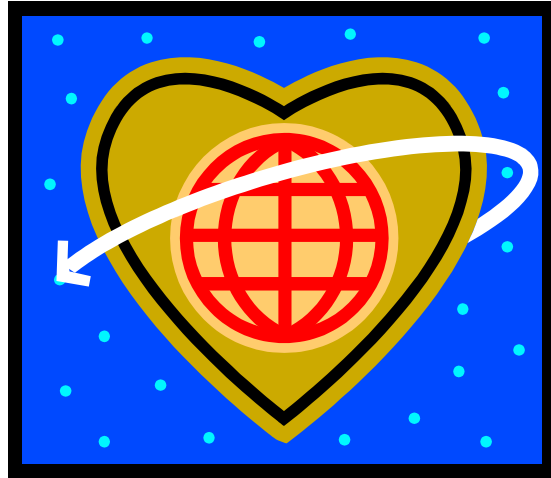


Ursuline Students Making A Difference



Student Service Recognition Program

2008-2009

Ursuline Educational Services (UES)

Ursuline Educational Services



Spring of 2009

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 have a global sensitivity, and they share about service outreach both in the States and around the world. The participants this year are from 15 Ursuline schools, and affiliate schools including:

Academy of Mount St. Ursula, Bronx, New York
Beaumont School, Cleveland Ohio
Sacred Heart Academy, Louisville, Kentucky
Saint Louis Elementary School, Owensville, Ohio
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, Dedham, Massachusetts
Ursuline Academy, St. Louis, Missouri
Ursuline Academy, Cincinnati, Ohio
Ursuline Academy, Dallas, Texas
Ursuline High School, Santa Rosa, California

Enjoy the spirit of caring so evident in the sharing!

United in St. Angela's peace,

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Student Name: Serviam Leaders

Grade Level: 9-12

School: Academy of Mount St. Ursula

City: Bronx, New York

Name of Place where service was given: POTS (Part of the Solution) Soup Kitchen

Describe your service and what you did:

The leadership group visited the local soup kitchen to determine the needs of the people there. We showed a CD explaining both the direct assistance and the systemic change that is part of the whole POTS Organization. We initiated a collection of food for Thanksgiving. Students brought food and money to support this effort and parents were invited to contribute as they attended our annual International Night.

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

We were impressed by the efforts of those who constantly see to the needs of our neighbors who are suffering from our difficult economy. We tried to bring this knowledge back to the other students and have helped inspire many to volunteer their time there.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service showed us how effectively the needs of the most vulnerable can be met when a few people organize. It made us experience the joy of enabling others to become a force for good in our society.

Student Name: Student Council Leaders: Keonna Campbell, Julissa Contreras

Grade Level: 12

School: Academy of Mount St. Ursula

City: Bronx, New York

Name of Place where service was given: Concourse House, a shelter for women and children

Describe your service and what you did:

Student Council organized a collection of toys for the children of Concourse House. We involved a large number of students in helping to wrap these gifts and personally delivered them to the children providing a party and a lot of personal attention.

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

The single mothers who live at the shelter sometimes cannot afford to buy their children basic necessities like clothing and toys. We offer this opportunity to help these mothers by putting a smile on their children's faces. What child does not enjoy toys from Santa?

Describe how this service was important in your life?

It is a pleasure to see the huge smiles of these children as they tear open their gifts. We sometimes think that because we are young we can't do much to make a difference in the lives of others. This helped us to see that anything is possible! Coming from a shelter as a child I learned how I have to always give back to those in need. God puts everyone on this earth for a reason and I believe mine is to serve those in need.

Student Name: Shannon Melero Grade Level: 12

School: Academy of Mount St. Ursula City: Bronx, New York

Name of Place where service was given: City Gate International Church

Describe your service and what you did:

Every Sunday I work with children ages 4-13 teaching them about Jesus and the Bible. On special occasions I help to organize children's plays and choirs.

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

The children I helped received a better understanding of the complexities of Christianity. It also helped their speaking abilities because they had to articulate the many difficult questions they had about God.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service helped me develop my patience. It also helped me understand the young minds that we are charged with.

Student Name: Alyssa Bovell Grade Level: 11

School: Beaumont School City: Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Ignatius High School, Arrupe House

Describe your service and what you did:

This summer I participated in the Arrupe Summer Program with St. Ignatius High School. This program offers 150 underprivileged Cleveland children an opportunity to spend a portion of their summer in a positive environment that encourages friendship, leadership, educational enrichment, and sportsmanship. I was assigned a girl camper and every day I would help her in her lessons and the art and sports activity. Through these activities I established a friendship with my camper.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service project that I participated in is important to my life because it helped me to appreciate everything that I have been given like a home with loving family members. It also made me feel like I helped to impact my camper's life by being there every day as someone she was able to look up to. The Arrupe Summer Program offered me an opportunity to become involved, serve others, strengthen my faith, and make a difference in the lives of the neighborhood children.

