MLP Class of 2015 Capstone Projects

AgGREGATE

Rachel Gaines and John McLemore arranged two agricultural and conservation learning sessions for third and fourth graders at the Starkville Boys and Girls Club. During the learning sessions, students had many hands-on activities and discussion opportunities, such as, planting a tree and reading and discussing about the Angus beef chart. Topics throughout these two sessions covered crops, livestock, forestry, soil and water conservation. These two fellows also conducted a pre and post-test survey with the same group of students in order to evaluate their “AgGREGATE” learning experience and compare their knowledge of agriculture to similar school groups. Their findings were presented at the Shackoul’s Honors College Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Children’s Hospital of N.O. LOL Tournament

Casey Butler hosted a 24 hour online League of Legions tournament during the month of April. Around 40 people participated in this intense gaming session, and Casey successfully raised over $500 for the Children’s Hospital of New Orleans.
Art Supply Drive

Anna Mills created two campus-wide events to support art majors. She organized an Asian art exhibit during the Chinese New Year Gala night, which attracted many local community members and provided an invaluable opportunity for art students to get more recognition from the community. Anna also collected over 60 pieces of needed art supplies through a campus-wide campaign, and she donated these supplies to the Art department.

Bulldog Book Bash

Jeffrey Robinson and Taylor Trippe together collected about 200 children's books from the local community and MSU campus. All the books were donated to local schools' in-class libraries. Their contributions made so much impact on young children’s future, and state of Mississippi’s literacy development.
**Brushing Up!**

Charlotte Reed organized a series of oral hygiene education seminars at three local nursing homes and one adult developmental center. About 40 healthcare workers were re-educated about how to better care for their clients’ and patients’ teeth and oral hygiene. Charlotte was so passionate about her project, and she even created a professional booklet with background knowledge, pictures, instructions and helpful tips about oral hygiene to hand out to all the participants during her seminars.

**College Conundrum**

Candice James created a handbook of college success tips for high school students complete with information on colleges and universities in Mississippi and financial aid application advice. She is planning to continuously use this handbook to influence and help more high school students to pursue higher education in the future. The initial printing of this handbook will benefit her hometown high school in Grenada, MS.
CTI 4-Man Scramble

Anna Matheny, Hunter Reed and Weston Swims raised over $800 by hosting a charity golf tournament. Around 80 people participated in their event, and all the money they raised will benefit the “Choose to Invest” mission in Kenya.

Dash 4 Davion

Angela Klipp and Eli Scott organized a 5K race, around 200 runners and 30 volunteers attended their race day. They together raised over $5,500 for a local child with Cerebral Palsy, Davion. It was a very touching event. Their work ethic and persistence inspired many people during their capstone project planning and implementation stages.
Drug Use Awareness

Alex Craig and Katelyn Walker hosted a series of events on campus in order to bring awareness of prescription drug abuse to college students. They invited two guest speakers, Karen and Andy Taggart, to share their personal story with nearly about 150 MSU students. These two fellows also conducted an online survey and public “testimony” on campus; they received over 100 survey responses and drew much needed attention to the issue of drug abuse with their public “testimony” day on the Drill Field where many students shared their personal stories on boards.

Blair Batson Volleyball Tournament

Evan Wester raised $210 for Mississippi’s Children’s Hospital, Blair E. Baston through a charity Volleyball Tournament on April 24.

New International Student Activities

Jing Liao is partnering with the Holmes Cultural Diversity Center to help new international college students at MSU get adjusted to life in the United States through International Student Involvement Day. Coming August 2015!
Human Trafficking Awareness Event

Stephen Horne partnered with the Departments of Homeland Security and MSU Criminology & Sociology department to bring a seminar educating nearly 100 participants on the signs of human trafficking and how to be advocates for victims of abuse in MS. Stephen’s event attracted attention from other departments on campus, and he is planning to do several more events related to this topic next year.

