

# Partnerships update

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Our mission is to work collaboratively with higher education, preK-12 public schools, and the community to improve the lives of students

## Director's Note: A Sign of Partnership



Though the sign Melanie and I were holding was for the Day of Caring (read more on page 2), to me it represents more than that. The sign bears the names of two organizations that, although distinctly different in mission and structure, joined

hands for the benefit of the community. As a unit of the College of Charleston, the Center for Partnerships to Improve Education (CPIE) is focused on advancing education and health and wellness within our community. We welcome conversations to discuss potential partnership opportunities with your organization. Here's to holding a sign of partnership with you!

(pictured left to right: Courtney Howard & Melanie Hofmann)

## Faculty as Partners

CPIE's Faculty as Partners (FaP) mini-grants program provides small grants to faculty in the College of Charleston's School of Education, Health, and Human Performance. Now in its second year, the FaP program was designed to stimulate faculty involvement with CPIE while supporting faculty research and service-learning initiatives. Interested faculty submit proposals to CPIE in October of each year. The proposals are peer reviewed and the awardees are announced each November. All grant activities will occur during the Spring 2013 semester. Please join us in congratulating our latest Faculty as Partners mini-grants recipients!

**Quinn Burke** will establish a local Scratch Day event for teachers to evaluate ways to improve their perceptions of computer science in an effort to improve students' digital literacy. *Dr. Burke is an assistant professor in the Department of Teacher Education. His area of expertise is educational technology.*



**Michael Hemphill** will develop and assess a service-learning model for an introductory physical education and exercise science class to expand opportunities for positive youth development in the Chucktown Squash program. *Dr. Hemphill is a visiting assistant professor in the Department of Health and Human Performance. He teaches physical education and activity courses.*

**Brian Lanahan** will receive funding and a course release to work with pre-service teachers to develop and update curriculum materials in collaboration with the Charleston Museum. *Dr. Lanahan is an assistant professor in the Department of Teacher Education. His specialization is social studies.*



## The Frog Scientist



What do South Carolina, frogs, and science have in common? The answer is Dr. Tyrone Hayes.

Dr. Hayes, a native of Columbia, SC is a Professor of Integrative Biology at the University of California, Berkeley. He is best known for his work on the mutating effects of the pesticide atrazine on frogs. His important research and his interesting background are described in a children's non-fiction book, *The Frog Scientist* by Pamela S. Turner that targets youth ages 10 and over.

The Center for Partnerships to Improve Education partnered with the College's Literacy Outreach Initiative and Lowcountry Hall of Science and Math, as well as the Charleston County School District to develop an interactive 5th grade curriculum to accompany the book. The curriculum consists of four multidisciplinary lesson plans about Dr. Hayes, experimental design, limiting factors, and pollution. The lessons were taught by Charleston County teachers at partnering Title 1 schools with assistance from College of Charleston Honors students. The partnership culminated in a campus visit during which the 5th graders from the seven schools toured College of Charleston's science labs and the natural history museum, conducted frog jumping experiments, and viewed a video message from Dr. Hayes that was made especially for them.



## A Day of Caring

Written by Joseph Ford, CPE Graduate Assistant

On Friday September 7, 2012, volunteers from the College of Charleston took part in Trident United Way's *Day of Caring*. The aim of the *Day of Caring* is to strengthen and improve communities in the tri-county area. Over 8,500 volunteers completed more than 300 service projects in order to meet this goal.

The groups of volunteers were very diverse, ranging from employees of local businesses and banks, to students from the College of Charleston and The Citadel, to Charleston County government employees. A group of women known as the "Hat Ladies" even sported their favorite headgear in support of *Day of Caring*.

The College of Charleston's twenty-nine volunteers, coordinated by its Center for Partnerships to Improve Education, were similarly diverse. The group included members of Call Me MISTER, a program to



increase male teachers of color, as well as students with majors in science, business, and psychology. The group even included a few graduate students, faculty, and staff.

The College volunteers went to Chicora Elementary School, a high needs school in North Charleston. College of Charleston volunteers talked to Chicora students about the importance of graduating from high school, going to college, and making goals and determining the steps needed to reach them. Students had many questions about college classes and college life. During that time, students were taken one by one to have their pictures taken with a mock cap and gown and diploma, to show them what they might look like as a graduate.