Student Name: Colleen Hawkins

Grade Level: 12

School: Beaumont School

City: Cleveland Heights, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Nuevo Paraiso, Honduras

Describe your service and what you did:

The Gesu Parish sends a missionary group to Honduras every February and June for one week. During this week, I helped with medical brigades by aiding as a pharmaceutical assistant. During this time, I collected orders for medicine and helped organize the specific orders into the families they belonged to. The group not only worked on medical brigades, but also helped with construction projects. Some of the projects that I was involved in include digging trenches in order to build a new gazebo, sawing and assembling pieces of wood together to make the frame for the gazebo, painting the walls of the new restaurant as well as clinic, making cement and paving a new sidewalk, tearing down a house in order to build a new one, and many more. These are the jobs we completed working alongside the community's workers. Aside from work, I watched the combination of Hondurans and Americans playing games of soccer together, spent time with the children by playing catch and watching their dances, as well as talked and spent time with the Honduran boys and girls of my own age.

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, the service I participated in made a difference to Nuevo Paraiso for the better. The projects we helped construct bettered their community by having safer means of travel as well as new buildings. I have been told by many of the people living in Nuevo Paraiso that our group is the best and that they love us very much. The feeling is mutual from the Gesu group and I believe that our love and affection has built many friendships with those of the community and they have been blessed by our presence, as we are blessed with theirs. The medical brigades provide medicine for the community and surrounding communities that they may not be able to afford, helping them to stay healthy.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service was important in my life because I have made so many new friends, not only in Honduras, but also among those who I traveled with. It has helped me to realize what career I want to pursue. Helping with the medical brigades made me realize this is something I would want to do with my life. Also, traveling to a foreign country such as Honduras enhanced my passion for travel and discovering one of many cultures around the world. It was important for

me to see how others live and how happy the people of the community are, even if they do not have as many belongings or money as one in the United States might have. I loved the beauty of the country, the people of the communities, and the welcoming smiles and experiences I had while serving in Honduras.

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

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

Name of Place where service was given: Hand-in-Hand- Ministries in Belize City

Describe your service and what you did:

We built a house in Belize for 3 girls and their single Mother. Hammering, painting and pouring concrete were responsibilities each person had in helping to make the house.

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

I believe the entire community saw hope in watching and helping us build a house. The family was given a new beginning and the daughters found their dreams a bit more achievable as a result of their new house being built.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

I was awakened to a whole new way of life through this trip. The poverty was overwhelming in Belize; however, the community was so supportive. I enjoyed learning about a culture different than my own while helping to give others the basic needs and hope we all deserve.

Student Name: Julia Neidhardt **Grade Level: 12**

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

Name of Place where service was given: La Casa Latina

Describe your service and what you did:

I babysat Hispanic children, ages 0-12, while their single Mothers took English classes. At times I also helped Mothers who were having difficulties and struggling in the class.

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

My service was small at first, but it inspired my friends and soon one babysitter grew to 12. My service also reached beyond Casa Latina into all the communities I am a part of. I took vegetables from the Farmer's Market I work at to the center in the summer, and organized drives at my school for winter clothing and cleaning supplies when the women were in need. Finally

we raised \$2,000 annually with a dinner that celebrates the different cultures for the Sacred Heart Community, (which has been my privilege to help organize and run for the past three years) where we have chosen to donate the money to Casa Latina.

Student Name: Colleen Niehoff

Grade Level: 12

School: Sacred Heart Academy

City: Louisville, Kentucky

Name of Place where service was given: Community Catholic Center

Describe your service and what you did:

I put on a week-long acting camp for the children at CCC. I gathered over 16 teen volunteers to aid the children in learning three skits, three songs and dances and helping the children build up their self confidence for their performance on that Friday night for their friends and family.

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

My project helped build the self confidence of the children. Many of them do not have very good home lives, so the interaction between the students and the teen volunteers was very beneficial to both parties. It opened the eyes of the volunteers to the great need of service, especially in the west end of Louisville.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Through this project, I found who I was. Getting to know the children on such a personal level helped me connect with them and realize how much we were doing for them. It also helped me realize that I can make a difference. I know that I gave the children something that they did not have previous to the camp.

Student Name: Loah Stevens

Grade Level: 12

School: Sacred Heart Academy

City: Louisville, Kentucky

Name of Place where service was given: Managua, Nicaragua (Pan y Amor. Los Pollitos)

Describe your service and what you did:

Before the trip, I wrote letters to family and friends, asking for donations. I also helped buy books for the schools. While in Managua, we painted at Los Pollitos. At Pan y Amor, we helped the students with their science unit and helped paint a mural.

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

I hope my service in Managua helped the children we met become encouraged to commit themselves to education. One of my favorite parts of the trip was seeing the children at Los Pollitos show their excitement over a book.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This trip made me aware of what true poverty is. I realized it is my duty and responsibility to help to the best of my abilities. I plan to return to Nicaragua this January to assist a medical immersion trip, and I know I will learn so much more about ways to help and serve.

Student Name: Cristina Egred

Grade Level: 5th

School: St. Louis School

City: Owensville, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: St. Louis Elementary School

Describe your service and what you did:

I helped a classmate who is having trouble in school. I became her friend so that she would know how to be a friend.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Helping my classmate makes me feel good. Showing my other classmates how to treat others and show mutual respect by setting an example is important to me.

