

FRESNO STATE

Bonner Center for Character Education
and Citizenship

ANNUAL REPORT: 2006

Purpose of the Bonner Center

The KSOEHD's Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship was formed in 1997 to promote character education in the Central Valley through providing nationally recognized speakers for the Fresno area, forums on character education and professional ethics, materials and other professional resources for review, and coordination for a variety of character award programs.

Administrative Housing of Ancillary Unit

The Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship is an authorized Ancillary Unit of the CSU Fresno and the KSOEHD. Dr. Jacques Benninga is its director and Dr. Pam Lane-Garon is its Associate Director. The Center's activities are guided by an Advisory Board composed of KSOEHD faculty, public school personnel from Fresno, Tulare, Kings and Madera counties and a representative of the Bonner Family Foundation.

Major Accomplishments for 2005 - 2006

1. In 2004 Drs. Susan Schlievert and Jacques Benninga wrote a nine-part series for KVPR (Fresno's public radio station) titled, "The Moral Is...". Kaye Bonner-Cummings narrated the series that ran from September-November. An expanded 13-part second season of the show ran for four months in Spring 2005. The weekly three-minute segments focused on children's differential understandings of stories and events. A third year of the series -10 additional segments—has been completed and will be aired twice weekly on KVPR between April-July 2006.
2. In April 2005 the Bonner Center offered the first of a series of one-unit classes for our students on principles of character education. The class was sponsored by a contribution from the Fresno County Office of Education that allowed Dr. Merle Schwartz of the Character Education Partnership in Washington, DC to conduct the class for approximately 35 enrollees. A second such class was held in November 2005 (with about 50 enrollees) and a third was held on April 28-29, 2006 (with approximately 43 enrollees). The class has been scheduled again for November 2006 and we hope to institutionalize it.
3. April 28, 2006 marked our 22st Annual Conference on Character and Civic Education. Jacques Benninga was the conference co-chair and worked with co-chair Jane Moosoolian. Donations were received from The Kremen School of Education and Human Development, The Fresno County Office of Education, The Tulare County Office of Education, the Central California Geographic Alliance, Educational Employees Credit Union, and the Bonner Family Foundation. Students and faculty from Fresno Pacific University were invited to participate as guests and two FPU faculty presented a breakout session. The 2006 conference was a success. International character education expert Dr. Hal Urban was our morning keynote speaker, and Fresno County Special Education Teacher of the Year Jeanne Cox, and Tulare County Teacher of the Year Jeff Cozad were the afternoon keynotes. KSOEHD faculty presented thirteen of the 36 conference breakout sessions.
4. Fifteen excellent elementary schools were awarded plaques and cash awards during the 19th Annual Virtues and Character Recognition Award ceremony that is part of the conference program. The winning schools for 2006 were:

BURTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Burton Elementary
Michelle Pengilly, Principal

CENTERVILLE SCHOOL

Sanger Unified
Lisa Houston, Principal

FANCHER CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Clovis Unified
Rosie Rivera-Borjas, Principal

FRANCIS J. WHITE LEARNING CENTER

Woodlake Union
J. Terrence Keller, Principal

JAMES K. POLK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Central Unified
Karen Garlick, Principal

JEFFERSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Sanger Unified
Matt Navo, Principal

JOHN S. WASH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Sanger Unified
Wesley Sever, Principal

MCKINLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Central Unified
Eliseo Cuellar, Principal

MONTE VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Porterville Union
Carol Woodley, Principal

OAK GROVE SCHOOL

Burton Elementary
Mick Bishop, Principal

ROOSEVELT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Central Unified
Danny Teevens, Principal

RIVER BLUFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Central Unified
Brett Wolfe, Principal

SANGER ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Sanger Unified
Ken Garcia, Principal

SANTA FE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Porterville Union
Angel Valdez, Principal

VANDALIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Porterville Union
Lissa Lambie, Principal

