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Faculty Profile: Jodie Drapal Kluver and Non-Profit Consulting

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Faculty Profile

Jodie Drapal Kluver and Non-Profit Consulting

It is not often that a graduate class transforms itself into a consulting group, but that is exactly what happened with Professor Jodie Kluver's public administration class in Non Profit Management last semester. As part of the class curriculum, Kluver asked each of her six students to pick one non profit agency from Massachusetts

they were servicing. The result of these contacts with regional non-profits was the formation of BOND— Bridgewater Organization for Non Profit Development—a registered campus organization at Bridgewater and one of the first Master's level organizations at the college.



and develop a comprehensive analysis of that agency. Professor Kluver and her student consultants worked with Cape and Islands Workforce Investment Board of Hyannis, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce in Brockton, the Massachusetts Archaeological Society, Robbins Museum of Archaeology in Middleboro, Andrew's Helpful Hands of Hudson, Vinfen of Cambridge and the Hockomock Area YMCA in North Attleboro. Although Professor Kluver and her students were focused on using their skills to assist regional non-profits, their primary interest was including a volunteer and public service component to the class.

Once underway, the comprehensive analysis included recommendations on how the agencies could strengthen their service capacity and case statement to assist them in achieving their mission. The student/consultants also made site visits to the agencies and shadowed the executive directors and spoke with the staff to gain a first hand understanding of the non profit that

Joined by political science department colleague Dr. Deniz Leuenberger Professor Kluver's BOND group was an immediate success as the non profits jumped at the opportunity to have this consulting group provide a wealth of research and recommendations. In fact as word spread that the BOND consulting group was a valuable resource, other agencies took an interest and sought their consulting service during the summer and fall of 2007. The American Red Cross of Massachusetts Bay in Brockton is now a BOND client, as is the Jane Goodall Institute/Roots to Shoots program in Boston and the Keeping Pace: Multiple Miracles organization in Bridgewater. The

BOND student/consultants provided services such as grant searches, letter proposals, fundraising analysis, strategic planning, marketing campaigns and organizational development to the non profits. The American Red Cross endorsed the work of the BOND team with a letter of thanks. An excerpt from the letter states that

"Your collective effort to identify financial support means that we can continue to provide partial scholarships to those in need. And although you may never meet those who benefited from your generosity, know that they Thank you and appreciate your support.

All of us at the Red Cross are grateful that your thoughts, actions and passion you have translated into a financial fundraising plan for the local American Red Cross Certified Nursing Assistant (CAN) Program."



Because of the huge success that the student/consultants have achieved in such a short time, Professor Kluver is developing an extended campus network bringing in faculty members and students from other disciplines to assist future groups of graduate students as they take BOND to the next level. Since Professor Kluver will teach various courses related non profits and civic involvement in future semesters, it is a certainty that the list of agencies seeking the assistance of these student/consultants will grow even more as well as the campus networks.

Professor Kluver's development of the student/consulting experience for her graduate students evolved from the belief that it is important to supplement textbook learning with the experience of real world public administration. She states that programs like BOND will prepare her students for the world of work once they leave Bridgewater. The BOND experience in Kluver's view has helped her students think critically about the strengths and weakness, the opportunities and threats that face non profits on a daily basis. By transforming the students through real world experiences, Kluver has encouraged them to apply their knowledge to specific problems and encouraged them to develop solutions that can assist non profits in reaching their goals.

Professor Kluver is so excited about the initial success of BOND that she has presented a case study of BOND at the New England Sociological Association and has submitted her work with the student group to the Public Administration Teaching Conference and the Global Womens Leadership Conference in the United Arab Emirates. The title of the paper is called "Embracing the 'Ah-Ha' Teaching Moment in the Classroom and then Running with It: A Case Study of Bridgewater Organization for Nonprofit Development

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*—excerpt from a letter to BOND from Tobias T. Cowans,
Area Director of the American Red Cross*

(BOND)." Through Professor Kluver's vision and hands on approach to learning, BOND may become a national model for transforming and transcending the graduate classroom by blending theory with practice and integrating community service into the Master's level curriculum.

Professor Kluver's graduate students who participated in the founding of the BOND project are Daniel W. Gray, Courtney L. Garcia, Gilbert Kairu, Matthew G. Eaton, Kerri Babin, and Michael C. Berry.

—Jodie Drapal Kluver is Instructor of Political Science.