

# Students Donate Nearly \$1 Million Worth of Expertise to Area Nonprofits

Students in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences' Information Systems program spent the fall semester donating about \$1 million of their expertise to help nonprofit agencies create computer systems that will enable them to provide needed programs and services.

The students' help, time and effort would have cost the participating nonprofit organizations nearly \$1 million, said Cleotilde

Gonzalez, assistant professor of information and decision sciences.

Twelve teams of seniors served as technology consultants for organizations such as the Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium, the Pittsburgh Community Storehouse, the North Hills Community Outreach Center, Operation Safety Net, Light of Life Ministries and Fallingwater.

Gonzalez said the focus of the Information Systems Applications course is "developing solutions to business problems."

The course costs the nonprofits nothing—they only have to make time to meet with the students. The course has served community needs for the past 10 years and a number of corporate affiliates of the Information Systems program help to support the outreach effort.

Students are asked to select, design, implement and test the technological underpinnings of their informa-



Ken Andreyo

**Cleotilde Gonzalez, assistant professor of information and decision sciences, says the Information Systems Applications course focuses on "developing solutions to business problems."**

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tion technology solutions, and to work with clients who may not be able to afford or even know what they need to improve existing computer systems.

Students working with Light of Life Ministries, an agency that provides support for

for the staff and the agency's limited budget. Eventually, the prototype may be rolled out nationally.

An educational program for the KidScience project at the Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium

Program," said project coordinator Mark Reardon. "It will make lesson planning easier and help with organizational functionality. In addition, the simplicity of the program will help in teaching computer skills to the KidScience students."

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homeless men and women in Pittsburgh and across the U.S., were able to build an information system that will help the Pittsburgh shelter keep track of its clients and the services each client receives. The students were able to update the shelter's computer system in ways that made sense

will enable Pittsburgh school children to easily understand wildlife conservation efforts.

"The database program designed by the Carnegie Mellon students will increase the administrative efficiency of the KidScience

Nonprofit groups interested in participating in future Information Systems Applications classes should contact Carnegie Mellon's Center for University Outreach at 268-7801.

—Teresa Sokol Thomas