

FRESNO STATE

Bonner Center for Character Education
and Citizenship

ANNUAL REPORT: 2011

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.

Major Accomplishments for 2010-2011

1. Twenty-six new scripts were written in 2011 for the 9th year of the KVPR (89.3 FM) series, "The Moral Is..." narrated by Kaye Cummings. "The Moral Is..." is a series of short essays written by CSUF faculty and sponsored by the Bonner Center. The content centers on contemporary moral issues. The program airs twice weekly on Sundays and Wednesdays. For 2011 new professors were recruited to write (in addition to Benninga) including: Dr. Deborah Helsel (Sociology), Dr. Andrew Fiala (Philosophy), Dr. Ida Jones (Business), and Dr. Madhusudan Katti (Biology). The program will run for 52 weeks beginning June or July 2011.
2. The 27th Annual Conference on Character and Civic Education was held in April 2011. Fresno Pacific students and faculty joined our CSU Fresno students and faculty. Approximately 500 students attended as well as local educators. Dr. Marvin Berkowitz of University of Missouri, St. Louis was our keynote speaker. His topic related to the foundations of character education in schools. In addition there were 36 breakout sessions and two general sessions. Dr. Berkowitz's visit was co-sponsored by the University's Ethics Center (Andrew Fiala, Director) and the State Center Community College Consortium. In addition, Dr. Berkowitz conducted a four-hour workshop for area school administrators on the day after the conference. Approximately 30 administrators attended.

Written feedback from conference attendees were collected and evaluated. The conference was a success and received very positive feedback from participants.

3. The 24th Annual Virtues and Character Recognition Program (2011) recognized 12 middle schools for exemplary character education programs, including all schools from Fresno County and Tulare Counties. Winning schools for 2011 included:

EDISON COMPUTECH 7-8 SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

GREEN ACRES MIDDLE SCHOOL

Visalia Unified School District

KINGS CANYON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

LIVE OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tulare City School District

LOS TULES MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tulare City School District

ALICE G. MULCAHY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tulare City School District

RAFER JOHNSON JR. HIGH SCHOOL

Kingsburg Elementary Charter School District

SCANDINAVIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

SEQUOIA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

TEHIPITE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

TIOGA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

WAWONA I.B. WORLD MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

4. Jack Benninga published two manuscripts related to his character education research:

Benninga, J.S., Sparks, R.K., & Tracz, S.M. (in press, 2011). Enhancing teacher moral judgment in difficult political times: Swimming upstream. *International Journal of Educational Research*

Benninga, J.S. & Quinn, B. (2011). Enhancing American Identity and Citizenship in Schools. *Applied Developmental Science*, 15(02), pp. 104 - 110. DOI: 10.1080/10888691.2011.560816

Jack has continued his active membership on the editorial board of the *Journal for Research in Character Education*. As well, Jack is a core member of the University's Ethics Committee, and its Honor Code Committee.

Goals and Objectives for 2011-2012

Several areas will receive primary attention by the Bonner Center in 2011-12. These include:

- a. Research. Jack will spend the summer of 2011 on writing projects and assisting Stanford University's Center on Adolescence in preparing its research on the formation of American identity in adolescents.
- b. Writing. Scripts for the 10th year of the KVPR series, *The Moral is*, will be initiated.
- c. Conference Planning. The 2012 Conference on Character and Civic Education. The year 2011-12 will be spent raising the necessary funds for the conference and planning its events. The keynote speaker has been identified: Michael Josephson of the Josephson Center for Ethics and Character Counts! In addition Dr. Hal Urban will conduct a full day workshop on character education on the day following the conference.
- d. Collaboration. The Bonner Center will continue work in collaboration with other ethics-related centers on campus to infuse a sense of academic integrity in all aspects of the workings of the campus.
- e. Other. Other areas to receive attention in 2011-12 include the materials collection in the Bonner Center, consultation with schools, speaking engagements, and instructional programs, and planning for the 25th Virtues and Character Recognition Awards (to be given to area elementary schools, April 2012).