SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY STUDENTS SPRING INTO SERVICE

During spring break in March, more than 120 members of the Saint Louis University community took mission trips organized by SLU's Christian Action Program and the Center for Leadership and Community Service. Here are a few other projects that students drive each spring:

**Homeless Awareness Week**
From April 19-23, the University literally opened its doors to those with nowhere to live. Representatives from homeless service agencies and experts offering free legal advice were on hand in the Simon Recreation Center. Later in the week, SLU students spent a night in makeshift shelters in the University's quadrangle to heighten awareness about the plight of the homeless.

**Showers of Service**
More than 500 people — students, faculty, staff and alumni — volunteered April 17 at various sites around St. Louis for this third annual daylong community service event, which is sponsored by SLU's chapter of Alpha Phi Omega (APO), a co-ed service fraternity. This year, volunteers worked at St. Matthew the Apostle parish in north St. Louis city. Others worked for Campus Kitchen on the SLU campus and Operation Brightside around the greater St. Louis area.

**Intergenerational Prom**
This ninth annual event paired APO members and residents of local retirement communities for an evening of dancing and refreshments March 26. A square dancing group performed and helped both the SLU students and senior citizens put a new spring in their step.

RELAY FOR LIFE AT SLU CELEBRATES CANCER SURVIVORS

More than 850 participants celebrated cancer survivorship and community spirit March 27 during Relay For Life at Robert R. Hermann Stadium.

The 12-hour event commemorated all stages of cancer survivorship beginning with diagnosis, as symbolized with Saturday's sunset, and ending with remission at sunrise on Sunday.

Participants from each of the 75 teams walked the track in relay style to symbolize each group's refusal to stop fighting until cancer has been stopped.

Participants were encouraged to raise $100 or more before the event. SLU's fund-raising efforts totaled more than $80,000, which will help fund American Cancer Society research, education, advocacy and patient services.

One of the most powerful events of the evening was a ceremony dedicated to those whose lives have been affected by cancer. Luminarias bearing the names of those touched by cancer were placed around the track, and their names were read. SLU student Jessica M. Obergas, a junior psychology major, was one of the participants. Obergas took this semester off to undergo two surgeries and a month of interferon treatment for stage three malignant melanoma. She hopes to graduate on time despite the missed semester.

“When I was diagnosed and going through treatment, my goal was to be well enough to travel to St. Louis and participate in Relay for Life,” she said. “It was wonderful to be around my friends again and to meet fellow survivors.”

Jeanne Symons, Obergas’ mother, participated on Obergas’ Relay for Life team (called “The Melanomores”).

Saint Louis University Cancer Center was a sponsor of this event and is organizing Relay for Life of St. Louis City in June.

As the first Relay For Life organized by students at Saint Louis University, this event helped pave the way as an example for other universities.
SLU Students Mentor as Big Brothers, Big Sisters

A growing group of Saint Louis University students are reaching out to urban school children through Big Brothers Big Sisters of Eastern Missouri (BBBS). BBBS partnered with SLU in 2002. The original program paired SLU law students and sixth-graders from Loyola Academy, an all-boys Jesuit middle school near the SLU campus. Now, the partnership includes seventh-graders at Loyola and programs at Columbia Elementary and Banneker Elementary, two city public schools. In February, the SLU Student Government Association chartered Big Brothers Big Sisters of SLU.

More than 50 undergraduates and 15 law students have committed a minimum of one year to BBBS. A few times each month, students visit their little brothers and little sisters at their schools and participate in on-site activities.

The programming develops a framework of success between the SLU students and their “littles.” The children build confidence through team-building activities, basketball and kickball games, discussions about values and heroes and tutoring. The adults use their knowledge and experience to make friends with a new generation.

“The program is a great way for SLU students to give back to the community,” said Adam Meister, president of Big Brothers Big Sisters of SLU. “Both groups benefit: The children get to know college students, whom they might not be around otherwise, and we get a fresh perspective from the kids.”

From the President

Arena to Be Community Resource

A year has passed since the Saint Louis University board of trustees approved the construction of a new SLU arena, and I wanted to share with you how work on this landmark project has progressed.

In December, SLU announced the selected location for the arena will be along Laclede Avenue west of Compton Avenue, a location that upholds SLU’s commitment to the revitalization of Midtown St. Louis.

