

13th & UNION PARTNERSHIP

Newsletter

Homework Center Provides ESL Students with Help

Through the Albright College and 13th and Union Elementary School Partnership, and with a grant from the Wyomissing Foundation, 13th and Union now has a Homework Center that offers after school homework help and tutoring to English as a Second Language students.

Albright volunteers—Shirk Scholars and other education and foreign language students—provide homework help, practice flash cards, play spelling games and listen to students read aloud.

Volunteer Angela Cremer '17 said she gained just as much from the experience as the elementary students did. "On my first day there I was helping a boy with addition and subtraction and I could tell that he just wasn't getting it, so I started to walk him through the process using the Spanish that I do know. Once I did that, I could see that it started to click with him a lot better, and he seemed to open up to me a bit more after I had started talking to him in his first language. It was a pretty moving experience for me, and I thought it was awesome how my learning a second language really paid off by allowing me to be able to help him more than I ever could had I not known Spanish."

Presentation about Partnership to be Held at Professional Development School Conference

An application to the National Professional Development School Conference, submitted by Susan Seidenstricker, Ed.D., has been accepted. Seidenstricker, along with graduate student Paige Dezii and undergraduate students Christa Mantz '14 and Kelly Detweiler '14, will present about the partnership at the National Convention in Las Vegas, Nev.

Since 2004, Albright College has enjoyed a Professional Development School (PDS) relationship with 13th and Union. Originally, the Pennsylvania Department of Education funded conferences and programs for the PDS relationship. Over the years, funding became unavailable and schools and colleges were left to continue the relationship on their own. Many PDS ties were broken.

Thanks to the efforts of the education department and Seidenstricker, the PDS relationship with 13th and Union has not only remained intact, but it has grown and developed as well. Thirteenth and Union teachers have attended in-services supported by Albright faculty, elementary students have been tutored and Albright student teachers have been allowed to grow professionally thanks to the partnership.

New iPads Help Kindergarteners Learn

Center time in Susan Shober's Kindergarten class has taken on a new meaning thanks to the purchase of iPads, made possible by a grant from the partnership through the Wyomissing Foundation.

On a recent visit, partnership coordinator Dorothea Miller watched as the students opened programs on the iPads and became engrossed in their letter and word work. Students are able to work in programs that match their reading level, so each lesson is individualized. They practiced letters and numbers, and worked on reading passages, comprehension and addition. Thoroughly engaged in their lessons, the students proudly showed off their accomplishments.

More research is needed, but Shober says that the students' skills have improved. The iPads make it possible to practice more frequently than with pencil and paper alone.

Grants Awarded for Asphalt Forest Project

Two grants totaling \$8,000 have been received to fund the Asphalt Forest Project, a project that will convert an area of campus with wetlands and forest biomes into an educational center for use by 13th and Union Elementary and Albright College students. For the project, Susan Seidenstricker, Ed.D., of the education department is working with the teachers at 13th and Union to write curriculum, based on the Common Core Standards, that can be used in science classrooms. Biology professor David Osgood, Ph.D., is also working with groups on campus to develop the area.

The grants were awarded by the Kurr Foundation and the Foundation for Sustainability and Innovation, thanks to proposals written by Seidenstricker, Sheila Simyak and Dorothea Miller. Books have already been purchased using funds from the Wyomissing Foundation.

