



Stony Brook Serves

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AmeriCorps Spotlight: Tabitha Yim

by Olivia Basileo

It is well-known that members of the prestigious AmeriCorps are hard-working and dedicated to serving their community. Tabitha Yim, a senior at Stony Brook, is no exception. She prides herself on her community service and the knowledge that she can benefit others with her unique skills. Her philosophy is that by helping others and making a difference in their lives, she can achieve the greatest satisfaction. Tabitha joined AmeriCorps to take advantage of the copious opportunities it offers for community service, and was not disappointed by what she found.

Tabitha has volunteered at the Veteran’s Home, the Hurricane Sandy Relief Center located in Mastic Beach, the Stony Brook Cancer Center and Long Island Head Start. All these organizations involve direct contact with people, which Tabitha finds the most rewarding.

She says, “I love the personal interaction aspect that comes along with community service. It makes the experience extremely rewarding and meaningful for both the giver and receiver.” The highlight of her service thus far has been helping with the Hurricane Sandy relief in Mastic. After such a tragic event, Tabitha was determined to interact with some of the victims and help them any way she could. Speaking with the people affected by Hurricane Sandy, she explains, “...was an especially rewarding moment and reinforcing reminder to myself as to why I do community service.”

Tabitha Yim’s most memorable moment throughout her service with AmeriCorps was mentoring students at a high school who were part of the HOPE (Health Occupations Partnership for Excellence) program. These students are from underserved communities but have great aspirations to enter the health science field. Their backgrounds, however, sometimes make it difficult for them to achieve their goals. Working with these students, Tabitha found she was able to use *(Continued on Page 2)*



Photo courtesy of Tabitha Yim.

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**Join AmeriCorps!
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Psi Chi and the Community

by Lisa Crimando



Psi Chi at their 2013 Involvement Fair.

Psi Chi, the International Honor Society of Psychology, passionately supports community service activities. The society's actions underscore their need to help others. The organization helps on and off campus community organizations in an effort to raise community awareness for those who need help locally and abroad.

The society raises awareness of academic needs on campus. It hosts an annual Graduate and GRE panel discussion. Psi Chi also opens student/faculty relations. They support social events that allow students and faculty to interact. The organization brings hope to those with physical ailments. They set up community

service trips to the Stony Brook Hospital.

The society furthers off campus community service as well. They volunteer with HeadStart, an organization that serves over 1,600 at-risk children and families in 22 centers throughout Suffolk County. The organization's need to help others does not stop at the country's borders. They have raised funds for UNICEF through bake sales and selling goodie bags.

Psi Chi also helps Stony Brook students. The society's E-board will enthusiastically "help students by hosting events that would reach out to students with varied interests." The organization eagerly helps psychology students because they ease the minds of those who are in an academic quandary. Society members contact professors and people from all different fields of psychology.

The organization has upcoming events. These events will help direct psychology students on their career path. On Monday, April 1, the society will host an event on careers in Business with a Psychology degree. Those students who would like to work with children can attend a meeting about careers in child therapy on Monday, April 8. These events will be held in SAC 303 from 1-2 pm.

If you would like to be involved with Psi Chi, please attend a meeting. Attendance does not require you to be a psychology major or inducted member!

AmeriCorps Spotlight, Cont'd

by Olivia Basileo

her knowledge and experience as a senior nursing student to encourage others to pursue their goals. She describes one girl who had doubts before the mentoring program. The student was afraid she would not be able to succeed in such a competitive field, but after talking to Tabitha, her doubts were calmed and she felt confident that she had the capability to excel. This was an important moment for Tabitha; her own knowledge and self-confidence inspired another student to feel the value of her own potential.

Tabitha's positivity helps her get the most out of her service experiences. She says, "I feel extremely grateful towards the people I help. I say this because although my purpose of being is to help them, I in return gain valuable insight on the vulnerability of certain populations." She loves being a part of AmeriCorps because whether she is working with members of the community (*Cont'd on Page 4*)

Sigma Beta Honor Society

by Lisa Crimando



Photo courtesy of Sigma Beta Honor Society.

