

NOMINATION FORM
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICE LEARNING COMPETITION

Institution: Benedict College

Title of Project: B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project

Project Director: Tondaleya G. Jackson

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Establishment Date of Project: October 16, 2015

Unit That Administers Project: Benedict College Service-Learning and Leadership Development Program

Total Number of Students Involved: 64

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS REGARDING THE NOMINATED PROJECT (Insert your response after each question; the response to each question should be no more than one page)

- 1. For purposes of this competition, the Commission on Higher Education defines service learning as college student learning at any level and in any situation that is *linked* in a direct, hands-on fashion to the resolution of a problem or concern in a target community outside the institution *and is related* to a college course with some type of reflection activity. How does your project meet the parameters of this definition?**

The Benedict College (B.C.) Cares Flood Relief Project, which took place October 16, 2015, resulted in the collection and dissemination of needed goods and supplies to community residents suffering from the flooding devastation experienced by many families in the Midlands and throughout South Carolina. College students, faculty, and staff united to contribute to the recovery efforts, a major community problem and concern outside of the institution. Following the B.C. Cares Project, reflection was facilitated by Freshman Seminar course instructors in the College's Freshman Institute. Thus, the B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project meets the parameters of the Commission on Higher Education's definition of service learning.

B.C. Cares Flood Relief was a Benedict College initiative which sought to address the immediate needs of community residents impacted by the massive amount of rainfall October 1-5, 2015. The subsequent flooding which resulted was unprecedented and historical according to local and national meteorologists. The storm was identified as a once in a 1,000 year event and would come to be referred to as the 1,000 Year Flood by South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley and others throughout the State and the nation.

The impact of such an event was immediately felt throughout the Midlands and the entire state of South Carolina. While some residents and businesses experienced minimal damage, others lost considerably more. Agencies throughout the area worked tirelessly to provide basic needs such as food and shelter for those without anywhere to turn. Some residents who were fortunate enough to remain in their homes were there without electrical power. Other residents were without jobs as a result business closings due to the damage suffered, resulting in a loss of income and the ability to purchase basic needs.

Students in Freshman Seminar I and II collected, organized, and distributed cleaning supplies, household goods, and clothing to community members impacted by the flood. The B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project culminated in a community wide give-a-way on October 16, 2015 at the Benedict College Charlie W. Johnson Stadium. The event was followed by first year students reflecting on the B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project in their respective Freshman Seminar course.

2. Specifically, which segments of the college/university community does your project involve?

The B.C. Cares Flood Relief involved the collaborative efforts of the following: Service-Learning and Leadership Development Program (SLLD); Freshman Institute and the Athletic Department. The 1,000 year flood bolstered the opportunity for Benedict College to put into action its motto “powers for good.” Collectively, the campus desired to assist neighbors in need, but wanted to do so in a meaningful and impactful way. Therefore, SLLD Program staff consulted with partnering community organizations who were working directly with Midlands’s residents to better understand the needs, beyond water/ food and shelter, of the community immediately following the flood. After formal and informal dialogue with representatives from local agencies the needs which the College community could best address were: clothing, cleaning supplies and household articles (bedding, linen, rugs, etc.). These items were at the top of the priority list for some of those most impacted.

Even in the midst of tragedy, learning opportunities can be found. One of the objectives for the Freshman Seminar course is to “orient students to Benedict College’s policies and procedures, campus community, history, culture, and service expectations.” The SLLD Staff met with administrators in the Freshman Institute who were interested in providing first year seminar students with the chance to engage in the B.C. Cares Flood Relief experience as a service-learning course opportunity. The Freshman Institute serves as the catalyst for enculturation of first-time freshman students and provides strategies, including curriculum reform, learning communities, and other programs and activities designed to guide first-time freshman students through first-year success.

