



## ANNUAL REPORT 2009 - 2010

### A Time of Transition Manager

**I** am pleased to share this annual report which highlights recent developments at the Robinson Community Learning Center of the University of Notre Dame.



*Left to right: Duane Wilson, Andy Kostielney, Christy Burgess, Marguerite Taylor, Jennifer Knapp Beudert, Ellen Kyes, and Velshonna Luckey*

We are in a time of transition, marked by staff changes and internal restructuring. Former Director Jay Caponigro has been promoted to director of community engagement. He will continue overseeing the Center and build opportunities for Notre Dame to support K-12 education. Judith Odusch, long-time administrative assistant, has retired; her responsibilities will be assumed by Andy Kostielney as RCLC assistant manager.

Duane Wilson, our new program director for advanced skills, has recently come on board to take leadership

of the Youth Entrepreneur program. Previously a teacher and assistant principal at Clay High School, Duane is the founder of Lifestations ministry which involves horseback riding therapy and young people. He replaces Luther Tyson, an original RCLC staff member, who is now pursuing his own entrepreneurial ventures. Rachel Ong has relocated, and we are reviewing applicants for a new literacy program director. Many RCLC staff members now have the title of “program director,” as a result of a Notre Dame initiative to align job descriptions across campus.

I have succeeded Jay as the new manager of the Robinson Center. For the past two months I’ve enjoyed getting to know the children, neighbors, Notre Dame faculty/staff, community partners, and volunteers who enrich our program.

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Change inevitably brings uncertainty about the future; fortunately, we have a strong core of experienced staff to help us build on the history of the Robinson Center. Change also brings new opportunities, and we are excited to have assembled such a dynamic team for the coming year. We hope you will come by and greet us. We look forward to hearing about your ideas, passions, and questions—the input that makes the Robinson Center truly a unique learning environment.

CONTACT US:  
**Robinson Community Learning Center**  
921 N. Eddy Street  
South Bend, IN 46617  
574-631-8759  
rclc.nd.edu

## RCLC History

The RCLC was launched in February, 2001, as an off-campus educational initiative of Notre Dame in partnership with Northeast Neighborhood residents of South Bend. While RCLC staff report to the Office of Public Affairs and Communication at Notre Dame, programs are overseen by a program advisory board comprised of residents, program partners, ND faculty/staff, and students.

## Mission Statement

The Robinson Community Learning Center welcomes community and Notre Dame partners who strengthen the Northeast Neighborhood of South Bend through relationship building and educational opportunities. By promoting innovation and excellence, the Center builds individual capacity and enhances existing systems throughout South Bend.



The Robinson Community Learning Center is a department under the direction of Mr. Timothy Sexton, associate vice president for public affairs, and Ms. Jan Botz, vice president of public affairs and communication at the University of Notre Dame. See more about Notre Dame's local outreach efforts at [nd.edu](http://nd.edu).



## RCLC Staff

Jennifer Knapp Beudert.....	Manager
Andy Kostielney.....	Assistant Manager
Ellen Kyes .....	Program Director for Take Ten
Velshonna Luckey .....	Program Director for Youth Development
Christy Burgess .....	Assistant Program Director for Volunteers & Performing Arts
Duane Wilson .....	Program Director for Advanced Skills
Kaitlin Fuja.....	Program Assistant for Robinson Enterprises
Marguerite Taylor .....	Assistant Program Director for Adult Programs

## 2009–2010 RCLC Advisory Board Members

Solomon Anderson	Stuart Greene
Darice Austin-Philips	DreShawn Hannah
Michael Ball	Greg Long
Mary Beckman	Geoff Meyers
Jasmine Brown	G. David Moss
Anthony Byrd	Melissa Paulsen
Irene Cour	Michael Vogel
Jim Frabutt	Alice Wilson

## Goal 1: Hospitality

Create a setting that serves as a place of gathering and interaction among neighborhood residents, ND students and staff, and community partners.

# Hosting Innovative Programs

by Marguerite Taylor and Velshonna Luckey

16,240 guests signed into the Center in 2009–2010

### ■ Lunch & Learn Lecture Series for Seniors

Together, the Robinson Center and Notre Dame Downtown offer this special monthly event. Lunch is provided by sponsors, notably the Milton Fund of the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County. Speakers are invited each month to discuss issues relevant to seniors, such as retirement finance, and health and fitness. Attendance averaged 61 per event, with a total of 609 attendees for the year (113 more than last year). The 469 evaluations received gave lectures an average quality rating of 4.48 out of 5 points.

