

STONY BROOK SERVES

A COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
PUBLICATION

Fun and Fashion with the Community Service Club

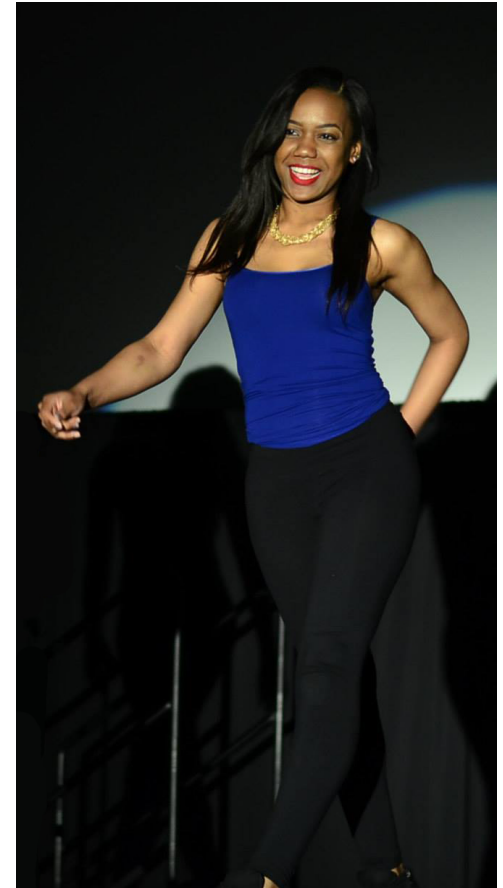
Olivia Basileo

“The club supports multiple charities and causes each semester, always broadening their horizons and seeking new ways to help the community”

Last spring, Stony Brook University’s Community Service Club hosted their fourth annual fashion and variety show, this time to raise money to help build a safe house

for survivors of human trafficking. All the proceeds from the fashion show went to Women’s Prevention and Protection Center Nepal (WPPC Nepal), a not-for-profit organization based in Seattle, Washington that operates programs to fight human trafficking in Hetauda, Nepal.

The Community Service Club’s variety show, held on April 15,



2014, attracted over 120 students and included performances by 5 student groups. The theme was Seawolf Spirit, and the night was filled with dancing, singing, fashion, and food. Students from all majors came together to support a cause and, in the process, connected with one another as members of one community. The Community Service Club aims to unite students through service and help create new friendships.

Through their event, the club raised \$682 for WPPC Nepal. Says Oshin Bharati, the club’s president, “I thought taking Community Service Club global with this NGO and raising awareness about a new cause apart

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Community Service Club members, along with National Residence Hall Honorary and Sigma Beta Honor Society, make PB&J sandwiches for those in need.

from diseases would help us serve the world better.” In the past, the Community Service Club has also supported Suffolk Perinatal Coalition and Lyme Disease Prevention. The club supports multiple charities and causes each semester, always broadening their horizons and seeking new ways to help the community. Any member can bring causes to the club’s attention and help organize events that support causes close to home.

Community Service Club also collaborated with National Residence Hall Honorary and Sigma Beta Honor Society for the event Peanut Butter Jelly Time on October 7. Members from all three groups interacted and worked together to make PB&J Sandwiches for the less fortunate. It was an

event that brought campus groups together for a common cause.

The club will be having its Fall 2014 fashion show in November, so come out and support your local talents! Also in November will be the Attitude of Gratitude Banquet, a Thanksgiving dinner on campus. Community Service Club does an extremely broad range of service, from helping global charities like WPPC Nepal to hosting events that bring students and the community closer together. “Though our school is really huge and it is really hard to connect with people here, I’m positive that our events have always helped people to connect with other SBU students and the outside world,” Oshin says. Keep an eye out for some fantastic events this semester and join other students in making a difference and forging new friendships!

Community Service Club meets Tuesdays at 7pm in James Lounge (in H Quad, in front of the infirmary).

A

Autism Awareness Club

Julianne Broderick

Not many people are aware of what Autism is, or that it even exists. In an effort to change

this reality, Bianca Marro founded the Autism Awareness Club in the Spring ’14 semester. With personal family ties to Autism, Marro set out to raise awareness throughout the campus community and beyond. Started by four fellow undergraduates—all involved in research at Stony Brook’s own Cody Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities at Stony Brook Children’s Hospital—the club’s main purpose is to spread awareness about Autism and to educate students on the subject. The Cody Center acts as a branch off of the club, but Autism Awareness Club works directly out of the Social Competence and Treatment Lab under the direction of Dr. Matthew Lerner.



