

2013 ROBERT L. SIGMON SERVICE-LEARNING AWARD RECIPIENT
Dr. Rebecca Dumlao, East Carolina University

For over 10 years, DR. REBECCA DUMLAO has assumed increasing leadership in service-learning and community engagement at East Carolina University. After receiving a competitive teaching grant, she developed Communication Modules for Service-Learning, a “one-stop” web-based site intended to help ECU faculty work collaboratively with engagement initiatives. Modules help faculty start community-focused class projects and include podcasts with community partners, communication strategies, assessment tools, and resources beyond campus.

Dr. Dumlao developed the School of Communication’s first service-learning course and, under her leadership, the School revised its curriculum to include a “Senior Communication Capstone” that includes a service-learning project. Since 2001, over 1600 students have completed the course contributing over 18,000 hours of service locally. After receiving grant funding, she team-taught Puppet Shows to Make a Difference in which Communication Honors students used puppets to present healthy eating and diabetes prevention information to over 200 children at local afterschool programs.

Dr. Dumlao has helped develop and sustain strong campus-community partnerships including one with the Girl Scouts. From 2010-2012 she chaired ECU’s Service-Learning Committee which plans a yearly service-learning conference, oversees service-learning course designation, and facilitates faculty development workshops.

Dr. Dumlao mentors faculty and students within her own academic unit and across campus. One colleague noted that Dr. Dumlao has guided his growth by offering suggestions for theoretical underpinnings for service-learning, class syllabi, class exercises, and strategies for working with community partners. Numerous students taking classes with Dr. Dumlao have moved from doing service-learning projects to pursuing ongoing civic engagement and building careers focused on public service. One student stated Dr. Dumlao’s class was “definitely one of the most rewarding” as it built his team-working skills and showcased the importance of community engagement. She also introduced him to the Public Relations Student Society of America (PRSSA) which he joined, later becoming an officer. Today he is the deputy of community relations at the U.S. Air Force Academy and noted that “her professionalism and mentorship was instrumental in my career success.” Dr. Dumlao has supervised three student scholars through the Student Engagement and Outreach Scholars Academy.



Dr. Dumlao contributes to the broader service-learning field by serving on the editorial review board for *Partnerships: A Journal of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement*, NC Campus Compact's multi-disciplinary, open access peer reviewed journal. Recently, Dr. Dumlao participated on a national committee of scholars to identify core competencies in civic engagement. This committee wrote a policy paper published by the Center for Engaged Democracy at Merrimack College.

She has presented her service-learning scholarship and community-based research at regional, national and international scholarly conferences such as the National Outreach Scholarship Conference, the International Association for Research in Service-Learning and Civic Engagement Conference, and PACE. Dr. Dumlao is currently working to develop a global service-learning program in Trinidad, West Indies, in conjunction with Amizade, a non-profit organization that provides service-learning and volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups.