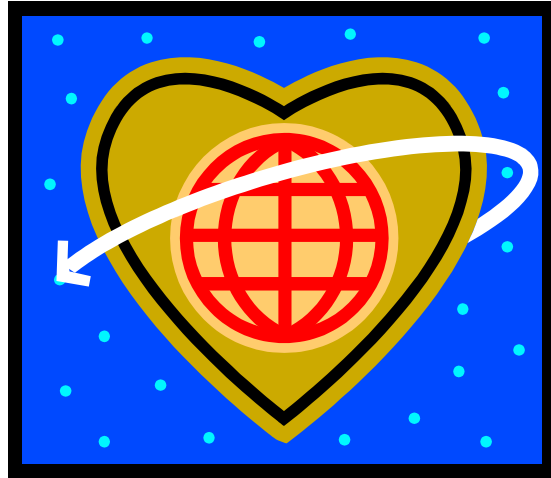


# **Ursuline Students Making A Difference**



**Student Service Recognition Program**

**2009-2010**

**Ursuline Educational Services (UES)**



## *Ursuline Educational Services*

*Spring of 2010*

*Dear Students, Friends, and Co-workers in Ursuline Education,*

*Our annual sharing of Student Service Projects is here!  
The projects are spirit-driven, filled with the dedication, compassion  
and sense of joy that reflects St. Angela's spirit. They share about service  
outreach both in the States and around the world. The participants this year are  
from 17 Ursuline schools, and affiliate schools including:*

**Academy of Mount St. Ursula, Bronx, New York**  
**Beaumont School, Cleveland Ohio**  
**Mount Merici School, Waterville, Maine**  
**Sacred Heart Academy, Louisville, Kentucky**  
**Saint Ursula Academy, Cincinnati, Ohio**  
**Saint Ursula Academy, Toledo, Ohio**  
**Saint Ursula Villa, Cincinnati, Ohio**  
**The College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, New York**  
**The Ursuline School, New Rochelle, New York**  
**Ursuline Academy, Wilmington, Delaware**  
**Ursuline Academy, New Orleans, Louisiana**  
**Ursuline Academy, Dedham, Massachusetts**  
**Ursuline Academy, St. Louis, Missouri**  
**Ursuline Academy, Cincinnati, Ohio**  
**Ursuline High School, Santa Rosa, California**  
**Ursuline High School, Youngstown, Ohio**  
**Villa Angela-St. Joseph, Cleveland, Ohio**

*Enjoy the spirit of caring so evident in this sharing!*

*United in St. Angela's peace,*

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**School Name: Academy of Mt. St. Ursula City: Bronx, New York**

**Student Name: Shani Ogilvie      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Bronx Bethany Church of the Nazarene

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I helped children in elementary school with their homework. The place where I did this service was at my Church's afterschool enrichment program. The program serves children not only with help for homework, but also by engaging them in music, arts and crafts, and martial arts within a Christian environment.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

My service made a difference to the community because I helped to reiterate what the children had already learned in school. I believe that my service encouraged the children to want to do their work and to succeed in school.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I believe that this service was important in my life because each day I was given the pleasure of watching the children grow and learn. It has become important to me that they can become enriched by means of arts and music. I wish that I might have had such great opportunities to enlighten me, and it is good to give it to these children.

**Student Name: Adeola Okoduwa      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

The Brotherhood/Sister Sol Organization

**Describe your service and what you did:**

This year I worked with a group of members on a campaign that is designed to lower the rate of teen pregnancy and to provide sex education. I helped to conduct interviews with teen parents and created workshops that talk about teen pregnancy today. We talked about the danger of STDs and ways to make choices in the direction of wholesome living.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Although the campaign is not over yet, we have achieved success. By the end of the past year many young members became more aware of sexual health and of ways to protect their bodies by making wise decisions. Our program is called "The Liberation Program" and it is meant to bring true freedom to young people. Harriet Tubman said that she freed many slaves and that she could have freed many more, if they had only realized that they were enslaved. We work to raise the consciousness of young people who need this freedom.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service has changed my life because it helped me to focus on sharing knowledge. After learning more about this topic, I now feel more confident in myself and can share this knowledge with my peers. Seeing others become more responsible influences me to keep helping others and never give up. I learned at the Brotherhood/Sister Sol that nothing is impossible and that young people have power to make things change. This program also encourages and supports travel abroad, and this will widen my world.

**Student Name: Samantha Rivera    Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Friends of Van Cortlandt Park

**Describe your service and what you did:**

During this time of service I was involved in trail maintenance and park preservation. I worked with a small group called Junior Naturalists assisting in the supervision of young children being educated about nature and the environment of the park.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Service with Friends of Van Cortlandt Park definitely made a difference to the community I served. The park benefited because of the maintenance, and the youth involved were enlightened about nature.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service has been very significant in my life. Being able to help young children as well as improve the environment is something I aspire to continue in my life. The beauty of nature and creation I witnessed within the environment in my own community resonated that summer and continues to do so to this day. It further established my appreciation for the earth's natural gifts and attributes.

**School Name: Beaumont School      City: Cleveland, Ohio**

**Student Name: Kristina Collins    Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Judson Manor and Judson Park

**Describe your service and what you did:**

Over the summer, I volunteered at Judson Manor and Judson Park, a retirement community in University Circle. The part of my service which I consider the most significant involved assisting in the Coffee/Tea Bar at Judson Manor, where I had many wonderful conversations with the residents. One such conversation led me to host a program for them on the history of polio in America, a personal interest of mine.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The program gave the residents an opportunity to discuss their experiences with polio. Several former medical personnel shared stories about caring for victims of the disease, and other residents whose friends and relatives had been affected also came forward. Everyone seemed to learn something new, and I think we all enjoyed it.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Hosting the program allowed me to have a truly unique experience of oral history. I got a real sense of what the country went through at that time and a sense of the human element, which is difficult to get from a book, but easy to get from a conversation and a smile.

**Student Names: Lauren Linker and Heather Guhde**

**Grade Levels: 12 and 10**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Lighthouse Summer Camp

**Describe your service and what you did:**

We volunteered at Lighthouse Summer Camp at William Patrick Day Early Childhood Center (Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities) and served children ages 2½ to 10 with developmental disabilities in a classroom setting. Disabilities included, but were not limited to: autism, cerebral palsy, prenatal exposure and /or addiction to drugs/alcohol, and a variety of genetic syndromes. We assisted in all aspects of curricular activities throughout the day. All of the children had individual education goals. Our job was to give hands on help so that the children could participate independently in activities to the best to their ability.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

By design, Lighthouse Summer Camp serves many children who have very severe behavior challenges. We also serve children who are non-ambulatory and may have additional serious medical issues. Many of these children have not succeeded in other programs. The children required a lot more help than what the teachers could offer. Through intense training, the volunteers were taught how to meet the needs of the children with whom they worked. Without the additional help we provided, the children would have missed many learning opportunities. The teachers didn't just need an extra set of hands, they needed people who were willing to look beyond the disabilities and see the wonderful little people inside. It was very challenging, but the payoff was worth all the hard work.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

We learned to see the face of God in the children. Our Catholic faith calls us to serve people in need. Jesus took joy in spending this time with the poor, the sick, and others in need. We had some long difficult days at Lighthouse and some moments were definitely not "joyful". We learned that the joy comes in seeing and in knowing that we made a big difference with so many children. Our hope is that each child carries a little piece of our relationship throughout their lives. We knew we could be helpful to the children through this service project; what we didn't know is how much they would help us.

**Student Name: Kat VanGunten and Leah Engle Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

L'Arche House

**Describe your service and what you did:**

After a long day at school with much homework to do and other issues on my mind, eating dinner at L'Arche on Mondays filled me with an immense sense of hope, comfort, joy, and peace. The loving, simple living and happy attitudes of BJ, Sean, Billy, Diane, Sue, Sr. Pat, and Cathy LaBianca erased these so-called "problems" from my swarming mind every time I entered their home.

My friend Leah Engle, with whom I completed the project, also thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Several text messages between us this year read something along the lines of: "We have L'Arche today! Can't wait to see BJ!"

The nights that Leah and I attended L'Arche, I felt a deep connection with God, an unexplainable feeling; one that I experienced through the pure, selfless love given by the core members. The love and simplicity of life encountered at L'Arche made me aware of the true purpose of my life: loving others fully, without judgment or false airs. Volunteering at L'Arche Cleveland not only made me more aware of the true love of which Jesus often spoke, but also filled me with an unshakable hope. Last summer and throughout this school year, Leah and I spent time at one of the L'Arche homes in Cleveland, where we prepared meals, often eagerly assisted by one or more of the core members. We often had help setting and carrying the food to the table. Before sitting down to eat, we would spend time talking or joking around with them. They were always enthusiastic about sharing with us what they did that day. While eating dinner, I really felt like I was considered part of the "family." Each person not only asked, but remembered each week and cared about different aspects of my life. The stories told at the table by the L'Arche core members never ceased to bring a smile to my face or make me laugh. Pure joy found in the simple things of life was expressed every night.

After dinner, Leah and I cleared the table and took turns washing the dishes. Then, we sat on the long brown couch with the others and simply took a load off. The dread of heading back home to homework and chores was softened as each member bid us farewell, giving us huge hugs and always a smile.

In July of last summer, Leah and I took part in the annual Faith and Sharing Retreat held at Ursuline College. I had taken guitar lessons that summer, learning church music for the retreat. Playing during the retreat was very enjoyable because I played alongside David, a L'Arche core member who plays guitar (but doesn't really know how) and sings with his whole heart. Several of the L'Arche members talked for long periods of time. I understood more of what they had experienced in the past.

