Mission Statement

Over the past two years, the Just Living Center has experienced a clarification and visioning process, re-emerging as the Center for Just Living. The name change represents the ideological shift the Center will make as it attempts to focus primarily on being a resource that serves student clubs working for a common vision of creating a more just society. The Center offers a modest library, computers and a comfortable meeting space.

The Center for Just Living stands ready to promote social justice and personal transformation through experiential learning and meaningful reflection. Its mission is to deepen the experiences that students have, emphasize social change and community service, and increase the number of students involved in dialogue about living justly in our world.

Just Living Coalition Member Organizations

Amnesty International
Circle K
Habitat for Humanity
Intervarsity
Open Doors
Students 4 Life
Student Campaign for Child Survival
Speak Up!
Students Against War
The Center for Just Living
Third Wavers
United for Africa
Volunteers Involved Through Action (VITA)
Fall 2005 Semester Report: Events

One of The Center for Just Living Student Coordinators, Diane Tran, was selected as a 2005-2006 Campus Compact Student Civic Leadership Institute Fellow and invited to attend a 4-day leadership training in Cedar Rapids, IA with 35 other Midwest Fellows from September 15-18, 2005. Diane’s plan of action as a result of the experience will include initiating an essay contest and offering mini-grants encouraging students to participate in Global Youth Service Day in the Spring semester.

The Center for Just Living helped facilitate the over 500 students who participated in the October 5, 2005 Community Day event. The Center hosted an Open House to share snacks and beverages with students returning from their community service sites and wishing to dialogue and reflect on their experiences.

The Just Living Coalition (JLC) began meeting regularly on a biweekly basis in attempt to unite disparate groups by recognizing their intersectionalities and through sharing their strength. Members of the JLC share space in both location and ideology. Housed in the CJL, groups like Habitat for Humanity, Amnesty International, Volunteers Involved Through Action (VITA) and Earth Action come together in work for the greater goal of social justice, each employing their own methodology in achieving it. Each is recognized for its various capabilities and desires in working to address social injustices. The underlying goal is to be able to work together in coalition while maintaining individual identities and missions and to partner together realistically in understanding what working together in solidarity truly means. The collaboration that began this semester has expanded the effectiveness of on-campus justice campaigns and has formed a foundation for continued collaborative work.

Rx for Survival: November 1-3, 2005

CSS student Diane Tran was selected as a University Coalitions for Global Health (UCGH) Global Health Organizer and attended the Global Health Council’s annual conference May 30 - June 3, 2005 to receive leadership training and to learn about a new PBS international health initiative to bring back to campus. The Rx for Survival was a 6 hour-long PBS series airing November 1-3, 2005. With direction and resource from Diane, serving also in the capacity of the Twin Cities Public Television Outstate Intern, the CSS Student Campaign for Child Survival (SCCS) chapter was able to spearhead a
campaign, particularly within The Center for Just Living’s Just Living Coalition, and was also to garner sponsorship from Amnesty International, United for Africa, Earth Action, Third Wavers, Open Doors, Fallfest, Speak Up!, Kaleidoscope Multicultural Club, Intervarsity, Campus Ministry, CSS Education Association, Students 4 Life, Social Work Club, Student Nursing Association, The Center for Just Living and the Residential Life Social Justice Living Community. Student organizers showed the 7-minute DVD trailer in their classes or club meetings and particularly targeted the Dignitas program for first year students.

Tables displaying Rx for Survival brochures and posters and international health information remained in the Student Union throughout the week of the showing. The two hours of each of the three nights of the Rx for Survival were screened in the Storm’s Den complex of Tower Hall. Sponsoring groups shared information about the series with their club members, some groups provided further contributions: Fallfest offered Cold Stone Creamery ice cream to students who attended the first and second night of the screenings, Third Wavers provided blank white tee shirts and puff paints with an Rx for Survival logo stencil for students to make tee shirts, Amnesty International tabled and received 278 signed letters concerning global health issues and policy-makers. Over 100 attendees watched the screening the first night, the next two were modestly attended by 40 students; other students, faculty and staff watched from their own homes.

As follow-up to the series, the student Peer Ministers held a small discussion for those interested in reflecting on the issues raised by the drama the following week on Thursday, November 11. The Student Campaign for Child Survival was able to reference the Rx for Survival during their Week of Action on the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria November 14-18 and have students sign 46 letters asking Senate Majority Leader William Frist to support the US fair share of its funding of the Global Fund. On Thursday, December 1, World AIDS Day, SCCS was again able to refer to the Rx for Survival during its Benefit Concert for the Fund, which featured 6 acts, 90+ attendees and raised over $47.00. The Health Information Management Department at CSS has purchased a copy of the DVD and student groups will look to partner with the series again when it re-airs in the spring.

