

**Service Engagement Grant-Scholarship of Engagement Grant Program  
Operation Raise Awareness- Phase II  
Narrative Report**

**A. Impact:**

- **Program progress**

The Day of Caring campaign was developed at Calumet College of St. Joseph (CCSJ) over three years ago to raise awareness of volunteerism on campus. With the assistance of Indiana Campus Compact, we were able to continue this campaign and expand its reach. We are pleased with the progress the college has made on this project. As a result of this project, the institution has seen growth in our community relationships, an increase in participation amongst our students, faculty and staff, and an increase in development of student leadership skills and learning. The primary activities and accomplishments for CCSJ during this grant period were as follows:

- Coordinated and implemented three Days of Service events (Volunteer Awareness Week, Homelessness and Hunger Awareness week and Campout Against Hunger).
- Established partnership with Food Bank of Northwest Indiana
- Hosted a media day to promote the food pantry
- Participated in 2014 Service Engagement Summit
- Presented CCSJ's Food Pantry program at the Service Engagement Summit

Our work with many nonprofit agencies, has allowed us to form a new community service partnership with Valparaiso University for MLK Day (Appendix D.1).

Marketing and digital media were an integral part of promoting this project. Marketing materials for this project were as follows:

- Colorful posters depicting student service engagement projects
- Interactive and fun activities
- Giveaways, such as lollipops promoting the food pantry hours
- Food Pantry flyers and website

- Social media (Facebook)
- Print and television interviews
- **Program challenges**

The planning team developed a strategic plan to determine the mission, vision, goals, objectives, role and responsibility of the project. The two program challenges that were encountered during the program implementation were integration of service learning into the curricula and the level of student involvement and participation. Academic Affairs has made a commitment to push service learning into the curricula. Additional resources have allowed the institution to increase the number of service learning and experiential learning opportunities offered to students. Although the institution created campus-wide service learning opportunities, there were some faculty members who felt students should have the option of creating their volunteer opportunity. We continue however to work on increasing student participation in the service learning activities. As far as student involvement and participation, our findings showed an increase in student involvement beyond course and club requirements.

- **Unique success story**

Security identified an abandoned vehicle in the parking lot on campus. After a thorough investigation, it was discovered that the vehicle belonged to one of our students. This student was homeless and living in his car. He had experienced extenuating circumstances that were beyond his control. The school administration nor his peers were aware of his circumstances. This situation put a face to the hunger and homeless plight on campus.

This young man's hardship hit close to home for CCSJ. The institution came together and provided numerous resources to help this student get back on track. We hired the student, provided him with food and clothing through our food and clothing pantry, and helped him find housing.

- **Impact on college student learning and development**

When tied to classroom curriculum, service-learning can deliver important academic, civic, social, and emotional outcomes. Students who participated in service learning projects felt their

contribution made a difference. Participation in service learning helped the students gain a deeper understanding of self and their involvement in the community. In addition, some students had an increase in self-confidence and a can-do attitude that spread to their work and academic pursuits.

Participation in the community service projects allowed the students to build new skill sets and improve upon existing ones. Students' explored potential careers and discovered what skill sets and credentials were needed to work in the field. For example, the food pantry is a student run pantry operated by G.I.V.E. The organization discovered they were in need of additional funds to continue the food pantry initiative and expand its offerings. The president of the organization decided to write a grant to request additional resources. The organization received the grant and that student can add grant writing to her resume. Grant writing is a valuable skill set that is transferable into the workforce.

- **Institutionalization of service-learning and community engagement on campus**

Although our mission is rooted in social justice, this project has helped the institution understand the educational value of including service learning into the curriculum. G.I.V.E. continues to bring awareness of local causes and different community events to campus. Our CCSJ staff, faculty, and students are working collaboratively on service-learning and community engagement. Joining Indiana Campus Compact has helped us see the importance of breaking down the silos of service and providing structure for our service learning activities.

Service-learning has been implemented within the curriculum as well as extra-curricular activities. The institution has created a co-curricular transcript for the students. This transcript will reflect students' participation in service-learning projects as well as activities outside the classroom. By coupling the academic transcript with the co-curricular transcript, one can get a holistic picture of the student both inside and outside the classroom. Our next step is to give public recognition and rewards based on service learning participation to faculty, staff and student(s).