In my experience volunteering at L'Arche, I believe that I served what some might consider the least of our brothers and sisters: the marginalized. Unfortunately, in our world, people who have mental and physical handicaps are often looked down upon, shoved aside as the "lowest" people of our society, those who don't really matter. Yet these humble, kind, and loving people have shown me God's face more than anyone in my life. The L'Arche members have taught me that nothing is impossible for God and that I can be anyone I want to be. Most importantly, they have taught me about perfect, selfless love and have led me to a much deeper relationship to Jesus.

## **School Name: Mount Merici School City: Waterville, Maine**

### **Grade Level: Nursery-6 Grade**

#### **Name of place where service was given:**

The project was conducted at school, but benefitted children across the globe in Kenya and Darfur.

#### **Describe your service and what you did:**

In early 2009, under the direction of the very talented songwriter Julia Vigue, students began preparing for their first spring music concert, appropriately named "Love Changes Everything." The lyrics heard during weeks of rehearsals were reminders of how one person's actions can make a difference. Songs like "The Power of One" and "Open Eyes, Open Hearts, Open Doors" were brought to real life when the children learned that Mount Merici had partnered with the national non-profit organization "Feed the Children" to raise money for goats.

The students were educated about how a gift of a dairy goat can supply a poor family in Darfur with up to several quarts of nutritious milk a day – a ton of milk a year. Extra milk can be sold or used to make cheese, butter or yogurt. Families learn to use goat manure to fertilize gardens. Goats can thrive in extreme climates and on poor, dry land by eating grass and leaves. And because goats often have two or three kids a year, Heifer partners can lift themselves out of poverty by starting small dairies that earn money for food, healthcare, and education.

We thought if we could raise enough money for even a few goats, it would be a wonderful lesson for our 190 students. It was a lesson learned, indeed. Students collected bottles, donated their savings, and earned money by doing chores to contribute to the school's collection jars. "I want to help the children. They have so little, and really, we have what we need to live," said second grader Elizabeth Hammond, who graciously handed over more than \$16 from her piggy bank.

In addition to raising money for goats, students also wished to support the Darfur Village Project, a collaborative effort of the Ursuline Sisters of the Northeast Province. Learning their spare change could mean providing much-needed school supplies and other necessities they take for granted every day, Mount Merici students wanted to help fellow Ursuline students across the globe.

#### **How long was the service work?**

Efforts to raise money for the above projects began in February, with the simple goal of engaging each of our 190 students to contribute \$1 by the musical date in March. We hoped to buy two or three goats and make a meaningful contribution to the Ursuline Sisters on behalf of Mount Merici School.

In two months, the students were excited to learn they had raised over \$1,000. Inspired by their dedication, parents added "matching goat funds." In April, Mount Merici School was pleased to present a \$500 check to the Ursuline Sisters to help build the school in Kenya; and students were thrilled to learn their work had raised an additional \$1,400 that would buy not "a few goats," but 46 goats for families in Darfur! In total, the fundraising was completed in less than three months.

**How did your service make a difference?**

The Mount Merici School service project not only made a significant difference in the lives of the children in Kenya and Darfur – it had a profound effect on the children at our school who learned that yes, their expression of love and support CAN change everything.

Accepting the \$500 gift on behalf of the Ursuline Sisters, Sr. Theresa Pelletier said the students didn't just wear the Serviam logo; they lived it every day through their selfless acts of kindness. "You are true followers of the Ursuline tradition," Sister told the students.

The students gave an hour-long spring musical performance before hundreds of parents and friends. Following the program, Julia Vigue said of the student's incredible commitment:

"You made the theme of our music concert come true by making sure that many families would no longer starve, but would instead thrive," she said, "all because of love sent to them all the way from Mount Merici School in Waterville, Maine."

**School Name: Sacred Heart Academy      City: Louisville, Kentucky**

**Student Name: Lori Andriot      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Dare to Care Kid's Café

**Describe your service and what you did:**

While I volunteered at Kid's Café, I would prepare and serve food for the children of the community. I would help them with their homework, if they ever needed it; I volunteered for their holiday party during the Christmas season for the children and their family members.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

In my opinion, I helped others realize that they are not alone. Many of the children that come to the Kid's Café are from disadvantaged families, and don't live in the "best" neighborhoods; perhaps one of their parents are in jail, and I'm able to let them see that they can be more than their childhood; they are not alone. I befriend many of the children that come there, such as a boy named Ronnie, an all around happy kid who always has a smile on his face and joke up his sleeve, and I give them a person that they can talk to when they need me. I make a difference to these children because I give them a person who believes in them, and then they know that at least one person is on their side.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

In all honesty, at the beginning of my high school career I did not realize the importance of service. But, as I started to do more hours and see the impact that I was helping to make, it changed something in me. So, when I started doing service hours at Kid's Café my sophomore year, I embraced the opportunity I was given to make a difference in someone else's life. I believe that as humans and as people of faith we all strive to make a difference and be important, if only in one other's life. And I accomplished that; the first time I was at Kid's Café I was asked to help a girl with her long division, and even though I could tell that she had no clue as to what she was doing, there was a fire in her eyes that let me know that she was never going to give up, and that is what helped me realize that I can do more, that I can be more. And that is why service is so important in my life, not because I thoroughly enjoy helping others or

making a difference; service is important because it helped me find myself, service helped me realize who I am.

**Student Name: Elizabeth Neyman      Grade Level: 11**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Kentucky Refugees Ministry

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I volunteer by tutoring and speaking English with a Thai Karen refugee family. I practice math problems with the 12 year old son and teach colors and other elementary skills to the 5 year old.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The Thai family does not have a great opportunity to practice English or spend time away from their apartment near the Americana Community Center, so I provide them with a source of entertainment along with education.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This family has become like a second family for me, with the sons as my little brothers. Also, spending time with the family and their Buddhist friends has encouraged me in a related career and spirituality.

**Student Name: Claire Wetterer      Grade Level: 11**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Gilda's Club of Louisville

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I worked at Gilda's Club of Louisville with children mostly with cancer or with cancer in their lives. I worked at the summer camp and played games, went on field trips and various activities.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I believe I made a difference in the happiness of many families that had been eaten away by cancer. I worked both physically and emotionally to help the detrimental effects that cancer had taken on these children.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I am a very empathetic person, and service is very important to me because I think that empathy allows me to grow closer to people during my service. I love working with people who have had a harder life than me because they teach me so many valuable lessons.

**School Name: St. Ursula Academy    City: Cincinnati, Ohio**

**Student Name: Emily Carmosino    Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Sedamsville through the Santa Maria Community Center

**Describe your service and what you did:**

The service I do is called Helping Hands. I do everyday household services in Sedamsville for people who cannot do them themselves or things that help the community look nicer. Some examples of the household services I do are painting, yard work, helping the area around where the Sedamsville sign is located and others.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Helping Hands Sedamsville makes a difference in Sedamsville because it helps the houses inside and out look better. It not only helps the outside community, but it helps the people in the community. Some of the people are old and lonely and just want someone to talk to, and our service group not only helps with their household things, but gives them someone to talk to.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service is important in my life because the service projects show me how important the little things that our service group does affect the people that we help. It also shows me the little things in life really do make a difference, and you do not have to do some huge service project to make a difference.

**Student Name: Beth Gunza**

**Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Douglass School, Choices Café, Girls Hope

**Describe your service and what you did:**

At Douglass School I tutored 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders after school. At Choices Café we volunteered helping unemployed with resumes and cleaning and rebuilding houses. At Girls Hope we mentored a 7<sup>th</sup> grade girl and participated in group events and one-on-one activities.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The children at Douglass Elementary are always happy to see us, and I feel like I am helping them apply what they learn. We are making the community cleaner, along with helping local people make progress in getting a job. Velestah, from Girls Hope, is always eager to spend time with me and the other girls; it gives her a time to just hang out and have fun.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I feel that as a Catholic human being it is our duty to serve others. I enjoy helping others, and helping others is something I want to, not have to, do.

**Student Name: Marisa Hartoin      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Sedamsville

**Describe your service and what you did:**

We work with people of Sedamsville, who tend to usually be older couples, and we do everyday household chores for them that they no longer are able to do on their own. The idea is that we are trying to keep these people in their houses longer and keep the neighborhood clean.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Our service really helps the people of Sedamsville. They always enjoy when we come to help them, and even the smallest household chores seem like the biggest help for them. It keeps these people's houses from looking really poor and it also keeps them from hiring outside help for a project that is easy for us to do.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service is very important in my life because I get to do something that is very beneficial to other people, and I get to interact with different kinds of people who are always so grateful for what we do for them. They make it easy to help and are always nice. I really enjoy working for these people, and I am happy that they always want us to come back to help them.

**Student Name: Kelly Muething      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Bulldog Buddies Tutoring Program (Parham Elementary School, Pleasant Ridge Montessori, Christ Emmanuel School, Academy of World Languages)

**Describe your service and what you did:**

This program allows St. Ursula students to interact with children (mostly underprivileged) in the surrounding areas. I have tutored, played games, and just talked with kids from very different backgrounds from myself.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Well, I hope that my service has at least helped the children with their studies and their homework. But, bigger than that, I hope I gave them a familiar face and a friend that they could look up to. I hope that I have exposed them to new ideas, as they have exposed me to new beliefs.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Being able to participate in this program has taught me so much. I have seen how stereotypes affect our society, and I have learned to put those aside. I have also learned that everyone I encounter in my life has something to teach, no matter how young or old.

