Capstone Projects: Spring 2014

25 Sittin’ on $25 Mil…in Debt

Kam de Verteuil, William Jackson, Haden Johnson, and Cody McClanahan organized and hosted a finance seminar for MSU students. The seminar provided helpful information on strategies to deal with debt, credit, and wealth management— with a target audience of soon-to-be graduates. The seminar was a huge success with over 200 attendants and five knowledgeable speakers.

4-H Judging Clinic

Kelsey Hart channeled her love of 4-H into a worthy cause: preparing binders for horse judging competitions. Kelsey created over 400 binders for 4-H participants to aid in the art of horse judging.

Alzheimer’s Awareness

Porscha Myles hosted a series of Alzheimer’s-themed game-days. Porscha’s main event was an informative seminar to promote awareness and support for caregivers of those with dementia-related conditions. Many participants attended and enjoyed Porscha’s events.
Autism Awareness

Simone Carson and LaQuanda Davis raised awareness and money for autism awareness. The pair accomplished this through informative booths on the Drill Field and an educational forum to grow awareness about Autism and how to be a support to others.

Bingo at Boardtown

Kaitlin Parker dedicated her semester to the passers-by at Boardtown Village, a community gathering location. Kaitlin hosted several bingo tournaments and was a support for the elderly community.

Blair E. Batson Benefit

Gineca Garriga and Anna Langford have a shared love for Blair E. Batson, Mississippi’s only children’s hospital. They channeled this shared interest into a benefit dinner raising more than $2,500 in funds while raising awareness of the need for children’s hospitals.
Books & Beyond

Fredricka Brown and Jessica Womack hoped to fight childhood illiteracy by hosting a book drive on MSU’s campus and in the Starkville area. They successfully collected over 200 books to benefit East Oktibbeha County Elementary School.

CANstruction in the Junction

Danielle Adams, Caroline Campbell, and Kimberly Keel wanted to help fill needy food pantries during the “giving off-season”. To accomplish this, they hosted a can collecting competition among MSU’s residence halls. They collected hundreds of canned goods and built “food sculptures” out of the cans in the Junction, to benefit Starkville Church of God Food Pantry.

Caring for Caregivers

Megan Burt organized and held a morning of pampering, stress relief, and educational support for long-term caregivers of family or friends with a terminal or chronic illness. Attendees were treated to a lovely meal, educational speakers, and a networking opportunity to help build support systems.
**Childhood Cancer Awareness MSU**

Brittany McCrary wished to raise awareness of the costs and likelihood of childhood cancer on MSU’s campus. She achieved this by hosting a two-day campus-wide event. On the first day, Brittany organized a seminar with childhood cancer specialists and victims. On the second day, Brittany hosted a scavenger hunt to help raise awareness.

**Dawgs for Water**

Chelsey Causey and Maggie Lupe put on “Water Games” to raise money and awareness for Engineers Without Borders, an organization that builds fresh water wells in Zambia. These games consisted of a life-sized battleship tournament where groups in canoes attempt to sink other groups’ battleships in the Sanderson Center’s indoor pool.

**Dog Jog**

Layne Moritz held a Dog Jog, a one mile fun run to benefit the Oktibbeha and Lowndes County Humane Societies. Layne’s Dog Jog was a huge success with 115 participants and their pets and raised over $2,300. The Dog Jog also tried to connect adoptable dogs from the shelters to potential owners by “renting” the dogs out to runners that did not bring a pet.
Faith Haven Fun

Andrew Bell wanted to make a difference in the lives of children at Faith Haven Children’s Shelter in Tupelo, MS. He accomplished this through weekly mentoring culminating in a field trip. During the field trip, Andrew treated the children to lunch, a haircut, a visit to a science museum, and a trip to the circus.

Finding Beauty in the Brush

Cole Bostick hosted a beautification day for Brush Arbor Cemetery, a forgotten, historically African-American cemetery. Cole also worked to preserve local history through the creation of a formal resolution to designate a Memorial Park Beautification Day for the city of Starkville.

International Student Handbook

Piyush Porwal and Katja Walter sought to help the international student population at Mississippi State University. The pair created the first ever International Student Organization and international student handbook. The handbook will serve as a guide for incoming international students and will provide assistance on everything from international travel documents to academic policies and procedures to the best restaurants in the Starkville area.
Keep Your Ride

John Ganes and Trey Rice wanted to inform the student population about common car maintenance and repair work. With the collaboration of local automotive professionals, John and Trey presented two days of informative seminars and one evening of live demonstrations, including how to change a tire. The pair also raffled off car maintenance items at their events to enforce good car upkeep habits.

Open Hands

Kelsey Huggins raised over $1,000 for the Children’s School and Craft Co-op in Parramos, Guatemala. Kelsey organized and ran local “craft parties” where children could pay to create bracelets and other crafts to be sold, all benefitting children in Guatemala.

Oral Health Fair

Toby Brandon, with the help of several oral health professionals, hosted an oral health fair at Henderson Elementary School. Toby promoted good dental habits for hundreds of students through interactive lessons and demonstrations. Examples of demonstrations include: how to floss—using blocks, yarn, and play dough; how much sugar is in a can of soda; and what does sugar do to teeth.
Rock the Cradle

Robby Escobar raised over $1,000 for local pregnancy resource centers and adoption agencies through the Rock the Cradle 5K run/walk. Robby attracted over 60 participants to his race, and raised awareness in addition to funds for his cause.