Interviewing Do’s & Don’ts

Charles Kirk hosted a panel discussion with career experts to educate nearly 100 graduating seniors on what to expect in a job interview and tips on what to do and not to do in the job interview and offer process. Charles also designed a brochure containing solid advice and tips for interviews.
99 Problems, But FASFA Ain’t 1

Jonathan Turner organized a financial aid seminar with staff from Financial Aid which educated current college students about how to apply for monetary aid, scholarships and loans as well as smart borrowing and spending techniques.

Irices for a Cause

Lauren Iupe and Olivia McCain raised funds and brought awareness for the American Cancer Society by selling purple irises in honor of cancer survivors and those who have lost their battle with cancer. The final showcase of iris honorariums was displayed at MSU’s Relay for Life, and together they raised over $700 for cancer research.
Kicks for Kids

Jenna Sabato and Patrice Simmons collected new and gently used tennis shoes to benefit the Palmer Home for Children through sales of the shoes. Their project was a big success: they received 121 pairs of shoes for resale and 28 new pairs of shoes donated to children at the Palmer Home.

“Life” Science Day

Sunny Patel and Grace Wegener’s project provided extra support and science activities centered on learning about “new life” such as planting flowers for special needs children at Henderson elementary school. They planted some herbs outside their school that the children will take care of throughout the next year. Both of them also participated in Bulldogs on the Move, and built more personal relationships with the students in special education.
Project High 5

Roderick Erby and Ebbony Evans partnered with the Career Center and organized a career workshop which educated fellow college students about professional dress and resume and interview tips to better their success during and after college. Together they were also able to give participants goody bags filled with informative brochures, a note pad, pen and other needed school/office supplies.

Science Lessons for East Oktibbeha

Daisy Grant and Meghan Smith created a week-long science extravaganza which included several exciting and engaging science lessons and interactive demonstrations for fifth graders at East Oktibbeha County Elementary School. Topics varied from physical life science to earth and space science. The students were encouraged by the lessons and increased their interest about the field of science.
Stamping out Homelessness

Sharday Young successfully collected “a van load” of clothing, basic necessity items and more than 200 canned food items for Stewpot Homeless Shelter and the Salvation Army of Jackson, MS. In addition, she facilitated a poverty night debate on the issue of homelessness. Because of Sharday’s passion and hard work on helping homeless people, many donated items are still coming in, even after she finished her project. Sharday drove back and forth from Starkville to Jackson several times to deliver her collected items, and her conscientious effort had been appreciated by many people.

Student Success & Minority Retention Project

Dildra Williams and Fredd Wilson created a “raw” documentary of the plight of African American students and their social and campus involvement at MSU to reveal the true minority experience. They also conducted a student success survey among MSU students in order to get better understanding about minority students’ retention in MSU. The documentary video has been posted on YouTube and has drawn exciting conversations. The findings of nearly 150 survey responses were presented at the Shackoul’s Honors College Spring Undergraduate Research Symposium.
Brookville Gardens Community Revival

Corey Barber, Will Jayroe and Meredith Pearson organized weekly educational and physical fitness games for Brookville Gardens Community in order to create family friendships and provide mentoring and tutoring opportunity for children. These included, an Alphabet Scavenger Hunt, a Board Game Night and Game Day in the Park. Their project concluded with a community family Easter Festival with food and games, bringing many fun and memorable moments to this community. Overall, more than 60 local families benefited from their series of events.

Well-Armed Women

Courtney Carter and Kiara Dulaney partnered with the MSU Police Department to bring Self Defense classes for college and community women and children, empowering over 100 participants. They also collected women’s and children’s clothing and hygiene items for Safe Haven Women’s Shelter in Columbus, MS. Female students gained better self-defense skills after taking the class.
Adult Literacy Awareness

Andrea Drake & Rachel Wolfe tutored adults in basic reading and writing skills and taught English as a second language learners at Emerson Family Center. They not only helped people in the local community improve their literacy skills, but also built strong personal relationships with them. They also hosted a discussion panel to educate the public on the issues of adult illiteracy.
First Semester Projects

Sudduth Elementary School

Claire Bassett, Jay Purnell, Aaliyah Moore, Allie Brown and KL Shelby served as tutors at Sudduth Elementary School on a regular basis, serving a total of 137 hours. In addition to their regular services, they also painted a mural wall in school gym with multiple murals of colorful trees, bushes and active bugs to encourage the students to continue to be active and motivated when they enter the gym.