**School Name: St. Ursula Academy    City: Toledo, Ohio**

**Student Name: Leah Bender      Grade Level: 11**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Gesu School, Extended Day Program

**Describe your service and what you did:**

After school at the Extended Day Program of Gesu, I help the students with any homework they may have and keep them company while playing with them after their homework is done.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The service I provided helped to shape the future of the students who are just now learning about this mysterious world. I helped them have a positive outlook on learning and trusting. Hopefully, now they can begin and complete homework with confidence and patience, as well as gaining strong relationships and trust.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This was important in my life because not only was I helping the children, I was also forming friendships and bonds. Not only was I helping the children, they were helping me learn as well. They taught me to be more free and open and to just be myself, which makes life easier and more fun.

**Student Name: Heather Leroux      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Summer 2007: Pittsburg, PA; Summer 2008: Fairmont, WV; Summer 2009: Trinidad

**Describe your service and what you did:**

Pittsburgh: I took homeless people to a Pirates' game, served breakfast at labor halls, worked on restoring a home for the homeless, worked in a car wash to raise money for living ministry, and talked to people on the street about Jesus.

Fairmont: I helped an impoverished widow by replacing and repainting the wood siding on the outside of her home, which was rotting and falling apart. I ran a student led free vacation bible school for impoverished children.

Trinidad: I provided free day camp for impoverished teen girls our own ages, using "Treasured" series Bible study; worked in a nursing home, visiting elderly and talked to them about Jesus; and in the prison and drug-rehab ministry, visited and shared Jesus with the people at this facility.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Pittsburgh: It was a big deal for homeless people to get a night out at the ball game; it "normalized" their live for a night. The homeless people's basic needs were met, such as food and housing, and the Gospel was shared to give people hope.

Fairmont: The exterior of a home was replaced with new siding and paint. She was very, very appreciative, as she was financially strapped.

Trinidad: Provided activities and fun for the needy. I shared Jesus' love. I still continue to face-book some girls that went to the camp. I was able to develop relationships with the girls.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Pittsburgh: I learned how fortunate I am to have a simple thing like shelter and regular meals. My eyes were opened!

Fairmont: It's ironic that the U.S.A. is such a rich country, yet extreme poverty exists here. There is no shortage of poverty in the U.S. It is everywhere, and it was shocking for me to witness this extreme poverty first-hand.

Trinidad: I learned that Trinidadians may not be blessed materially as much as Americans, but they are blessed through their faith in Christ. I learned that while it's fun to travel overseas, there is plenty of work to be done right here on U.S. soil. Even in Toledo, I think that the mission opportunities are endless.

**Student Name: Rachel Nofziger    Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Toledo Mennonite Church – Tutoring Program

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I tutored children for public elementary schools. I would help them to increase skills in mathematics and reading. I also assisted them with their homework.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Even though my difference wasn't something major, I do think I made a small difference in the children I helped. By spending individual time with these children, I was able to help them personally with any difficulties.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I enjoyed this service work because I was able to see the change I was making with each kid. It was fun to come across these children and each of their personalities.

**Student Name: Madeline Roman    Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Through the Servant Leadership Center, I worked all around Toledo, Ohio. Some places I worked include the Cherry Street Mission, Toledo Area Mobile Food Pantry, Women Blessing Women, Food for Thought, and the lot of a homeless man.

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I completed the 4.5 experience that was designed to immerse high school juniors and seniors in the pain and heartache of poverty's realities. It was a first time initiative, and only 8 juniors and seniors were chosen to complete this program. The 4.5 program consisted of four and a half days of service around Toledo. On day one, we worked with the Toledo Area Mobile Pantry, serving a neighborhood with more than 100 families living below the poverty line. There, we helped stock the shelves of the pantry and cooked hotdogs for a block party for the neighborhood. On day two, we worked at the Cherry Street Mission's dining facility. There, we helped prepare and serve one of the meals for the homeless. For

another one of the meals, we sat and ate with them, hearing their stories and learning what it's like recovering from job loss, family break-ups, substance abuse and more. On day three, we tutored women at Women Blessing Women. Also, we spent a day in the life of a near homeless man in Toledo. With this homeless man, we went "dumpster diving," searching for sellable items and food. Also, we helped build a fence around his lot to protect him from outsiders. On the fourth day, we worked with Food for Thought, making hundreds of lunches, which would be distributed to homeless folk at the main library downtown. On the fourth and a half day, we distributed those lunches while witnessing the joy and relief that came to the people isolated from "regular" society.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

My service not only helped the homeless acquire their basic necessities, it helped to eliminate the loneliness they feel in their lives. Since homeless people are isolated from "regular society," they endure extreme pain. Reaching out to these people, letting them know that we truly care for them, and seeing them as equals to us really instilled hope in their lives. Also, they were able to experience community that stems not from our common station, but from our common humanity.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

My service opened my eyes wide and made me appreciate everything that I have been blessed with in my life. Also, I realized that through my service, I now possess a true understanding of the needs of people, not simply a surface notion of what we think people need. Next, I learned that we are all valuable as human beings, and our worth is not dictated by our economic circumstances. Finally, by interacting with the homeless people, all of my previous stereotypical thoughts I had about homeless people were wiped away, making it easier to view everyone as equal and be willing to help every needy person, no matter how petty or how large the situation may be.

**School Name: St. Ursula Villa                      City: Cincinnati, Ohio**

**Student Name: Colin Jones Grade Level: 5th**

**Name of place where service was given:**

St. Cecelia's Soup Kitchen, St. Rita's Festival, and an Egg Hunt at the Bethany House, and Gathered Backpacks.

**Describe your service and what you did:**

**St. Cecelia:** prepared and served meals for shut-ins every Thanksgiving. **Soup Kitchen:** prepare and serve meal to the walk-ins. **St. Rita's Festival:** I worked at a booth. **Egg Hunt at Bethany House:** made a brunch and played games and had an egg hunt for the kids at Bethany House. **Gathered Backpacks:** I gathered backpacks for foster care kids at Pressley Ridge.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Doing these things for people helped them and made them happy. When you make people happy, it makes you happy.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I got happy when I saw the smile on the people's faces. I also knew I changed people's lives.

**Student Name: Harrison Jones      Grade Level: 7th**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Lunken, Queensgate and Sawyer Point for the Buddy Walk, St. Cecilia Parish, and St. Rita's Festival

**Describe your service and what you did:**

At Lunken I babysat for free.

Queensgate and Sawyer Point: I helped prepared for the Buddy Walk for Down Syndrome.

St. Cecilia: I helped make Thanksgiving meals for the poor.

St. Rita's: I helped work at an auction for the deaf and I donated a basket.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

It made people happy that people do care about them, and for the people I helped, it was that kids can make a difference.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

It made me feel good that I helped some people; even though I didn't do much, every little thing makes a huge difference.

**Student Name: Palmer Jones      Grade Level: 3rd**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Soup Kitchen, St. Cecelia Thanksgiving dinners, Easter at the Bethany House, Gather Backpacks, St. Rita's Festival

**Describe your service and what you did:**

Soup Kitchen: prepared and served meals to walk-ins

St. Cecelia Thanksgiving dinner: We prepared meals and served them to shut-ins every Thanksgiving

Easter at the Bethany house: prepared brunch, played games, and helped kids find Easter eggs

Gathered Backpacks: We gathered backpacks for foster kids.

St. Rita's School: worked at a booth to raise money.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

We made them happy by giving them things. We helped feed people who were hungry. We helped make people feel better.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

It made my heart feel good because it was nice.

**Student Name: Cam Shahrooz      Grade Level: 3rd**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish

**Describe your service and what you did:**

For three years I have assisted and participated at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission Sunday Multicultural Mass, where I carried the gifts and represented the children of the Hispanic Ministry. I also assist every Sunday during the Spanish Mass. After mass I collect the books, clean up, and take the collection to the safe box.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I represent the Hispanic Community and also the IHM Parish; for that reason I like to help at the end of the Mass. By cleaning and taking the collection to the safe box, I am helping the adults. We all share the work, leaving the church clean and ready for the next mass. Everybody can go home earlier if we all help.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

It is very important because the people at my parish trust me and make me feel that I am a very responsible child.

**School Name: The College of New Rochelle**

**City: New Rochelle, New York**

**Student Name: Dianna Barber      Grade Level: Graduate Studies**

**Name of places where service was given:**

Serving dinner at P.O.T.S.; Midnight Run, Holy Rosary Church; Resurrection Church and Community RCD School.

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I have been serving Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner at P.O.T.S.; bringing brown bags of goods needed to Holy Rosary Church; liaison for parents and director of RCD at Resurrection Parish.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

In my opinion, my service made a difference in the community because people were given good help and comfort, and it also modeled a certain behavior for my children and other members of the community. This behavior will continue to reach members in the community, who will continue to serve and participate and encourage service.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service was important in my life because I believe that you get in life what you choose to give. The more you give to others, the happier you and everyone around you will be. This is the legacy I hope to instill in my children that will continue throughout the generations.

**Student Name: Jayne Howard      Grade Level: Senior**

**Describe your service and what you did:**

*Sowing for Souls Ministries* started out serving women in transition; however, our scope has broadened as men have begun showing up to receive our help. Below is our mission statement for *Sowing for Souls Ministries* and *Advocates for Community Enterprise* (a subsidiary of *Sowing for Souls*):

“We are a not for profit whose mission is to provide basic life skills and computer training to disadvantaged people who reside in underserved communities. Currently our services include: computer training workshops, household budgeting seminars, higher education resources and nutrition.”