When Autism Awareness Club's last president graduated, the club dwindled. Once Marro decided to take over as president, she made it her mission—and that of the club's—to make it bigger and better than ever. Currently, the club has 170 members on their emailing list, with 20-30 coming to weekly meetings and around 40 attending their events. To date, the club has done lots of fundraising through selling t-shirts and having bake sales. On average, the club makes \$200-\$300 from fundraisers, a figure to be quite proud of as they are not USG funded. The rest of Autism Awareness Club funding comes from donations from family members, with all funding donated to the Brian Wright Memorial Fund for hospital treatment research. In fact, the club will be donating a generous \$550 to the university's Autism research this week.

“The club’s long term goal aligns with this philosophy: they want to raise money for treatment research and recreational scholarships for those living with Autism.”

Autism Awareness Club's most recent event was the Riverhead County Fair on Sunday, October 12, where they sold bracelets to raise awareness for the cause and raised an average of \$200 on bracelet sales. The club also hosted an event where kids painted pumpkins outside the Psychology building as well as one where they colored puzzle pieces—the symbol of Autism awareness—to make up a mural. This November, the club



Children decorating puzzle pieces at the Autism Awareness Club's table at the Riverhead County Fair.

plans on having a Zumba event, with all proceeds going to children with Autism. On the educational side of things, the Autism Awareness Club was pleased to have the

topic of Autism in the spotlight on Science on Tap: a live, award-winning show and web series produced by Stony Brook University's

Alan Alda Center for Communicating Science. On October 29th at Stony Brook's very own Hilton Garden Inn, Dr. Lerner was featured on the show and participated in a discussion of Autism Spectrum Disorders, and what interventions work best and why. The club also held a presentation that answered the question “what is Autism?” At the presentation, PhD and graduate students spoke to fellow graduates as well as

undergraduate students about Autism, creating a forum for students to become more engaged with the topic of Autism.

In practice, the Autism Awareness Club is not affiliated with Autism Speaks, as Autism Speaks raises money to find a “cure” for Autism, treating it as a disease. Rather, the club wants to promote awareness of Autism as a developmental disability—which means that Autistic individuals can lead



Puzzle pieces that children decorated at the Riverhead County Fair.

normal and happy lives. The club's long term goal aligns with this philosophy: they want to raise money for treatment research and recreational scholarships for those living with Autism. What's more, the members of the Autism Awareness Club want to get more involved with outreach to schools to talk about Autism. This year, in addition to raising awareness, the club strives to become more involved with the kids themselves.

H

Hunger 101 at LDS Opening Day

Olivia Basileo

BECAUSE IT TAKES MORE THAN FOOD TO FEED THE HUNGRY



Earlier this semester, LDS and the Career Center invited LI Cares, an organization and food bank that combats hunger through education, action, and awareness, to give their Hunger 101 presentation to LDS's new freshmen. The program took place during LDS Opening Day.

The presentation introduced the general themes of leadership development and service learning that define LDS, as well as this year's annual LDS theme, which is "Community Building".

Hunger 101 is an interactive presentation that helps students understand the causes of hunger on Long Island. Hunger is an abstract concept for many people on Long Island, but Hunger 101 erases misconceptions about hunger and inspires students to get involved in the fight to end it. The program uses role play to give students an idea of the circumstances that lead to hunger. Some of the identities students take on include single parents, laid-off workers, and natural disaster survivors.

At LDS Opening Day, the workshop ran smoothly, but it was by no means easy for students. The students were challenged with complex emotions—through their role playing, they felt anger, sadness, frustration, helplessness, and gratitude. Candace Chabza, Lead UGC Advisor for LDS, says that the workshop was very effective; "That honest and raw reflection was, in my opinion, the most powerful part

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-Candace Chabza**

of the event, demonstrating an emotional impact, understanding, and even empathy, which has proven to be far more effective in promoting our students to take action, large or small, to help improve the lives of others in need."

The Hunger 101 Workshop was perfectly in line with LDS's central themes and overarching goal: to empower and inspire our students to make a positive difference in our community and beyond.

Education is a key component of service, and bringing programs like Hunger 101 to campus benefits both Stony Brook students and our community as a whole. Student groups are highly encouraged to participate in food

drives this holiday season—and throughout the year—and to join LI Cares in their fight to end hunger on Long Island.

"Hunger is an abstract concept for many people on Long Island, but Hunger 101 erases misconceptions about hunger and inspires students to get involved in the fight to end it."



R

Relive your Childhood with Camp Kesem!

Julianne Broderick and
Olivia Basileo

Last year, Stony Brook students formed their own chapter of the nonprofit organization Camp Kesem, one chapter of 63 in the nation. Camp Kesem, strictly speaking, is a free week-long summer camp for children whose parents have cancer—but it’s much bigger than that. It’s a year-long fundraising initiative by students here at Stony Brook, filled with hard work and commitment, and it’s a life-long support system for the kids who attend the camp, carrying over into reunions so that camp never truly ends.

