

**2012 Robert L. Sigmon Service-Learning Award Recipient**  
**Dr. Spoma Jovanovic**

Dr. Spoma Jovanovic is Associate Professor in the Department of Communication Studies at UNCG. From 2005 to 2007, she served as the Service-Learning Faculty Fellow through the Office of Leadership and Service-Learning where she was expected to be knowledgeable in innovative service-learning pedagogy and to assist faculty interested in civically engaging students to achieve course objectives. She has designed faculty development workshops for service-learning course development and integration of a community based scholarship agenda, and presented at national conferences fostering advancement in service-learning pedagogy.



She has taught more than 20 Service-Learning designated courses and a dozen others that incorporate service-learning. Dr. Jovanovic's documents and presentations were used as part of a strategic initiative that influenced the 2009 Faculty Senate vote making UNCG the first UNC school to change promotion and tenure policies to recognize and reward engaged scholarship. Beginning in 2007, Dr. Jovanovic created a partnership with Dudley High School, Greensboro News and Record, and Guilford Education Alliance, to promote discussions about community and civic literacy between undergraduate students and highschoolers. These discussions led to the college and high school students working together on the Bringing Us Bus Shelters project, researching and advocating for more bus benches and shelters, and raising funds to buy and place their first bus bench. In 2011, the program won \$10,000 from SynerG, the young professional group of ActionGreensboro, to initiate "Benches of Artistic Distinction." Almost 125 UNCG students from eleven different service-learning classes have participated in the project.

Jovanovic's stresses that "part of our job as faculty is to teach students how to participate in a democracy, and thus service-learning provides an ethical and just path to learning about and speaking on these social issues." She volunteers with the Interactive Resource Center, Leadership Greensboro, the City of Greensboro, and the Peace & Justice Network, as well as grassroots organizations. Dr. Jovanovic is an advocate for students taking charge of their education, and creates learning environments that allow them to do so. A student shared that Dr. Jovanovic's "research shows such a strong commitment to community activism, social justice and service...she helps students see their true potential, valuing their role as a citizen within their communities, and the importance of democratic expression. She deserves this award because she has worked hard to awaken the leader in all of her students to make a difference."