B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project culminated with a massive community give-a-way on October 16, 2015 at the Benedict College Charlie W. Johnson Stadium. At the event, fifty-five students from Freshman Seminar I and II were assisted by other campus students, considered walk-on volunteers not affiliated with any particular group or organization of varying classifications. The Athletic Director, Coordinator and nine student athletes were on hand as well. All of the students worked alongside the AmeriCorps VISTA and SLLD Department Staff to implement the B.C. Cares project. The Division of Academic Affairs and the Office of the President provided the necessary administrative support needed. This included permission to solicit financial donations and ongoing volunteerism and support from staff in both offices leading up to the event and throughout its execution.

3. How many students (specify degree levels to the extent possible) does the project affect?

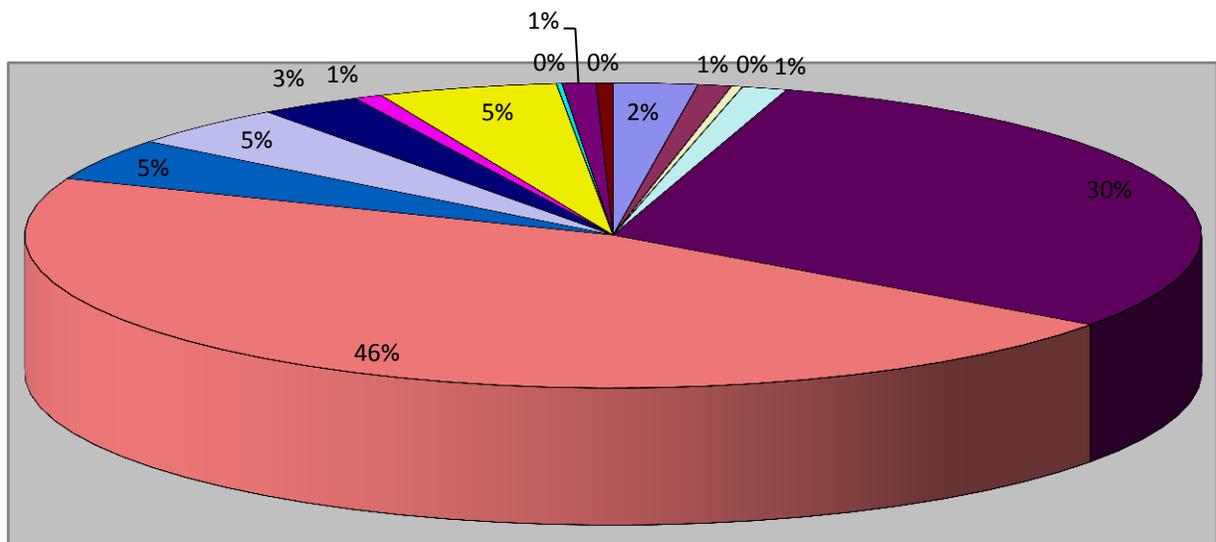
Sixty four (64) students, 55 freshman and 9 student athletes, participated in the project.

4. Describe the target community or communities your project serves.

Based upon information obtained by CoreLogic, Richland County sustained the most exposure from the flood waters with 21,212 damaged homes and \$3.16 billion in damages. According to reporting from local media sources, the hardest hit areas were Lower Richland County, the Gills Creek Watershed and Stoop Creek Watershed. The flooding on Gills Creek was made worse by the failure of three dams. Areas around Forest Acres, Eastover, Gaston and Hopkins remained inundated for weeks after the flood. About 9,500 S.C. Electric & Gas customers in Richland and Lexington counties were without power. During this same time period, The Salvation Army, Red Cross and Harvest Hope Food Bank reported a combined total 1,314,119 meals served to flood disaster survivors.

The B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project served a total of 650 community members from 14 zip codes throughout the Midlands. The largest numbers of residents served were from the 29204 and 29203 zip codes with 299 and 196 respectively. Given the pervasiveness of the devastation, the B.C. Cares Flood Relief was open to all Midlands residents. A breakdown of the areas served is below.