November 14-18: Hunger and Homelessness Week

Campus Ministry student workers, Stacey Rauenhorst and Jim Skoog, worked to establish a number of activities during Hunger and Homelessness Week from November 14-18, including the 30-Hour Famine, the Oxfam Hunger Banquet, the play “Haunted By God,” about the life of Dorothy Day, and tabling in the Union with bags of rice advertised as free lunch. The Center for Just Living helped fund the Wednesday night play about Dorothy Day, information share during its Just Living Coalition meetings, and also worked with the Third Wavers to raise awareness on NetAid’s International Day for the Education of Girls and Women on November 16. CSS student Rumbidzai Sithole is a NetAid Global Sister and worked to bring the issue to campus and find a home for it in existing student organizations.
November 15, 2005: America Recycles Day

The Earth Action Club partnered with the Residential Life Social Justice Living Community to purchase recycling bins for the apartment buildings which lacked recycling facilities. The groups tabled in the Student Union on Monday and Tuesday to encourage students to properly dispose of recyclables to register to win a gift certificate from Target. They distributed the recycling bins through education sessions in Cedar Hall on Wednesday night and in Scanlon and Kerst Halls, respectively, on Thursday night. The bins appear to be properly used and the recycling bins outside indicate that students are generally well-educated on what materials are recyclable. The two student groups will consider doing further education programs into the spring semester.

November 14-18, 2005: International Education Week

The Institute for International Public Policy and Americans for Informed Democracy granted $200 to fund activities promoting study abroad opportunities during International Education Week on campus.

- On Wednesday, November 16th, 60 empty chairs taped with pictures of students’ study abroad experiences in Mexico and Namibia were placed in the Student Union to draw attention to the fact that 60 million girls worldwide are without access to education. Third Wavers and Rumbidzai Sithole organized students to send over 100 emails detailing the interconnectedness of global issues marginalizing women and girls to legislators at the information table throughout the course of the day to share their support of increased education for girls and women.

- Posters and informational brochures concerning the CSS and HECUA study abroad programs available to CSS students were created, updated and displayed
on tables in the Student Union throughout the week, promoting opportunities to become more informed of and practice social change.

- The Student Campaign for Child Survival’s Week of Action on the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria culminated with students tabling on November 17th so that CSS students signed 46 letters and made over 100 phone calls asking Senate Majority Leader William Frist to support the US fair share of its funding of the Global Fund.

**December 1-15: Human Rights Week: Africa Awareness**

- On Thursday, December 1st, World AIDS Day, United for Africa hosted Kenyan Professor Njoki Kamau, of the Women’s Studies Department at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, who spoke to CSS students about the exacerbation of AIDS in Africa due to increased poverty as a side effect of globalization.

- The evening of World AIDS Day, senior Diane Tran spoke of her study abroad experience in Namibia and South Africa during a World AIDS Day Benefit Concert put on by the Student Campaign for Child Survival. The concert featured 6 acts, 90+ attendees and raised over $47.00 for the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Attendees signed and pledged promises concerning their actions to combat AIDS on over 45 red strips of paper which were later sent to the Student Global AIDS Campaign to be included as part of their national chain of promises to be personally delivered to Senator Frist’s office. Students were featured by the Budgeteer, Duluth News Tribune and Channel 10.

- United for Africa hosted an AIDS Benefit Dance on Saturday, December 3rd. The dance was well-attended and received over $700 in donations for AIDS relief efforts.

- Amnesty International sponsored a one-day Write-A-Thon on Friday, December 9th, pledging to have over 600 letters signed by students, staff and faculty at CSS to contribute to the larger national campaign. AI leader, Stephanie Kistner, led 8 students in learning of the initiative while attending the Midwest Regional Conference in Cincinnati, OH, October 28-30th. Their on-campus success has encouraged them to attend the National Amnesty International Conference in
Portland, OR at the end of April 2006.

- On Tuesday and Wednesday, December 13th and 14th, Amnesty International and members of the Just Living Coalition screened “Hotel Rwanda” and “The Peacekeepers” in honor of annual International Human Rights Day on December 10th. An information table offered movie snacks and a personal student study abroad scrapbook that shared about study abroad programs. The event was a partnership between the Campus Activities Board under the leadership of Fallfest Chair, Steve Plude.

- The Student Campaign for Child Survival held a Last Minute Holiday Gift Sale during Wednesday and Thursday, December 14th and 15th, offering cards of children’s artwork produced by CSS students who had previously studied abroad in Cuernavaca to benefit Habitat for Humanity and books of art drawn by primary school-age children in Cuernavaca. SCCS also accepted donations for Heifer International and the United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF), fundraising nearly $200 total over the course of 2 days. Articles, informational brochures and study abroad information supplemented the fundraising.
World AIDS Day acts featured headliners Noble Haze.

Diane Tran speaks about her study abroad experience in Namibia and South Africa.

Students came in from the Minnesota winter to enjoy local bands and to support efforts to combat AIDS.

Study abroad materials catch faculty and students’ eyes as they ponder where next to engage in academic studies and learning.

