A NOTE FROM OUR CHAIR
by Elinor Mattern ’01

In many ways, it has been a tremendous year for S.O.S. Lately the trusty computers in our office have been spitting out some especially impressive numbers—over 600 Smithies participated in community service work during the academic year! On behalf of S.O.S., I’d like to thank all of you for volunteering your time to tackle projects that desperately need to be done. Our campus and the surrounding communities are better off because of your efforts.

S.O.S. Fund Drive
by Vandana Nakka ’03

The S.O.S. Fund Drive, which ended on March 15th, was a success. The counting is almost complete and we have fundraised over $4,000, exceeding our goal of $3,000-4,000! It is obvious that the issue of Children Affected by Domestic Violence has received attention and accrued an overwhelming response from the generous members of the Smith community.

From students’ voluntary participation in our benefit concert—done for the first time this year, to staff donations and prize contributions from stores in downtown Northampton, the fund drive was enriched by everyone’s involvement and the wonderful work of S.O.S. House Reps for their hard work and hope that next year’s drive will be as successful!

Working at the Northampton Nursing Home Pediatric Unit
by Anita Pedersen y Arbona ’01

I first heard about the Northampton Nursing Home Pediatric unit from the SOS list of long-term volunteer projects. I decided to work at the nursing home because I can interact directly with the children, and I am given a lot of freedom in my choice of activities. I had an interview with Diane Duseau, the manager of recreational care in the Pediatrics ward, and received a tour of the facility. At the beginning of the year Diane encouraged me to choose one child whom I would visit each time I came. I usually visit Raymond, a 6 year-old boy with profound mental retardation and inability to speak or move independently. He is a wonderful little kid, who smiles often and laughs when I tickle him or when I make his stuffed toys talk. I go to the nursing home once a week for two hours. I read books, sing songs, and play games with Raymond and a few other children on the unit.

I was looking for a regular volunteer position that would give me experience working with kids with disabilities, so working with Raymond has been an incredibly important experience for me. What I like most about working with him is finding ways to make him laugh. It’s also fun to be a kid for two hours each week, leaving behind worries about schoolwork and instead focusing on making somebody else happy. The nursing staff is incredibly appreciative, as are the children. My visits to the nursing home are not always easy: if the kids are tired, sick, or unhappy it is very difficult to stay motivated. It is also emotionally draining to work…

[continued on page 2]
Thank You To The 2000-2001 Board

The amazing ladies of the outgoing S.O.S. Board have been the life of this organization. Without your smiling faces every week at board meetings, your incredible enthusiasm, and your willingness to help each other, S.O.S. would not be the organization it is.

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Spotlight on a House Rep
by Lindsay Bellows '03

Being a House Representative for SOS this year has proved to be both exciting and rewarding. Attending bi-weekly meetings in the Bodman Lounge helped the house reps stay directed in their job to inform their respective houses on upcoming events. As a house rep, I felt so knowledgeable about service opportunities in the valley and appreciated SOS's effort to create those opportunities and establish ties with new organizations. The highlights of being a house rep included signing up first-time donors for the blood drive who risked being nervous to donate; sponsoring two children for the winter gifts' drive and, as a house, buying them toys and clothes. Collecting money for the Fund Drive, Silent Victims: Children Affected by Domestic Violence, was the most challenging part of the job but students were very receptive to the cause and ultimately were very generous. Because of the enthusiasm of both my house, and the SOS board, being a representative was a positive experience.

Short-Term Projects
by Jenn Bell '03 & Maia Dauner '03

To everyone who participated in our projects, THANKYOU!! This year has been outstanding. As a Short Term Co-Chair I have been continually amazed by Smith students’ dedication and willingness to make a difference in their community. This past semester we made Valentine's cards for the residents of the Veterans Medical Home and worked on two quilts during Project Square which will go to local homeless shelters when they are finished. (The quilts are almost done, they just need a little bit more work.)