As we strive to strengthen our community, the new arena will be yet another beacon for this area. We remain committed to creating a true “college town” atmosphere with shops, restaurants and entertainment, ultimately making Midtown a place where people go to live, to socialize and to learn.

The new arena will be located just blocks from Grand Center, which will allow people who come to the arena to also spend time in the arts-and-entertainment district. Additionally, the construction will add new revenues from increases in employment, surrounding property values and sales taxes.

Students Create Brochure for Lupus Foundation

Saint Louis University physical therapy students recently applied skills they acquired in the classroom to a real-world project when the Missouri Chapter of the Lupus Foundation of America commissioned a brochure to educate people with lupus about the best ways to exercise.

Five 2004 MPT graduates researched and wrote the brochure, Exercise and Lupus. Currently distributed throughout Missouri, the brochure is under review by the Lupus Foundation’s national office for possible national distribution.

The brochure originated as a presentation at the 18th annual spring conference on lupus. The presentation was so well received that Paula Kanyo, executive director of the Missouri Chapter of the Lupus Foundation, asked them to develop a brochure for clients statewide.

With lupus, a chronic autoimmune disorder, the body’s defense system becomes overactive and attacks healthy tissue.

Dr. Cheryl Cavallo, assistant professor of physical therapy, said the brochure benefits those who want to stay active despite their disease. In addition to basic information, the brochure offers exercise tips, such as modifying activity when symptoms like inflammation arise. Content has been reviewed by health care professionals for accuracy.

“Because many people with lupus are young, these students could identify with them and were challenged to do more,” Cavallo said. “They saw how they could make a difference and, by pushing themselves, had a very meaningful experience.”

To receive the brochure, call (800) 9-LUPUS-6 or visit the Web at www.lupusmo.org.


**BILLIKEN TEAM SHARES LOVE OF SOCCER WITH SPECIAL KIDS**

Since 1996, women's soccer players from Saint Louis University have shared their Saturday mornings — and their athletic skills — with a special group of children through the Special Needs Soccer Association (SPENSA).

SPENSA is a St. Louis-based, not-for-profit program for children between the ages of 5 and 21 who have a mental or physical disability. Players who traditionally have not had a place in the youth soccer system get the opportunity to learn soccer and to experience the fun of the game.

“Building confidence and having a good time is what SPENSA is all about,” said Kara Kornfeld, a junior. “I feel lucky to have coaches like Tim Champion, Kelly Young and Janet Oberle who value giving back to the community so much that they make our service project a year-long event.”

The SPENSA program conducts five- to nine-week sessions each spring and fall. During each session, approximately 25 SLU student-athletes team up with nearly 70 children. Practices, informal scrimmage and games take place at Saint Louis University and other locations in the St. Louis area.

“I think it’s important that our team participates in this program. Our athletes have so much going for them,” said Tim Champion, head coach of Billiken women’s soccer, who has been involved with SPENSA for more than 20 years. “Service is something the University is about, and Billiken athletes are no exception.”

SPENSA is an affiliate member of the Missouri Youth Soccer Association (MYSOA), and is free to participants. The program is funded through private donations, as well as the Tom Smith Jr. Memorial Golf Tournament, which is sponsored by the Eastern Missouri Soccer Referees Association and takes place in August. For more information, go to the SPENSA Web site: www.spensa.org.

---

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**Looking for an enriching experience?**

Here’s a sampling of upcoming art exhibitions and outreach events on the Saint Louis University campus and around the metropolitan area.

**Relay for Life of St. Louis**
June 4-5
Saint Louis University
For more information, call (314) 286-8157

**Komen Race for the Cure**
Saturday, June 12
Downtown St. Louis
For more information, call (314) 721-2900

**Veteran’s Wheelchair Games**
SLU physical therapy and occupational therapy students will be volunteering.
June 15-19
Various venues
For more information, call Bruce Nolan at (314) 894-6602

