



# Athletes in Service to America

Winter 2003 - Vol. 2, Issue 2

## Newsletter

### Eighth Annual National Training

St. Petersburg, FL — Eckerd College was the host site for the 8 Annual Athletes in Service to America National Training Event. The event was held November 6-10, 2002, and was attended by all corps members, site coordinators, and PIs of the four operating sites. Also in attendance were staff members from the Center for the Study of Sport in Society and the Parent staff. There was a balance of training elements, community service and teambuilding activities over the three-day event. The corps members received additional training in Project TEAMWORK, facilitated by Susan Leitao; Mentors in Violence Prevention, facilitated by Jeff O'Brien; and literacy tutoring, facilitated by Claudia Grose from Northeastern University and special guest Lisa Lashley from Gibbs High School.

In addition to the training elements, members participated in the AIS version of Survivor and received official gear of the show generously donated by Reebok. Members donned the show's official buffs and t-shirts as they went through the different physical challenges. One of the many highlights for the participants was the community service event at the Royal Palms of the Largo Senior Living Facility in Dunedin, FL. The community service event culminated the three-day national training and was very rewarding as AIS members and staff (including Jerry Neuner of Canisius College) split up into teams and descended on the senior living residence helping the residents in a variety of ways. The community service event was part of the Day of Good Deeds. Below is an excerpt from the St. Petersburg Times:

#### Good deeds help overshadow bad day (11/12/02)

Not all the volunteers were local residents. About 60 current and former college student athletes from Boston, New York and Kentucky were attending Eckerd College for training as part of Athletes in Service to America training. Normally the athletes tutor and mentor children and teens, said Eileen Smart, the national program director. Today they get to work with seniors. They've been coming up and telling me how the people are hugging them and thanking them. This is really special.

Doris Clifford, a 79-year-old resident called the acts of kindness a godsend as a group of volunteers helped her with some landscaping. My back has gone out, and there is no way I could move all these rocks and plant the rose bush, she said. Resident Judy Briggs, 75, said her spine gives her problems. Her volunteers weeded the small garden in front of her apartment, put down a layer of topsoil and planted three juniper plants. I think it's beautiful what these volunteers are doing, she said. I can't afford to pay people to do this, and they are doing it out of the kindness of their hearts.

Please see the other side for a Photo Gallery of National Training!

### Director's Message...

As this installment of our newsletter rolls out, AIS is in the midst of another great service year. The members and staff have weathered the many storms that this winter has thrown our way. Some of our members at Kentucky were stranded due to severe ice storms. In typical AIS fashion, members made the best of the situation and tutored and played games with some of the children at a local Salvation Army Shelter as they waited for electricity to be returned to Lexington.

We hope you enjoy reading about National Training and hope that warm weather is headed your way!

Yours in service,



Eileen Smart

### Member Spotlight



**Name:** Carolyn White  
**Site:** Northeastern University  
**College:** Holy Cross  
**Sport:** Soccer

Carolyn is a second year member of the Northeastern corps. White, who is a native of Brewster, MA, has done a bulk of her service at the McKinley Technical High School in the South End. Carolyn also assists with the New England SCORES after-school program at the Hennigan Elementary utilizing her old soccer moves from Holy Cross. In addition to her AIS commitments, somehow Carolyn finds the time to coach basketball as she is currently coaching for a local AAU girls team.

## Corps Member Reflections

Perspectives from the front lines of service from our corps members.



## National Training Photos



This was probably the best experience of the weekend. It was nice working with members from a different corps and most of all see the look on the senior citizens faces after we completed the work. I learned a lot about myself and others and appreciate life more.

- *Canisius College member on the service event*

I made some great new acquaintances and learned wonderful characteristics about other corps members. Not only did I have a blast, but it was educational at the same time.

- *University of Kentucky member on National Training*

This was quite the day. It was great to be able to interact with the people we helped. You really get a great feel for the difference you are making and it helps you realize why we do what we do.

- *Eckerd College member on the service event*



Jon Silva and Cerwin Thompson attempt to remove shrubs for a senior resident.



Peter Roby, Director of the Center for the Study of Sport in Society, gives a motivational speech to the group.



Tom Shamp and Ken Rostek lift Nicole Sidebottom through the "Spider Web" activity, as other members are spotting.



Jerry Neuner, PI from Canisius College, lends a hand during the community service event.



The "Groupers" finish the Stick-Around exercise (below). Jessica Leas transplants a rose bush for a resident of the senior residence (left).



Our entire AIS family (above) and the "Pink Flamingos" get ready for the AIS version of Survivor (below).



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