



Wisconsin | Campus Compact

## **Best Practices in UWEX Service-Learning**

### **Grant-writing for Wisconsin Bookworms Family Living programs, UW-Extension Dane County**

The Wisconsin Bookworms program (formerly Wisconsin First Book) provides free books and volunteer readers to low-income preschool children. In Dane County, volunteers from the Home and Community Educators organization and the University League visit 10 sites, reading to 144 young children and distributing approximately 1200 free books each year.

In 2005-06, with the assistance of a Wisconsin Campus Compact AmeriCorps\* VISTA member, two UW-Madison students were recruited to write for grants to further support the Dane County Bookworms program. These students wrote for *and* received two local grants for a total of \$2250. These funds will enable Dane County Bookworms to expand in 2006-07 and reach out to approximately 100 new low-income preschoolers.

Through this partnership between Dane County Cooperative Extension and UW-Madison, more young children and their families will benefit from the Wisconsin Bookworms program. The university students gained from this opportunity to develop grant-writing skills and to learn about career possibilities in UW-Extension and other community agencies.

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**Note:** AmeriCorps\*VISTA is a national program that places full-time volunteers with organizations to help them develop and strengthen programs designed to bring individuals and communities out of poverty. Wisconsin Campus Compact (WiCC), an affiliate of the national Campus Compact organization, is a coalition of leaders from more than 30 Wisconsin public and private colleges and universities, including UW-Extension, who are dedicated to strengthening civic engagement in postsecondary institutions. The goal of the cooperation between AmeriCorps\* VISTA and WiCC is to provide leadership and coordination of service-learning initiatives that address poverty by engaging high school and college students in efforts to improve academic achievement and aspirations of low-income youth.