Geoscience Service Learning & Diversity

Suzanne OConnell
Wesleyan University
Geoscience Service Learning & Diversity: A Wide Open Opportunity for Research

Suzanne OConnell
Wesleyan University
Bachelor Degree Recipients – Congratulations to us!
How can service learning contribute to diversity?

Reasons for not being involved in geoscience:

• Lack of exposure to geoscience and especially the employment opportunities,
• Where not attracted by the out-of-doors emphasis that was a draw for many white students,
• Wanted to pursue a career with more prestige and name recognition, and
• Didn’t think geoscience was relevant to their lives.

• (e.g. Whitney et al., 2005, Huntoon and Lane, 2007, Levine et al., 2007, Hoisch and Bowie, 2010, Velasco and Velasco, 2010, Stokes et al., 2015). Multiple reasons were identified and include that URM students (and/or their parents)
How can service learning contribute to diversity?

Reasons for not being involved in geoscience:

1. Lack of exposure to geoscience and especially the employment opportunities

   • Get out in the community (networking, skills, “meet a geoscientist”)
   • Post/inform employment opportunities
     • Better initial job outcomes  Matthews et al., (2015)
     • Higher graduation rates  (Lockerman and Pelco, 2013)
     • Starting salaries
How can service learning contribute to diversity?

Reasons for not being involved in geoscience:

2. Where not attracted by the out-of-doors emphasis that was a draw for many white students

Change your webpage (and geomarketing)!

  Diverse students
  Post pictures of people in labs, on computers working with people
  Geomajors who have pursued other employment opportunities
  medical school, lawyers, governor, secretary of state, head of planned parenthood for Colorado
How can service learning contribute to diversity?

Reasons for not being involved in geoscience:

3. Wanted to pursue a career with more prestige and name recognition

Change your webpage (Your majors, geomarketing)

What geologists are doing

Compile degree recipients who pursued other careers (SERC? AGI?)

• (e.g. Whitney et al., 2005, Huntoon and Lane, 2007, Levine et al., 2007, Hoisch and Bowie, 2010, Velasco and Velasco, 2010, Stokes et al., 2015). Multiple reasons were identified and include that URM students (and/or their parents)
How can service learning contribute to diversity?

Reasons for not being involved in geoscience:

4. Didn’t think geoscience was relevant to their lives.

Climate change (and health, ecology, food, water, disasters, etc.)
Sea level rise (erosion, saltwater intrusion, storm surge)
Water (drinking, cleaning, precipitating, lack of)
Energy (wind, solar, fossil fuel, nuclear, hydro, bio, etc.)
Land use (heat islands, impervious surfaces,
What service learning offers

• Better initial job outcomes  Matthews et al., (2015)
• Higher graduation rates  (Lockerman and Pelco, 2013)
• “Qualitative findings suggest that service learning is effective in part because it facilitates four types of outcomes: a) an increased sense of personal efficacy, b) an increased awareness of the world, c) an increased awareness of one’s personal values, and d) increased engagement in the classroom experience.”  (Astin et al. 2000).
• Higher order thinking skills
Recruit, recruit, recruit

Environmental Geochemistry Course @ Wesleyan
Potential New Service Learning Faculty

Geoscience Minority PhD's

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