



## SERVICE-LEARNING AT SOUTHEASTERN

Service-learning, an educational process that allows students to find real-world connections for course content, is growing in popularity at Southeastern as more faculty and students embrace the concept.

Southeastern students have traditionally engaged in community service activities, but there is a difference between “service” and “service-learning,” explains Dr. Tena Golding, director of the Center for Faculty Excellence, which coordinates service-learning activities on campus.

“Service-learning enhances student learning by providing a meaningful connection between course content and a community need,” says Golding. “The service experience becomes an environment where students must transfer and apply what they’ve learned in the classroom to a real-life situation. Student reflections connect the service back to the learning of the academic content.”

Last year, 45 courses taught by 30 faculty members contained service-learning components. These courses involved more than 1,200 students who put in over 16,000 hours of service in the community. With the ever-increasing interest in service-learning, the university secured an AmeriCorps/VISTA volunteer, Alexandria Raphael, to support and document service-learning efforts. She is currently conducting a survey to collect data on the 2009-2011 academic years.

Service-learning activities cover a broad range of activities, from tutoring youngsters, to providing free mobile health screenings to those without adequate access to medical care, to working in nearby marshes to limit erosion.

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PHOTO: Members of the Department of Biological Sciences’ environmental awareness class spent several days placing recycled Christmas trees into the Jones Island Marsh to help shore up the coast line.