The students involved in making

Camp Kesem happen dedicate whole years to fundraising, awareness, and community service. Since the camp is free for campers, counselors must raise the money to bring themselves and one child each to camp. Aside from applying for grants and hosting large events, much of the fundraising is done on an individual basis, with each counselor aiming to raise \$500.

At Camp Kesem, campers are able to forget about their troubles at home and enjoy a week of fun. Counselors engage kids in three main activities: Science, which could range from creating ice cream to slime; Arts & Crafts, ranging from Fuse Bead art to creating and adding to Time Capsules over the course of the week; and Adventure, which ranges from nature walks to archery. Kids get to go swimming, participate in the “Messy Wars” (by throwing chocolate syrup at their counselors!), and make friendships that Camp Kesem hopes will last a lifetime.

“The best part about Camp Kesem, is that even though it is meant for kids whose parents suffer from cancer, the camp never makes cancer its central theme.”

The best part about Camp Kesem, is that even though it is meant for kids whose parents suffer from cancer, the camp never makes cancer its central theme. Only once in the camp week is cancer addressed: at the Empowerment Ceremony, halfway through camp. Kids are encouraged to speak about their troubles and feelings, and everyone encourages one other. Camp Kesem also holds a Winding Down ceremony. During this time, campers make bracelets out of beads, where each bead represents something meaningful to the campers.

Stony Brook Camp Kesem’s first camp took place this past summer, from August 10 – 15 in Connecticut. 52 campers ranging from ages 6 to 16 attended, with 28 counselors running the camp. This year, they want to bring 100 kids and 50-60



Corrine Banning and campers at Camp Kesem.

counselors to camp, a feat that will require them to raise \$100,000. Camp Kesem members spend the whole year fundraising and planning their summer camps. From October 13-17 this year, the club hosted Kesem Week—a week of fundraising and awareness initiatives. Kesem Week encourages the campus community to donate money and to apply to become Camp Kesem counselors. This year, their Kesem Week activities were: Kesem Krafts (lanyards), a “Kissing” Booth, a Camp Song Flash Mob, “Stuff the Cup” (where male members wore bras over their clothes and asked students to put their donations inside!) and Free Hugs. According to Corrine Banning, Camp Kesem Development Coordinator, this year’s Kesem Week was extremely successful; the club raised over \$500 and spread a lot of awareness about counselor applications going live! It’s a promising start for the Summer 2015 camp!

Camp Kesem will be holding an event called Giving Tuesday on December 2, during which members and nonmembers can make things for the campers like welcome letters and toys. The

group will also be holding a number of other fundraisers, including a Flapjack Fundraiser at Applebee’s in November. The club currently has about 80 to 90 members, but since counselor applications are open to all Stony Brook students, more people are constantly getting involved in Camp Kesem. Counselors are selected through an application process, and those chosen are trained by Camp Kesem’s Volunteer Committee. The entire camp is student-organized and student-run, making it a great leadership and service experience for the college students involved as well!



The founders of Camp Kesem, Jamie Leonard and Tobin George, had both been affected by cancer in their parents at a young age. They decided to bring Camp Kesem to Stony Brook in order to make a difference for children on Long Island suffering the same difficulties. By providing kids with an outlet to make friends and have fun, they hope to lessen the burden of cancer on these families even just a little bit.

Stony Brook’s chapter of Camp Kesem is one of the most ambitious in the nation; it’s the only chapter

trying to double its enrollment in only a year. Camp Kesem members hope that in the future, they’ll be able to hold two-week camps, with two waves of students attending. They want to make their camp bigger and better. For the upcoming summer, members are embracing a camp theme of Olympic Demi-Gods and working hard to bring 100 kids to camp. If you’re interested in becoming a part of this amazing initiative, visit the counselors and members at their fundraising events, and check out their website for updates!

Stony Brook Camp Kesem:
<http://campkesem.org/stonybrook>

Share Your Stories

We want to share your stories with the Stony Brook University community! SB Serves is a Career Center publication dedicated to highlighting the community service activities that the students, faculty, and staff of Stony Brook University take part in! To find out more about how to be featured in an upcoming issue please email Megan Smedley, Internship Consultant at

Megan.Smedley@stonybrook.edu. Please include your name, phone number, and email address along with a brief description of your involvement experience. Upon submission a SB Serves writer can contact you for additional details.

Features can range from one page articles to smaller snapshots. Pictures help bring to life the experience for readers and are great additions to issues!

If you have any upcoming events you would like to share with the community we can include these as well. Maybe you have not been involved yourself but know someone that is and you would like to nominate them for an upcoming feature, let us know! We are always looking for new individuals and groups to feature; please share with us your thoughts and experiences!