Student Name: Katie Liming

Grade Level: 12

School: St. Ursula Academy

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Bethany House Shelter

Describe your service and what you did:

I have volunteered at Bethany House for the last three years. Bethany House is a homeless shelter for women and their children. I join a group of my classmates in providing a monthly brunch for the women and children at the shelter. We prepare the brunch there and then serve it. Afterwards we usually play with the kids. We often bring crafts to do with them, or we sometimes go outside. I have also babysat a few times at Bethany House. Last year I was a leader for the Bethany House group. I helped to organize when girls would go, and who would supply what for the brunches.

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

I think my service at Bethany House made a difference to the women and children I met. The monthly brunch I help provide gives them something to look forward to. A brunch may be a small thing, but I feel like it brings joy to the people we serve. The kids are always excited to see us, and the moms are always happy to talk to us. While the Bethany House is a great environment, I imagine it would be hard to adjust to living there. The women that come are obviously struggling with their current homelessness, and they then have to adjust to living in a house with twenty other people. I think seeing new faces, having someone watch your kids for a while and sharing in a good meal takes some of the stress away. One of my favorite times at the Bethany House was when I was babysitting and this one little boy got in a fight with another boy over something. The boy later started crying and kept saying how much he hated it there. I could see how frustrated he was, so I asked if he wanted to play with some bubbles. He was so excited about the bubbles that he forgot everything he was upset about. Some other kids joined and he soon had many new friends. The joy I saw in this boy over something as simple as bubbles let me know that I had truly made a difference through my service.

Student Name: Stephanie Miller

Grade Level: 12

School: St. Ursula Academy

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Saint Ursula Academy and Camp Stonybrook

Describe your service and what you did:

Ever since my freshman year at SUA I have been a member of ISSE Club. Within ISSE, I am a Homeroom Representative and thus, I have been able to partake in many service opportunities. While at the same time I have encouraged my classmates and the entire SUA community to continue to serve others. Second, I am a Marian Medal Retreat Team Leader. With this service opportunity, I am able to lead a Girl Scout Retreat and become someone younger girls can look up to.

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 the service I have done has made an immense difference in those I have served. For instance, through ISSE I have participated in a weekly Mission Collection in which students have given \$1.00 to areas in need. Also, I have been a part of SUA's Personal Care Drive and The Canned Food Drive. Through these opportunities millions of people have been able to benefit from the donations of the drives. Finally, I believe that in being a retreat leader there are now many girls who are able to look up to myself or my team as role models as they prepare to enter into high school and become strong and faithful women.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

The service I have done and continue to do through ISSE is a constant reminder that I am so lucky to live the life I do and that I may just be a high school student but I am a high school student who cares and wants to make a difference. Furthermore, ISSE serves as a reminder that

I can constantly encourage others to serve. Last, my work as a retreat leader has influenced me greatly. It has enabled me to become a better leader and role model. Also, through being a team leader I have been able to work with others who share the same values I do and it has been an amazing experience.

Student Name: Tara Porter

Grade Level: 12

School: St. Ursula Academy

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Hoffman-Parham School; Ronald McDonald House; Tender Mercies

Describe your service and what you did:

I led a group of students that went to Hoffman-Parham School on Mondays after school. There I worked with the kindergartners and first-graders on homework or I simply played with them. At Ronald McDonald I led a group that went and prepared brunches for the families one Sunday morning a month. With the same group I prepared and served a meal for Tender Mercies downtown one Friday a month.

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

I think my service has really impacted the students I help. I have been working with the same group for the past two years and I am able to see the differences that my friendships with them have made over the long term, just in the way they act or they remember things I tell them from week to week. At Ronald McDonald and Tender Mercies I have been able to see how such a small thing like a meal can really make an impact on someone's life. The people I serve are always so grateful and I am glad to know that I am able to make their daily lives a little easier.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

The service I have done has really just opened my eyes. It has opened my eyes to the different circumstances people live in from those living in poverty, or those struggling with a sick child. I am always amazed at the gratitude people have for the little things I take for granted. My service has truly shown me how blessed I am and made me a more grateful person.

Student Name: Megan Rogg

Grade Level: 12

School: St. Ursula Academy

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: St. Francis DeSales School

Describe your service and what you did:

As a leader of Bulldog Buddies, the after school tutoring program, I serve as a bridge between St. Ursula and DeSales. I organize carpools, help lead orientation, and take attendance every time I

go to tutor. At DeSales I help a third grade student study or do her homework. When she is finished, we play educational games, such as a spelling bee, until it is time for her to go home.

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

The immediate effects of our program come into view when the students' faces light up every time we walk into the room. Since many of them come from difficult family backgrounds, they enjoy the positive atmosphere of our program. It is amazing how much these students can accomplish with the motivation that I, along with the other tutors, bring to the sessions.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

My position as a leader of the program taught me responsibility. However, I feel that the most important lesson comes from the students. They teach me to let go of all judgments and to see people as they really are. Also, I love being with the children, and my time tutoring has led me to the decision to pursue education in college. I love the differences I can make in their lives, but more importantly, I love the difference they make in mine.

Student Name: Deanna Buenger Grade Level: 12

School: Saint Ursula Academy City: Toledo, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Toledo Zoo

Describe your service and what you did:

Toledo Zoo Volunteers provide educational tables for the children visiting the Zoo. Students demonstrate and supervise crafts which educate children to Zoo conservation goals.

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

I helped children appreciate the animals they are visiting. I educated children to the habitats necessary for animals to thrive. I created interest in Science topics so children will desire to learn more about Zoology and ecology.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

I learned about child development and how to stimulate the interest of children then direct their interest and energy to learn about Science. My people serving skills were improved greatly.

Student Name: Nikeya Dickson Grade Level: 11

School: Saint Ursula Academy City: Toledo, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Martin Luther King Center Kitchen for the Poor

Describe your service and what you did:

I did a variety of services including serving meals to the less fortunate, preparing meals and food boxes, helping with paperwork and cleaning.

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 feel like I have helped by helping prepare a meal, and in some cases that may be that person's only meal. I enjoy talking to some of the people I have helped serve because it makes me appreciate the things I have been given in life.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service is important in my life immensely! It makes me appreciate that I can eat whenever and all the sacrifices my family have made for me. It also affects me because I feel better about myself knowing that I have contributed to society and hopefully changed someone's life as much as they have mine.

Student Name: Brittany Heckman

Grade Level: 12

School: Saint Ursula Academy

City: Toledo, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Costa Rica

Describe your service and what you did:

I recently completed a two week mission trip to Costa Rica, and was affected by the poverty I saw there, and how service was very important. Every day we performed service, mostly painting, planting, and digging. One day I even helped teach some of the children English.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

June 17. Little did I know that this day would be the beginning of a life-changing experience; for I did not know how beautiful Costa Rica is. While I was there I did many different things. We woke up every morning and had breakfast with the locals, then we went back to our places and got dressed for the day. Then a local driver picked us up in a cattle truck and took us to the place we were working. Most of the projects we did were for the local school. One day we put the second coat of paint on the outside, one day we painted murals inside the school, and one day we painted the outside lower part of the school blue, after we held a big paint and water fight. It was a lot of fun because we had the truck driver, and the two local Counselors, Max and Alcedes, who talked in their own language, and we had no idea what to expect next. We also dug trenches for their drainage system. One day while we were digging it started to rain and we had about an inch of mud on our shoes, but we still wanted to play soccer with Max and Alcedes. After we did our work each day we went swimming, some days it was just our down time, and almost every day we played soccer or pato pato gonzo (duck, duck, goose) with the local children. Then we went to dinner and ate with the locals again.

One night for dinner we went fishing at a tilapia farm, (important fact to know: I HATED fish, everything about them: the smell, the look, the feeling, the taste; I just hated absolutely

everything about fish.) While we were fishing I fell into the pond. I was terrified and that night when we went back to the village I tried the fish that I caught and loved it! Every night after our work, showers and dinner we did two things. First we learned something about the Maleku tribe, which involved hunting for tree frogs, medicinal plant hikes, or just walking around the village at night. Then the last thing we did every night was to meet in the center of town in the main room and play cards, ping pong, foosball, or new games with the locals. We talked and had a great time; it was our time to become close to some of the people we served. This was the best experience I have ever been given, I have so many people to thank; my parents and grandparents for supporting me and giving me this opportunity to go, and the people that were there with me and made the experience the best in my life. I love you Costa Rica! Puda Vida! KAPI KAPI! AFEKAPIAN!

Student Name: Alisha Mitten

Grade Level: 12

School: Saint Ursula Academy

City: Toledo, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Hospice of Northwest Ohio

Describe your service and what you did:

I do whatever I can to make the patients and their families more comfortable. This could be anything from puzzles with kids and listening to music with patients to separating, folding, and stocking linen.

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

Through Hospice, I meet with 4-6 year old children for a group called “Young families in Grief.” I think my interaction with the kids helps them cope with their bereavement. I think that communication, verbal and nonverbal, with the patients allows them to live longer and emotionally happier.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Hospice illustrates how we are all alike and equal. Everyone experiences grief. At Hospice I can communicate with people of all ages. Hospice has strengthened my abilities to communicate and become close with just about anyone.

Student Name: Alex Smithers

Grade Level: 8

School: Saint Ursula Villa

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Stepping Stones Center

Describe your service and what you did:

For my community service I volunteered at a summer camp for kids with special needs – physical and/or developmental. My special camper was a boy named Tavon whom I assisted with the activities of summer camp which included swimming, sports, art and fishing.

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 a boy with special needs by giving him, in his opinion, “the best summer he ever had.” Tavon and some of the other campers had the opportunity to enjoy their time at summer camp. I also helped the staff at SSC with running errands, cleaning up and the Fourth of July Picnic and parade.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This volunteer service was important to my life because it really opened my eyes to what I take for granted in my every day activities. Kids my age with special needs face many more challenges. I’m learning to share the gifts God gave me with others. God blessed me with a healthy and strong body and a talent in sports so I can use those abilities to help others. I plan to return to Stepping Stones next summer and give someone else a very happy and fun summer.