5. The Bonner Center web site and materials center were updated and reconfigured during Summer 2005. Pam Lane-Garon secured a collection of related books from her former professor at Arizona State University. We added many books and materials during Summer and Fall 2005. The site will be updated again in Summer 2006.
6. In May 2005 the University Faculty Senate and University President John Welty approved an Honor Code policy for the university. CSUF is now the second CSU with such a policy. Jacques Benninga was chair of both the initial Honor Code Committee and the subsequent Honor Code Writing Committee and worked on this project since December 2002. Dr. Paul Oliaro (Student Affairs), with Jim Prince (Chair, Academic Standards and Grading), Dennis Nef (Assistant Provost), Robert Hernandez (Student Affairs) and Jacques Benninga spent the year 2005-06 planning for full implementation of the code for Fall 2006.
7. Dr. Pam Lane-Garon received a second grant from CSUF to continue her work on the "Ethics Project". She has used that grant to create an electronic procedure for administering and submitting responses to ethical sensitivity dilemmas. The Early Childhood Education Multiple Subject Program is piloting the assessments and the complementary curriculum implementation model.
8. Jacques Benninga wrote three entries for the upcoming Encyclopedia of Moral Education that will be published by Greenwood Press. Selections were "Cultural Transmission", "Edward A. Wynne", and "James S. Leming". The encyclopedia is intended as a primary reference work for university libraries, undergraduates, parents, educators and schools. The aim of the book is to provide a one-stop reference point to familiarize readers with the fundamental knowledge base of the field.
9. Work was completed on the project "Stability and Change in Character Education", funded by a grant from The John Templeton Foundation. The project allowed a follow up of exemplary schools identified in 2000, to determine if and how those exemplary programs continue over time. Jacques Benninga conducted the research from September 2004-May 2005, and a final report was submitted to the Templeton Foundation in August 2005. The report was submitted for publication in March 2006.
10. "Character and Academics: What Good Schools Do" (Jacques Benninga, Marvin Berkowitz, Phyllis Kuehn, and Karen Smith) was published in February 2006 in the Phi Delta Kappan, a well known professional journal for education that addresses issues of policy and practice for educators.
11. The "Partnerships in Character Education Program" was one of four such federally funded projects in 2004. The project is a four-year joint effort of the Fresno Unified School District (FUSD), the Bonner Center for Character Education and WestEd, an educational research entity. Work began in January 2005. Drs. Jacques Benninga, Pam Lane-Garon, Rich Firpo and Richard Sparks are the CSUF/Bonner Center staff on this project, establishing peer mediation programs at target schools, and conducting professional ethics training for faculty of the target schools and for district administrators.
12. Jacques Benninga was invited to join the Academic Advisory Panel at Stanford University's Center on Adolescence. His appointment is for four years. According to the invitation, the Center's Academic Advisory Panel is made up of "a group of scholars with unique perspectives on the influence of purpose on development."

Goals and Objectives for 2006-2007:

Several areas will receive primary attention by the Bonner Center in 2006-2007. These include:

- **Research.** Our FUSD Partnerships in Character Education research team has spent the bulk of 2005-06 implementing peer mediation programs and preparing assessments, testing teachers and implementing professional ethics discussions in target schools. The new FUSD Superintendent is supportive of our efforts. The School Board has suggested public sessions for its ethics discussions, and the FTA is interested in our work and wants to cooperate. 2006-07 will be an important year for this project.
- **The 2007 Conference on Character and Civic Education.** The 23rd conference will be scheduled for April 2007. A major keynote speaker will be selected and planning for the myriad details that will make the conference successful will be worked out. The 20th Annual Virtues and Character Recognition Award applications (middle school) will be due in February 2007 and will be screened and validation teams will be formed to visit finalist schools. Additional character education workshops will be planned.
- **California Department of Education.** The Bonner Center spent significant time over the years 2000-2004 ensuring that character education criteria were included in California's award to distinguished schools. Schools applying for the award during those years had to address character education at their schools. Surprisingly, for the 2006 award most character education criteria have been deleted. We have already contacted the CDE about this issue, and an editorial written by Michael Josephson and Jacques Benninga criticizing the CDE appeared in the Fresno Bee in April 2006. We will continue to advocate with the department to reinstate character education as part of the distinguished schools nomination process. To do so, we will attempt to form a coalition of like-minded organizations.
- **Other areas.** Other areas to receive attention in 2006-07 include the materials collection in the Bonner Center, consultation with schools, speaking engagements, and instructional programs, and a framework for an evaluation of character education at the high school.