### ■ Senior Book Club

Nine seniors met weekly to discuss *The Secret Life of Bees* by Sue Monk Kidd, and *Have a Little Faith* by Mitch Albom. The club also read Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* as part of the One Book, One Michiana program and participated in activities at the South Bend Public Library.

### ■ Senior Fitness

Ten dedicated seniors met every Friday morning to walk, exercise with the Wii, and socialize!

### ■ Computer Clubs

Two Seniors Computer Clubs operated on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, with a combined membership of 25. Clubs met with minimal turnover from Labor Day to Memorial Day.



### ■ Lego Robotic League

The 10 members of the iRobotics team, ages 9-14, had an excellent year working with coaches "Dr. D" (G. David Moss), Tom Apker, and Ms. Velshonna. The group researched a city-wide wi-fi system, and visited Anderson, Indiana, to talk with a city official about system implementation. The team received regional awards for creative presentation and innovative solution, and earned first place in the state for innovative design. Thanks to ND's Office of Student Affairs and ARCO/Murray "Bike For Kids" for their support!

### ■ Chess & Sports Club

Fifteen children participated in our Chess and Sports Club. The group rotated weekly between chess and sports activities led by volunteers from the Notre Dame hockey, volleyball, and softball teams.

## Goal 2: Education

Establish educational opportunities to develop technical abilities, build life skills, and provide support/mentoring at all ages.

### Robinson Center Youth Programs

by Velshonna Luckey



#### Comments from parents:

"My son improved his academic grades, became responsible, respectful, and hardworking on his homework."

"I appreciate having a safe place for my children to grow and learn."

"My child's behavior has improved! He is focused on individual tasks for longer periods of time."

#### ■ After-school Tutoring:

Forty-five RCLC students were tutored by 64 college student volunteers (97% Notre Dame, 3% Saint Mary's). Tutors worked with children individually, helping with homework and academic challenges, and providing enrichment activities. Children's average attendance was 95%. End-of-year surveys from 44 tutors yielded these responses:

- 100% of tutors agreed that the program was beneficial to the student they tutored.
- 100% of tutors agreed that they developed a positive relationship with the child they tutored.
- 98% of tutors agreed that tutoring helped them become aware of local community needs.

#### ■ SES Tutoring:

In its second year as an Indiana-approved Supplemental Service Provider, the SES Program provided English/Language Arts tutoring to 110 students within the South Bend Community School Corporation. Collaborating with The Boys and Girls Club second semester enabled us to serve five additional locations. Initial analysis of pre- and post-test results indicates an average 25 percent improvement in each student.

#### ■ Fun Fridays:

Notre Dame Residence Halls and Clubs partnered with the RCLC in providing 16 "Fun Fridays," a series of events for the RCLC children. Leaders came from **Stanford, Zahm, Breen-Phillips Halls**, as well as the **NAACP, Literacy Awareness ND Club** to organize activities and recruit volunteers.

#### ■ Summer Afternoon Program:

Forty-one children participated in a summer afternoon program full of creative learning experiences. RCLC staff designed a curriculum involving implementation of a mini economy. The RCLC currency is called RuCLiCs (pronounced: *Roo-Clicks*) which represents "U & I in the RCLC." Topics of study included: personal finance, nutrition and muscles, and geography.

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## Programs for Teens

by Velshonna Luckey and Andy Kostielney

### ■ Be InSpired

The Be InSpired series was launched this year, designed to intentionally engage the minds of our teenagers through the inspiration of community role models. Each week 21 junior high and high school students met to listen to different



speakers, including 21 professionals from our local community and five Notre Dame College students. At the end of the series, 90 percent of the participants said that listening to the guest speakers gave them an increased understanding of the value and importance of education.

### ■ College Prep Freeway

Twenty junior high and high school students met weekly in the computer lab to explore the Internet for purposes other than surfing Facebook, MySpace, and YouTube. The Internet is now the fastest way to get current

information on scholarships and colleges. Next school year this group will focus on creating individual college plans, using websites like [collegeboard.com](http://collegeboard.com), [triptocollege.com](http://triptocollege.com), and [knowhow2goindiana.org](http://knowhow2goindiana.org). During these sessions students are encouraged to identify steps and set goals necessary to attend college. Meetings include tips on using Microsoft Word, PowerPoint and Excel.

