



LEAD THE WAY

He dined with Kurt Vonnegut, Jr., discussed anthropology with Donald Johanson, and just one week before graduation, he will pull off a full-scale community concert showcasing Cleveland-area high school bands and the importance of music education.

These aren't typical experiences for Case undergraduates. But then again, Case's College Scholars Program is anything but ordinary. For James Carlson, who organized the band concert, and the select others accepted into the two-year program, exceptional learning experiences are the norm.

The College Scholars Program welcomed its first class of 20 students in 1997, thanks to the desire of one generous benefactor, Mort Mandel, to help educate students for leadership. Since then, dozens more young men and women from all majors and disciplines have had the opportunity to experience a more personalized Case education and be transformed into active and enlightened community and service leaders.

"The College Scholars Program helped to pioneer service learning at Case," says Jonathan Sadowsky, Case's Castele Professor of the History of Medicine, who has been director of the program since 2001. "Many student groups perform community service, and many academic programs reflect on the social world we live

in, but in service learning, these are brought together to enrich both the learning and the service."

Upon entering the program in their sophomore or junior year, students work closely with faculty to design their educational program. They engage in student-directed learning, develop communications and leadership skills, enjoy sessions with renowned distinguished speakers and guests, and design, conduct, and present a senior project. To enhance their experience, students have the option to live together in a common residence in the North Residential Village.

The service learning experience culminates in a senior project that applies the student's individual expertise to a social or significant issue important to the surrounding community. For Carlson, an economics and history major who has played the bassoon since his middle-school days, the band concert was a way to foster arts appreciation, build community, and promote creativity.

"Music may seem like just playing from a score, but it is the creative emotional expression that makes it *music*," he says. "In today's rapidly evolving economy, it is vital for workers to be able to think outside the box. The more a student steps

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— Linda Ehrlich

away from the book and learns how to creatively express himself or herself, the more comfortable he or she will be with innovative solutions."

Disadvantaged toddlers in Cleveland stand to benefit from biology major Remy Olson's work with the Cleveland Department of Public Health to increase the number of children who receive lead poisoning screenings.

"Mandatory screening of Medicaid participant children at ages one and two is at an unacceptably low level in Cleveland, due partly to physician barriers to lead screening," she reports. She assisted in surveying health providers on their screening practices and in promoting a filter paper test "that provides a method of in-office screening that reduces physician barriers, allowing more at-risk children to be screened and treated."

Through the efforts of anthropology major Rachel Pope, women on Case's campus as well as those in the Cleveland area are more informed about the birth process and the role doulas, or childbirth and labor companions, can play in it. "I used my senior project funding to pay for the training to become a doula, and have since attended four births." She also co-hosted a pregnancy and childbirth education event on campus and held a free public screening of the film *A Doula Story*.

Another highlight of the College Scholars Program is its Speakers Program. "We bring in speakers who qualify as moral, intellectual, or creative leaders, and whose work we've studied," Sadowsky explains. After their public lecture, the guests meet privately with the students to discuss their work and life philosophies, identify issues crucial to service and leadership, and address pressing social concerns. "These experiences," he says, "are often deeply inspiring to students."

The student-directed learning component of the program, which requires students to develop the syllabus for special units and lead the classes, earns accolades from students and professors alike. "I think the College Scholars Program is a remarkable program for the sense of ownership the students feel," says Linda Ehrlich, associate professor of modern languages and literature. "They come to realize that they can take initiative."

For students like Olson, the value of the College Scholars Program is a no-brainer: "It represents the best opportunity for creative, independent, and successful intellectual and interdisciplinary exploration that Case has to offer." ■

NANCY O'CONNOR

Nancy O'Connor is a Cleveland-area writer.

SUCCESSFUL CONVERSATIONS

Who better to learn from than those who've achieved the greatest success? Through the College Scholars Speakers Program students participate in informal discussions with local, national, and international leaders who discuss their work, philosophies, leadership, and service. What follows is a list of some of the participants in the Speaker's Program over the past 10 years.

Mary Catherine Bateson — writer and cultural anthropologist

Susan Faludi — author

Donald Johanson — physical anthropologist and discoverer of "Lucy"

Anthony Lewis — former *New York Times* reporter

Dr. Paul Loeb — associated scholar at the Center for Ethical Leadership

Mark Norell — curator of paleontology, American Museum of Natural History

Katha Pollitt — columnist with *The Nation*

Richard Rodriguez — author



Peter Singer

Peter Singer — ethicist, Princeton University

Susan Sontag — author and playwright

Kurt Vonnegut — author

Cornel West — philosopher and cultural critic

Dr. Howard Zinn — emeritus, Boston University