

# Compass

ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

Stevenson Center for Community and Economic Development



December 15, 2011 Vol. 5 Issue 1

## Students and Alumni Serving with Peace Corps

Margaret Anderson, Togo  
David Becker, Jordan  
Tyler Curtis, Togo  
Mimi Duong, Morocco  
Ted Fischer, St. Vincent & The Grenadines  
David Johnson, Panama  
Joseph Lauchlan, Costa Rica  
Laura Livesay, Senegal  
Sasha Miranda, Dominican Republic  
Andrew Piotrowski, El Salvador  
Nicolette Slagle, Thailand  
Hillary Smith, Dominican Republic  
Dustin Stoltz, Azerbaijan

## Current Internships

Lloyd Banwart, Land O'Lakes International Development, Shoreview, MN  
Dana Bulba, Credit Builders Alliance, Washington, DC  
Jared Dellinger, College of Lake County/Lake County Partners, Grayslake, IL  
Katie Mitchell, ASPIRA Inc. of Illinois, Chicago, IL  
Julie Ornee, United Way of McLean County, Bloomington, IL  
Niko Valaris, City of LaSalle, LaSalle, IL

## Stevenson Center Hosts Consuella Brown

Consuella Brown, acting president for the Woods Fund of Chicago, was the Stevenson Center's 2011 Alumni Guest of Honor for Homecoming week.

On October 15<sup>th</sup>, Brown visited campus to discuss her career and foundation work with current Stevenson Center students. Brown shared her

experiences with the Woods Fund and the Peace Corps, and she reflected on the joys and challenges of development work and community organizing. The question and answer session produced many interesting and hilarious stories of Brown's career path, from growing up in California to Peace Corps to

Chicago and places in between.

As a Peace Corps Fellow in the Department of Politics and Government, Brown worked with the Chicago Housing Authority for her professional practice. She served with Peace Corps, first as a volunteer in the Marshall Islands and Lesotho and then as a staff member in Swaziland and the Gambia. As Associate Director for Administration, she helped establish the first Peace Corps program in the Republic of Zambia. In the late 1990s, Brown completed her tour with the Peace Corps and joined the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs as the Country Director in Malawi. The Stevenson Center is glad to count Consuella Brown among its many talented alumni.



Consuella talks about Zambia with Peace Corps Fellow Tim Glaza (RPCV Zambia 2008-2011).

## Note from the Director

Happy holidays to you and those you hold dear!! Enjoy your time with them. For the Stevenson Center, it is a time to celebrate our continued impact on communities around the globe and our growth. Each year we receive more applications for admission; this year we

welcomed our largest cohort ever. We added an outstanding Assistant Director, Rebecca Rossi, to the Center staff in August. This addition ensures continued progress for the good of those we cheerfully serve. We currently have 6 students in domestic internships, 11 overseas in

Peace Corps, and 7 with assistantships outside of their departments. Our alumni roll now exceeds 130. Thank you for being part of the growing Stevenson Center family, and we hope you have a peace-filled holiday.

All the best, Frank

# Faculty Spotlight: Rebecca Rossi



**Welcome Rebecca!**

Assistant Director Rebecca Rossi began working with the Stevenson Center in August 2011. As the Assistant Director, Rossi provides program support to all students, including students who are participating in AmeriCorps. Prior to working with the Stevenson Center, Rossi worked with Mid Central Community Action, Inc. supporting victims of domestic violence. Rossi also served as a volunteer coordinator for Habitat for Humanity.

Most recently, Rossi was the Director of the Green Institute at Heartland Community College in Normal, Illinois. The Green

Institute provides community, campus, and continuing professional education on sustainability and environmental issues. Rossi also coordinated Heartland's sustainability efforts, convening Heartland's Green Team, and worked to bring composting to campus.

Rossi holds a Master's in Technology from Illinois State University and has taught residential development and project management. In addition to her M.S., she holds a graduate certificate from Illinois State in Project Management and is a LEED Accredited Professional.

