFB, “When I walked into the warehouse and saw walls lined with pallets of food that were all going to people that needed it, [food insecurity] wasn’t an abstract idea anymore, but the people that were getting this food could be someone you passed on Kirkwood on the way to your favorite restaurant.”

By setting up service-learning experiences for IU students, Marina plays an integral role in supporting HHFB’s mission to meet the food security needs of the community. Service-learning students serve in the HHFB garden, on the Repack/Mealshare program, and by designing the annual Children’s Art Calendar. These areas of service respectively produced over a million pounds of produce last year, expose local school children to issues related to food insecurity, and, allow local restaurants to donate prepared food to be re-packaged into family-sized portions.

Marina uses the things she has learned as an IU student to enhance the projects she takes on as an ACE at the HHFB. “Early on”, says Marina, “one of my business classes taught us how to create databases in Access. I loved how applicable this program was to nonprofit work, largely because of its affordability. Most of the documentation for the students and other volunteers was all on paper, which made finding information quickly very difficult. So during my first semester, I created a small Access database from scratch that allowed us to input class information, student information, run queries for analysis, etc., which saved us a lot of time. This does not mean that my design was perfect, but it led us to the system that we have in place today that ServeIT, a nonprofit tech support clinic from IU’s School of Informatics, helped HHFB create. And voila! No more paper.”

Marina’s involvement in and understanding of all the programs at the HHFB helps her focus on creating a meaningful experience for the students at the agency. She seeks courses that best match the HHFB programs and work at the agency, and closely examines the main focus of the class to explore opportunities to broaden the students’ knowledge. When the students are onsite, her goal is to help students recognize that the warehouse full of food they see is helping those in need and that service-learning is important to our community.
There are over 750 students in the Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC) who are not native English speakers. Of those, 360 students are not considered fluent. The English Language Learning (ELL) program at the Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC) works hard to help them with their language learning needs by helping these students navigate cultural differences and providing language support. Students practice listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Choonhyun Jeon, the ELL Program Cultural Competency and Diversity Coordinator at MCCSC, takes pride in how the ELL program helps non-native English speaking students learn English as soon and as effectively as possible to support their academic success. “The program supports students,” Mr. Jeon says, “by providing special English language instruction during a regular class period every day with certified English instructors plus exposure with native English speakers during regular courses. The program also provides translation and interpretation services to the families of the students. Family events further the mission by teaching parents about the programs and how to help their children succeed in school.”

Service-learning students, under the guidance of ACE Faith Groff, support the afterschool portion of the ELL program. Mr. Jeon boasts about Faith’s contributions to the program’s mission, noting that Faith’s fresh perspective results in strong service-learning partnerships, benefitting both MCCSC and IU students. She is especially effective as a liaison, representing faculty learning outcome needs to Mr. Jeon and ELL program needs to faculty and students. Her efforts make the ELL program responsive to IU course content, making for especially robust experiences for service-learning students.

Faith further helps the ELL program by providing much-needed services and time that the agency, otherwise, would not be able to afford. As a peer facilitator, she is able to support the 70 service-learners she monitors, and to relay their interests to the program in return. The pride Mr. Jeon feels for Faith is evident as he speaks of the value an ACE brings to his program, sharing that many of their services would not be possible without Faith.

Research tells us that meaningful work on-site helps to ensure that service-learners will retain more and be more likely to connect their learning to course content (Eyler & Giles, 1999.) ELL’s partnership with the service-learning program easily hits this benchmark, as service-learners have the opportunity to work with students who genuinely need their help, getting cues and support from the ACE and their instructors as the semester progresses.

More than a decade ago, I showed up as a transfer student at IUB ready to plant my feet firmly in the ground. A course I was in that was required for my major was piloting service-learning and, to be quite frank, it was not going well, especially for the student ACE who was trying so hard to coordinate our service. At the end of the semester my professor left applications out for any of us who might be interested in becoming an ACE. After everyone left the room, applications untouched, I picked one up, and the rest is history.

