

Foundations Community Partnership Launches Summer Youth Corps
Bucks County Students Participate In Service Learning

Doylestown, PA (July, 2008) – Ron Bernstein, Executive Director of Foundations Community Partnership has announced the launch of a new Summer Youth Corps, which sponsors **Bucks County** paid student internships at local non-profit human service agencies. Focusing on non-profit human service agencies providing services to children, youth and families in Bucks County, the Summer Youth Corps offer interns the ability to gain practical experience while helping to effect positive change in the community.

In its inaugural year, 7 of the 10 participating college students were former recipients of Foundations Community Partnership's high school grant program, The Partnership in Education Program. The Partnership in Education program recognizes the achievements of local Bucks County high school seniors for their demonstrated community service, commitment to academic performance, and quality of character.

"We are gratified that there has been such a great response to this wonderful new internship program," said Ron Bernstein, Executive Director of Foundations Community Partnership. "Not only do local non-profit agencies benefit from having highly qualified students assisting their organizations, but the students are also gaining meaningful work experience with groups that are really making a difference in the community."

Dan Weldon, Ed.D., Senior Consultant for Program and Educational Services for Foundations Community Partnership worked collaboratively with Buck County Community College to develop a curriculum for the Summer Youth Corps.

"Through our relationship with Bucks County Community College, students are able to really experience "service-learning", a form of experiential education where students learn to solve community problems and achieve real objectives for the community while earning college credits," says Dr. Weldon.

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Service-learning is different from volunteerism in that it is a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

The Summer Youth Corps is led by Field Supervisor Gretchen Nordstrom, a graduate student at the University of Pennsylvania, where she is in the process of earning a Masters of Social Work degree at the School of Social Policy and Practice.

This summer, students have been placed in the following locations:

New Hope resident Megan Conover is working with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Bucks County in **Jamison**. Big Brothers Big Sisters helps children reach their potential through professionally supported, one to one relationships with mentors that have a measurable impact on youth. She is a graduate of **Central Bucks West High School** and Bucks County Community College, and a student at Temple University.

Durham resident Rachel Crouse is working with the Central Bucks Family YMCA teen center in **Doylestown** where she assists with teen activities. She is a graduate of **Palisades High School** and a student at Kutztown University.

Bensalem resident Saleemah Flythe is working with Bucks County Health Improvement Partnership (BCHIP) in **Langhorne**. BCHIP provides healthcare access to uninsured, low income

Bucks County residents. Saleemah is a graduate of Bensalem High School and a student at University of Pittsburgh.

Holland resident Katy Frank is working with Tabor Children's House in **Doylestown**. Tabor House provides quality, affordable day care to the Bucks County community as well as a day camp for 7-14 year olds. Katy is a student at a student at Smith University and a graduate of **Council Rock High School South**.

Warrington resident Rob Hoy is interning with the Churchville Nature Center in **Churchville** where he is working on building a butterfly garden, researching a survey on red-bellied turtles, and conducting marketing research at the nature center. A graduate of **Central Bucks HS South**, he is a student at the University of Southern California.

New Hope resident Carrie Kozar is working with Special Equestrians in **Warrington**, a therapeutic horseback riding facility serving people of all ages. She assists with riders as well as the care of the horses. A graduate of New Hope – Solebury High School, Carrie is a student at University of Delaware.

New Hope resident Christina Mercandetti is working with The Free Clinic of **Doylestown**, an organization that offers free medical care to those in the area who are uninsured. She is a graduate of New Hope-Solebury High School and attends Neumann College.

Sellersville resident Adam Schultz is working with the summer camp at the Upper Bucks YMCA in **Quakertown**. He is a graduate of **Penn Ridge High School** and Bucks County Community College.

Richboro resident Elizabeth Shaw is working with Community Conservatory in **Doylestown**, an organization offering music, art, voice, and acting classes for the youth of Bucks County. A graduate of St. Hubert Catholic High School, she attends Bucks County Community College.

Langhorne resident Melissa Stack is working with Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA) in **Jamison**. NOVA supports, counsels and empowers victims of sexual assault and other serious crimes. Melissa is a graduate of Neshaminy High School and attends West Chester University of Pennsylvania.

Students who have completed their freshman through junior year at college and who are residents of Bucks County are eligible to participate. Some academic institutions also offer credits for the students as independent study or service-learning opportunities. Each student will complete a structured syllabus, including a project paper by the end of the program. Internships are subsidized by Foundations Community Partnership.

Foundations Community Partnership (www.fcpartnership.org) develops community-focused, youth-based service learning opportunities, provides grants and scholarships, and supports community education, research and training.

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Editor's Note: Digital photos of the students are available.