# Student Spotlight: Dana Bulba

Dana Bulba, an ACED Fellow in Sociology, is enjoying her professional practice in Washington, D.C., with the Credit Builder's Alliance (CBA). Bulba is helping implement and develop CBA's communications strategies. She is also collaborating on projects pertaining to CBA's training and knowledge sharing. Bulba reports:

"It's been really amazing working at CBA and having an opportunity to work and discuss with organizations across the

"I've been able to gain valuable insight on the powerful impact of these organizations."

country. CBA has in its membership over 300 organizations including, but not limited to, Habitat for Humanity affiliates, CDFIs, Credit Unions, and microlenders. I've communicated with dozens of individuals from the various groups on a wide variety of topics; from learning more about small business lending practices, to understanding the impact of financial coaching, I've been able to gain valuable insight on the powerful impact of these organizations.

One of my first projects at CBA was taking the lead in developing a co-hosted IDA [Individual Development Accounts] and Credit Building Webinar. This was an amazing opportunity for me to learn more about and coordinate with two amazing community development organizations – Kentucky Domestic Violence Association (KDVA) and LISC/Chicago. We had over 90 credit and asset building practitioners from across the country register. Over the next month, I'll be working closely with the Executive Director to develop a



**Dana Bulba as a student at Illinois State University.**

trainer's guide for CBA's 'Credit is an Asset.'

Bulba graduated from the University of Maine in 2008 with a BA in Journalism with minors in Public Relations and Sociology. Upon graduation, she joined Teach for America as a 2008 charter corps member in Jacksonville, Florida, where she taught the second grade.

## Graduates

Announcing May and August 2011 applied community and economic development professionals with Illinois State University master's degrees. The diverse capstone and thesis titles include:

**Tessa Zevallos, M.S. Sociology, ACED Sequence,** Thesis- Darle el Pecho: A Qualitative Exploration of Mexican Immigrant Mothers Experience with Breastfeeding

**Nicole (Kurtain) Wengerd, M.S. Sociology, ACED Sequence,** Thesis - Strong Ties and Strong Influences: Social Networks and HIV Prevention

**Jered Ulschmid, M.S. Sociology, ACED Sequence,** Thesis - Married and Cohabiting Men's Extra-Dyadic Relationships in Sub-Saharan Africa: Assessing Two Health Behavior Models

**Bradley Pribe, M.S. Political Science, ACD Sequence,** Capstone - The Continuing Development of the NGO Sector in Kyrgyzstan: Experience from One NGO in Naryn, KG

**Dana Overman, M.S. Political Science, ACD Sequence,** Capstone - Neighborhood Capital: A Multidisciplinary Holistic Approach to Neighborhood Revitalization Through Workforce and Economic Development

**Joe Lauchlan, M.S. Applied Economics, ACED Sequence,** Capstone - Local Food Systems in Central IL: An Impact Analysis

**David Johnson, M.S. Applied Economics, ACED Sequence,** Capstone - Determinants of Job Growth Potential in Nascent Entrepreneurship: A Cross-Country Analysis of GEM Data

**Kara Harvey, M.S. Sociology, ACED Sequence,** Thesis - The Other Side of Metamorphosis: An Exploratory Study of How Partners of Transsexuals Experience Transition

# Update from Senegal



Livesay wearing an evening outfit for the Tabaski holiday in Senegal.

Laura Livesay, a Master's International student in Political Science, is serving as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Senegal. For her capstone, Livesay is researching how social capital affects local economic development. "It appears that social capital can have both a positive and detrimental effect on local economic development. Positive outcomes evolve from trust, solidarity, and networking; whereas the concept of reciprocity can actually hinder economic growth," she reports.

Livesay helped to coordinate a successful Girl's Leadership Camp at her host site in Senegal. Participants included 42 middle-school-aged girls, 5 high-school-aged girls who acted as junior counselors, and 7 Senegalese counterparts. Each day of the camp had activities and speakers relevant to a specific topic. The overall theme was girls' empowerment, trying to get the girls to think more about their futures.

Livesay also remarked on the

language: "Concerning language, I now hear 'degg na Wolof bu baax' which means 'she understands Wolof really well' much more than the once normal 'deggul dara' which means 'she doesn't understand anything.'"