Our rescheduled trip to the Northampton Nursing Home on Friday, April 6th was great. Eight of us decorated spring cards with the residents and had some wonderful discussions with them. The Grove Street Toiletry Drive ended Friday, April 16. The toiletry items were donated to the Grove Street Inn, which is a temporary shelter for adults that helps residents find employment and housing. It is located within walking distance of Smith Campus and is always in need of items such as toiletries. A representative from Grove Street said that it is very important for the residents to have adequate toiletries and raincoats or ponchos so that they will be better equipped for job (and housing) interview. Thank you to everyone who donated items!

[continued from page 1] Northampton Nursing Home-Pediatrics

…with children who are so disabled. However, the rewards far outweigh the costs. Working with Raymond has helped me realize how important it is have fun, laugh, and help others live fuller, happier lives. I would like to work with children with disabilities after I graduate. If anyone is looking for a place to volunteer where you can really feel like you are making a difference, I would suggest working at the Northampton Nursing Home Pediatric Unit. They need your help!

Have a Great Summer!!

S.O.S.
Community Service Internship Program (CSIP)
by Christina Davis '01

What? Community Service Internship Program: community based internship at a local non-profit for 4 - 6 hours per week. Reflecting with the rest of the CSIP interns and the co-directors once a week (Wednesday evenings), completing a weekly "process recording". Year long commitment. Participants receive $2,000 stipend. Placements with various agencies, ranging from working with children to working with inmates at the local jail.

Who? Students who are interested in getting involved in the community!


How? Come to the SOS office to pick up an application or call x4595 for more information. It is rolling admission, so the sooner, the better!

Spring Blood Drive: A Smashing Success!
by Adrienne Leavitt '04

The Smith Blood Drive kicked off national Red Cross Month as we collected 210 units of blood during our two-day drive. The donated blood was used by local hospitals within four days of our blood drive and each person who gave blood helped to save up to three lives. Thank you to everyone who came to Davis Ballroom to give blood and to all of the dedicated volunteers who came to support their peers during the donation process. The Smith Blood Drive is the Red Cross's largest and most successful Blood Drive for a college of our size, and they depend on us to continue their mission. Thanks again to everyone involved!

1st Annual Performance Benefit Concert for the S.O.S. Fund Drive
by Ruth Wilson '01

On March 7th from 8-10 p.m. in Sweeney Concert Hall, about 300 people attended S.O.S.'s first annual Performance Benefit Concert. The Illmatics, Celebrations, the Vibes, the Smiffenpoofs, the Noteables, SIKOS, Sally (the Smith College rock band) and the Smith College Jazz Ensemble all performed. Over $500 were raised, and all proceeds went to the Fund Drive. To all the groups who performed, thank you for your great performances, your cooperation and your enthusiasm!
COMMUNITY ED LUNCHEON
by Holly Burke & Erin Sikorsky

Tuesday, April 10, 2001 was the final community education luncheon, featuring a manager from the Food Bank Farm of Western Massachusetts. The Food Bank works to provide fresh produce to over 400 social service agencies in Western Mass. Robin, one of the two managers at the Farm, came to talk to a group of about 15 students about how the Farm runs, what services it provides, and the volunteer opportunities available there. The two managers are the only full-time employees at the Farm and volunteers provide about 1/3 of the work. The Food Bank Farm has been one of Smith students’ favorite places, whether its for short-term projects, long-term volunteer placements, or for House projects. Thank you to everyone who has attended our Community Education Luncheons this year!

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Agency Outreach & Community Outreach Interns
Application Process Underway

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Final Short-Term Project!!!
by Ruth Wilson

Speaking of the Food Bank Farm, Saturday, April 28th from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. is the final-short term project of the year and will be at the Farm. Come enjoy the beautiful weather while getting wonderfully dirty doing activities such as picking vegetables, planting seeds, laying mulch, etc. to help provide food for local homeless shelters and food pantries. Call Maia x7853 or Jennifer x6164 to sign up.

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