

Annual Report
Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship
to
July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015

Purpose of Ancillary Unit

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 the 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. The Center's activities are guided by an Advisory Board composed of KSOEHD faculty, local school districts, and public school personnel from Fresno, Kings and Madera counties.

Major Accomplishments for 2015

1. Twenty-six new scripts were written in 2014-2015 for the 12th year of the KVPR (89.3 FM) series, "*The Moral Is...*" "*The Moral Is...*" is a series of short essays written and read by CSUF faculty and sponsored by the Bonner Center. The content centers on contemporary moral issues. The program airs on *Valley Voices* (Tuesdays at 9:00 am and 7:00 pm) and Sundays at 3:55 pm. Authors of the series for 2014-15 included: Dr. Diane Blair (Communications), Dr. Ida Jones (Business), Dr. Andrew Fiala (Philosophy), Dr. Madhusudan Katti (Biology), Dr. Christopher Meyers (Kegley Center for Ethics at CSU Bakersfield), Ms. Kaye Cummings (Bonner Family foundation), and Dr. Jacques Benninga (Education). In the summer of 2015 KVPR decided to end *The Moral Is* series after 12 years. I told the writers, "Seinfeld was on for only 9 seasons, we made it through 12."
2. The **31st Annual Conference on Character and Civic Education** was held on March 13, 2015. The conference is coordinated each year by KSOEHD faculty Ms. Jane Moosoolian, Dr. Susan Schlievert and Jacques Benninga. Fresno Pacific students and faculty joined our CSU Fresno students and faculty. Over 500 students attended as well as local educators. Eduardo Briceno of Mindset Works was our keynote speaker. His topic *A Growth Mindset Foundation for Character*. The day included the 28th annual award programs for Valley schools, two general sessions, and 30 breakout sessions. The following day the Bonner Center sponsored a full day workshop on Social Media and Ethics. Approximately 110 CSUF students registered for this workshop (CI 124) and attended. The day included presentations on Privacy and the Ethical Framework (Dr. Andrew Fiala, Philosophy), Social Media and the Digital Footprint (Dr. Libbi Miller, C&I), and Digital Citizenship and Fair Use (Otto Benavides, C&I). Written feedback from attendees have been collected. The conference was an overwhelming success and received very positive feedback from participants.

3. The 28th *Annual Virtues and Character Recognition Program* (2015) recognized 13 Valley middle schools and 6 Valley high schools. Although in the planning for two years, this was our first year ever to screen and award high schools. It was a very successful process. The character recognition award process is work-intensive, initiated in October of each year and culminating in March. Winning schools honored for 2015 included:

Middle School Winners

ABRAHAM LINCOLN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Selma Unified School District

EL CAPITAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Central Unified School District

GLACIER POINT MIDDLE SCHOOL

Central Unified School District

JOHN F. KENNEDY JR. HIGH SCHOOL

Hanford Elementary School District

KINGS CANYON MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

MULCAHY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tulare City School District

RIO VISTA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Central Unified School District

SCANDINAVIAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

SEQUOIA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

SUTTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fowler Unified School District

TEHIPITE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

WASHINGTON ACADEMIC MIDDLE SCHOOL

Sanger Unified School District

WAWONA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Fresno Unified School District

High School Winners

ACADEMY FOR CIVIC AND ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP

Chartered by Fresno Unified School District

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Central Unified School District

FOWLER HIGH SCHOOL

Fowler Unified School District

SANGER HIGH SCHOOL

Sanger Unified School District

TULARE UNION HIGH SCHOOL

Tulare Joint Union High School District

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

Chartered by Fresno Unified School District

4. Benninga serves as co-editor of the refereed *Journal of Character Education*, and is a core member of the University's Ethics Committee, and this year, with Andrew Fiala (Philosophy) continued and co-directed a FLC on Professional Ethics. Members of the FLC included faculty from the Kremen School, School of Arts & Humanities, Craig School of Business, the Lyles College of Engineering, the Department of Physical Therapy, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Criminology.

Sources of Funding

The Bonner Center's income for the center's activities comes from donations provided by the following agencies:

- The Bonner Family Foundation
- The Kremen School of Education and Human Development
- Fresno County Office of Education
- Kings County Office of Education
- Madera County Office of Education
- Education Employees Credit Union
- Teaching Fellows Program

Goals and Objectives for 2016

Several areas will receive primary attention by the Bonner Center in 2016. These include:

- a. Research. The Bonner Center joined the Civic Education Task Force, one of several operating throughout the State of California at the behest of The California Task Force on K-12 Civic Learning. The local group was formed by Justice Don Franson of the 5th District Court of Appeals. Part of the summer was spent revising the Bonner Center's award application and making other plans to include civic education into the Center's framework. A proposal was developed (by John Minkler and me) and presented by the Civic Education Task Force and the Bonner Center (Fresno State) to several funding agencies to more deeply infuse character and civic education into the programs of surrounding school districts.
Our annual conference in March 2016 will have a civic education focus. Dr. Michelle Herczog, past president of the National Council for the Social Studies and director of the Democracy Schools Project in California will be the keynote speaker.
- b. The Bonner Center's web site will be updated.
- c. Writing. Work is to begin on a special issue of the *Journal Character Education* on character education after No Child Left Behind that will be edited by a staff member (Heather Cozad) of the national character education organization in Washington, DC. And by me. A call for manuscripts has been produced and nationally distributed. Target date for receipt of manuscripts is July 2016. Hopefully the special issue will come out in Fall 2016.
- d. Conference Planning. The 32nd Annual *Conference on Character and Civic Education*. The summer of 2015 will be spent raising the necessary funds for the 2016 conference and planning its events.

- e. Other. One special project that we will work on in 2016 is a statewide consortium for character education. It is the goal of the Consortium for Character Education in California (CCEC) to establish an organization and to engage in some or all of the following activities:
- establish and hold a statewide character education conference
 - promote civic education in schools throughout the state
 - promote social-emotional learning in the school curriculum
 - award excellent schools of character at the state level
 - promote professional responsibility, integrity, and ethical conduct in school personnel

Several institutions have expressed interest in working towards this goal. They include the following:

- University of San Diego's Character Development Center
- California State University Bakersfield's Kegley Institute of Ethics
- Fresno State's Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship
- San Jose State's Collaborative for Reaching and Teaching the Whole Child
- California State University Stanislaus' Character Connects
- Sana Clara University's Markkula Center for Applied Ethics

Other areas to receive attention in 2016 include the materials collection in the Bonner Center, consultation with schools, speaking engagements, and instructional programs, and planning for the 29th Virtues and Character Recognition Awards (to be given to area elementary schools, March 2016).