Our target population includes the unemployed, welfare recipients, transients and disadvantaged people, start-up church groups, and community based organizations in the southern State of New York. We have served at the YWCA of Yonkers and currently we are serving at Dixon African American Zion Church (AMEZ) in Yonkers, NY.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

According to our evaluations, the participants describe that they have developed a more positive attitude toward the environment. Hope, self-confidence and courage to change their lives have been recognized as immediate changes after attending the workshops. We started with thirteen participants, and they regularly attended the workshops. After receiving the certificate, they moved on, and some of them looked for jobs. Two of them explained that they enhanced their job skills (writing and computer skills) and they felt more secure in their jobs. Three of the participants became college students. One found employment. Two are retired, and they thought it was necessary to enhance their computer skills. As a result, they felt more adjusted to the surrounding environment.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This organization is important in my life because I live in a community infested by crime, where many people live in poverty and have poor employment skills. Many of the people in my community are unemployed, and they live off of welfare. Being on welfare develops feelings of being unfit and unable to adjust to the changes in the environment.

I have been aware of these life challenges in my community, and I decided that I had to do something about it. I have realized that addressing these needs will promote change and open a path to self-empowerment. It feels rewarding being able to enhance people’s lives and to make them aware that they have ownership over their lives.

**Student Name: Ugo Ogbuagu      Grade Level: Senior**

**Name of place where service was given:**

The College of New Rochelle

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I developed a peer support group at CNR to help new students better adapt to the Nursing program. The peer support provides mentorship as well as tutoring for pharmacology and dosage calculation.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The service has motivated students to become more active within the College. It has encouraged students to help one another and recognize each other’s strengths.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I enjoy helping others, so this service was just another opportunity for me to do so. Throughout my career, I have been mentored by others, and I feel that this is my way of giving back.

**Student Name: Mirham Rojas      Grade Level: Senior**

**Name of place where service was given:**

New Orleans (Spring 2009)

**Describe your service and what you did:**

At the Plunge to New Orleans, I worked alongside a group of eight CNR students and some of the Campus Ministry staff at helping to rebuild homes that had been destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. For five days we worked hard at sanding, mudding, texturizing, priming and painting the walls of our assigned home.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Considering the amount of work that still needs to be done in New Orleans, I am tempted to say that the experience made more of a difference in me than I had on the community. I hope that my work in New Orleans attested to the good faith that still dwells in people. I hope that my presence helped at least one person feel less alone, less forgotten, and more optimistic of what the future has in store for him or her. Finally, I hope that the owners of the houses we worked on get to enjoy their new homes and feel a little more secure of their situation.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service exposed me to a different culture and way of life. Watching the devastation caused by Katrina on television and documentary film does not do justice to the true hardships New Orleans residents faced. By being there, even if only for a week, I was able to share in their struggle and provide them with some support.

**School Name: The Ursuline School      City: New Rochelle, New York**

**Student Name: Student Body      Grade Level: 9-12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

A New York Beach

**Describe your service and what you did:**

The Ursuline School of New Rochelle has become an active participant in fundraising for the Special Olympics. Every December they host a Polar Plunge at a local beach. For those unfamiliar, participants run down the beach and then “plunge” into the frigid waters.

Last year, the Ursuline students raised over \$2000, and they had about 15 volunteers participate. This year, even as the weather called for snow and the rain came, Team Ursuline had 25 students participate and just over \$3600 was raised! Who knows what next year will bring?

The girls' efforts were rewarded with their standing as a top fundraising team, and some even raised more than \$500 individually. Each 'plunger' received a special commemorative sweatshirt, and many received other "incentive prizes" as well. The school rewarded their charitable contribution with a dress down day to show off their new apparel. We are sure it has motivated many to participate in this wonderful and fun event next year.

"The day was cold, but our hearts were warm, and that's what kept us going," said one Ursuline student.

## **School Name: Ursuline Academy City: Wilmington, Delaware**

**Student Name: Christina desGroseilliers Grade Level: 12**

### **Name of place where service was given:**

1. In 2007, my Sweet Sixteen birthday at Hockessin Memorial Hall.
2. Blank-ease blanket program at Ursuline Academy.
3. Ronald McDonald House in Wilmington, DE.

### **Describe your service and what you did:**

1. For my sweet 16 birthday party, I organized a party in support of The Mary Campbell Center's youth program. The Mary Campbell Center is a residential organization that serves children and adults with developmental disabilities. In lieu of birthday gifts, I asked my friends to bring a donation to this youth program, and we raised over \$3,000 dollars for the youth program. NBC 10, WDEL, and several newspapers reported on this event.
2. My group, Blank-Ease, will be making fleece blankets for foster children. Children's Choice is the organization we're working with to get these blankets to local foster children. I created this program so foster kids get a blanket they'll always keep with them as a means to help ease their transition into new environments. I want them to know that people care about them and that they matter.
3. I started volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House this past summer and have continued doing so every other Wednesday afternoon from three to six. At the Ronald McDonald House, I help in the family room, trying to create a home-away-from-home atmosphere for the families of critically-ill children. I spend most of my time cleaning the rooms for families, organizing the kitchen and family room areas, and spending time with the families.

### **In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

1. In my opinion, my sweet sixteen made a difference to the Mary Campbell Center because with the money I raised, they were able to help the youth program. The money went towards funds for field trips for the children and towards educational activities to do with the children. This organization is dear to my heart because they help mentally retarded and autistic children just like my brother. Also, because of the news coverage, I am happy that this event was a catalyst to show other teens that they can serve and make a difference in somebody's life.
2. For the blank-ease project, I believe that the blankets that we make for the foster children for Christmas will be a way to for them to be comforted. I know that many small children find comfort in having a blanket, as it provides warmth and security. These children have it difficult

with no sense of consistency or belonging so the blanket represents something consistent and comforting to them.

3. At Ronald McDonald house, I feel that my contributions provide help and comfort to people who are dealing with difficult and emotional situations in their lives. Having a critically-ill child is heart-breaking and I feel good that I am providing my services to help these people through the Ronald McDonald House. I've observed my family deal with a disabled child and know that it is not easy to handle the emotions and hurt that can come from it.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Over the past 8 years, I've seen how others have made a difference in our lives by helping my brother. So, I try and live my life by "paying it forward". Helping others has been a way for me to gain understanding about many different people, and it's great to know that I am making a positive difference in someone's life. However, I have also learned that the knowledge I receive from community service adds a priceless layer to my education. I am very partial to doing service that helps children because of my brother. I know what people go through and want to do what I can to help ease their hurt and show that there are people who care about them and what they're going through.

**Student Name: Gabrielle Perrotti Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Mrs. Bundesen's Classroom (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I go to Mrs. Bundesen's room and while I am there I do whatever she needs me to do. Sometimes I sort or grade papers. Sometimes I work on social studies or teach the children a math lesson. Normally, I read them a story or two.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

My service made a difference in two ways. First it helped Mrs. B because when I come over she can take a break and take a load off her feet. It also helped and made a difference in the lives of the 45 second graders that have been in her class for the past three years. These kids not only have learned how to tell time or about different story book characters from me, but I hope that I have also set a good example for them to learn from. Hopefully, when they get older, they, too, will want to volunteer to help others, and maybe they'll even return to help their past teachers out, too.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

It made me realize that I am a very good teacher and I also enjoy being a teacher. Teachers must have a lot of patience because if a child does not understand something, they must keep trying to explain it. Not only do I enjoy it, but Mrs. B says I'm very good at being patient and explaining too. Also, it was important because it made me realize that more people need to spend their lives like kids do. By this I mean that 2<sup>nd</sup> graders do not judge people by their looks, rather by their actions and how kind the person is to them. More adults need to act like this, because life shouldn't be about the little things, but rather about the big things, like how kind a person is.

**Student Name: Courtney Seitz      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Bayard House (A residential program that houses homeless or transitional pregnant teenagers)

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I have volunteered over 550 hours in my community, but my favorite service takes place at Bayard House. For the last three years I have been conducting a Baby Supply Drive and raising money by organizing “Jeans Days” at my school. For the Supply Drive, I first had to pitch my idea and get approval from my school administration. After that, I collected cartons from area businesses, decorated them, and placed them throughout the school. Next, I publicized the Supply Drive in the school newsletter, designed and posted signs around school, and wrote reminders for the morning announcements. Finally, I collected all the supplies: diapers, wipes, blankets, clothing and small toys and delivered everything to Bayard House. For the Jeans’ Days, I publicized the fundraiser at school with announcements and posters, collected the money, and then went shopping for baby supplies to take to Bayard House.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

With the recent economic downturn, there are many worthwhile charities that have been shortchanged; Bayard House is one such charity. My efforts provide much-needed supplies to the young women and their babies. Many of these young women have nowhere else to go, let alone supplies for their babies. The Supply Drive helps these women stay on their feet during a very difficult time.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service is important in my life because I can see the direct impact of my efforts. As a teenage girl, I can only imagine how difficult it is to be in their situation. They have been turned out of their homes and have been left on their own to have these babies, finish their education, and work. I am happy to be able to help the residents of Bayard House, even if only in a small way. This experience enables me to reach out to the community and spread the spirit of the Ursuline motto: Serviam.