### ■ High School Mediation

The High School Mediation Initiative (HSMI) is a partnership between the RCLC and local high schools to help students effectively manage violence and conflict. HSMI incorporates Restorative Practices in an attempt to reduce suspensions and expulsions. Restorative Practices focus on accountability, victim participation, and community involvement, rather than traditional punitive measures. This year the HSMI worked with students from Adams, Clay, and Riley High Schools. Results have been encouraging. Out of 13 cases involving 30 students not a single child was a repeat offender, and at Clay High School overall suspensions were down 7 percent from Jan. 2009 to Jan. 2010.

## Goal 2: Education

Establish educational opportunities to develop technical abilities, build life skills, and provide support/mentoring at all ages.

### Robinson Center Shakespeare Company

by Christy Burgess

Hermione swoons in *The Winter's Tale*.



#### ■ Performances:

The Robinson Shakespeare Company (RSC) continues to flourish in its third year. RSC actors have performed scenes and monologues for Art Beat, the Notre Dame football team, the Friends of the Snite Museum of Art, and ShakeScenes 2010. RSC's production of *The Winter's Tale* was attended by 170 people, and

#### ■ Community Based Learning:

In fall 2009, 16 members of the ND First Year Composition course joined the RSC as part of an innovative Community Based Learning experience sponsored by ND's Center for Social Concerns. The shared excitement of performing created a bond beyond the traditional mentor/mentee relationship. Fifty percent of these students returned to the RSC to volunteer; 88 percent started a student organization to develop Shakespeare performance classes for youth.

Eight members of the Notre Dame football team joined the RSC summer drama camp as part of the Community Leadership for Tomorrow class. Our football volunteers participated enthusiastically in RSC games and activities, auditioned for *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and even learned how to line dance!

**"What really struck me is how much these kids wanted to learn....If given the right resources and opportunities I feel these kids are destined to succeed."**

*ND volunteer*

**"I never thought I could actually go up on stage and act, so it gave me confidence. If I can conquer acting, I can pretty much conquer anything!"**

*RSC high school student*

*Two Gentlemen of Verona* (set in the wild, wild, West) will be performed in July 2010!

RSC students continued their winning streak at the English-Speaking Union Shakespeare Monologue Competition, placed first in elementary, middle school, and high school competitions. RSC's first-place high school winner, Charell Luckey, was second runner-up at the state competition in Indianapolis!

# Youth Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship

by Kaitlin Fuja and Jennifer Knapp Beudert

**“The RCLC’s capacities to draw upon its unique organizational attributes to create opportunities for educational, professional, and relational growth have contributed to the formation of an excellent youth entrepreneurship program.”**

(Read Dr. Peter Miller’s entire report at [rclc.nd.edu/about/rclc-in-print](http://rclc.nd.edu/about/rclc-in-print))

The Robinson Center provides education in financial literacy, small business development, computer skills, and public speaking, thanks to support from the U.S. Small Business Administration and Key Bank of northern Indiana. The program follows the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE) curriculum, and incorporates the DEED Project, which encourages pursuit of “social venture” entrepreneurship.

Youth were recruited from three local high schools to receive in-class and after-school business development training. Twenty-five students enrolled and eight completed the entire course. Seven students completed business plans and competed in the invention convention. Intensive business development training was also provided for 13 youth through the 2009 Summer BizTech camp. The Entrepreneur program also mentors new youth-run enterprises during their first year of operation. During 2009–2010, three youth and two adult Biztech graduates worked with mentors, reporting positive progress toward business goals.

## ■ 2010 Invention Convention Prize Winners:

- **First Prize:** “Eewii Gewii” by **Tarek Al-Zoughbi**. Palestinian pastries introduced to share culture and change stereotypes of Americans of Middle Eastern descent.
- **Second Prize:** “Tanashia’s Snuggles” by **Tanashia Mudzimurema**. Woven blankets with user-defined words and imagery.
- **Third Prize:** “Sweetak Videos” by **Michael Cwidak**. Promotional videos for local bands.
- **Best PowerPoint:** “Exciting Excursions” by **Kyle Sera**. Travel service for family road trips.
- **Most Creative Idea:** “Some Bright Idea” by **Sarah Bright**. Graphic design/logo creation services.

■ **Gigot Center for Entrepreneurship** of Notre Dame’s Mendoza College of Business generously sponsored a trip to the NFTE youth expo in New York City for all finalists.

