



Bonner Center for Character Education
and Citizenship

ANNUAL REPORT: 2005

Purpose of the Bonner Center

The Bonner Center for Character Education and Citizenship in the Kremen School of Education and Human Development 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. An Advisory Board composed of KSOEHD faculty, public school personnel from Fresno and surrounding counties and a representative of the Bonner Family Foundation guides the Center's activities.

Highlights of Significant Activities 2005:

1. The Bonner Center Advisory Committee added three new members in 2004-2005: Jim Lloyd is the Social Science coordinator for Fresno Unified School District, Karen Worobey is the character education coordinator for the Madera County Office of Education, and Kelley Petty is the Character Counts! Coordinator for the Tulare County Office of Education.
2. Drs. Susan Schlievert and Jacques Benninga wrote a nine-part series for KVPR (Fresno's public radio station) titled, "The Development of Understanding". Kaye Bonner-Cummings narrated the series that ran from September-November 2004. An expanded 13-part second season of the show ran for four months in Spring 2005. The weekly two-minute segments focused on children's differential understandings of stories and events.
3. 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. Other such classes are planned for Fall 2005 and Spring 2006. Thereafter we hope to institutionalize the class.
4. In April 2005 the Bonner Center was highlighted in FresnoState, the magazine of California State University Fresno. Both Pam Lane-Garon and Jacques Benninga had pictures included and substantial narrative was devoted to a description of the Bonner Center and its work.
5. In May 2005 it was announced that Jacques Benninga had won the 2005 Jan and Bud Richter Award for Excellence in Education.

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. The University will begin implementing the Code in Fall 2005.

7. April 20, 2005 marked our 21st 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 City of Fresno, The Fresno County Office of Education, The Tulare County Office of Education, Lozano Smith Attorneys at Law, The Fresno Bee, the Central California Geographic Alliance, Educational Employees Credit Union, and the Bonner Family Foundation. The 2005 conference was a success. International character education expert Mr. Michael Josephson, Esq., of the Character Counts! Coalition was our morning keynote speaker, and Fresno County Teachers of the Year Carol Stone and Jim Durando were the afternoon keynotes. KSOEHD faculty presented fifteen of the 36 conference breakout sessions.

8. Ten excellent middle schools were awarded plaques and cash awards during the 18th Annual Virtues and Character Recognition Award ceremony that is part of the conference program. The winning schools for 2005 were:

CLARK INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Clovis Unified
Carl Tomlinson, Principal

EL CAPITAN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Central Unified
John Barber, Principal

KASTNER INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Clovis Unified
Rick Gold, Principal

LA JOYA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Visalia Unified
Mary Whitfield, Principal

LIVE OAK MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tulare City
Paula Adair, Principal

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. MIDDLE SCHOOL

Madera Unified
Robert Chavez, Principal

MULCAHY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Tulare City
John Pendleton, Principal

PIXLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Pixley
Tony Luis, Principal

REYBURN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Clovis Unified
Stacey Dunncliff, Principal

RIO VISTA MIDDLE SCHOOL

Central Unified
Chris Williams, Principal

9. Both the Bonner Center web site and the Bonner Center materials center were updated and reconfigured during 2004. Pam Lane-Garon secured a collection of related books from her former professor at Arizona State University. We plan to add many books and materials during 2005-2006

Bonner Center Research Activities:

- 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.

- 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 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. Planning meetings with FUSD and WestEd staff were held, and contacts were made with the schools to initiate the grant activities. This is a major project that will take much of our energies over the next several years and deserves special description. Its significant features include:
 - infuse character education into the English/Language Arts curriculum of target schools, and re-invigorate Second Step as a violence-prevention, anti-bullying program,
 - enhance character education as a school-wide focus in the target schools and support teachers in the implementation of research-based effective teaching strategies designed to improve student achievement and classroom management,
 - work to improve the physical/psychological factors at school sites that research suggests influence student behavior and achievement.
 - And, the most UNIQUE feature of the grant:
 - provide professional development in ethical decision-making to adults in the school system at all levels.
 - Drs. Jacques Benninga, Pam Lane-Garon, Rich Firpo and Richard Sparks are the CSUF/Bonner Center staff on this project.
 - As part of the research preparation for that grant, an "Expert Meeting" of Bonner Center staff, school district educators, and evaluators from WestEd met in Fresno in July 2005 to formulate Ethical Sensitivity assessments. Dr. Muriel Bebeau from the Center for the Study of Ethical Development at the University of Minnesota led the workshop.