East Oktibbeha County Elementary School

Rachel Blough, Bailey Bullock, Brittany Carey, Morgan Green and JaMarcus Harris together served as tutors and classroom assistants at the East Oktibbeha County Elementary School on a weekly basis. From their observations, they realized that school not only need extra academic assistance but also improvement on aesthetic and recreational aspects. These five fellows, repainted five benches and created a four-square pad in that school and taught the children how to play four-square. A total of 124 service hours were provided to the school.
Noxubee Wildlife Refuge
Aishwarya Ananthakrishnan, Louie Dusang, Robert Eifert, Leo Gonzalez and Nick Renfroe served at Noxubee Wildlife Refuge for nearly 100 hours. This group conquered the “blizzard” of 2015 year and a swamp with 3 feet of water in order to paint boundary lines at the refuge. In addition to their service, they also built and installed a bench at the park area which added beautification and accessibility for patrons of the refuge.

Humane Society
Vanessa Black, Kayla Franks, Alexis Hampton, Kaitlyn Junkin, Ashley Palmer and Tristan Smith served at Oktibbeha County Humane Society. In additional to regular service socializing animals at the shelter, the group went beyond and created a “Volunteer Board” which has made for a more efficient staff and volunteers at the Humane Society. Together they served 125 hours.
The Salvation Army

Wesley Brandon, Kristen Cosby, Octavia Lewis and Amber Stewart served at the Salvation Army for nearly 100 hours. Beyond their regular service jobs, they also made the food pantry and clothing store more organized and accessible by rearranging and labeling shelves and store section and filling food bags. In addition, they collected over 400 cans through a canned food drive for the Salvation Army’s emergency food pantry.

Child Development Center

Jessi Collier, Jack Francis, Hannah Garrard, Jameika Smith and Feifei Zeng served as classroom assistants at the Child Development Center. Beyond their regular service, they updated and decorated the bulletin boards around the center, making them more parent and kid friendly. They also painted a chalkboard on one of the walls. For their final project, they arranged a Field Day which comprised multiple fun activities including: Simon Says, Duck Duck Goose, Musical Chairs and Parachute games. They served a total of 105 hours.
Discovery House

Breauna Gardner, Simone Jones, Anne Tatum McPherson and Sydney Swims served at the Discovery House during the semester. These four fellows showed their enthusiasm and sincerity to all the members at the center. They created and arranged various interesting and meaningful activities in order to provide more stimulation for the members while they were having fun. They also hosted a field day with some team-building games and provided lunch for all of the members. Together they served nearly 100 hours.

Henderson Elementary School

Doria Johnson, Mydarian Booker, Josselyn Meneses, Jennifer Harrison and Aaliyah Gaston served as tutors at this elementary school on a regular basis throughout the semester. They also created a Fun/Educational Day which included five learning stations: Health, Science, Technology, English and Math. They also made goody bags with all kinds of healthy items for all the students who participated. Together, they served 123 hours at Henderson School.
Carl Aaron, Eboni Smith, Kay Hynes and Ty Butler served at the Carrington nursing home, which is comprised of full-time residents and part-time physical therapy patients. These four fellows interacted and played games with the residents throughout the semester. They also planned a Spring party for them, which included Easter themed painting, Skip bo, popcorn/snacks and Easter egg “hunt”. In addition, they also arranged a flower pot painting and planting day at the nursing home in order to provide a more cheerful atmosphere for all the seniors. These four sincere fellows also made 60 fleece blankets for the Carrington; so all the residents can have their own new warm blanket. In total, they served nearly 100 hours.