I know that when most of us talk about service-learning or the ACE program, we usually talk about the good it has done in agencies and in the community. Even when it doesn’t go well, there is something valuable learned. But when I talk about the ACE program, I can’t stop talking about all of the good that has come about in my own life from that one year as an ACE. As a somewhat lost, community-less transfer student at a large state school, becoming an ACE gave me a community, a sense of place, and a burgeoning identity rooted in social justice. The program provided me the space and opportunity to learn about and develop my strengths, look honestly at my own privilege, and consider how I might be a force for good in the world not only during my time as an ACE, but throughout the rest of my life. How often do we ask 20-somethings, or people of any age for that matter, to consider such things? What a gift I received! It’s almost enough to make me feel guilty.

The idealism that drives so many of the ACEs that go through the program becomes hard to maintain as life becomes crowded with work, relationships, children, bills…the responsibilities of adulthood. A decade out, however, I can still easily see the impression that one year made on my life. I never left Bloomington. My time as an ACE made this place my home. I never left IU, or for that matter, the work of trying to connect students to the same transformational experiences that transformed me. We never left the community partner where I served as an ACE. My husband now runs their after school program. The mentorship I received from the ACE supervisor at that time, Claire King, blossomed into a life-long friendship.

It is with wonder and anticipation that I think about another decade out, and the new ways in which I will see the fruits of that original seed planted in 2004.

Colleen (O’Rourke) Rose was an ACE for the Benjamin Banneker Community Center in 2004-2005. She supervised the ACE program from 2007-2010 and currently serves as a Senior Assistant Director with Student Life and Learning at IUB.
Anna Burse  
**ACE at Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (Freshman)**

“Being an ACE represents empowerment. By creating this bridge between the university and the community, everyone involved can grow and become stronger. Taking action in society, understanding different perspectives, and learning through hands on experience are all ways in which I have become empowered through the ACE Program.”

Marina Young  
**ACE at Hoosier Hills Food Bank (Junior)**

I love getting to see the students really understand the social issues that are not only discussed in their class, but are seen through hands on projects and direct service. IU has unique partnerships between non profits and classes that truly do make a difference and it’s great to be a part of the team that makes that possible!
People & Animal Learning Services (PALS)
Joshua Apanavicius
Anderson, IN

Girls, Inc.
Alexis Dent
Fort Wayne, IN

Monroe County United Ministries (MCUM)
Alex Dowland
Clarksville, IN

Hoosier Hills Food Bank
Courtney Drescher
Bloomington, IN

The Project School
Angela Duan,
Crown Point, IN

Fairview Elementary
Andrew Hennessey,
Fort Wayne, IN

MCCSC Special Education Program
Jade Reeves
Columbus, IN

Habitat for Humanity ReStore
Ellie Roach
Bloomington, IN

SCCAAP Thriving Connections
Emmanuel Scaife
Indianapolis, IN

SCCAAP Head Start
Jasmin Yates
Indianapolis, IN
The ACE Award for Exceptional Facilitation of Service-Learning
This award honors ACE Faith Groff, from MCCSC Office of English Language Learning. Dr. Kathryn Engebretson from the IU School of Education nominated Faith for her work with her students this year.

“I consider Faith not only to be an integral facilitator in our service-learning but truly as an irreplaceable partner whom I can trust has the best interests of her agency and my students in mind.”

–Dr. Kathryn Engebretson, Curriculum Studies, IU School of Education

Most Valuable ACE Award
This award honors ACE Alexea Candreva, from the Crestmont Boys and Girls Club for her work with fellow ACEs. Nominated by her peers, who wrote numerous positive statements, this one summed it all up very well:

“Alexea has been an amazing mentor for me. In my freshman year, she had endless patience with my many MANY questions and frequently helped to point me in the right direction. She works hard to encourage a bond amongst the ACEs by creating group sites for us to all communicate through, like Facebook and GroupMe. She is an amazing leader, and I could never thank her enough for her guidance these past couple years. She does not know it, but I look up to her so much - and I am constantly blown away by how easy it is to look up to her.”

Newman Civic Fellows Award
This award honors ACE Sidney Harris, who was nominated by the ACE Coordinator and IU President Michael McRobbie.

“The Newman Civic Fellows Award honors inspiring college student leaders who have demonstrated an investment in finding solutions for challenges facing communities throughout the country. These students represent the next generation of public problem solvers and civic leaders. They serve as national examples of the role that higher education can—and does—play in building a better world.”

Thank you for Participation on the Service-Learning Advisory Board
Scott Day, on left, ACE for Habitat for Humanity ReStore, and Katie Mathis, (right) ACE for Batchelor Middle School.