## Goal 2: Education

Establish educational opportunities to develop technical abilities, build life skills, and provide support/mentoring at all ages.

### Take Ten

by Ellen Kyes



2010 Take Ten Festival

**Take Ten** is the RCLC's violence prevention/conflict resolution program. It uses a school-based curriculum to provide the tools to "Talk it Out, Walk it Out, or Wait it Out" as alternatives to violence.

#### ■ Children

During 2009–2010, Take Ten served 12 schools within the South Bend Community School Corporation, School City of Mishawaka, and the Diocese of South Bend–Ft. Wayne. Four new sites were added: Coquillard Primary, St. Joseph Grade School and Muessel Primary, and the South Bend Juvenile Correctional Facility. Take Ten volunteers worked directly with 1,615 children, indirectly impacting the 8,000 other students at these sites. Take Ten served nine Boys and Girls Clubs in St. Joseph County, attended by 880 children, and worked with 50 youth from the Center for the Homeless and the RCLC.

#### ■ Volunteers

The Take Ten curriculum was delivered by 125 college student volunteers recruited from Notre Dame, Holy Cross College, Bethel College, Saint Mary's College, and Indiana University South Bend. In order to enhance the quality of their experience, Take Ten staff worked with these institutions to create college credit options for volunteering with Take Ten. These opportunities include internships and course work in psychology, education, introduction to peace studies, and Catholic social teaching. Seventy-eight percent of Take Ten volunteers reported a positive change in student behavior.

#### ■ Training

Take Ten continues to train volunteers and teachers at participating schools, as well as staff at the Boys and Girls Clubs and the Center for the Homeless. It has recently broadened its scope to train staff and volunteers at the South Bend Juvenile Correctional Facility, as well as parents at Title One schools.

Starting in 2010, Take Ten served as a resource for the No Parent Left Behind program. Take Ten staff presented concepts of nonviolence and peaceful conflict resolution to Parent University groups at six schools. Parents expressed interest in learning the curriculum to help them be better parents and work out their conflicts.

## ■ Evaluation

Evaluation is an important part of Take Ten. In 2009, 685 Take Ten participants were assessed to determine changes in feelings, thoughts and knowledge, and behaviors with regard to violence and conflict. A younger group of 391 third- and fourth-graders took one form of the instrument, and an older group of 294 students took a higher level version. Findings revealed that *"students in primary grades as well as intermediate grades demonstrated significant increases in three important areas of analysis. They improved in their knowledge about conflict and violence, in their feelings as they relate to this area and, most importantly, in their actions and behaviors when faced with potentially violent situations."*

The entire evaluation report can be found at [taketen.org](http://taketen.org).

## ■ Take Ten Festival

The annual Take Ten Festival was held at Notre Dame's Stepan Center in April. More than 300 children enjoyed games and activities, a pizza snack, a performance by the First Class Steppers, and remarks by South Bend School Superintendent Jim Kapsa and South Bend Police Chief Darryl Boykins.

## ■ Take Ten Awards:

- **James M. Kapsa Award:**  
Mrs. Marlene Schroeder  
4th grade teacher, Perley
- **Take Ten T-Shirt Art Award:**  
Cheyenne Hill,  
6th grade, Battell
- **Take Ten T-Shirt Slogan Award:**  
Mrs. Dill's 5th grade, Battell
- **Take Ten Creative Writing Award:**  
Chelsie Rummage,  
6th grade, Marshall



**"Don't hate on me  
because I'm  
violence free"**

## Take Ten by Chelsie Rummage

I am Take Ten  
I am the steps: talk it out,  
walk it out, wait it out  
I am the sound of  
children, shouting  
and making me more  
and more creative.  
I am the sound of a  
conflict being resolved.  
I am a place where there  
are no bullies and  
children feel safe.  
I am a place where you  
make strangers into  
friends.  
I am a place where  
being different  
doesn't matter.  
I am the start of  
a new life.

## Goal 3: Partnership

Provide space and support for programs through health care, business, school, and community organizations that promote education and enhance the quality of life.

### ■ Yoga

Through a partnership with **Notre Dame's Office of RecSports**, a yoga instructor is provided for Monday evening classes. A total of 107 participants registered for yoga this year. In evaluation surveys, 100 percent of participants rated the instructor, facility, and convenience of the class as excellent or very good.

### ■ Health

**St. Joseph Regional Medical Center** provides a nurse to the RCLC on the last Monday of the month who typically sees approximately 25 people. In addition, 31 people received flu shots from SJRMC staff this past year though this annual service.



