**BUILDING COMMUNITY: WHAT DO COMMUNITY PARTNERS TELL US
ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH CSUMB SERVICE LEARNING?**

Over 1700 students have worked in Monterey Bay area communities since Service Learning began with the opening of CSU, Monterey Bay. Their service has ranged from tutoring students in local elementary and high schools to health outreach activities with community agencies, from leading computer technology workshops for local schoolteachers to creating drama workshops for children. CSUMB service learning students have provided an estimated 53,910 hours of community service in the last 3 years.

Each semester we have asked our Community Partners to complete written evaluations of the experience of having CSUMB service learning students placed at their agency, organization or school. In addition, at two year-end focus groups we brought together Community Partners to discuss their partnerships with us. We were interested in learning about the impact of service learning in the community: What were the results of student participation in the community, for community members and for the organizations where they served? We also asked our community partners about the process of working with CSUMB service learners: what kinds of support did they need to best partner with CSUMB in the education of the service learning students?

The following are taken from the evaluations and focus groups representing 66 different agencies or schools where more than 250 CSUMB students had worked between Fall of 1996 and Spring of 1998. This is what they had to say:

Service Learners in the Schools
Service learning students tutored and collaborated with teachers on special projects and curricula in classrooms and in after school programs from kindergarten through senior high school. They shared their expertise in subjects ranging from art to reading to native plant ecology to computer technology. But most important to all of the teachers with whom we spoke, the service learning students served as mentors for the students in the community. The CSUMB students were successful students—though many had come from similar situations--who modeled going on to college and pursuing their dreams. Here is what several teachers had to say:

> "It was a big deal to have CSUMB students come into the classroom--especially the men--the kids cling to them and see them as role models."

> "In my class are students who usually 'fall through the cracks' in education. At the beginning only four or five said that they would attend college. Now, all say, 'Yes!'"

> "My students see the service learners as 'cool people' who are going to school. This really strengthens their impact as role models."

A Unique Collaborative Project: Technology Tutors and Classroom Teachers
Over the first two years of the program it became increasingly apparent that the technology available at CSUMB and the technology skills of the service learning "tech tutors" had great potential to benefit the local teachers and schools beyond the individual projects the tutors carried out in the classroom. At one focus group, the teachers said that they would like to learn more about the university's technology resources. As a result, the following semester Professor Geri Philley and her tech tutors organized a Teachers' Workshop for the classroom teachers involved

with service learning projects. The teachers decided to learn Web Page technology as a workshop project. The tech tutors prepared six workshops and together with the teachers created state-of-the-art Web Pages at the CSUMB Multi-media center.

Service Learners in the Community
Through their service placements, students are involved in projects that are responsive to community-identified needs. The projects students carried out contributed to the community organizations in multiple significant ways:

Person-power
"We were better able to give individual help especially during busy times."
"We were able to expand our services to reach more people."

New Services
"We were able to begin working with foster care providers."
"Never before had we had anyone watch and write observations of the terns and rookery."

Improved Quality of Services
"We were able to increase the quality of service by making more sources of information readily available."
"They enabled our staff do their jobs better and more efficiently."

New approaches, energy, and enthusiasm
"The students brought new approaches and visions of our services."
"They gave us a shot in the arm with regard to energy and enthusiasm."
"We gained knowledge of the collaborative model."

Enhanced Agency resources
"They researched all sorts of background information for projects."
"Student fundraising brought grant money brought into the agency."
"Students created a map of service flow that is helpful for new staff orientation."
"We are now on the Internet."

Building Better Partnerships: How the Institute, Faculty andCSUMB can Support Community/University Partnerships
The Community partners identified the following practices as essential for building successful working relationships with CSUMB, the Institute and Faculty and the service learning students:

- Clear expectations for students coming to the site.
- Personal contact with faculty teaching service learning courses.
- A chance to discuss ideas and projects with other Community Partners.
- On-going communication about the partnership--before, during, and after placements.
- And finally: More students!