BC Cares Flood Relief Project



| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 29044-Eastover | 29045 - Elgin |
| 29160-Swansea | 29201-Columbia, Near USC |
| 29203-Columbia, Near Columbia College | 29204-Columbia, Near BC |
| 29205-Devine Street Area | 29209-Gills Creek Parkway Area |
| 29210-Broad River Road | 29221-Columbia |
| 29223-Dentsville | 29550-Hartsville |
| 28829-Graniteville | Transient |

5. Describe your project's effectiveness in helping to solve the problems or concerns in the target community.

Service organizations throughout Richland County were inundated with residents needing various types of support. However, in times of great crisis the first priority is to provide food and shelter. Established organizations and dedicated citizen groups were hard at work, providing both, during the critical weeks of flood recovery. While important, family basics such as household goods and cleaning supplies were not priorities to the agencies addressing the need for food and shelter. However, given the magnitude of cleaning required after the waters had receded, cleaning supplies and clean clothes were equally as important to residents who were able to remain in their homes as well as those returning to their homes during the recovery period. However, due to the massive clean-up efforts required, the College is confident the B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project was able to provide short term relief to 650 residents who would otherwise turn to local agencies which were under daily pressure to disseminate substantially more resources in even greater numbers.

6. Describe the degree to which your project enhances student learning while providing specific examples of the service learning activities the college students engage in. Also explain how the service learning activities reinforce or apply what the college students learn in the classroom.

The B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project was coordinated through the Service-Learning and Leadership Development Program and implemented by freshman seminar instructors in the College's Freshman Institute. The SLLD Director and SLLD Faculty Coordinator worked directly with seminar faculty to ensure participation in B.C. Cares Flood Relief addressed learning outcome(s) specific to the seminar course. Service-learning is one of the topics addressed in Freshman Seminar along with subjects such as college policies and procedures, time management, and many other topics relevant to the first semester college experience at Benedict College.

The Project allowed college students the opportunity to provide community residents impacted by the 1,000 Year Flood with household goods collected exclusively for this purpose. Seminar students, under the direction and supervision of their course instructor, were engaged in the I.P.A.R.D. service-learning framework components: investigation, preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration throughout project implementation. In the *investigation* and *preparation* phase students were introduced to service-learning and afforded the opportunity to learn more about the historic nature of area communities surrounding the College. This included guided training in their organization of B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project. Freshman students were educated on college policies and procedures through their active engagement in this *action* oriented service project. The rapid pace of the project required students to utilize time-management skills. Key

course concepts were illustrated in real time, allowing students to gain essential content while using their skills in community engagement. *Reflection* activities were facilitated by course instructors following the project implementation and included oral presentations and *demonstration* activities.

7. Is there academic credit associated with the project (not necessary for submission)? If so, please explain the particulars.

First year students earned credit for participation in their Freshman Seminar course. Benedict College requires first year students to earn 20 hours of service-learning through the Freshman Seminar I (10 hours) and Freshman Seminar II (10 hours), which are service-learning designated courses. The preparation activities included a project overview conducted in the seminar courses. Students then selected project assignments and carried out the associated duties.

Groups were responsible for community awareness and marketing. This included the development and distribution of flyers to residents in the community. Students conducting collections placed boxes in the dormitories and throughout buildings on campus to obtain donations. These were later sorted and organized for distribution during B.C. Cares Flood Relief. Other students collected monetary donations from their peers as well as faculty and staff members throughout campus. The funds collected were used to purchase additional items which would be used to supplement the donations received campus wide.

All of the donated and purchased items were compiled and students created care baskets to distribute on the day of the event. Students were responsible for set-up, community registration, and supply distribution. Seminar students received service-learning credit for their participation in the B.C. Cares preparation, action, and reflection activities.