- **Addressing community issues**

For many college students and their families, rising tuition costs, housing, and living expenses are presenting new financial challenges. The issues have created a growing population of financially stressed students who face hunger and sometimes even homelessness. The Operation Awareness Phase II grant allowed us to continue and expand our food pantry services. Our previous grant allowed us to open a small food pantry that provided a limited selection of basic nutritional needs. This current grant has allowed us to provide fresh meats, fruits and vegetables as well as baked goods. The pantry now provides nutritional fresh and canned food to help supplement student expenses. Two months were dedicated to raising awareness of the pantry and accepting non-perishable food donations. The students collected over 200 non-perishable food items for the food pantry. (Appendix D.2).

The overnight campout, which focused on homelessness, brought attention to this national concern. The overnight campout was a success. Students were given the challenge of building cardboard box homes and sleeping in their box home the entire night. The purpose of this event is to raise awareness of homelessness and connect with the homeless experience. For this event, a Sojourner Truth House sent a representative to help us understand the plight of hunger and homelessness. After this experience, the students had a greater understand of homelessness. In fact, through discussions and reflections, several students admitted to be homeless or hungry at one point in time. (Appendix D.3).

- **Advancement of the field of service-learning and community engagement**

In order to advance the field of service-learning and community engagement, Student Activities and G.I.V.E were invited to a meeting with the Religious Studies department to discuss service-learning course department. Attendance at this meeting helped us gain a better understanding of the teachings and research faculty will implement in course curriculum. We will implement a new process to identify service projects for the students. The student activities center has served as a clearinghouse for service opportunities for faculty, staff, and students. We will continue to promote and educate the college of this service. Pre-and post-assessments will be implemented as the method of measurement to evaluate the success of service learning projects.

- **Advancement of professional development**

Acquiring new knowledge and skills that relate to service-learning and community engagement is a key role in maintaining motivated, well informed students, faculty and staff. G.I.V.E. members, as well as staff, have participated in several training sessions. The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana required food safety training for all food distributors. We were also required to attend a community fundraising workshop. This year, we had three G.I.V.E. students attend ICC's Service Engagement Summit. CCSJ was also asked to do a presentation at the summit on the implementation of our food pantry. As a result of that presentation, we were invited to participate in a panel discussion on service-learning next month. In addition, faculty were educated on procedures, forms and new initiatives aimed at the enhancement of service-learning. Overall, this project has advanced our professional development by understanding the significance of including community service into the curricula, giving relevance to service engagement for students and creating global awareness and understanding the importance of building relationships with organizations in the community.

- **Maintaining relationships with the community organization**

CCSJ's goal to expand the food pantry was extremely successful due in part to our existing relationships established through experiential learning projects on the academic side and G.I.V.E.'s previous volunteerism at the food bank. Since the inception of G.I.V.E. and our partnership with United Way, the doors have been opened for us to develop more partnerships with other organizations. We now have ongoing relationships with Habitat for Humanity and the Sojourner Truth House. Ongoing success of our projects with these agencies has contributed to the growth of our relationships.

- **Publications**

FBNWI and CCSJ organized a press release to officially acknowledge CCSJ as FBNWI's first college based food pantry in Northwest Indiana (Appendix D.4). The food pantry was featured in an article in the *NWIndiana Life* newspaper entitled "Calumet College of St. Joseph Partners with the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana." <http://www.nwindianalife.com/community/serving/45028-calumet-college->

[of-st-joseph-partners-with-the-food-bank-of-northwest-indiana](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSm63C-8uHo). In addition, Lakeshore Public Television came to campus to interview the food pantry representatives and showcase the food pantry. The interview can now be seen on YouTube and CCSJ's website <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSm63C-8uHo>. As mentioned under the "Professional Development" section, CCSJ has been asked by ICC to share our food pantry model.

**B. Community Partnership**

The community partners that worked with CCSJ are as follows:

- Food Bank of Northwest Indiana
- Habitat for Humanity
- Kappa Kappa Kappa Inc.
- Sojourner Truth House
- Valparaiso University

**C. Evaluation**

It was important for CCSJ to maintain continuous communication with the partners throughout the project. Gathering consistent feedback from our community partnerships has helped us with building and sustaining our relationships. In addition, this feedback has allowed us to track our progress towards our project goals. Surveys were distributed at the end of each semester to evaluate student needs and usage. The survey was comprised of basic questions such as name, concerns and complaints (Appendix D.5). Approximately 99% of the responses were favorable. The survey also revealed that there was very little need of the pantry during winter or summer breaks. For those students needing help we provided information of other food pantries the FBNWI serviced.

