

**SC Commission on Higher Education
Service Learning Award
2004-05**



Since 2001 the Commission on Higher Education has undertaken an initiative to publicize on a statewide scale the service learning and volunteerism efforts of our colleges and universities. Last week we completed the Fourth Annual CHE Service Learning Competition. For the purposes of the competition, the Commission defines service learning as follows:

Service Learning is college student learning at any level and in any situation that is linked in a direct, hands-on fashion to the resolution of a problem or concern in a target community outside the institution.

An effective way to highlight the value of service learning is to publicly recognize projects that represent the integration of student learning with community service. This year's competition brought 14 nominations, and as in years past the Selection Committee determined winners in three categories: public four-year institutions, public two-year institutions, and independent institutions.

The Selection Committee was chaired by Dr. Vermelle Johnson, and was also served by Kathy Carter and Karen Horne from the South Carolina Commission on National and Community Service; David AvRutick, President, American College of the Building Arts; Jennifer Shurley, Community Service Coordinator at Clemson University; and Blanche Premo-Hopkins of USC-Aiken.

Following are this year's winners in each category:

FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC INSTITUTION

Clemson University

"Focus on Prevention: A Diabetes Self-Management Training Initiative"

Project Directors: Dr. Deborah Willoughby and Dr. Vivian Haley-Zitlin



The primary goal of this project, initiated in 1999, is to provide health education and care to underserved populations, the uninsured, and the elderly who have special health care needs due to Type 2 diabetes. It has included faculty and 150 students from Clemson University, South Carolina State University, Tri-County Technical College, and Spartanburg Technical College and has provided free diabetes management clinics in Oconee, Spartanburg, Anderson, and Orangeburg counties. Students involved in the project gain "real life" experience working with underserved populations, and have an opportunity to develop patient interviewing and counseling skills, as well as transfer practical application skills from the classroom to a clinical setting.

TWO-YEAR PUBLIC INSTITUTION

Midlands Technical College

"SCDA Columbia Site: Give Kids A Smile Day"

Project Director: Dr. Martha Hanks



"Give Kids A Smile Day" is a nationwide event that is part of the American Dental Association's effort to improve access to dental care for low-income families. In February 2003 and February 2004 the South Carolina Dental Association enlisted the help of volunteer dentists and the Midlands Technical Colleges' Allied Dental Education faculty, students, and staff to host the Midlands "Give Kids A Smile Day." Together, these two one-day clinics in 2003 and 2004 provided free dental care to nearly 200 children, with services valued at \$25,000. "Give Kids A Smile Day" for 2005 is scheduled for February 4.

INDEPENDENT COLLEGES

Clafin University

"Peer Power to Decrease the HIV/AIDS Epidemic"

Project Director: Sadie Jarvis



Since 1999, the director of Counseling at Clafin University and 40 peer educators have been actively addressing the problem of the growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in surrounding communities, particularly in the Greater Orangeburg area. These "Peer Power" students are trained by HIV/AIDS experts and assist in the delivery of HIV/AIDS curriculum modules in several required undergraduate courses. They also collaborate with faith-based organizations in the community, and assist various community advisory councils in raising HIV/AIDS awareness. In April 2005 the "Peer Power" educators will present a revised HIV/AIDS policy to Clafin University President Henry Tisdale.