

November 21, 2011

To whom it may concern,

I serve as Advisor to the Leaders in Collaborative Service (LINCS) program through the Kernodle Center for Service Learning and Community Engagement at Elon University. This program offers a unique role to students and equally distinctive opportunity to seven community organizations that host our students in our local community. LINCS is innovative in the state of North Carolina and several universities have inquired about duplication on their campus due to the impact that it provides.

In 2004, the Frueauff Foundation was approached with the idea of a way to build community capacity for supporting service learning students while providing trained students a means of better understanding community needs, modeled after a similar program at Indiana State. On the frontline, the LINCS students serve in the role as campus community liaisons. In 2005, three organizations were selected based upon the number of students and amount of resources each had to support student engagement. Funding began and incrementally increased to support six partnerships. Lastly, a critical need high school was identified by Dr. Lambert, President of Elon University, and is funded through his office as our seventh program. The partnering non-profit organizations address issues of homelessness, hunger, after-school care, housing authority programs, and an equestrian and pet therapy program for persons with disabilities.

The goal of LINCS is to enhance the relationship between each organization to Elon University through collaboration, recruitment and resource development. Thus, interested students competitively apply for a specific LINCS position and are interviewed by the Kernodle Center for Service Learning and Community Engagement. Afterwards, two candidates are considered for final selection by the Agency Director.

LINCS positions require a high level of responsibility and no two days are the same. The role includes supervising service hours and schedules of students from academic service-learning courses, student organizations, Greek organizations, service events and programs. This could mean up to 100 students each semester. Additionally, they coordinate and conduct orientation and training for student volunteers, serve as a point of contact for student volunteers and faculty, and provide direct service to the organization. Routinely, LINCS participate in professional staff meetings, board meetings, etc. and work on special projects as directed by supervisors. The LINCS saves the professional staff time and effort that can be redirected into the greatest agency needs. For ten hours a week during the academic year, students receive a stipend to help cover travel costs but they receive much more in personal skill development and an intimate knowledge of the needs each organization faces. They promote those needs and identify campus resources.

The impact of this program is evident. Each LINCS site has its own individualized relationship with Elon and our campus has specific needs that if were not connected through LINCS may have otherwise been unattainable. This program is unique to our University and community and consistently demonstrates the need for sharing of resources between campus and community. We are all more appropriately and better connected because of this irreplaceable relationship.

Feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the contributions of this partnership.

Sincerely,



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