FBNWI required us to submit monthly reports detailing the following: number of clients served, units of food purchased and units of food distributed. CCSJ Food Pantry has served 251 CCSJ students and 4 clients from the community. Approximately 2,000 units of food have been distributed and over 1,300 units of food were collected through donations.

## D. Appendices

(Appendix D.1)

Martin Luther King Celebration at Valparaiso University.



Photographed with Ishmael Beah, author of Radiance of Tomorrow

(Appendix D.2)

Food Bank of Northwest Indiana



(Appendix D.3.)

Campout Against Hunger



(Appendix D.4).

**Food Bank of Northwest Indiana**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

- *Special press conference to celebrate the pantry opening, August 13, 2014 at 2:00 pm CT; recognize volunteer efforts*

**The Regions First School Pantry: Food Bank of NWI Partners With Calumet College of St. Joseph's to Expand the Fight Against Hunger**

**GARY, Ind.** – Come celebrate the first school pantry in Northwest Indiana on Wednesday, August 13, 2014 at 2:00 pm CT at Calumet College of St. Joseph's, Quentin P. Smith Student Lounge (Student Activity Center). The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana will be teaming up with Calumet College of St. Joseph's service engagement club, G.I.V.E. (Get Involved, Value Everyone), to develop the first school pantry in the region. Our school pantry program is all about overcoming barriers to ACCESS! School pantries are designed to provide food resources where students already live, work, and learn.

“It’s a very exciting time for the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana right now, and we’re grateful to be able to bring innovative solutions to hunger,” said Arleen Peterson, Executive Director of the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana. “Many people don’t think about the need for hunger relief for college students and their families, but the truth is it’s growing in need. Students attending college are families in transition who can benefit from additional resources.” Since college students are receiving financial assistance for tuition and books, as low-income students we know there is a need for feeding students who are already struggling to find ways to put food on the table and advance their career opportunities. The school pantry was designed to combat this issue, and with this partnership we are able to reach more individuals than we could on our own.”

One of Calumet College of St. Joseph's goals is to prepare its students to lead meaningful lives with and for others. G.I.V.E. serves as that bridge to bring together individuals that share the same passion for volunteering. These actions foster the development of personal values, social responsibility and a sense of caring for others.

The pantry opened in January, 2013 and will service the community Tuesdays, 3pm-6pm and Fridays, 10am-1pm. If students are hungry during the day, the Student Life department can give them food from the pantry. While this is the first school pantry, we hope that it can become a model for other colleges, universities, high school and elementary schools in the region.



For a full listing of all the pantries and soup kitchens that the Food Bank serves please visit [www.foodbanknwi.org](http://www.foodbanknwi.org).

### **About Food Bank of Northwest Indiana**

The Food Bank of Northwest Indiana is located in Gary and supplies food to almost 100 pantries and soup kitchens in Lake and Porter Counties. In addition to distributing food to their member agencies the Food Bank also runs the BackPack, Kid's Café, Food Rescue, HOPE Project, Summer Feeding, Family Food Nights, and Pantry on the Go programs and offers pantry referrals. Last year the Food Bank distributed over 5 million pounds of food, and served over 5,000 individuals a week.

### **About Calumet College of St. Joseph's and G.I.V.E.**

Calumet College of St. Joseph is a Catholic institution of higher learning dedicated to the academic, spiritual and ethical development of undergraduate and graduate students. Informed by the values of its founding religious community, the Missionaries of the Precious Blood (C.P.P.S.), the College promotes the inherent dignity of all people, social justice, and an ethic of service, student empowerment, opportunity, and lifelong learning.

G.I.V.E. is a service learning club which strives to bring together individuals to engage in meaningful volunteer opportunities that aim to develop a lifelong enthusiasm and commitment to community service.

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If you would like more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview please call (219) 980-1777 EXT 301 or email Arleen Peterson at [apeterson@foodbanknwi.org](mailto:apeterson@foodbanknwi.org).