**School Name: Ursuline Academy    City: New Orleans, Louisiana**

**Student Name: Kailan Butler**

**Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Medard Nelson Charter School with STAIR (Start the Adventure in Reading)

**Describe your service and what you did:**

At Nelson charter School, I currently volunteer with a program called STAIR. At this program, I tutor a second-grader who is at risk for academic failure. My student’s name is Jai’keria. Every Monday, I go there, and Jai’keria and I complete the lessons for her reading level. We review sight words. I check for improvement to see if she has learned new words.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

In my opinion, this service impacts her life because it helps to improve her reading ability while strengthening her confidence in academics. While tutoring her, I believe in reminding her of her improvements and teaching new life lessons. Jai'keria lives with her grandparents. Her mother lives in Texas. Jai'eria misses her mother, and this is sometimes an obstacle in her learning. I let her know that her mother wants her to be patient and learn all that she can. She always shows great appreciation towards me and looks up to me as a role model. My student always gives me a hug after each session, and it warms my heart to know that I am a positive influence in someone's life, working to improve her knowledge in reading. I believe that service is about spreading joy to those that need it the most.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service is important in my life because I enjoy impacting Jai'keria's life with a new sense of confidence and joy that she hasn't felt before. This act of service makes me feel that I am important because I am definitely making a difference. This also brings me joy. It is a wonderful feeling to know that you have helped someone and that they have appreciated it. If you can change someone's life with service, then you know it was worth it.

**Student Name: Kiersten Leflore    Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Angel Care Nursery Center and Shiloh Baptist Church

**Describe your service and what you did:**

For about a month during summer vacation, I volunteered at Angel Care Nursery Center from 7-5 every day. I taught the 2 year olds and 3-5 class and also assisted in the nursery center. I performed over 150 hours of service. I currently act as a Sunday school teacher at Shiloh Baptist Church. Every Sunday, I spread and simplify the Gospel to kids aged 4-6. Then they share what they learned with the adult class.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

During my time at the Nursery Center, I felt like I really helped out the day care. The Nursery was short staffed due to summer vacations. It was nice knowing that I helped even the parents and I was actually doing something productive with my summer and not just sleeping it away. At the Church, it's fun breaking down the Bible and applying it to life for little kids.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I enjoy working with little kids, so it didn't feel like a job to me. I am considering pursuing education and getting a teacher's degree in college. I feel so accomplished knowing that I am even a small part of these children's lives.

**Student Name: Sarah Parent    Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

The Center of Jesus the Lord

**Describe your service and what you did:**

On Sunday afternoons, I go to my church, the Center of Jesus the Lord, and help with the homeless ministry by preparing food for and serving it to the poor. The main courses we cook include meatloaf, chicken, and spaghetti and meatballs. There is always a vegetable or fruit of some type, too. Dessert is a must, some bakeries donate their uneaten doughnuts, and we bake brownies and cakes. We have coolers of water, tea, lemonade, and even hot chocolate when it gets cold. During the hot, summer weather, we bring a snowball machine. At seven o'clock, we transport the food to the end of Elysian Fields to "the wall" at the river; there is always a line of people there awaiting our arrival. We say grace with everyone, and then we serve about two hundred people a week.

Someone built a free-washing station, where the people who may not have easy access to soap and water can wash their feet; they can also get small toiletry items here. After they clean their feet, many of them exchange their old, dirty socks for a new pair. In the winter months, we bring coats and blankets to give away; we also often have small toys to give to any children. Sometimes we even distribute dog food to the numerous pet owners. Once all the food is eaten and all the trash has been picked up, the servers say a closing prayer; some of the people whom we serve frequently join our prayer circle.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The people we feed each week are always exceedingly grateful for what we do. It shows them that they are loved. Recently, a woman who was there with her family for the first time told me she was so thankful that she thought she could cry; she said that they are not homeless, but do not have enough money to buy food. Not only do we give the people an opportunity to eat, but we also give them an opportunity to get back on their feet. We provide them a place to receive their basic needs without being judged. A simple smile and "God bless you" brightens their days and give them hope.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This humbling ministry has made me fall in love with helping the needy. I enjoy going to the wall on Sundays and serving the people; I really love conversing with them. Their gratitude for the time I spend serving them and talking with them brings me an enormous amount of joy. When I am not able to attend for a few weeks in a row, I feel like I am missing something vital in my life.

I have gotten to know a few of the people we serve better than others. One man, whom I call 'Bill Cosby' because of his remarkable resemblance to the comedian, came to the wall after a few months of absence. I ran up to him and embraced him, asking where he had been. He replied that he had found a steady job and did not need our assistance anymore; that day, he came to visit us and to help us serve everyone else. Moreover, the people's faith never ceases to astound me; they give me courage to believe in and trust in God always. Many of them tell me how good God is, even when their living situations are not ideal. In the past two years, my faith and my ability to love and my gratitude for all God has given me has grown through my service with the Center of Jesus the Lord's homeless ministry.

**Student Name: Alex Read    Grade Level: 11**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Booties and Bobbie Socks Day Care and Pre-K

**Describe your service and what you did:**

While volunteering at Booties and Bobbie Socks Day Care, I participated in a number of things. My first few days were spent assisting the teacher, Ms. Tanya, in the two year old room. This was not my main area of volunteer work; however, I did spend time with the two year olds and bonded with them as well. With these wonderful children, I assisted in serving breakfast, interacting with them while they played for

a little while in the morning, partaking in one-on-one interaction with each child, informed the children when to clean up their play area, and seated each child for the beginning of the day. After each child was seated, I assisted in singing the A, B, C's with them, reading to them, teaching the children their colors, and having an overall good time with them. When Ms. Tanya and I finished with the previous activity, it was time for snack. I got each child situated and handed out their snack. As snack time ended, I took the children outside to play as the room was being cleaned. My main job while being outside was to walk around and make sure the children were behaving properly and that no one was to get hurt. At the conclusion of play time, I brought the children inside to have lunch. The children were then brought back to their classroom to take naps. After the children got up from their naps, I spent more time with them until their parents arrived to take them home. The rest of my service work was spent with the infants. With the infants, work wasn't much different. I spent each day tending to the infants and making sure everything was taken care of. Each morning was spent checking the infants in as their parents dropped them off. The rest of the day was spent feeding, changing, and playing with the infants. I would go back and forth between tending to one infant while making sure others were napping. Towards the end of the day, while the parents came to pick up their children, depending on the day, either I or the teacher would get the room cleaned and ready for the next day.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Personally, I feel that my service benefitted both the community as well as those that I volunteered to help. I was able to come into this wonderful environment full of bright, smiling faces and lend a helping hand. It is always nice to have an extra set of eyes and helping hands to ensure the safety of and well-being of each child that attends the day care. I was able to give the teachers an extra break or more help when needed and to lift a burden off of their shoulders when time may be a little too stressful. This entire experience gave me a wonderful sense of accomplishment in knowing that I did service and benefitted a great deal of workers, parents as well as many, many bright, smiling faces.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service was important in my life because I was able to see what pure joy really is. These children always had smiles on their faces regardless of what was going on around them. In the bible, Jesus says: "Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it" (Mark 10:15). I thought of this particular verse almost every day while volunteering. We are all children of God. However, we are fully aware of our actions and our ability to sin, as well. When I watch these children, they all truly exhibit pure joy and happiness. These children are quick to forgive and are always smiling regardless of the surrounding situation. Seeing them reminded me of what it truly means to be a child of God. Children really have no choice but to depend on their parents. We, as children of God, should run to Him in times of need. We, as children of God, must forgive those around us. As children of God, we must not worry about every little problem, trial, or tribulation in life, but enjoy life as a whole. Enjoy the breath of life that God so graciously gave to us. We are blessed with so many beautiful things in life, yet we often let the little negative aspects overshadow the beauty. Children just seem to keep going regardless. Nothing seems to bother them seeing these children reminds me of who I should be, a true child of God. This volunteer work influenced my life greatly. I now strive to live every day with the mentality of a child. Pure joy is what I strive to exhibit most. Children are absolutely wonderful and will put a smile on my face any day.

**School Name: Ursuline Academy City: Dedham, Massachusetts**

**Student Name: Elizabeth Gavin Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Salvation Army Parkway Kettle Campaign

**Describe your service and what you did:**

Each holiday season from before Thanksgiving to Christmas Eve, I volunteer to ring the bell for the Salvation Army outside my local supermarket in West Roxbury. I chat with both old and new faces as they enter and exit the store, hopefully encouraging the outstretching of hands towards the kettle. Suddenly, I realize the meaning of Christmas, as little boys and girls hand me a jar full of pennies they have been saving since September. Or an old man hands me a \$50 bill to tuck in the safe confines of the little red kettle for him, as his gloved hands are just too cold. Each year we meet our goal and usually exceed it!

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The Salvation Army is one of the few charities that know no geographic, political, or economic boundaries. It extends itself to those in the direst of need wherever and whenever.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This experience grounds me, humbles me, and renews my faith and my spirit. It underscores the interconnectedness of us all and our responsibility towards each other.

**Student Name: Stephanie Spadoni Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Girl Scouts Gold Award project

**Describe your service and what you did:**

Sewed hats ("Joan's Comfy Caps") for cancer patients and ran workshops to teach others to sew them.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service:**

In the summer of 2007, my grandmother Joan was diagnosed with lung cancer. Because of her chemotherapy treatments, she lost all of her hair and had difficulty finding a hat that was comfortable. Her sister did have one hat, which she gave to my grandmother, and she loved it. Because it did not have any kind of label, though, (which was partly why it was so comfortable) no one in the family could find where it was made or how to acquire another one. My other grandmother, Norma, a proficient sewer, was able to design her own pattern for a similar hat. Since I enjoy sewing, she taught me how to make the hat. Joan loved them and thought that others would love them, too. I remember well the conversation with her that resulted in the idea that I make these hats as my Gold Award Project because we felt that there was such a great need for others to also have access to comfortable hats. My grandmother Joan has since passed away, but I continue to make these hats for others in her memory.

