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[Local healthcare students participate in community service learning projects](#)



One team of interprofessionalism students started the project "Kicks for Kids" to collect shoes for Refugee and Immigration Services in Roanoke.

Students from the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Jefferson College of Health Sciences Students from the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine are creating community service projects as part of a joint leadership class. Here is a press release from Virginia Tech:

(<http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2011/01/index.html>) and Jefferson College of Health Sciences (JCHS) (<http://www.jchs.edu/>) in Roanoke, Va., are giving back to the community as part of an innovative interprofessionalism curriculum.

Interprofessionalism (<http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2011/01/interprofessionalism-curriculum.html>) is one of four value domains at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. This domain emphasizes service learning and team building activities that are focused on professionalism and ethics, roles of the health professions, community service, public health, acute and chronic disease, and patient safety. While some medical schools offer a limited amount of interprofessional education, the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine puts a unique focus on it and integrates it across the four year curriculum.

“Students get to learn about themselves and about their own personal feelings toward their ideas about health care, their ideas and biases about other professions,” said Richard Vari (http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2011/01/rick_vari.html), associate dean for medical education and chair of interprofessionalism. “They will benefit because they will learn how to understand and manage conflict, understand and appreciate roles and responsibilities. ... That will improve patient outcomes.”

Medical students from the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine as well as nursing and physician assistant students from JCHS have been participating in an interprofessional leadership course together since August 2010. The course requires students to complete a service learning project (<http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2011/01/service-learning-projects.html>) in the community.

“The service learning project accomplishes many great things at once for our students,” said Dr. David Trinkle (http://www.vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2011/01/david_trinkle.html), associate dean for community and culture. Trinkle has helped develop the interprofessionalism curriculum at the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. “It requires them to work in teams formed with various health professional students from diverse backgrounds and training and test their team and leadership skills which they have been working on in class since the summer.

“Second, it gets our students intimately involved with our great community at the beginning of their four year curriculum and involves our community equally with our school,” added Trinkle. There are 10 teams of around nine students each. The class has been able to delve into a wide array of projects.

One group is seeking help from the community on their plan. The students developed a new project in partnership with Refugee and Immigration Services called “Kicks for Kids.” They are collecting new or gently-used shoes that will be handed out to families connected to Refugee and Immigration Services. Children’s shoes are the greatest need; however, other shoes will be accepted.

“Correctly fitted, warm shoes are an important part of a healthy child’s development,” said Oleg Uryasev, Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine charter class student and member of the “Kicks for Kids” service learning team. “Many people have pairs of shoes that their children have outgrown. We would like to see those unused pairs of shoes donated to Refugee and Immigration Services so they can distribute the shoes to children who need them.”

The team is asking for support from the Southwest Virginia community. Shoes can be dropped off at the front desk of the Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine or at the student services office at Jefferson College of Health Sciences through Feb. 12.

Here’s a look at the other service learning projects:

- * One team is pitching in at the local Ronald McDonald House. The team has been preparing meals for the guests as well as arranging entertainment activities such as a Super Bowl party.
- * Two teams will serve at Habitat for Humanity. One group is working to raise awareness of homelessness in the Roanoke Valley in addition to helping with the construction of some homes. The second group is working closely with one family to help build their home.
- * A few teams are partnering with Roanoke City Public Schools as well as organizations that support the school system. One group’s focus is to tutor high school students who are struggling in math and science. Another group is centering their attention on health awareness for students, helping with Madison Middle School’s “Edible School Yard” project. A third group is working with the growing homeless student population in partnership with the school system, the Transitional Living Center, and Turning Point Shelters.
- * The Adolescent Health Educator at Carilion Clinic Children’s Hospital and the Roanoke Adolescent Health Partnership is receiving help from interprofessionalism students. The team is providing health education at a housing development community center as well as volunteering with the Adolescent Health Partnership.
- * Another team is working with the Council of Community Services’ Drop-In Center to further its mission to prevent the spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. The team is creating marketing materials for National Black HIV Awareness Day (Feb. 7) as well as other educational programs.
- * The final team is serving at the Bradley Free Clinic. Students are providing basic care and screenings to those in the Roanoke Valley who do not have access to health care elsewhere.

Students are required to complete at least 13-17 hours of service from Jan. 10 to Feb. 21 as part of the interprofessionalism leadership course. But leaders at both schools believe the service won’t stop there. “It is hoped that many of these projects will extend beyond the required phase and into a voluntary phase,” stated Trinkle. “Many groups have already expressed interest in continuing to work on these projects, or offshoots of them, throughout their time in Roanoke.”

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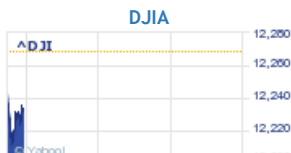
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