Prior to coming to Illinois State, Laura received her B.S. in Political Science from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

## Student Presentations and Awards

**Eric Porter, Peace Corps Master's International Student, Sociology-** Awarded the University Club Scholarship for Fall 2011.

**Community Project Design and Management Class-** Students presented a community-wide recycling assessment for the Ecology Action Center (EAC) of McLean County on December 6, 2011. A Pohlmann Family Development Grant supported this endeavor.

## Current Graduate Assistantship Hosts

- East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
- Habitat for Humanity, ISU Campus Chapter
- ISU Civic Engagement & Responsibility Minor / American Democracy Project
- McLean County Community Compact / University of IL Extension
- McLean County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
- Tri-County Regional Planning Commission



Search for the **Stevenson Center Alumni** group on LinkedIn!



"Like" us on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/StevensonCenter!](http://www.Facebook.com/StevensonCenter!)



Left, current students and staff pose with Consuella Brown during Homecoming

# AmeriCorps Members

The Stevenson Center is in its seventh year of providing AmeriCorps Member status and benefits to some of our students serving in Illinois:

- Dane Myers is conducting research to support ongoing programs and to develop Aging and Disability Resource Centers for the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging.
- Julie Ornee works with volunteer “vision councils” at the United Way of McLean County as they strive to improve education, income, and health.
- Carolyn Schulte supports a variety of McLean County Community Compact programs that help school-age youth prepare for careers.

The Stevenson Center continues its partnership with the Leadership and Service Unit on campus to extend these benefits to its students. Alison Kessinger primarily advises and creates service learning opportunities for the Leadership and Service Lifestyle Floor. Katie LaSota organizes volunteer projects such as Bring it Back to Normal and development experiences like the Leadership Revolution. We are grateful for supervisor Harriett Steinbach’s dedication over the last three years.

We are also thankful for our ongoing relationship with Western Illinois University. Many thanks to Karen Mauldin-Curtis, Karen Peitzmeier, and Carrie Skees for their support!

# Give a Gift to the Stevenson Center

A primary goal of the Center is to provide more support and programming for our fantastic students. We also want to reduce the cost of hosting a Fellow such that underserved communities can also benefit. Donations are welcome. Thank you for your consideration.

 \$10

 \$50

 \$15

 \$100

 \$25

 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send checks payable to the Stevenson Center or visit us online at [www.stevensoncenter.org](http://www.stevensoncenter.org) to make a donation.

# Help Us Network

How did your experience at Illinois State affect you? How did your professional practice in applied community/economic development (whether an 11-month internship or Peace Corps service) shape your career path? What did you learn that you have continued to build upon?

Perhaps the most important way that you might give back to your graduate program is by helping a current student to have a meaningful professional practice experience. What can you do?

- Talk to your colleagues about how one of our graduate students could assist in your work.
- Send us links to organizations that might be a good fit for our students.
- Share information about the Stevenson Center with others in your network who might be interested.

While financial gifts are always appreciated and needed, helping us place our talented students is a timely and accessible gift. Please contact us at [stevensoncenter@ilstu.edu](mailto:stevensoncenter@ilstu.edu) or 309-438-7090. Thank you for your ongoing support and generosity!

Newsletter Editor and PR Intern: Alex Trimble, [ajtrimb@ilstu.edu](mailto:ajtrimb@ilstu.edu)  
 Director: Dr. Frank Beck, [fdbeck@ilstu.edu](mailto:fdbeck@ilstu.edu)  
 Associate Director: Beverly Beyer, [babeyer@ilstu.edu](mailto:babeyer@ilstu.edu)  
 Assistant Director: Rebecca Rossi, [rmrossi@ilstu.edu](mailto:rmrossi@ilstu.edu)  
 Staff Clerk: Martha Boudeman, [mjboude@ilstu.edu](mailto:mjboude@ilstu.edu)  
 Senior Fellow: Dr. Bob Hunt, [rwhunt@ilstu.edu](mailto:rwhunt@ilstu.edu)  
 Assistant on Brownfields Project: Elizabeth Lovell, [ellovel@ilstu.edu](mailto:ellovel@ilstu.edu)  
 Student Assistant and Research: Cherié Dew, [ccdew@ilstu.edu](mailto:ccdew@ilstu.edu)



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