Sigma Beta Honor Society has an active role in the community. Since they are an established community service organization, they can situate their efforts. They have an unmatched opportunity to accentuate their community service actions on a local and global scale because of their commitment to helping others.

The organization has a passion for community service. Although the honor society has a strong emphasis on academics, they also believe in the importance of community service. Through their efforts, they have raised awareness about local, national and global issues. The honor society believes that members who participate in community service will provide aid to the community at this time, as well as after graduation.

Sigma Beta Honor Society started establishing their record of community service in 1972, and they have worked alongside established community service organizations. The honor society remembered our war veterans through their work with the Long Island State Veteran's Home, as well as helping those in need at the Pax Christi Hospitality Center. The honor society also raises money for charitable causes. They host a Talent show in an effort to fundraise money for global organizations, such as UNICEF.

Community service plays an important role in the organization. It is the foundation of the honor society. Since civil engagement is important, the honor society guides members in the direction of helping others in an effort for them to become global citizens who have a responsibility towards the community. The mission statement of the organization states that the honor society is "dedicated to academic excellence while raising public awareness and inspiring individual initiative to make service within our communities an integral part of our lives."

Sigma Beta Honor Society believes that other campus organizations should be involved in community service. Increased awareness of community service roles will be created if more campus organizations would become involved in community service. Through aiding others, a student can become a good citizen who has a responsibility towards his or her community. If exposed to a number of community service organizations, this student will understand his or her community service role.

The organization has upcoming community service events. On March 30th, the honor society will be helping at the Sweetbriar Nature Center for an Easter festival and then heading to Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen on March 31. They will also encourage youth to pursue higher education with an organization known as Par Fore on April 3rd. The honor society shows their love for the environment in a West Meadow Beach cleanup on April 27th and on April 28th, Sigma Beta will honor veterans with a trip to the Veterans Home. Their general body meeting will devote time to projects such as making goody bags for children at Little Flower Orphanage and making Valentine's Day cards for veterans.



Photo courtesy of Sigma Beta.

AmeriCorps Spotlight, Cont'd

by Olivia Basileo

or fellow AmeriCorps members, she gets to interact with diverse people who appreciate her help and share her determination. Being a part of AmeriCorps suits her perfectly, because she gets the privilege of seeing the fruits of her service. Through her volunteer work, she has developed her leadership skills and built upon what she's learned in the classroom.

Tabitha highly recommends AmeriCorps to anyone who is interested in performing community service directly to the public, regardless of major. Aside from the satisfaction of helping others and improving leadership skills, it opens up valuable networking opportunities. Tabitha is a nursing student, graduating this May with a BS and concentration in nursing. She would like to work in an ICU and eventually earn her Masters or a Doctorate in Nursing Practice. Her time as a volunteer with AmeriCorps has reaffirmed her goal, and it has given her great experiences that she will carry with her for the rest of her life. Tabitha will, without a doubt, continue to make a difference in the lives of others.

Hurricane Sandy: Volunteer Reflections

Many students have been volunteering their time to assist with Hurricane Sandy relief efforts. Here are a few of their stories:

As a Senior here at Stony Brook University, I do not attend many activities here on campus. I have attended a few general body meetings and I most recently volunteered for the Hurricane Sandy Relief. The experience was a great one for reasons that I have met new colleagues, and participated in a cause for the greater good of the Long Island community. Because of this community service, I am now on the lookout for more volunteer work and hope to make changes for our society in the near future. The most memorable part of this experience was the fact that I left feeling great that I have helped other people besides myself.

