

Grant to help 'build bridges' with area students

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Posted: 1/31/08

SCSU students will soon be "building bridges" with area school kids thanks to a \$20,000 mentoring and tutoring grant.

SCSU's Volunteer Connection, in affiliation with St. Cloud Independent School District (ISD) 742, received the grant Jan. 14 to help "build bridges" between the SCSU campus community and ISD 742.

The "Building Bridges: Campus-Community Connections" grant was awarded by Post-Secondary Service-Learning and Campus-Community Collaboration Grant Program via state-funds.

Beth Knutson-Kolodzne, Volunteer Connection coordinator, said the grant will help fund service learning projects between SCSU and ISD 742 students.

According to Knutson-Kolodzne the three projects that have been identified so far are:

- * SCSU students as reading tutors for grades K-6.
- * SCSU students working with Clearview Elementary's kindergarten Spanish immersion class.
- * SCSU service learning classes working with ISD 742 on a summer English Language Learners career conference day.

Knutson-Kolodzne said they are working with classrooms where service learning is connected to the curriculum.

"Targeting classes or departments interested in service learning is one of the three projects," Knutson-Kolodzne said.

SCSU and the St. Cloud school district have developed several goals they hope to accomplish with the initiative such as increasing strengths between both institutions, fostering college aspirations among ISD 742 students and collaborating to share resources, Knutson-Kolodzne said.

"The joint goal is to increase the number of new service learning partnerships between SCSU and ISD 742," she said.

The grant will help not only in developing more projects, but what students involved can take away.

"Seeing and understanding the connection between making a difference in the community," Knutson-Kolodzne said. "Being a lifelong, engaged citizen."

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