Student Name: Gretchen Thomas, Catherine Shanahan, Lauren Arcuri, Kelly Roberts, Lizzie Crafton and Clare Shurmer

Grade Level: 5th

School: Saint Ursula Villa

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: St. Ursula Villa to Uganda Day Springs Academy

Describe your service and what you did:

My friends and I organized a Valentine’s Night babysitting service at school and donated all the money to my Mom’s Uncle’s School in Uganda. We sent out fliers to all the younger families in our school and hosted a night for parents to have a Valentine’s dinner out while we watched their kids. We organized crafts, decorated cookies, read stories, and watched a movie. There were 6 of us who ran this with me, Susie Shanahan, Lauren Arcuri, Kelly Roberts, Lizzie Crafton and Clare Shurmer. We also had my Grandpa match any funds we raised with the event. We sent \$1, 605 to the school. This money will help them build a fence, enhance their dorms, and go to building a well for fresh water. We are planning a similar event for this Christmas to help continue support these children.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

It really made my friends and I feel good to know we were helping others in need so far away. We also had fun helping our families here at school by watching their children while they got a night out. We can’t wait to help them all again this year. It was also neat to get a letter of appreciation from their students and Principal, to hear how much they needed this and how thankful they were.



Student Name: Norma David

Grade Level: Senior

School: The College of New Rochelle

City: New Rochelle, New York

Name of Place where service was given: San Lucas, Guatemala

Describe your service and what you did:

I traveled with Campus Ministry on a plunge to Guatemala. In Guatemala, I was able to give back to their community by assisting mid wives in the community, removing rocks in order to start the foundation of a new home and planting trees.

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 provided the extra help they needed with the planting and removing of rocks. Also the women were able to have their questions answered about pregnancy and what was to be expected.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service was important in my life because I was able to give back to a community. A community that was poor, but so rich in heart.

Student Name: Rashmi George

Grade Level: Graduate Studies

School: The College of New Rochelle

City: New Rochelle, New York

Name of Place where service was given: American Express for Citi-Harvest, Project Sunshine, Employee Giving Campaign

Describe your service and what you did:

I raise awareness at meetings and via email correspondence with information about each project, how it affects the community we live in, and the need to help others who are less fortunate.

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

It provided food, money, shelter and a warm friendlier atmosphere for some.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

It helped me learn about projects that are in place for those in need and understand the struggle in our own community. The service humbles me and allows me to be more thankful for my life which makes a difference in someone else's life who is less fortunate.

Student Name: Sherly Mathew

Grade Level: Senior

School: The College of New Rochelle

City: New Rochelle, New York

Name of Place where service was given: San Lucas Toliman, Guatemala with the Mayan people in the Community

Describe your service and what you did:

The programs/services offered were: Reforestation: focused on Orchard trees, coffee exporting, etc.; Construction: painting a newly built house for one of the families in need; Coffee Bean farming: worked with the local community in learning how the coffee export was carried on for fair trade prices.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service was a life changing experience for me. Even though coming from a third world country like India I have never been involved in a mission trip like this where you offer your service to the community. So, even though I was prepared, I saw so many things such as poverty, lack of health care that many third world countries go through in a different way, a way in which it opened my eyes to the world around me. I also thought of doing this late on in my life after I graduate college. Even after leaving Guatemala, my mind kept going back to the people who cared for us. I went there to offer my care for them, and in turn they took care of me. I remember the woman who prepared the food, the man who drove us around and I remember being on the street and saying “I am thirsty” and the man beside me saying “Say Coca Cola light”. By seeing all this I began to understand what it means to live in a world where everyone has a purpose to life. I have a purpose and I think I have understood and realized that, through this trip. Although I found it hard to leave the people, I found joy in my heart thinking that they had taught me so much that I will never forget.

Student Name: Princy Philip

Grade Level: Senior

School: The College of New Rochelle

City: New Rochelle, New York

Name of Place where service was given: San Lucas Mission in Guatemala

Describe your service and what you did:

I helped in the Reforestation project mostly. I also helped around the Mission with chores. I was also lucky to accompany midwives on trips to maternity camps around San Lucas and neighboring towns for routine check-ups and follow-up cases.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Physically I wasn't able to do a lot but I gained a new respect for the Guatemalan culture. I was able to appreciate the good work and goodwill that Fr. Gregory had spread. I was also able to understand and imbibe the strength that the citizens showed in times of turmoil and conflict and hardship,. As a nursing student, I was able to recognize many health issues in society and was able to help with whatever knowledge I possessed. This also gave me a great sense of accomplishment since this was my first community service trip.

Student Name: Rachel Pascocello

Grade Level: 12

School: The Ursuline School

City: New Rochelle

Name of Place where service was given: My service is located on the internet

Describe your service and what you did:

I created and published a website: www.goyovo.com as part of my Girl Scout Gold Award project. Through fundraising, I purchased a website and domain name. This website is a place where Westchester teens can locate volunteer opportunities in our area. My website explores the many ways a teen can volunteer. It is easy to use; users just follow the links to get more information from different sites that may appeal to teens. The site give a brief description of each opportunity that may suit a particular teen's interest. Teens can commit to an ongoing project such as teaching seniors computer skills or participate in a singular event like working at a charity walk. Teens can also help others without leaving the house. With just a click of a computer mouse, sponsors can make donations for items such as free mammograms for women and free kibble for cats and dogs. The donation bin section proves that donations don't always have to involve money. New or gently used items can be donated to help others. Donations range from collected soda can pull-tabs to prom dresses. There is even an area of the site where you can get free concert tickets for volunteering in your community.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service is important to my life because I enjoy helping others and giving back to the community. My main goal for my website is to promote volunteerism. I feel that helping others is a part of all religions, especially Christianity and when we help others, we become more compassionate and caring and accepting of others.