- NiKeia Walker, Economics and Applied Mathematics in Statistics Major, Senior

Over the winter break, I volunteered with Nechama in Far Rockaway and the Americorps in Freeport. Both experiences reminded me of how lucky I am to have only lost electricity during Hurricane Sandy. In Far Rockaway, we gutted the first floor of a home because of the severe water damage. In Freeport, we worked on mold suppression. Because I was not as severely affected by Hurricane Sandy as others were, I decided to lend a helping hand to the communities that really needed it. One of the main reasons I volunteer with disaster relief is to remind those affected that there are still people who care about them. They are not forgotten. The most memorable part of both experiences was meeting dedicated individuals from other states and working as a team even though we just met each other. I hope to continue to engage in volunteering with disaster relief in the future.

- Katrina Llanto, Health Science, Senior

A storm as powerful as Sandy doesn't just drown your block in water. It hits your home, a place that is supposed to be safe. When Sandy breached into Freeport, it destroyed that feeling of protection. Working in Freeport I learned from talking with Sandy's victims that it wasn't the loss of material things that hurt them, but the loss of that security. I remember someone saying, 'if I can't be safe in my own home where can I?'

Volunteering alongside the office of the Dean of Students allowed me the opportunity to not only help repair homes, but to also begin to help repair hearts. Sure it was below freezing that day, but every time we got a smile from the home owners, our own teammates or just people driving by, we would literally gain a second wind. Sandy may have torn houses apart. But it brought us all together.

- Shamvil Bilal, Biology, Senior, AmeriCorps Member

Spring into Service!

by Kristina Kuznetsova

Why do you believe it is important to engage in community service?

“Community service by definition is, ‘voluntary work intended to help people in a particular area,’ but people who offer their services will do much more than provide free labor. Those who participate in community service are learning, doing and improving themselves and the community together. It is an opportunity to provide selfless acts of kindness no matter age, class or background. Service instills the value of working hard for change, taking initiative and collaborating with others to achieve a common goal. There really is nothing more rewarding for the individual and the community at large.” **-Caitlin Walsh, Graduate Student**

“Community service benefits not only the recipient but also the contributor of service. Some might characterize it as voluntary generosity, others as an ethical imperative -- an obligatory reciprocation through generalized exchange to society at large, and to the particular communities of our locality. In our hyper-commercial modern world, where many services have been commoditized for profit, our lives have become fragmented and individualized, with increasingly tenuous bonds to people beyond our immediate social networks. Our sense of social being is highly dependent upon the interpersonal relationships with (sic) develop with people from all walks of life, with members of local communities of diverse origins, definition and composition. Participating in direct service and cooperative engagement builds greater empathy with, and more appreciative understanding of, others in our broader social fellowships. Service helps to foster community and to strengthen social bonds; it builds leadership skills while developing a more conscious sense of our own humanity and our commonalities. People experience very different motivations ‘to get involved,’ and may serve in very different ways, from established institutional relationships to imaginatively creative individual initiatives. It starts with a simple willingness to give of one's time, a willingness to share of one's self.”

-Professor Gregory Ruf, Asian American Studies & Anthropology

“I think engaging in community service is important because it creates opportunities for people of very different backgrounds to interact with one another. When a person volunteers in the community, they find themselves in an environment that is different from their job and with people that they do not interact with on a regular basis. For example, I volunteer to judge high school science fairs and to help put on sensory-friendly Broadway shows for children with Autism. Through meeting these people, I believe that my perspective of the world around me is broadened and I am more mindful of the various experiences that other human beings in my community are having. I am able to think beyond the realm of my daily life at work and school. Conversely, I think that the families also benefit to see that other people care and will use their time to create positive experiences for others. Overall, I think that community service builds connections that would not otherwise exist amongst people who live near each other and that these connections are extremely important for building a sensitive and caring environment for everyone to live in.”

-Megan Tudor, Graduate Student

Submit Your Articles!

The Career Center encourages students, faculty, and staff to get involved with community service activities. Our publication is the place to share your stories with the Stony Brook community! Submit articles and photos, share information about projects, and list upcoming events. Please send all submissions to **Taryn Kutujian, Internship Consultant, Career Center**, at taryn.kutujian@stonybrook.edu. Be sure to include your name, phone number, and email address.



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For more information, contact the Career Center!



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