

Aloia Meets with Service Partners

By SARAH LUNDGREN/The Brunswick News

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Surrounded by representatives from community service organizations and nonprofits at the Elizabeth Correll Teen Center in Brunswick on Monday, Greg Aloia was in his element.

The new College of Coastal Georgia president has a soft spot for giving back, and seeing so many service organizations support the college's service learning program that sends students out to work with community groups was heart warming.

The reception for the college's community partners involved in service learning was a chance for the new president and representatives to meet and to hear how the program is working.



College of Coastal Georgia President Gregory Aloia, right, talks with community leaders including America's Second Harvest Community Relations representative Kalista Morton, left, and United Way of Coastal Georgia President and CEO Dana Haza during a reception for community partners of the service learning program at the College of Coastal Georgia held at the Elizabeth Correll Teen Center on Monday.

Organizations represented in attendance included United Way of Coastal Georgia, International Seafarer's Center, Boys and Girls Club of South Coastal Georgia and Salvation Army.

Aloia was impressed and thankful for those who have committed since the program's introduction in Spring 2011.

“Our students get theory in the classroom and merge it with some practical application in the real world, all tied back to their discipline,” he said. “The organizations get to involve our students in their missions,” Aloia said.

The service learning program at the college has already become one of its defining components. Aloia says being able to offer it to students is what makes the difference in where they go after college.

“What gets an applicant through the door is the story they tell,” Aloia said. “It’s who they are, what their passion is. It puts substance behind them. Someone who has done service learning, versus someone who hasn’t, has such a different story to tell, has life experiences to apply. We’re giving each student a story to tell.”

Phillis George, service learning director, asked those in attendance Monday to be honest during a discussion and survey.

“This service learning endeavor is unprecedented, in terms of how far-reaching it is across all segments of our community, so revision is a necessary part of perfecting the outreach,” George said.

“What I’m hoping is that we hear ways in which we can really strengthen our core operation. If there are things we’re doing great, of course we’d like to hear that, but if there are things we can improve upon, we want to hear that as well.”

George says community partners are always encouraged to express their thoughts.

“It’s a learning opportunity for our students, but it’s also meant to affect positive change within the community,” George said.