For my project, I recruited people to help me make the hats; I offered sewing workshops to teach young people as well as adults how to make them. By teaching others, my goal is to have my project continue on. I have donated some of the hats to St. Elizabeth's Oncology Department and to the Faulkner Hospital Breast Clinic, so that the hats are available to any patient who would like one. The project has engaged

the staff from the cancer centers, who I have learned, feel helpless when confronting their struggling patients; now they have something to offer them. I have also made kits containing a sample hat, supplies and instructions on how to make the hats. These can be found at multiple locations throughout the Boston area. Through teaching others, leaving kits, and donating hats, I hope my project will endure.

This project has helped me to greatly improve my communication skills. I spent numerous hours on the telephone trying to coordinate the time, place, and location where I would be holding my workshops. I also had to plan all the logistics surrounding the workshops and coordinating the people, materials, and equipment necessary to do so. I needed to reach out to my community to find places that were accessible to cancer patients who would benefit from having one of these hats. I taught the workshops offered as well as educated some sewers on how to instruct others. Through my project I have become much more comfortable organizing events and leading others.

I believe my project has strengthened my community by drawing people together for a common goal, which is to provide love and support through the care put into making these comfortable hats (since entitled “Joan’s Comfy Caps”). Almost everyone I tell about my project has either asked me for a hat for a loved one or asked me to teach them how to make these “comfy” caps. Although I have technically completed my project, I will be hosting more workshops because there have been many more people who wish to learn.

**School Name: Ursuline Academy    City: St. Louis, Missouri**

**Student Name: Michelle Hannegan**

**Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

St. Clement of Rome

**Name of place where service was given:**

Home of someone in St. Louis

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I helped lead a religious retreat for seventh graders. I showed them the love and grace of God. I gave them advice and also was a person for them to talk to.

**Describe your service and what you did:**

A group of teens and I went to a hoarder’s house. The hoarder was facing eviction in one month if it was not cleaned out by then. We helped clean her house.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

It made a difference by strengthening the faith of the seventh graders. The other leaders and I showed them that they did not have to be ashamed of their beliefs. The seventh graders grew closer to God and to each other.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

It made a difference because she was not evicted from her house. Also, the lady who works with her throughout the process said that the hoarder has been more determined and in better spirits ever since we helped.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service was important in my life because I was able to share my faith with others. Seeing how the retreat affected the seventh graders gave me great joy. The retreat helped me as a seventh grader, so I feel very grateful to be able to do the same for others.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

It was important in my life because it taught me how to build trust with others. Also, it gave me greater patience. It taught me about developing relationships with others.

**Student Name: Julie Swanger and Christina Rejko      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Nicaragua, in the towns of Villa Catalina and Chanco

**Describe your service and what you did:**

While in Nicaragua, our group worked to build several houses and schools and dug multiple latrines for the towns of Villa Catalina and Chanco. We did this by mixing cement, filling, carrying and dumping buckets, digging, breaking rocks called material selecto and going on sand runs. Even though these activities were so physically grueling, there was never a feeling of wanting to stop no matter how hard or long we worked. We also visited an orphanage for the handicapped where we could brighten their lives by simply holding their hands, cradling them in our arms, rubbing their backs, playing a game, or smiling at them.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Mother Teresa of Calcutta wrote, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." Last summer when we went to Nicaragua with our youth group, it was as if we had traveled to a completely different world. There aren't words to describe the conditions we witnessed. Little children ran around without shoes on, covered in dirt, with ripped clothing and gnats swarming around them. Dogs and horses roamed around resembling skeletons more than animals. Towns were blanketed with garbage, barbed wire fences were everywhere, and entire houses were smaller than our bedrooms. We went to the dump one day, and the sights and smells still burn in our memories. Seeing people of all ages pick through piles of garbage to scrounge up enough metal to get a meal of rice and beans for the day was hard to see. It really opened our eyes, and we realized how much we have and how much we take for granted every day. While in Nicaragua, our group worked to build several houses and schools and dug multiple latrines for the towns of Villa Catalina and Chanco. It was incredible because, as we were working, children of all ages, teens and adults would flock to us and jump right in and work with us. They were so energetic to help and never tired. As important as it was to build these necessities of life for them, it was just as important to get to know the people in these towns. Even though there was a language barrier between us, it didn't make the slightest difference. No matter what country you are from, a smile is universal. Some of our most cherished memories are just simply playing with a child, holding a baby, or attempting a conversation with somebody. Everyone was so friendly in Nicaragua, and every person we came in contact with we said, "¡Hola!" "¿Como esta?" It didn't take much to completely fall in love with these people. It broke our hearts to leave them, but there isn't a day

that goes by that we don't think about and pray for them. Even though we were only there for nine days, they hold a special place in our hearts. In those nine days, we know we didn't change the world, but we did cast a stone by making a small contribution, helping these people slowly pull themselves out of poverty.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

When we went to Nicaragua, we had no idea that they were going to give us more gifts than we could ever give them. They taught us how to live and be happy. They had absolutely nothing, but were the happiest people we had ever met. They didn't focus on materialistic things to bring them joy; they simply made the most of what they had. In addition, they taught us not to take anything for granted and to be thankful for all the blessings God has given us. These people changed our hearts and lives forever, and we are already counting down the days until we get to visit them again.

**Student Name: Student Council      Grade Level: 9-12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Ursuline Academy

**Describe your service and what you did:**

We make sandwiches for homeless for delivery to the St. Louis Council of St. Vincent de Paul. We remember and recognize our co-worker's birthdays. For this, each girl on STUCO chooses a teacher that she wants and makes her a batch of cookies or anything she wants and writes a little happy birthday note for that teacher and give it to her on her birthday. During the Christmas season we Adopt-A-Family. As a whole, Student council prepares a Christmas basket of gifts and food for a needy family.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

Our service towards others shows that not only do we care about our school and do acts of service in our school but we show acts of service to the community as well. It makes a difference to those who receive it because they know by what we do for them that we do care about those who are in need. For the teachers' birthdays it shows that we not only do things for the students, but we care about our teachers as well.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service that we have done for others is important in our lives. We realize that there are people out there who need our help and doing small acts of service for them makes us feel good because we helped those who struggle just trying to get the simple things in their lives. We are always glad to make their day just a little better. This goes along with the teachers' birthdays. We do so much in favor for the students at the school, and sometimes people forget that teachers are a huge part of Ursuline, so it's important for us that we notice them on their birthdays, and we love seeing the smiles on their faces when we hand them little plates of cookies and little birthday cards.

**Student Name: Caitlin Zera      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Ursuline Academy

**Describe your service and what you did:**

I am involved in many activities at Ursuline and in many ways view my involvement as a fulfillment of the motto of Serviam within my own Ursuline community. In all aspects of my involvement, I feel a purpose of service to other students, as well as faculty. That is the main goal of my efforts. I participate in many different clubs, but I assume a leadership role in several main organizations.

I am one of two Ursuline representatives on the Inter-school Ecological Council, which is a council of young women from a variety of Catholic high schools who discuss present environmental issues. I share ideas with the young women from other schools and listen to the projects that they have initiated at their schools. It's a great resource, and I take back information to the Ursuline Environmental Club to help expand the UA environmental program.

As president of the Environmental Club, I try to live the mission of service to the Ursuline community through service to the environment of the beautiful Ursuline campus. The Earth is God's creation, and the mission of environmentalism has taken on a deep religious meaning of service for me. Under my leadership, the Ursuline Environmental Club has initiated several projects already this year. One, the TerraCycle "Juice for Reuse" program, was implemented in the café in late October. Our single stream recycling provider cannot recycle Capri Sun pouches, and TerraCycle offers a reuse solution. For every Capri Sun pouch collected and sent into the TerraCycle Company the Environmental Club receives \$.02 to put towards new green projects at Ursuline. It's an extremely beneficial program and students have been receptive. I have also organized monthly club projects. In September, our club members painted five recycling bins to be placed in the hallways of the school, so student recycling could be more accessible. I have also created movie nights that the Environmental Club presents, and the whole school is welcome to attend. These movies are environmentally educational and also serve as a team-bonding activity for our club members. I love being involved in clubs that have members from all different classes, fresh-women through seniors, and I think an important part of joining a club is to interact with great students you wouldn't otherwise meet in a class. By planning these movie nights, I feel that I can help students of different classes broaden their diversity of friendships.

I also try to encourage other students in the club to vocalize their ideas and support them in any environmental endeavors they want to pursue. Several students have already planned environmental campaigns of their own and are leading them within the club. I feel that this is a crucial part of the service of the Environmental club: to give all students chances to incorporate their passion into a club that can make change happen.

The goal of my role as president of the Environmental Club is always to unite students for the cause of saving the earth and to educate the student body. I believe it is also the Environmental Club's mission to engage students to have a part in something that extends beyond their own community and connects them with the larger human family. We all share the Earth. The environmental awareness and environmental commitment is global, but the education begins at Ursuline.

I also have a leadership role on the school newspaper *Bear Facts*. As co-editor-in-chief of the Ursuline Academy *Bear Facts*, I have many responsibilities and therefore many ways in which I serve the students of Ursuline Academy by providing them with accurate and informative news. One of my goals this year as co-editor-and-chief of *Bear Facts* is to promote the participation of the Ursuline community in the school newspaper through more in-depth interviewing and first-hand reporting. I want to produce a high-quality newspaper that engages the school community, but also allows the students on staff to gain valuable experience. I developed a new policy of reporting on student activities at Ursuline in which our staff members can receive news from clubs and organizations within Ursuline so they can effectively cover all kinds of student events. I initiated a plan to place *Bear Facts* on the Ursuline website to give all student and members of the Ursuline community access to the newspaper in a non-print, environmentally friendly way.