Student Name: Sarah Pizer

Grade Level: 11

School: The Ursuline School

City: New Rochelle

Name of Place where service was given: Songcatchers and Heartsong

Describe your service and what you did:

At Songcatchers, I volunteer as a piano teacher for underprivileged children in New Rochelle. I work with a class of 8-10 children from the ages of 7 to 13 of all different levels.

At Heartsong, I volunteer with art therapists, with a group of children with physical, emotional and cognitive disabilities. We work to encourage self-expression and provide a rare opportunity to interact outside of their home.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Working with children, I have learned to be more patient and sensitive to their needs. At Songcatchers I have the chance to share my knowledge of music, which I am very passionate about and has been a large part of my life. I feel lucky to have the opportunity to share something of great importance to me. At Heartsong, nothing pleases me more than seeing the

success of my work: a child beginning to open up and feel free to express themselves. The serious problems these children have is very hard to see and work with, but I feel that by doing this I am growing as a person and becoming more aware of where my service is needed.

Student Name: Sarah Dodge

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Wilmington, Delaware

Name of Place where service was given: Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay; Sanford Day Camp

Describe your service and what you did:

Girl Scouts: I completed the Gold Award with 5 other girls in my troop by creating 40 blankets for the Mary Mother of Hope House.

Sanford: I worked in the art room at the camp where I helped 5-13 year olds with arts/crafts.

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 Gold Award Project was very helpful to the children in the Mary Mother of Hope House. The blankets gave the children a tangible, soft, huggable item they could carry around with them as they suffer through a very difficult situation. The blankets let the children know that someone was out there thinking of them.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

My Gold Award Project with the Girl Scouts opened my eyes to the difficult situations people are suffering through every day. It made me realize that I can do something to help. At Sanford Day Camp, I realized that I need to be very patient with children of all ages because everyone learns at different speeds and I need to accept that.

Student Name: Claire O'Neill

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Wilmington, Delaware

Name of Place where service was given: Autism Society of Delaware, Special Olympics

Describe your service and what you did:

I helped organize the ASD annual walk. I was a partner athlete with Special Olympics.

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

My service helped raise money for research and to help make DE Autistic families lives better. I helped my sister swim in the special Olympics.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Service is important in my life because I want to help those who cannot help themselves. My sister has Autism, and I want to help make her life and other's lives better.

Student Name: Alison Wade

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Wilmington, Delaware

Name of Place where service was given: American Lung Association

Describe your service and what you did:

I volunteered at Summer Spacer Camps that are catered toward children with asthma. I spent time at the camps keeping the kids occupied and entertained. I led asthma-related games and scavenger hunts that helped the campers learn how to manage their asthma. I worked alongside medical professionals to provide a safe environment for the asthmatic campers. My service at the Asthma Awareness Days included educating children about their asthma through games and interactive lessons.

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

I helped increase asthma awareness in my community and made a difference in the lives of the children. The campers learned about their asthma and how to manage and cope with it. They gained assurance knowing they weren't the only children dealing with this condition and that they can do anything that non-asthmatics can do. I made sure not to treat them differently because they had asthma while still keeping them safe. The children and parents felt better knowing the camp was qualified to take care of the campers if they were to have an asthma attack.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

I discovered a lot about myself through my service. I learned that I simply enjoy helping others and making a difference in their lives. This influenced my college and career goals of studying human services and working for an organization that actively helps those in the community. I learned communication skills that taught me how to relate to others and be an approachable individual. I will use these skills and my desire to help others in all that I do.

Student Name: Laura Hartigan

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Dedham, Massachusetts

Name of Place where service was given: Casserly House, Roslindale, MA

Describe your service and what you did:

At Casserly House, my friend and I tutored elementary school children whose parents were recent immigrants and unable to help the kids with their homework. We had to get them through their homework while engaging them in conversation.

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

I think it truly helps the kids to have anyone help them out with their homework. They may not be able to receive individualized attention at home which can work against them. My friend and I kind of became surrogate older sisters who helped them do their reading so that they might even start to like it. They were all brilliant and it felt great to help them.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Meeting these kids drastically affected me. I looked forward to going to see them and by the time my service there was coming to an end each kid, Rueben, Widny, Marvin, Brendan, Jenny, etc. held a special place in my heart. Each one of them mattered so much more than the homework I was completing or the service hours I was doing.

Student Name: Maddi Heanue

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Dedham, Massachusetts

Name of Place where service was given: Casserly House, Roslindale, Ma

Describe your service and what you did:

After school, I'd drive to Casserly and wait for the children to get off the bus. Sister Nancy and I would then get the student to settle down, do their homework and hopefully read a bit. We would basically reinforce concepts learned in school, in English. All the students were fairly recent immigrants, so studying in English could be difficult but important.

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

I think my service was important because on the surface, I was just a tutor. But Sister Nancy and I were really more like a support system – you can come to America and you can learn English and you can succeed.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service was so important because it inspired me to go into education. Also, I was always proficient in Spanish but helping those kids gave me a new view on learning a language.