Sprout Initiative

Tucker Fleming and De’Ronnius Young sought to improve literacy in local children. They focused their efforts on weekly mentoring and teaching reading strategies to children at the local Boys and Girls Club. Tucker and De’Ronnius also recruited excellent volunteers to be consistent, reliable mentors to children to further their impact. Finally, the pair has reached out to the College of Education at MSU for research assistance at the Boys and Girls Club.

Students for STEM

Melody Chimahusky hosted weekly interactive and stimulating lessons and experiments at East Oktibbeha County Elementary School. To spark an interest in STEM-related (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) concepts, Melody invited special guests (such as physics professors and the chemistry club at MSU) to present demonstrations to 5th grade students.
Total Kommunity Outreach

Masey Smith wanted to connect the Starkville Korean Church to the local community. Masey did this by inviting students and community members to the church for a day of cultural exploration and fellowship. Masey also raised funds to help repair the flooded basement of the church and install an air conditioning unit.

United Students Field Trip

MaryBeth Cox and Shelby Holm hosted a field trip for United Students, a student organization that serves as an advocacy and support group. United Students' members are comprised of students with and without disabilities. MaryBeth and Shelby's field trip was a day of fun including bowling, lunch, and a movie.
Alesha Briscoe created a new student group, Yarning for a Cause, which gathers to practice and teach knitting and crocheting. All handcrafted items made in the group benefit members of local nursing homes and children’s homes.
Caring Days

Alex Craig, Sunny Patel, Meredith Pearson, Katelyn Walker, and Grace Wegener served at Caring Days, an activity center for local Starkville citizens. In addition to regular service, the group hosted a Health Fair for the members of Caring Days. During the Health Fair, members participated in a nature walk, dance-off, photo booth, mind stimulating games, and enjoyed a variety of healthy food options. This group served a combined 117 hours at Caring Days during the spring semester.
The Care Center at Pinelake Church

Darius Brooks, Will Jayroe, Meghan Smith, and Anna Strohm served at the Care Center at Pinelake Church, a food pantry. During weekly service opportunities the group assisted with the organization and distribution of food items to patrons. For their service project, this group hosted an Easter egg hunt for patrons and children of patrons of the Care Center. Over 50 patrons enjoyed the group’s egg hunt and complementary lunch. In total, this group served 126 hours at the Care Center at Pinelake Church.

East Oktibbeha County Elementary School

Kiara Benson, Roderick Erby, Stephen Horne, Angela Klipp, and Anna Mills served as mentors at East Oktibbeha County Elementary School. In addition to regular mentoring and classroom help, the group enhanced the school through landscaping efforts. They also arranged for a motivational speech from Curtis Virges, MSU football player, before annual state testing. The group served the school for a combined total of 127 hours.
Emerson Preschool

Rachel Gaines, Daisy Grant, Daniel Mooney, Sa’Arrah Mullins, Evan Wester, and Dildra Williams served Emerson Preschool. During regular service visits, the group helped in and out of the classroom. For their service project, the group built a stage for the children of Emerson Preschool on their playground. This stage will serve as a place for the children’s imaginations to run wild. This group dedicated 143 hours of service to Emerson Preschool.

Henderson Intermediate School

Corey Barber, Andrea Drake, Shantell McCollins, Taylor Trippe, and Fredd Wilson served Henderson Intermediate School, a school for 5th grade students. The group mentored and tutored students on a regular basis, serving a total of 152 hours and 355 children. In addition to regular service, the group helped to prepare the student for their annual standardized testing through a two-day quiz bowl event.
Noxubee Wildlife Refuge

Ebbony Evans, Hunter Reed, Jenna Sabato, Eli Scott, and Alex Willoughby served the Sam D. Hamilton Noxubee Wildlife Refuge. The group volunteered over 95 hours of hard labor for landscaping and repair work. The group took on several projects at the Refuge including: roof replacement for a pavilion, installation of erosion control fabric, gravel placement, fence removal, and vegetation upkeep and maintenance.

Oktibbeha County Humane Society

Kiara Dulaney, Kyle Henson, Lauren Iupe, Olivia McCain, and John McLemore served Oktibbeha County Humane Society (OCHS). In addition to regular service of socializing animals at the Humane Society, the group wanted to alleviate “kennel craze” for their service project. To accomplish this they designed an enrichment program to better inform volunteers of the most socially needy animals. The group served 103 hours at OCHS.
Rolling Hills Developmental Center

Courtney Carter, Candice James, Charlotte Read, Weston Swims, and Rachel Wolfe served Rolling Hill Developmental Center. The group hosted a Spring Flower Fling for the residents. This event allowed residents to decorate their flower pot, plant their flower, and then watch their flower grow as they take care of it. This group served 112 hours at the Spring Flower Fling and during regular service hours.

Vicker’s Personal Care Home

Casey Butler, Anna Matheny, Patrice Simmons, Jonathan Turner, and Sharday Young served Vicker’s Personal Care Home, an assisted living facility. This group served regularly by visiting with residents and helping staff in numerous ways. For their service project, they hosted a pizza party for residents and enhanced the Home by painting the patio furniture. 116 hours were served at Vicker’s by this group.