SOCIALLY ACCEPTABLE

► ADELPHI UNIVERSITY (adelphi.edu) is heating up the trend toward socially conscious academic programming. The peace studies minor there has received heightened student interest. Graduates can compete for job titles at all kinds of service agencies and nonprofits or work abroad for the U.N.

Another program at the university allows student teachers to complete half of their student teaching in a foreign country. “We’re dealing with a more diverse student population all around the world,” said Dr. Perry Greene, associate dean of the Ruth S. Ammon School of Education at Adelphi University. “A teaching experience outside of your locale opens you up to other ways of approaching education.”

At Adelphi’s College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Business hosts a lecture series on corporate responsibility that is open to the community.

Adelphi’s Levermore global scholars program for undergraduates focuses on civic and community service. Since it got its start three years ago, the program has placed students in internships at the UN Alliance of Civilizations, CityArts, Hudson River Park Trust, Coalition for the Homeless and Habitat for Humanity.

► THE NEW SCHOOL in Manhattan (newschool.edu) was founded with the mission of bringing positive change to the world. According to the provost, Tim Marshall.

It was recently selected by Ashoka, the world’s largest network of social entrepreneurs, for its changemaker campus initiative, a three-year program to support and develop social entrepreneurship.

It also launched the design for social innovation and sustainability (DESIS) lab, a new research center that brings together faculty and students from across the university to engage in projects that bring together design and social innovation.

The New School also established one of the first programs in the US to focus on nonprofit management, as well as courses in social entrepreneurship, social investment and related areas.

By ERIKA PFADDER

M Ave MONEY or make a difference? If you assume you can’t combine both, think again.

Socially responsible coursework and entrepreneurship are hot, according to Gabriel Brodbar, director of the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation program in social entrepreneurship at New York University’s Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service (nyu.edu).

“The market cannot take care of itself,” he said. “People are realizing that things are not working and want to get involved. They’re reassessing their responsibility for the world they want to see. In the last couple of years, more universities have been responding to the demand for this type of study.”

After receiving a $10 million gift from entrepreneur and philanthropist Catherine B. Reynolds, beginning in 2006, the foundation has selected up to 20 graduate students and 10 undergraduates each year across 11 different schools at NYU. They receive $50,000 each in aid, and gain the cross-disciplinary skills, experiences and networking opportunities needed to advance and support their efforts to realize sustainable and scalable solutions to the world’s most intractable problems.

Students from every field of study apply for acceptance.

“We have talented documentary filmmakers who want to stir others to action through their work. There’s also a medical school student who is bringing new cell phone technologies to the developing world so doctors can stay in contact with each other,” said Brodbar.

Some students launched businesses before coming to the program. “One fellow operates an online tutoring company that he markets to schools in The Bronx,” said Brodbar.

Acceptance into the Reynolds program also means access to top shelf, pro bono business plan consulting and development, run by two Reynolds alumni.

By ERICA PFADDER

Students are choosing socially conscious and entrepreneurial courses

There’s also a host of inspirational guest lecturers such as the founders of Whole Foods, Teach For America and Seth Goldman of the Honest Tea company.

Competition for the program is fierce, however.

“Last year, we had about 1,200 applications and picked up 14 people,” reported Brodbar.

Magogodi Makhene is one such deserving recipient. A Master of Arts candidate from NYU’s Gallatin School of Individualized Study, she was inspired to apply by her own upbringing.

Raised in Soweto, South Africa, Makhene was ingrained in the political upheaval there in the 1980s. “We seek high net worth people, entrepreneurs,” she said. “Every time you’re making a dollar, you’re creating some sort of social change.”

After coming to the US at age 17 and earning her bachelor’s degree in international business at Newman College, Makhene enrolled at Gallatin at NYU to learn how to leverage private equity for development in Africa.

“The challenges in South Africa are crime and jobs. Job creation is key. I’d like to help create the kind of jobs that will propel a middle class there,” she said.

This past summer, along with another NYU alumni, Makhene co-founded Zenzele Circle (zenzelecircle.com), an investment fund to link enterprises with angel investors in the west.

“We seek high net worth people who understand the needs of a start-up. These people are also seeking some sort of social mission. Creating jobs in Africa resonates with them. “Long-term, we hope to expand the model through sub-Saharan Africa. We’d like to cultivate a culture and trend of angel investment and get entrepreneurs there to invest in the next generation of entrepreneurs,” she said.