I am also a member of the school's Diversity Team. I am involved in several committees and have participated, planned, and led Diversity Day activities. I am an active member of Ursulines' National Honor society and participate in many service activities throughout the year in association with NHS.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I think I have been able to make an impression on each of the activities I am involved in, even if it is small. Diversity: for the Senior Diversity Day, I found a speaker to come and talk to the Ursuline Seniors about religious diversity. The speaker, Sousan Darwech, is a Muslim woman who explained some principles and traditions of her religion and also related a beautiful message of tolerance. Bear Facts: I think the students on the Journalism staff are learning a lot more and are having more fun expressing themselves creatively. I think *Bear Facts* has improved in its ability to represent a broader spectrum of students at Ursuline. I feel that *Bear Facts* better serves the student body when articles focus on Ursuline news, as well as world and national news.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Ursuline is dedicated to the development of the whole person, and by being involved in these multiple service activities I have grown into a more diverse, understanding, and better person. Some of my service activities are linked to academics, but more importantly they are linked to people. By participation in these service activities I have connected with so many different people. I have learned a lot from them, and hopefully they have also learned something from me. Giving back to the wonderful Ursuline community of teachers, students, staff, and administration is something I am proud to be a part of.

**School Name: Ursuline Academy      City: Cincinnati, Ohio**

**Student Names: Megan Carter, Virginia Dickens, Megan Gilligan,  
Katie McCuen      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
UGIVE program called Step Up Cincinnati

**Describe your service and what you did:**

Every Monday a group of 20 interns would meet for 5-6 hours and plan the StepUp Cincy event. This involved getting food donators and raffle prizes. We were in charge of the entire event and responsible for recruiting 500 volunteers.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I think we were able to inspire high school students to get more involved in our community. This will lead to a better world and hopefully affect the students in a positive way to make productive changes in their lives.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Anytime you are able to inspire someone to become a better person, I feel you have made a huge difference. It is important to not only better ourselves by doing service, but to influence others to feel as good as we do when participating in service opportunities.

**Student Name: Grace Ferguson and Caroline Reilly      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Heartland Nursing Home in Madeira

**Describe your service and what you did:**

We hosted a “Senior” Prom for the residents. There was a live band, interactive games, themed pictures, and snacks. We danced with the residents and played bingo.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The residents were thrilled to interact with younger people and have fun. Some may not have any family members, so it was nice for them to talk and dance with girls interested in talking to them.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This experience opened my eyes to how lonely these people are sometimes and how a few hours of my time can make such a significant impact on my life.

**Student Name: Catherine Schomaker      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Kid’s Cafe

**Describe your service and what you did:**

As a leader of Kid’s Café, an afterschool program for underprivileged children in Over the Rhine, I planned and organized activities or games for the children. These children are severely economically disadvantaged and receive food from the Free Store Food Bank. Once a week I met with our volunteer service coordinator to jointly plan activities. I would then purchase the needed materials, make an example of the project to demonstrate to the children, and complete the activity with the children at Kid’s Café. I also recruited new volunteers by notifying students of our activities through homeroom mail. For my homeroom, I talked to my classmates and encouraged their participation. I arranged transportation for the volunteers and solicited parent volunteers to accompany our group. Occasionally, I would coordinate with the director of Kid’s Café to make sure our scheduled activities were appropriate and coordinate details.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I think by participating in and leading Kid’s Café I have made a difference in the children’s lives because I have tried to teach them valuable life lessons and have been a good role model for them. Over the years, I have developed strong relationships with many of the children and have shown them that I truly care about them. I have seen some of these children grow so much and change their behavior, which has made them better students and friends.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Kid’s Café has been a huge part of my life during my time at Ursuline. So many of these children live extremely difficult lives, and it is not fair that they have to suffer. Kid’s Café is so important to me because I care so much about all of the children, and I wish I could do more for them. I look forward to the times when we go down so that I can see their smiling faces and vibrant energy. Knowing that some of them have nothing and are worried if they are going to get food the next day breaks my heart and

makes me want to take all of them home to live with me. I love these children, and I want to make their lives better.

**Student Name: Bridget Sullivan, Caroline Gruber and Michelle Spotts**  
**Grade Level: 12, 12, 11**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Light House Center and Project Linus

**Describe your service and what you did:**

For Light House Center, students knitted or crocheted scarves to be donated and delivered to children at the Light House Center, who have run away from home.  
For project Linus, students crafted fleece-tied blankets to deliver to small children who have experienced a great loss.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

By giving our time and energy, we were able to create beautiful blankets and scarves for individuals who truly needed them. We may only be able to do small things to help others out, but if one blanket or scarf can keep a child warmer and more comfortable, then we have made a difference.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

These service activities are important because they enable those who are fortunate (like us) to give back to our community. They build a sense of camaraderie within our school, and students come together with a common goal of serving others. By helping out these organizations, we've discovered the real joy of giving.

**School Name: Ursuline High School City: Santa Rosa, California**

**Student Name: Torri Saiz Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

I work with Special Spaces, based in TN, but my work will be completed in Sonoma County.

**Describe your service and what you did:**

The service I will be completing will be designing and creating a dream bedroom for a cancer patient. I will become a friend and support while getting to know the child and create a bedroom as his/her own special space to escape worry.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

My service will greatly impact the family who receives it. Many children with cancer cannot attend school or do many things outside the home; therefore, a room with a comfortable atmosphere and things to entertain is needed.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I'm excited about my work with Special Spaces and I think the reward will be the smiles when the room is revealed. It is important in my life because there is no doubt my service will be life changing for the recipient. I'm determined to make it a great senior project, and all I want to do is make a difference.

**Student Name: Michelle Stone      Grade Level: 12**

**Name of place where service was given:**

Transplant Donor Network

**Describe your service and what you did:**

My volunteering as a hospital aide and my part-time job at a cemetery exposes me to illness and death and has prompted me to consider the fragility of life and the possibilities of organ donation. On the suggestion of an emergency room physician, I established an organ donation awareness program for Sonoma County teenagers with the support of the California Transplant Donor Network.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I am in the process of speaking to schools and youth organizations for the next several months. It is difficult to assess my success because I cannot track who/how many people actually register (for privacy reasons). I provide students with basic information, and I hope they will think ahead to a time when they or someone they love may be in need of an organ/tissue transplant.

My essay (<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/article/20090922/NEWS.909221001>) in the local newspaper about my project had a big impact. I received positive responses from teachers, students, and even strangers! In support of my project, my friends, my parents, and some of their friends have registered as donors. My impression is that while most people may be aware of organ donation, they have never taken the time to seriously consider it for themselves. If my message reaches only a handful of people, maybe they, in turn, will share their support of organ donation with friends and cause a "ripple effect".

From my classroom presentations, it is clear that students are interested about the ability to give. They have offered thoughtful questions about donation and about volunteering at the hospital. Visiting different high schools, I met teachers who had been organ recipients or donors, or who had a family member who was an organ recipient. My presentations have started a dialogue between them and their students. It occurred to me that organ and tissue donation is something people just do not seem to talk about. I want to change that, certainly among my peer group.

I am planning for a friend to accompany me to our next training session so she can continue raising awareness for organ donation after I graduate next May. In addition, part of my presentation to schools is to provide teachers with the US Health and Human Services packet ([www.organdonor.gov/student](http://www.organdonor.gov/student)) called Decision: Donation, which includes materials, videos, CD ROMs and student tutorial to be incorporated into their schools' curriculum. I want to make them aware of the availability of these resources.

The administrators at one of the schools where I am presenting have expressed an interest in starting their own CBSL "senior service project" program based on Ursuline's program. Although I can speak to them primarily about my project, I hope I can inspire them to find ways to stimulate students to make the time and find the passion to volunteer in meaningful ways.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

I learned important lessons from planning and implementing my project. Although I consider myself a very good public speaker, presenting a difficult and sometimes uncomfortable topic to classes of 16 year olds has been daunting. Cold-calling schools to introduce myself and my project and providing proof of

credibility was likewise a bit intimidating. However, once I was in the classroom and sharing donor stories, I felt confident and excited that other students can be moved to get involved, too. My experiences outside the classroom have brought me in contact with people who have deeply touched me. At the California Transplant Donor Network training, I met a couple whose four-year-old son has a genetic defect and needs a transplant. Despite her hardship, the boy's mother was incredibly positive. She was genuinely interested in my project and asked me to contact her if I needed direction or support. I was inspired by her strength and her willingness to help me, even though her son is in great need. Volunteering at the hospital, I became acquainted with Telemetry patients, many of whom need transplants. I valued the time I spent speaking with people of all ages and backgrounds about their experiences and hopes for the future. Yet, it is heartbreaking to consider that without transplants, they may never fulfill their dreams. I know the time I spent with them made them happy for a short while, and it confirmed my desire to be a "minister" to others. The organ donation presentations have supplemented my two years' work as a hospital aide. I realized that while we are each called to do something special, ultimately, we are here to serve each other. While volunteering at the hospital alleviates the nurses' and care partners' burdens, the time I spend with patients is just as important. When I put "a face" on the need for an organ donation, my desire to tell everyone to donate swells. My choice of community service projects not only addressed a need but also sparked my passion, which I want to share with other teens. My encounters with patients bring me back to the hospital repeatedly for the pure joy of the experience. I can only imagine the true joy of matching an organ donor with someone who is desperate for the gift of life.