“Hotel Rwanda” and “The Peacekeepers” keep students at the edge of their seats as they learn about international affairs.
On November 18th to 21st, approximately twenty CSS students and staff (in coalition with the Twin Ports SOA Watch) participated in the **School of the Americas (SOA) Peaceful Protest** at Fort Benning in Georgia. The protest is a peaceful demonstration held annually to speak out against the military training base formally known as the School of the Americas. The SOA trains United States military officials in torture tactics, with its graduates have been reported to be involved in the assassinations of innocent Latin American citizens, clergy, and missionaries. Aware of the dangers of such a training organization, CSS students and the CJL recognize the need for the SOA to be closed, and therefore have remained active in this annual protest, as well as other SOA education and awareness initiatives.

**United for Africa** is a new club at St. Scholastica. Members include students from various countries in Africa and the United States as well as interested staff. This club exists to clear misconceptions and stereotypes about the often misunderstood continent of Africa, by presenting the truths about the harsh realities that affect the continent and why these realities exist today. United for Africa will focus a large amount of its efforts to initiate discussion about HIV/AIDS in Africa, education, economic and political issues. The genocide in Darfur, Sudan and the famine in Niger are the two key concerns of the club this semester. The club will also be bringing speakers in to inform interested students about issues that are relevant to Africa. Under the leadership of Nai Laicer and Rumbidzai Sithole, CSS international students from Tanzania and Zimbabwe, respectively, UA hopes to become a powerful voice raising awareness among the student body and staff about the pressing issues facing the continent of Africa.

**Third Wavers** partnered with Student Health Services to provide a Women’s Health Panel. The group grew in numbers and encouraged support for the Feminist Forum Academic Journal to be published on campus this spring. The journal will be a culmination of student and faculty academic research, published in order to further the research reputation of the College of Saint Scholastica and to bring women’s topics, issues, and history to the forefront of academic consciousness. They also lobbied on the Violence Against Women Act. For the Spring, they plan to invite women from the CSS and Duluth communities to lead a series of “F” word discussion panels, addressing personal perceptions and development of feminism.

**The Social Justice 101 Leadership Seminar** is a student-designed and led course currently run out of the CJL. A story was published about the program in the Cable and Minnesota Campus Compact made mention in their monthly newsletter, “News You Can Use,” of the 9 students who participated in the Fall course and who will be joined by a minimum of 3 more students in the upcoming Spring semester. All will register with an Independent Study in the Honors Department and receive 0-2 credits for their work in the renamed series: “Be the Change.” Senior students Diane Tran, Rachel Satterlee, Lauren Satterlee and Tiffany Sobczak initiated the project by writing a grant to Youth Venture, a national non-profit organization that funds young social entrepreneurs, from which they received $1000.00 to jumpstart the initiative on campus over the course of this year. The seminar was created in an effort to foster an atmosphere fueled by deep discussion and personal evaluation concerning issues of social justice.
First year student and participant Amanda Sneed shared, “Through the discussion of social justice literature and the sharing of personal experience, we have begun to better understand why we do what we do, and to not to simply do without forethought or understanding of what exactly we wish to accomplish.” As a collective of civically engaged students, emphasis was placed on establishing a base knowledge and understanding about reasons for and the means by which students serve.
Looking Ahead: Spring Semester 2006

Selected Upcoming Events:

- **Earth Action** plans to tackle issues of replacing Styrofoam plates with biodegradable servingware as well as increasing CSS purchasing and awareness of fair trade items in the Bookstore and the Port.

- Diane Tran has been selected to serve as a participant in the Housing Minnesota “Let the Outside In” 4-day immersion seminar in Minneapolis and St. Paul on homelessness issues from January 9-12, 2006.

- Katy Windschill and Diane Tran have received full scholarships from the Duluth League of Women Voters to attend the *Leaders of Today and Tomorrow* training in Minneapolis, MN from January 12-14, 2006.

- In February, eighteen CSS students will work to attend the 4th annual **Student Campaign for Child Survival** National Conference at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. CSS has had representation at every national conference to this point and will attempt to bring its largest contingent ever this year!

- **CJL Alumni Collective** forming to reengage former CJL student coordinators in Center and its programmatic activities.

- The Center for Just Living plans to host a social justice-focused, student-led **Coalesce Conference 2006** on Saturday, February 25th, at CSS with workshops from the Just Living Coalition member groups. The goal of the conference is to information share between the various groups housed with the center by allowing individuals and groups to lead issue and skill-focused workshops. This educational structure will also allow the student presenters to gain experience sharing their knowledge and passions in a peer setting.

- “**What does social justice mean to me and how do my life and actions show it?**”. Two student Essay Contest winners will receive airfare and registration to attend annual COOL/Idealist Conference at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN, March 3-5, 2006.
• Mini-grant opportunity for two student groups or organizations proposing to perform community service as part of Global Youth Service Day, April 21-23, 2006.

• Social Change Agent Leadership Enterprise (SCALE) Professional development program for young, passionate changemakers in the CJL.

Submitted by:

Diane Tran
dtran@css.edu
218.723.7029

Special thanks to Amanda Sneed, Rachel Satterlee, Lauren Satterlee, Rumbidzai Sithole.