8. If funding is required, how is the project funded and what is the approximate annual budget for the project?

The B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project was not a funded endeavor. This independent service effort was completely contingent upon collected donations, material and financial, from faculty, staff, and students on the Benedict College campus. No institutional funds were utilized. The Benedict College campus donated over \$1,500 in cash. This does not include the value of countless items purchased and/or donated by students, faculty, and staff throughout the campus. The 1,000 Year Flood was a historic event. Given the urgency of community need, the B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project was created exclusively to support community residents in distress as a direct result of this catastrophic event. While Benedict College is engaged in a number of ongoing service

projects and activities throughout the Midlands, the B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project is not an annually scheduled or budgeted item.

9. Add any other comments you may have about your project.

Benedict College President and CEO, Dr. David H. Swinton was instrumental in setting the tone for donations and volunteerism. Once the project was launched, the first financial donation was generously provided by President Swinton. The President and Athletic Director were two of the first administrators on site the day of implementation. Throughout our campus, other administrators, faculty, staff and students liberally funded this community effort from their own monies and some volunteered throughout the day. While 64 documented students are listed as the number involved in the B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project, this figure does not include approximately 20 to 30 additional student volunteers, not affiliated with the Freshman Institute or the Athletic Department who assisted on October 16th. These additional students were walk-on volunteers and their significant offerings aided in the success of this endeavor.

In addition to the involvement by the Benedict College community, the generous donations from Mr. Jeffrey Lampkin, host of the Jeffrey Lampkin Show on WACH Fox television and Ms. Tiesha Smith, owner of Clean by Design Cleaning Service were used to purchase supplies. The B. C. Cares Flood Relief Project also united with Kool Kamp an entertainment group comprised of local radio disc jockeys. At no cost, the organization used their resources to promote the event in communities throughout the Midlands. Kool Kamp not only attended and volunteered at the event, they also donated a U-Haul truckload of new and gently used clothing to support the collections garnered by students and staff for the B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project.

The participation of the College's athletes was equally instrumental. These nine students did the heavy lifting, literally and figuratively. Throughout the B. C. Cares Flood Relief Project, athletes assisted the elderly, disabled, and physically challenged community residents by carrying supplies and loading vehicles. The athletes were hands on and all smiles throughout the day. Mr. Willie Washington, Athletics Director at Benedict College said: "Community involvement is a tremendous opportunity for our student-athletes. It really helps them understand what it means to give back to the local community and it provides quality time for each program to bond off of the playing field and outside of the classroom."

You may also include supplemental information about the project (such as brochures, pictures, etc.).

The B.C. Cares Flood Relief Project Summary is attached.

Please return this form via e-mail by **February 26, 2016**, to:

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Benedict College Cares

Flood Relief Effort

October 16, 2015

Sponsored by Benedict College Service-Learning and Leadership Development (SLLD) Program
In Collaboration with The Freshman Institute

The B. C. Cares Flood Relief Project provided much needed dental hygiene, baby care products, cleaning supplies, adult personal care, and personal hygiene to community members in need. Through monetary and collected donations, Benedict College administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community partners were able to provide much needed resources that benefited over 600 community members in need.

Overview of B.C. Cares 2015

Benedict College student volunteers prepare baskets for distribution.



Community recipient, Benedict College President & CEO Dr. David H. Swinton, & Tondaleya Jackson, Director



Communities Served

| | |
|---|------------|
| 29044 - Eastover | 15 |
| 29045 - Elgin | 7 |
| 29160 - Swansea | 2 |
| 29201 - Columbia, Near USC | 8 |
| 29203 - Columbia, Near Columbia College | 196 |
| 29204 - Columbia, Near BC | 299 |
| 29205 - Devine Street Area | 29 |
| 29209 - Gills Creek Parkway Area | 29 |
| 29210 - Broad River Road | 18 |
| 29221 - Columbia | 5 |
| 29223 - Dentsville | 32 |
| 29550 - Hartsville | 1 |
| 29829 - Graniteville | 6 |
| Transient | 3 |
| Total Served | 650 |

SLLD Staff & Kool Kamp

