HDFS 101: Service Projects

HDFS students are required to take an introductory course, HDFS 101, in which they explore possible careers but also participate in service projects for a more hands-on experience. This year, students participated in five projects - collecting food for the Eastern Illinois Food Pantry, helping with donations at Goodwill, organizing the Christmas donations for sale at a Habitat for Humanity warehouse, hosting the Halloween party at Crisis Nursery, and working with community families to build a KaBOOM! playground at Old King's Orchard in Decatur, Illinois. KaBOOM! is a national non-profit organization that is dedicated to ensuring that “all kids get a childhood filled with the balanced and active play needed to thrive.” This particular project was a favorite for many of the HDFS 101 students this semester.

New CFLE Program Offered to HDFS Students

As of Fall 2014, the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at UIUC began offering the abbreviated Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) program accredited by the National Council on Family Relations (NCFR). Students who are interested in becoming Certified Family Life Educators are required to take specific courses that enhance their knowledge on all aspects of family science. Once students have completed the required courses, they are able to apply for provisional certification within two years of graduation. Those who obtain the provisional certification must complete 3,200 hours of relevant work experience within five years to apply for full certification. Relevant work experience includes a variety of activities focused on enhancing family life through educational and preventive measures. Certified Family Life Educators are employed in a variety of settings, such as social service and family intervention programs. Students who are interested should visit http://hdfs.illinois.edu/undergraduate/programs/certified-family-life-educator or contact Dr. Jennifer Hardesty to obtain additional information about the required curriculum and application process.
Dr. Jennifer Hardesty's Research

Dr. Jennifer Hardesty gave an outstanding presentation this Fall on her ongoing research project: Undoing “I Do” Postseparation Dynamics of Coparenting with Abusive Former Partners. She has worked with several undergraduate students, graduate students, and other professors in the department as well, including Dr. Brian Ogolsky, Dr. Ramona Oswald, and Dr. Marcela Raffaelli. She first became interested in this topic as a graduate student at the University of Missouri - Columbia and continued to broaden her knowledge of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and how it factors into custody arrangements when couples are going through the legal divorce process. Her research goals consist of integrating literatures on divorce and IPV, theorizing the context and variation of IPV, and exploring predictors of coparenting dynamics over time. Dr. Hardesty is very passionate about her work and we look forward to hearing about her future research discoveries.

Dina Izenstark is a Doctoral Candidate in the HDFS Department. She received her bachelors and Masters degrees in Recreation, Sport, and Tourism at UIUC. Following her Masters degree, she worked for two years as a Leisure Services Supervisor implementing youth development and nature programs. Today, her research focuses on understanding how family-based nature activities uniquely contribute to family health and well-being. Her dissertation focuses on the effects of the natural environment on mothers’ and daughters' attentional functioning, and whether enhanced attentional functioning predicts improved family interactions.

Dina has been actively involved in the Illinois Student Council on Family Relations. This year, Dina also co-authored three manuscripts that were accepted for publication in leading refereed journals. She was recently honored with two research awards - one from the Academy of Leisure Science and one from the National Recreation and Park Association.

Excited about her new adventure as she seeks a position as a university professor, Dina is also sad to leave such a wonderful learning community and the many people that have been so important to her development. Dina would like to express her gratitude for all the faculty, staff, and students who have shaped her academic journey. She is especially grateful to her advisor, Dr. Aaron Ebata.

HDFS Ambassadors are currently working on a variety service projects. We are collecting pop tabs for the Ronald McDonald House Charity. We also are collecting clothing donations for local community organizations, such as the Crisis Nursery. If you are interested in helping, please contact Erin LePoire, lepoire2@illinois.edu

For more information and giving opportunities visit http://hdfs.illinois.edu

Courses To Consider This Spring

HDFS 422: U.S. Latina/o Families

This course explores issues relevant to the understanding of Latina/o families and children, and introduces students to current interdisciplinary scholarship on Latina/o families. Prerequisite: Junior standing. Fulfills “Diversity in HDFS” requirement.

For more information about this course, please contact Dr. Marcela Raffaelli, mraffael@illinois.edu

HDFS 291: Exploring Graduate & Professional Schools

Thinking about graduate school? Medical school? Law school? This 8 week course explores graduate and professional education and helps students develop a plan to obtain the best experiences that will prepare them for success in advanced education.

For more information about this course, please contact Dr. Robert Hughes Jr., hughesro@illinois.edu