Student Name: Katherine Walker

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Dedham, Massachusetts

Name of Place where service was given: Several churches including First Baptist and St. Mary's as well as various kitchens in Mansfield, MA

Describe your service and what you did:

I helped prepare and serve food to the homeless as well as clean up after the meal.

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

My service may not have affected the community as a whole, but I know that it helped at least one, if not several people, fill their stomachs. In my opinion, if I was able to help at least one person for the better, that means the world to me. I think the community experienced some unity in helping people too.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

At first, I wasn't as excited to do this project, but as soon as I started, I began to love it. Serving at soup kitchens hits you with a grim reality. These people have tremendous struggles and it made me realize that all of my "life stresses" are nothing in comparison to the hard life that the people who show up at the kitchens have to deal with on a daily basis.

Student Name: Marissa Buechel

Grade Level: 10

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Saint Louis, Missouri

Name of Place where service was given: Webster Groves Rehabilitation Center

Describe your service and what you did:

I donated my time at Camp Independence, a camp for kids with Cerebral Palsy in which they are able to participate in Sports activities (baseball, soccer, volleyball, swimming, ice skating, dance, karate, basketball, etc.).

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 allowed the young campers at Camp Independence to interact and meet new people. It also allowed the community to know that these kids may look different on the outside, but are the same as everyone else on the inside.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service has allowed me to become more grateful for my ability to run, jump and play around. It also taught me to not take the simplest things in life for granted.

Student Name: Jacqueline Grewe

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Saint Louis, Missouri

Name of Place where service was given: Ursuline Academy

Describe your service and what you did:

As an Ursuline student, I am involved in many things to help the community. Broadcast; Ambassador, Senior Advisor, Speech Team, the Ursuline Plays, Dance Recitals and Leadership for Diversity.

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

I have helped in a lot of critical moments. Last year during a Speech competition, I was there helping with Ambassadors and they needed someone to do an extemporaneous speech. I stepped in and helped. Also in Broadcast I learned the equipment and helped teach the class. Senior Advisor's is a group of seniors who help with showing the underclassmen around and you volunteer to be a leader and a friendly face for the freshmen. Many teachers trust me and often ask me to run little errands for them. Last year I volunteered to be a freshmen leader and I wanted the girls in my group to have fun. Some weren't into the retreat but that didn't stop me, I was determined to make everyone participate, relax and not waste time. I think I made a difference. I love Ursuline and would help in any way possible any day of the week. Whether it's helping a student with "Drama" or painting scenery, helping the Speech team, teaching how to work equipment, running papers to the office, etc, I'm there.

Student Name: Colleen Kinsella, Kate Rice, Kasey Shelly, Stephanie Shelly

Grade Level: 10, 12, 12, 10

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Saint Louis, Missouri

Name of Place where service was given: Antigua and Panajachel, Guatemala

Describe your service and what you did:

We bought and distributed bags of beans and powdered milk to migrant coffee workers; we read with kids at the library and supported a program that helps them stay in school; worked on improving literacy rates; distributed chickens to Mayan families; brought 12 sewing machines from St. Louis for the Mayan women who now use them to make clothes for themselves and their children, and can possibly start a tailoring business which will bring an income to help support their families.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Before my first trip to El Salvador, I didn't fully realize that there were so many other people in the world who were in need of my help. The trip inspired me to try to raise awareness about the problem so that other youth could be part of the solution. This service had a momentous change in my life. It was a very eye opening experience that put things into perspective. When extreme

poverty is in front of you, not in the newspaper, not on TV, but right before your eyes, it can really teach you what's really important, that's what this service did for me. This service changed my life because I got to see how people less fortunate than me lived and functioned on a normal basis, and this encouraged me to become more passionate about helping those in need. This service taught me to appreciate what I have and how lucky we all truly are. It changed me in the sense of not caring about material objects, the people of Guatemala have so little, but still are so happy and it opened my eyes to a whole other world we're not used to here in America.

Student Name: Colleen Mulligan Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy City: Saint Louis, Missouri

Name of Place where service was given: Ursuline

Describe your service and what you did:

Between the new Peace/Justice committee and environmental club, I raise awareness and promote both. For environmental club, I try and get everyone to recycle and go green, by learning new things and bringing them to Ursuline and sharing them with others. The new Peace and Justice committee I put together to bring different activist clubs to encourage and live out Ursuline's Motto of "Serviam". We are all working together to help those in poverty by raising awareness and going out and helping those in need.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

To me, both of these issues are increasingly important. My passion is to help those who are homeless and in poverty. I also am passionate about keeping our Earth clean and healthy. Between the two things, I believe that I can make a difference here at Ursuline and carry it with me as I grow older and hopefully will find a career to help one of these issues and better the world.

Student Name: Annie Hauser Grade Level: 11

School: Ursuline Academy City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Su Casa Hispanic Center of Cincinnati

Describe your service and what you did:

I volunteered for the Su Casa organization through a program called "Vacaciones Utiles" benefiting local Hispanic children at no cost to their parents. This was a summer program for children entering preschool through second grade. At this summer "camp" the children were given preparation for the coming school year specified to their age. The preschoolers were taught basic concepts that others raised in an English-speaking household would take for granted (the majority of the children's parents and most of the younger children spoke only Spanish).

