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Students Develop “Water for Wellness” Campaign

May 2, 2013

BLOOMINGTON, Ill.— According to the United Nations, 783 million people, or 11 percent of the global population, remain without access to a clean source of drinking water. Illinois Wesleyan University students in the “Perspectives in International Health” class are addressing this human rights issue one drop at a time through their campaign titled “Water for Wellness: Quenching Africa’s Thirst.”

The Health 280 class, taught by Laurine Brown, associate professor of health, was part of the “Making Human Rights Real” liberal arts cluster, which included courses that explored human rights and social justice this past semester. Students in the class had to choose one human rights-related health issue to develop a campaign around. They decided to focus on providing safe drinking water to people in need by raising money for The Water Project.



Students in the Health 280 class

In spreading awareness about the campaign, Health 280 students reached out to fellow students, faculty and staff to help raise \$1,000. In two weeks the students met and exceeded their goal, collecting over \$1,200 to date for The Water Project. Campaign strategies included tabling efforts, distribution of flyers across campus and the use of social media to spread awareness, as well as workshop presentations and a bake sale. Students also fundraised by collaborating with Josh Weingart, the founder of TheWaterDropShop.com, which donates 10 percent of their profits to fund clean water projects, and by participating in the Color Drop 5K on April 20 at Illinois State University.

According to the students involved, the “Water for Wellness” campaign’s mission is to install a well pump or other hardware that would provide clean water to a village in one of five African countries in which The Water Project works, including Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Sudan.

The Water Project, an international not-for-profit organization, focuses on providing access to clean drinking water through community engagement and education. By creating long term, sustainable solutions for clean water, The Water Project is helping to decrease the incidence of water borne illness, such as cholera or typhoid, and help end the cycle of poverty that is linked to access to clean water.

For additional information about the campaign and to make a donation online visit thewaterproject.org/community/profile/global-health or contact Laurine Brown at (309) 556-1067.

Please note: Chelsea Green '14 and the students of Health 280 contributed to this story.

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