

The Way our Mission would have Us Be. . . **Augsburg College Center for Service, Work, and Learning**

Augsburg College has a long and proud tradition of experiential education that has played a significant role in the College's mission, vision and core curriculum. As a result, the Center for Service, Work, and Learning (CSWL) was created and has developed out of this tradition. Our CSWL mission statement describes our work and commitment to learning, development of the whole student, community and civic engagement, student leadership and exploration of vocation. Shaped by experiential learning pedagogy, the work of CSWL provides the cornerstone for enriching and enhancing student learning in the classroom with direct experiences in the community. We believe this proven method of active student engagement in the community, aligned with passion and purpose, deepest values, and a fit between who you are and what you do, will better equip students for a lifetime of learning, responsible professional lives, commitment to long-lasting service and civic engagement, and meaningful participation in a global society. Furthermore, CSWL holds the student central to our work and we strive to provide support and resources that are intellectually challenging and blend the liberal arts with the practical. CSWL staff take the mission of the college seriously and the following are examples of how our common work reflects and advances the College mission:

The way we are based in the liberal arts...

Daily, CSWL staff provide support, services and resources to both students and faculty that allow them to utilize the wider community outside the campus as learning "text" and where knowledge can become real, alive and useful to the learner. From Mosques to Museums, community based learning sites are arranged for over 20 first year Augsburg Core courses and Augsems that connect classroom goals with off-campus service, civic, and cultural "Engaging Minneapolis" opportunities. In addition, by building partnerships with departments and faculty, a growing number of courses in the majors are embedding community based learning components. Individual assistance is provided for students to locate internships related to their majors as well as interdisciplinary internships in a wide range of community organizations, businesses, government agencies, schools and hospitals. An internship reflection portfolio model has been developed for faculty and students that integrates Augsburg's liberal arts core curriculum and skills with the major and asks students to reflect on ethical issues and the diverse cultures of the organizations where they are working. Students also gain insights about themselves and accumulate invaluable, practical experience. Many of our Augsburg students use these work and service based internships experiences as their AugCore Augsburg Experience requirement. CSWL career staff provide one-on-one career planning and coaching to help students discover their unique gifts, talents, skills, and interests; choose majors; explore career paths; and grapple with questions of vocation and purpose in a changing world. We believe bringing together classroom learning with community engagement, coupled with a deeper self-awareness and asking what it means to be a good citizen, provides a foundation for lifelong learning.

The way we are shaped by the faith and values of the Christian church...

A commonly held value of CSWL staff is to have freedom and opportunity to share their skills, knowledge, expertise, passions and spirit with others—we "give it away". We strive to be a welcoming place and we often say in the office that we are here to "serve" the students and the college. This stems from our individual and collective experiences, values and faith traditions that we bring to our work each day that align with the work and values of the college. The college motto, "Education for Service," is reflected in the nationally recognized Service-Learning activities that are embedded in courses and also carried out in co-curricular arenas. In addition, our active involvement with the Lilly "Exploring our Gifts" grant created new and exciting initiatives for CSWL to help students make connections between faith, vocation, and work. Staff utilize self-awareness assessment instruments to encourage individuals or groups of students to examine their gifts, interests, skills, and passions. Coupled with mentoring and coaching, this encourages students to grapple with how to best use their gifts in the world through choices of majors, professions and how we should live in the world. An energizing 24-hour retreat called "Quest 24" and alternative spring breaks are designed to examine life purpose, passions, and career connections. The Lilly Internship program provides students who care deeply about exploring social and community needs from a theological perspective, opportunities to work in faith based and non-profit organization and work along side people who are making a difference. Students and alumni of the College often remark that having had a wide range of opportunities that linked their education with experience, and where they felt their values and faith traditions were respected, felt more confident to follow their callings in the world.

The way we are shaped by the context of a vital metropolitan setting...

CSWL cultivates cooperative relationships between students, faculty, staff and community members to ensure that community and civic engagement is an integral part of Augsburg's mission. The College is blessed with remarkable learning resources in our Cedar Riverside neighborhood that provide a variety of locales in which to apply learning. Inviting the community as partner in the teacher and learning enterprise is a vital part of our work. Augsburg's Community Service-Learning staff have built powerful relationships with neighborhood community partners that offer students opportunities to understand and respond to needs in the city through course-embedded service experiences and community and civic engagement. This dynamic and interactive educational approach employs reciprocal learning between the students and the community. A key component includes reflection on and analysis of community issues in order to promote personal and educational growth and civic responsibility. CSWL staff who live in the community have advanced our work and the mission of the college by sitting on community organization boards and building friendships and working partnerships with community leaders. This provides opportunities to bring community speakers into the classroom, develop student-faculty immersions into the community, seminars and workshops to educate and inform our Augsburg community. CSWL has connected with Trinity Lutheran Church, which has a major presence in our Cedar-Riverside neighborhood, on projects including Wednesday Night Out (Augsburg provides meals and childcare as low-income parents gather to discuss issues), and Safe Place (a daily after-school program for primarily Somali children where Augsburg students tutor through the Augsburg Reads program). Another way we are actively involved in the community and live out our education and mission is through the Campus Kitchen at Augsburg. Armed with the motto "Teach. Reach. Feed. Lead.," this student-run program works with the campus food service, food banks, and local farmers to utilize surplus food and prepare it into meals for the community. The program provides companionship to community members, nutrition education to youth, and skills-based training for underemployed men and women. CKAC also connects the service to Augsburg courses for service learning and goes even further by providing academic departments, program offices and staff service opportunities to build a culture of community engagement throughout the institution. Reaching out beyond the Cedar Riverside neighborhood, CSWL fosters relationships with a broad range of non-profits, businesses, schools, churches and government agencies that are potential learning environments for students that will allow them to cross the boundaries from classroom to community in order to develop practical competencies and "test" their ideas in a real-world context. CSWL staff, working with students who are preparing for "life after Augsburg," believe that these experiences in our city and beyond, will empower learners and instill in *all* our students the notion that they can make a difference in their neighborhoods, as well as in their workplaces, promoting the common good.

The ways we are shaped by an intentionally diverse campus community ...

Inherent in our work is promoting opportunities for learning that meet the interests and needs of diverse students and faculty. We work with students from varied backgrounds that are rich with diversity including different learning styles, genders, cultures, ethnicity, economic class, and age, and we collaborate across campus with faculty, academic departments and programs, campus ministry, and student affairs that serve our various students. We encourage all students to engage in "experiencing the other" in order to be exposed to lives, ideas, backgrounds, cultures, and faiths that are different, yet valued. The off-campus work-study Augsburg Reads tutoring program places students in direct contact with primarily Somali and East African youth who have diverse backgrounds and faiths. Through some of the service-learning courses, students and faculty can meet and dialogue with immigrant populations and the disenfranchised who live just down the street and Urban Partner interns work in non-profits in the city rich with diversity. Through work-based experiences, from undergraduate to graduate students, we are here to open up community-based opportunities where they will be stretched and encouraged to express their viewpoints and experiences through critical reflection and discourse. CSWL staff are also active in campus committees such as environmental concerns and the Women's Resource Center, to help shape and identify speakers who bring diverse voices and viewpoints to the campus. Furthermore, CSWL also sees our role and advancement of the College mission to include encouraging the entire college to live out its Christian values within our own community and to be a caring citizen in the highly diverse neighborhood where we are located.