**Art Exhibits at SLU**
(314) 977-7110
moca@slu.edu
Benetart and Benevon
Art exhibit by Christina Shuangel
Through Sunday, July 11
Saint Louis University
Museum of Art
Brick by Brick: Building St. Louis
and the Nation
Sponsored by Samuel Cupples House
Through Saturday, July 11
Saint Louis University
Museum of Art
The Tools of a Mission
Collection of Western Jesuit Mission Tools
Through Saturday, July 11
Saint Louis University
Museum of Art
Saint Louis University
Museum of Art
3663 Lindell Blvd.
1-4 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday,
except 12-4 p.m. Friday
For more information as well as admission costs (if any), call (314) 977-3399
sluma@slu.edu
Brilliant! American and European Cut Glass in the Gilded Age
Opening mid-June
Samuel Cupples House
3673 West Pine Mall
For hours, as well as admission costs (if any), call (314) 977-3025

**SLU PROGRAM HELPS STUDENTS BECOME WOMEN, MEN FOR OTHERS**

Saint Louis University senior Brian Knobbe was named Volunteer of the Year in November by Employment Connection, where he dedicated nearly 400 service hours during a three-year period.

Knobbe, who will graduate in May with a bachelor’s degree in business administration, worked at Employment Connection as part of the John Cook School of Business service leadership certificate program. The program emphasizes service to the community as a vital component of leadership and requires students to complete 15 credit hours, 24 workshops and 100 hours of volunteering.

Obviously, Knobbe’s service well exceeded the certificate’s requirements.

“I did everything from copying and filing to being in charge of the agency’s annual fund-raiser, a billiards tournament,” Knobbe said. “I liked being able to use the marketing skills I learned in business school to make a difference to the organization and the people it serves.”

Employment Connection, located one block west of the SLU campus in Midtown, is a nonprofit agency that helps people with limited opportunities become self-sufficient through employment.

Knobbe started the certificate program during his sophomore year at SLU, but he’s been involved in service throughout his education. He attended Catholic grade school and high school, where he learned to reach out to those in need.

“My Catholic background definitely has developed my service,” he said.

After graduation, Knobbe plans to land a job in advertising and to continue his service. When he mentioned his interest in volunteering at Cardinal Glennon, it became clear where Knobbe’s motivation to serve came from.

“I had surgery for a congenital heart defect when I was 2, and I’ve always felt lucky about how my life turned out,” he said. “I’ve always wanted to give back. Doing service is natural for me.”
Thanks to a recent gift from the Lay Family Foundation, Saint Louis University will proceed with a pilot program that will whisk away groups of fourth-, fifth- and sixth-graders from three local urban schools for a learning experience filled with wildlife, nature and art.

Beginning in April, children from Cole Elementary, Loyola Academy and Laclede Elementary School will take regular field trips to Saint Louis University’s Lay Center for Education and the Arts, which is approximately 100 miles northeast of St. Louis near Louisiana, Mo.

Children will travel by motor coach and receive a sack lunch. The Lay Family Foundation will fund the complete cost of the trips.

“We thought it would be a wonderful experience for urban youngsters in those grades to have a full-day camp experience out in the woods and wilderness,” said Julius Hunter, vice president for community relations.

Much like these children, I grew up in an area of asphalt, concrete and brick. I didn’t see much in the way of wilderness or nature except in movies.”

The office of community relations developed a teachers’ guide for use in conjunction with the trips. Designed to encourage learning before, during and after the trip, the guide features interdisciplinary lessons about geography, math, history, science, English, music and art. Hunter and senior administrative assistant Jeanette Butcher wrote the guide, drawing upon their collective experience as former elementary school teachers. The duo also sought input from the College of Public Service, the Saint Louis Association for Gifted Education and the three schools participating in the pilot program.

During trips to Lay Center, students will record their discoveries about the various animals, plant life, topography and art there. The final on-site project of the day will be burying a “treasure box” filled with information about the visiting class, which will leave behind clues about the box’s location for the next class.

Gail Allmon, principal of Cole Elementary, believes that, in addition to providing a unique learning experience, the trips to Lay Center will offer other tangible benefits.

“I’m confident this will foster better cooperation among our students and will help improve social skills,” she said. “And we are confident the Lay Center experience will help create a sense of how the youngsters who live in urban environments are related to and supported by nature.”

Members of the community are welcome at the Lay Center. To schedule a visit, contact University Event Services at (314) 977-MEET or events@slu.edu. For more information, go online to www.slu.edu/events/lay.html.