This year's *Day of Caring* came with a theme (which was really more of a challenge). Trident United Way asked their volunteers and the community as a whole to not make the *Day of Caring* a single, annual event; but rather to make it day one of a total of 365 days of caring every year. The challenge, then, is for volunteers to

continue their community involvement and for those not involved to become so. "There are so many ways to get involved and stay engaged throughout the year. Trident United Way's



Corporate Volunteer Council allows for many opportunities to participate," said Lisa Mitchell, this

year's chair of *Day of Caring*. "Getting involved in the community is a personal commitment and one that we should all make in order to pay forward the good in all our lives and make a difference to those that may just need a little added support," she added in her letter to the community that was published in the Post and Courier.

Trident United Way's *Day of Caring* was a remarkably successful event. The numbers of volunteers and projects completed were astounding and College of Charleston students who participated felt they made an impact. "(The *Day of Caring*) gave the students a clear picture of what life can be like for them after they graduate if they just stay focused and try their best," said senior psychology major Samuel Howard. Emily Hoisington, a

freshman English and education major felt similarly. "I think all it takes to make an impact could be a simple smile. These



students love hearing about what can and WILL happen when they get older and they love talking about their dreams. Just being someone they can talk to automatically makes a difference (in their lives)." College volunteers and others throughout the three counties will continue to work to meet Lisa Mitchell's challenge and make this year's *Day of Caring* just one day of 365. "Small deeds can make a huge difference," said Howard, and this year's *Day of Caring* challenged us to continue to do small deeds to make that difference.

# Build the Energy Up!

Written by Rachel Etchason, CPIE Graduate Assistant

On Thursday, September 27, 2012, the Center for Partnerships to Improve Education partnered with the Trident Regional Education Center and other organizations for the region's first ever *Build the Energy Up!* According to the Trident Gap Analysis, residents of the Trident area do not have access to sufficient information about up-and-coming careers in the Trident region. The purpose of the *Build the Energy Up!* seminar was to promote student achievement and career awareness by demonstrating to students the connection between their classroom lessons and the working world. This inaugural event focused on careers in manufacturing and the health sciences.

*Build the Energy Up!* was an effort to unite students, teachers, and industry in order to build awareness of career opportunities.



Representatives from local businesses and organizations including the College of Charleston, Lowcountry AHEC, the Medical University of South Carolina, Trident Technical College, GPAllied, Boeing, Santee Cooper Power Associates, Environmental Express, Rhodia, Bosch, Hospice Care of SC, Alcoa, Coastal Hydraulics, and AGFA Materials shared their knowledge and experience to the future workers of the Trident area.

The event was held at the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce. The outer edge of the conference room was lined with parents, teachers, and volunteer

presenters while the center of the room was filled with nearly 100 students in grades 8-12 from Ashley Ridge High School, Burke Middle/High School, Fort Johnson Middle School, James Island Middle School, Military Magnet Academy, Wando High School, Summer-ville High School, and The Apple Charter School.



Students were engaged in several demonstrations including an opportunity to learn about and actually touch a real human brain, thanks to the Graduate Students Reaching Out with Science (GROWS) group from MUSC. Shon Isenhour, a representative from GPAllied, provided everyone with Oreo cookies to enjoy while he discussed the manufacturing process and potential careers that the tasty cookie has to offer.

During lunch, the industry experts led round robin discussions with small groups of students. This provided a more intimate opportunity for students to ask questions and receive immediate feedback. Some industry representatives also provided handouts and other giveaways.

The initial response for the event was overwhelming, and the evaluations from the teachers and students were extremely positive. This has encouraged the organizers to begin making plans for the second annual *Build the Energy Up!* event.



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## COLLEGE of CHARLESTON

CENTER FOR PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE EDUCATION

## About Us

The Center for Partnerships to Improve Education (CPIE) is housed within the College of Charleston's School of Education, Health, and Human Performance. It was established in 2005 to support the improvement of public preK-12 education through partnerships. Initially, CPIE formed agreements with selected high needs schools to provide teacher professional development and mentoring programs for students. After undergoing a re-envisioning in 2010-2011, CPIE now addresses the following four focus areas:

### Teaching and Learning

Student learning outcomes improve when academic concerns in school, home, and community settings are addressed

### Health and Wellness

This important area fosters the physical and emotional well-being of students and families and promotes healthy environments for work and play

### Community Outreach

It is necessary to cultivate partnerships among stakeholders whose work relates to teaching and learning and health and wellness.

### Research

The development of creative and rigorous research adds to existing bodies of knowledge, informs the work of the other three focus areas, and provides opportunities to study current and emerging best practices.