*The Quintet Attacca presents Peter and the Wolf sponsored by the Fischoff National Chamber Music Association.*

### ■ Piano & Music

Seventeen students worked weekly with nine instructors. Two music recitals were held at the RCLC this year, and ND musicians visited to perform Tchaikovsky's "Peter and the Wolf." Enrollment in classes

remain consistently full, due to excellent instructors recruited by John Blacklow and Daniel Schlosberg, and affordable fees offset by the generous support of Notre Dame's Music Department and College of Arts and Letters.

***Through our partnership with the South Bend Community School Corporation, instruction for adults in English for New Learners and GED preparation is provided at the RCLC throughout the year.***

### ■ 2009-2010 at a glance

#### **English for New Learners:**

35 beginning and intermediate, and 25 advanced adult English students

- Twenty six advanced one or more levels on standardized CASAS tests (74%).
- Six of 10 parents increased involvement with their children's literacy or education activities (60%).
- Nineteen increased community involvement (93%).
- Thirty-two improved citizenship skills, including how to function in the community as well as knowledge of the U.S. government (91%).

**Thirty-four adults participated in GED preparation classes (total of 140 class hours provided)**

## Goal 4: Civic Engagement

Foster active citizenship and a commitment to community building among the Center's partners and participants.

### ■ NENC Back To School Picnic

Once again, the Northeast Neighborhood Council, ND Student Government, Student Affairs, the Center for Social Concerns, and RCLC staff collaborated to sponsor a rousing back to school celebration. A total of 310 residents and students enjoyed face painting, balloon sculptures, music, and delicious burgers.

### ■ Turning Over A New Leaf

Nearly twice as many college volunteers as last year took part in the 2010 "Turning Over a New Leaf" event, sponsored by Circle K of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's. Over 230 students raked 67 lawns for Northeast Neighborhood seniors.



Jay Caponigro (right) and members of the Notre Dame student government repair the RCLC mural on CommUniversity Day.

### ■ CommUniversity Day

Notre Dame Student Government, the Center for Social Concerns, the City of South Bend, and RCLC staff came together to support the second annual CommUniversity Day. More than 500 ND students participated

in 30 work projects throughout the community (the RCLC mural got a fresh coat of paint!). Thirty-eight seniors were given bus tours of the University. The day ended with an RCLC picnic for over 200!

### *A Sampling of our Organizational Guests in 2009–2010*

**Friends of the Snite**

**NENC Annual Meeting**

**INDOT**

**Eastside Reunion Committee**

**AARP Tax Assistance**

**NNRO-South Bend Heritage**

**Young Life**

**OPAC Division Meeting**

**American Red Cross**

**Martin Luther King Men's Club**

**Quarknet**

**SB School Corp**

**ND Federal Credit Union**

**South Bend Police Department**

## Goal 5: Sustainability

Acquire resources necessary  
to achieve program goals.

## Many thanks to our 2009-2010 sponsors!

The Robinson Community Learning Center would like to acknowledge our generous sponsors, without whom our work throughout the community would not be possible.

**The Milton Fund of the  
Community Foundation  
of St. Joseph County**

**Indiana Office of Faith-Based  
and Community Initiatives**

**U.S. Small Business  
Administration**

**Key Bank of Northern Indiana**

**Carroll Charitable Trust  
at Wells Fargo Bank**

**Indiana Criminal Justice  
Institute**

**ARCO/Murray National  
Construction**

**Special Project Challenge Grant  
of the Community Foundation  
of St. Joseph County**

**The ArtsEverywhere Initiative  
of the Community Foundation  
of St. Joseph County**

**St. Joseph Regional  
Medical Center**

**Better World Books**

**American Medical Association**

**Memorial Hospital of  
South Bend**

**Individual donors and those who  
wish to remain anonymous**

### ■ The Coach Kelly Challenge

On June 7, 2010, Notre Dame Football Coach Brian Kelly announced a \$250,000 gift to Notre Dame, to be divided between cancer research, the Hesburgh Libraries, and the Robinson Community Learning Center. This donation will support tutoring, violence

prevention, youth entrepreneurship, and the performing arts. Coach Kelly also launched the “Coach Kelly Challenge,” encouraging all members of the Notre Dame family to offer financial support to the University through one of its annual giving programs.



2010 RCLC summer camp and football volunteers