

March 24, 2009

Dear Editor

As the Vice Chair of the Parkland College Board of Trustees, I congratulate the students and faculty of the Parkland College - Garden Hills Elementary Homework Club.

Recently, the Homework Club was recognized by the Community College National Center for Community Engagement with its 2009 Collaboration Award. Building on the already successful partnership that the college and Champaign Unit # 4 Schools share, the Homework Club has been a natural outgrowth of a relationship that prides itself on the core principals of reciprocity and respect.

In the three semesters that the Homework Club has been operating, over *one hundred* Parkland students have mentored over *sixty* Garden Hills students. For the elementary students, receiving homework support in a small group setting has continually been shown to increase that student's overall academic success. At the same time, the Parkland students take on the role of mentor to their partners, modeling successful strategies that embody the life choices of a committed college student. More importantly, these experiences at the Homework Club tie directly back to specific course concepts and learning outcomes for the college students involved.

For Parkland, volunteerism and community engagement are not only present in the college's mission and purposes, "To guide and assist students in becoming active, responsible, ethical, and self-disciplined citizens in our democratic society," but are an active institutional priority. Thus, Parkland College is a supporter of not only the Garden Hills Elementary/Parkland College Homework Club, but of the importance of strong community partnerships and responsible teaching.

Sincerely

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