## **School Name: Ursuline High School City: Youngstown, Ohio**

**Student Names: Sarah Biviano, Anthony Bowell, Jasmine Brown, Krista Byers, Tricia Day, Kourtney Douglas, Kasey Foley, Brittney Frazzini, Cara Mia Gatti, Stephanie Golec, Michael Goldthwait, Rena Hinebaugh, Jacinta Joyce, Chelsea Kernan, Casey Lower, Allie Naples, Greg Sauline, Ben Smith, Kaneesha Tensley, Jacci Tondo-Steele, Brian Trinckes, Bryce Wakefield**      **Grade Level: 12**

### **Name of place where service was given:**

A variety of opportunities from preschools to rescue missions and soup kitchens

### **Words of Wisdom from Student Reflections:**

- "Christian Service has done me a world of good, and we've only completed half of the semester. From the time I can remember back in elementary school, and honestly even until now, I have always been a person who mumbles and chooses not to read anything aloud. Each week at the preschool, I am able to read stories to children and then explain the instructions for their projects. I realize that in order to keep the four-year-olds attention, I must speak rather loudly and clearly so that they understand what the story is about, this improvement is important for my pursuing politics in the future."
- "I knew I would need patience and motivation, both of which I knew I was lacking. I noticed my patience decreasing every time I went to Preschool; little kids and I don't mix. I needed to take time out to just bite my tongue from saying anything rude. But, then I realized that someone had to do this for me, too. They also had to try to teach me the alphabet. That is when I found the peace of mind I was looking for. I realized that sometimes I had to throw my thought out the window and think what's best for them."

- “One of the ways I have grown through service is my will and determination to help others. When I first started going, I wasn’t going for the right reasons. I really only wanted to get an A out of the class and nothing more. I really didn’t think I would learn much. Boy was I wrong. I found myself wanting to be friends with the elderly, the children, and the mentally handicapped. Every day when I work with them I feel a sense of accomplishment. These experiences have made me a better person.”
- “I learned my weakness is judging others and not accepting them for who they are. The Food Pantry is difficult for me...I can’t always accept the people who walk in there...I know it is wrong, that’s why I am working real hard to stop myself from doing it. Also, my leadership skills have improved so much. I never thought in a million years that I would be teaching a class how to read or helping preschoolers with their month and weekdays. I never thought I was cut out for those areas. My leadership will not only help me in service, but also in athletics and other academic areas.”
- “I’ve experienced growth in compassion. I love the ability to see beyond myself and understand the reason for my work. For the younger boys, to have a male helper is exciting; they can talk about their interests and get responses beyond “that’s nice” or “that’s great”. I can talk about action figures and cartoons with them because I understand they like talking about boyish things. It makes them happy; the teachers are happy, too, because we lighten their load.”
- “Overall, I’m interacting with different groups of people, whereas before when I volunteered I would go into a place and just spend some time there not getting too personal with anyone in particular. I’m starting to see how getting to know people can teach me so much more later on in life when I’ll be interacting with people in everyday life for my job and life.”
- “In the beginning of Christine service, I thought of the class as a way of getting out of school for two periods. I didn’t think much of the point behind the class. After just one week of going out to locations, I realized that this class was so much more. I realized that there were people out there that needed us. They needed our assistance, or our time, or even just someone to be there.”
- “At the start of the course I was a very shy person. I was soon forced to go outside of my comfort zone in order to interact with my classmates, students, children, and the elderly residents. The most important thing is that I learned to be unselfish.”
- “Patience is important when dealing with the elderly residents. Many of the residents repeat themselves a lot, and I have to repeat myself because many are hard of hearing. I’ve grown because through my boredom and frustration I’ve managed to keep a smile on my face. I learned that when I’m feeling these emotions, I know that I am doing this for the residents, not myself.”
- “A key part that had changed about me is my patience with children. I used to have very little patience, but when I work with them every week I notice that I am changing with them. When I play with my little cousin who is almost five years old, I do see a change in myself with him and how I act.”
- “I am more confident at the Leonard Kirtz School; I used to be very uneasy about going there. To sit and watch the kids not able to even talk is very difficult. Now I am more comfortable with the environment at the school and how to interact with the children by observing the teachers and aides.”
- “I found that helping people helped me in ways I never thought were possible. It not only made me feel good about myself, but it gave me a new insight into the lives of others... it isn’t about making this epic change on the world around you... it’s being there that really counts. The fact that someone is there consistently willing to do something, anything, without reaping benefits or expecting a gold medal is the true definition of service.”
- “Taking this service class was one of the best choices I have made. It is really preparing me for my life on my own. I feel lucky to be able to work with kind and caring people every day. I don’t need to be paid or get an award at the end of the day. The way the kids or adults look at me is an award all on its own. If I didn’t need money to survive, I would work without pay any day.”

- “Controlling groups of fifth and sixth graders has made me feel accomplished. They challenge my disciplinary techniques and give me a new perspective on authority figures. The things I’ve learned from being on the flip side of things (the authority figure instead of the student) are astounding: from the value of obedience to the transparency of the students.”
- “Since service started, I feel like I’ve become much more confident and comfortable around other people. Before I had a really hard time meeting new people. Having a conversation with someone I didn’t know made me nervous. Public speaking gave me hives. I don’t think it’s one specific incident that has helped...working with different people necessitates the growth of confidence in people skills, if only because of the amount of practice one gets in talking to and dealing with people. I’ve had several family members comment on how much more confident and comfortable in my own skin I seem.”
- “I was scared to go there because I wasn’t sure what I was going to see or do. I walked into the building scared and came out excited. Each kid in class has improved every time I see them. They have slowly started to conquer their disability one step at a time. I struggle with the stress of school, peers, family, and work. They struggle with everyday tasks, which I see as just part of my routine. The greatest lesson they have taught me is to never take things for granted no matter how big or small they are. This class has allowed me to strengthen my faith with God and some of my personality traits, like patience and courage.”
- “I’ve learned a lot from all the experiences I’ve had at my locations, from my reflections, and from what we’ve gone over in class. I especially like the listening techniques we studied, and I’ve found myself using them outside of service.”
- “Another sign of growth I have seen in myself is unity. I am not only closer with my peers, but also with older and younger people. I always used to hang out with the same group of friends. Because of service class I am able to interact with all ages. I can literally see the Church. Everyone around me is part of the Church, and we all have that special unity. There are many other virtues that I have gained from service; my favorite is joyfulness. I am a lot happier when I am helping others and not thinking of myself.”
- “I met a special lady that reminds me of my great-grandmother. She talks about God just like she did. She has told me things that only a grandmother should tell you. I love to be there. I have grown socially and mentally. I don’t think that I would have been able to learn these valuable lessons without the help from these places. I realized that you get joy from helping the people and not just having fun.”
- “It becomes very frustrating because every week we do the same thing and it becomes the same routine. I then think to myself that this is my job when I am there I need to do it the best I can and not complain about it. It took me about a month to realize that, but it now makes sense to me. I think of it in the way that God put me in charge of this job because he knew I could handle it properly and with respect.”
- “One major area in which my confidence is a factor is communication with a complete stranger. I would have never opened up and talked with someone I had never met before. We are expected to find residents and have conversations with them, to talk about whatever is on their minds. This was very difficult at first, but every week I meet a new resident, and every week it got easier to go up to someone new and start talking; that is a big step for me.”
- “Though I may not always be willing to do so for a variety of different reasons, I go out on location again every day because I know that people are counting on me to be there. I realize that I have a responsibility, and I follow through with it. It is about the act of serving others. I have matured, learned the virtue of patience, grown in my understanding of others and myself. I know that I will take these skills with me in life, even if I forget everything I’ve learned in all my academic courses.”

**School Name: Villa Angela-St. Joseph City: Cleveland, Ohio**

**Student Name: Jerome Barton Grade Level: 10**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
Honduras, Central America

**Describe your service and what you did:**

On the most recent trip we built a tilapia pond. We laid concrete. We also mortared bricks for the roughly 51/2 ft. tall walls.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

The building project will aid with self-sufficiency. More importantly, the children of the two orphanages will know that they aren't forgotten and abandoned by everyone. There are people who love them.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This is one of the most important trips I've ever been on along with the other three of the same nature. It gives me a sense of fulfillment in my life. It restores a faith in my heart in the human race, that maybe we, as a people all around the world, can join together and make a difference.

**Student Name: Grace Rodgers Grade Level: 11**

**Name of place where service was given:**  
William Patrick Day Center

**Describe your service and what you did:**

It's basically a regular summer camp. We have snack, read stories, do artwork, playtime, play outside, take naps. But we also have to do activities that will help the children develop the skills they need pertaining to their disability. This camp is a fun place where parents can bring their kids and trust they will be safe, so that they will have time to relax.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I believe my service made a difference because this camp is always looking for volunteers. The children who attend the camp need energetic young people who they can interact and bond with. All of the people who are a part of this organization help these kids grow and develop as best as possible.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

Honestly, starting this was one of the most important things I've ever done. This camp has helped me in more ways than I could ever imagine. As soon as I finished my first day I decided that was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I can't imagine having any other career other than being a Special Needs Teacher. I fell in love with every single kid I met and had the time of my life. I love being a part of such a special community of people, and I will never stop.

**Student Name: Sarah Rodgers**

**Grade Level: 11**

**Describe your service and what you did:**

At the day camp we assist mentally and physically disabled children. We help them eat and walk, we play with them, we swim with them and we do “work” with them that help develop their skills.

**In your opinion, how did your service make a difference to the community you served or to those who received your service?**

I think that my service helped the kids because I helped give them a chance to interact and form relationships with different types of people and give them a fun, memorable summer.

**Describe how this service was important in your life?**

This service was important to me because it has given me a broader perspective of life and service. I also have learned many helpful things such as sign-language and child care skills. This has become more than just a service to me, the children are a part of my life, and they have had a huge impact on my character.