These include nursery songs, the alphabet, numbers, colors, etc. (all in English). In the approaching school year the children would be expected to already be comfortable and familiar with these ideas. The kindergarteners worked with similar concepts, but slightly more advanced (bigger numbers, days of the week and seasons of the year). The first and second-graders worked on their writing and spelling skills, as well as basic mathematics. Two meals were supplied to the “campers”. They were given an allotted free time each day. On certain days, special visitors came that worked with the children on an assortment of activities. Some days they were taught certain kinds of dances. On other days, the children learned about good health habits and proper manners. I worked consistently with all of the children on these concepts, assisting the hired teachers. My activities in a given day ranged from helping to serve and clean up food at meal times, playing with, reading books to and supervising the children during free time, teaching and helping to keep peace in the classroom, and attempting to control the inevitable chaos that was bound to set in at the end of every day.

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

I could see the issues our “campers” would have encountered upon the onset of the school year if they had not attended our summer program when I noticed their difficulty in absorbing the concepts that they would be expected to already know in their regular school classrooms. These strictly Spanish-speaking children were at a tremendous disadvantage to their English-speaking peers. Even those that were somewhat fluent in English would not easily comprehend lessons given in their second language (Spanish being their first). This program prepared the participating children for the challenge of receiving an English education, and enabled them to excel in a community that might not be well-tuned for foreign language-speaking students. In addition, the program was free to participants, presenting the less fortunate parents with a type of daycare at no cost to them. The children were taught in a loving and supportive environment, and given tools they would not have otherwise had access to. These tools provided them with the opportunity to succeed and a chance at a brighter future.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

These kids showed me more about the art of achieving goals than any inspirational film or motivational speaker ever could. They demonstrated that every person has an innate ability to succeed if a little hard work and a lot of heart are involved. I parted with these children, and entered my own school year with virtues new to me such as patience and perseverance. Always keeping those children in my mind and in my heart, I no longer begrudge any challenge I am presented with in my privileged existence, but approach it with a certain tenacity and utter determination.

Student Name: Ashley Holbrook, Caitlyn Scherer, Laura Zorko Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Nisbet Park, Cincinnati, Ohio

Describe your service and what you did:

We held a benefit concert for Unified for Unifat and Save Darfur. We booked the bands, got food donations, got volunteers, made/designed shirts, publicized for the event, and made sure things ran smoothly during the show.

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

Our event created a greater awareness about the injustices in Darfur and Uganda. We also raised a couple thousand dollars! The money will greatly help to stop the injustices in these countries.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This experience taught us how to organize an event on our own from nothing. We learned how much work goes into planning a concert and we learned how rewarding it is! It was a great experience.

Student Name: Julia Tasset

Grade Level: 11

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Cincinnati, Ohio

Name of Place where service was given: Su Casa Hispanic Center of Cincinnati

Describe your service and what you did:

My responsibilities included: taking care of children (preschool-first grade), individual tutoring, facilitating classroom and playtime activities, even accompanying the class on a field trip to Union Terminal.

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

The children I worked with came from low income families and homes where English was not the primary language. However, their parents wanted them to have access to a structured, educational environment. Through this program, they spent their summer learning not only grade appropriate material, but manners and social skills. At this point in their lives, I believe access to these opportunities, not otherwise available, will make a difference in their development.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

Prior to this summer, I had not had much experience in child care. I was surprised at how much I bonded with my class. They taught me patience, and I got to practice my Spanish. But most importantly, I was reminded to count my blessings. I would like to continue doing similar work in the future, and work with "Vacaciones Utiles" next summer.

Student Name: Alexa Juarez

Grade Level: 11

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Dallas, Texas

Name of Place where service was given: Trujillo, Honduras

Describe your service and what you did:

This summer a group of Ursuline students along with students from JPPII, Bishop Lynch, and Bishop Dunne traveled to Trujillo, Honduras. When we arrived, we were separated into two groups. My group stayed in Trujillo to repair two churches in the area, while the other group went to an orange grove to build a church. At the first church, we built a rock wall, repainted the walls and lacquered pews. The second church took three days to repair. Everyone helped paint the walls and ceiling, repair the fence, and build the patio. We also had the opportunity to build relationships with the Honduran community while we worked. The youth group visited our camp site every night, and we exchanged the differences and similarities about our culture. The kids at the churches also enjoyed having conversations with our poor Spanish skills. But no matter how many hand gestures, we all got our message across in the end. Smiles and friendships are the same in any language.

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

Working side-by-side, the community and our group helped build the church, the center of each neighborhood. In Honduras, there was always a church at the heart of a neighborhood or town. The church and spiritual life was a major element in the two Honduran communities we visited. They enjoyed having us passionately spend time and effort to rebuild a new and improved center of worship. Working together, we not only built a church, but also relationships. We were paired with someone from the community and shared our stories with them. I learned so much from my partner, Rosie. She said, "I do not view you as American or me as Honduran. I view us as people with different experiences and stories." At the end of the trip, they considered us a part of the community, because we had worked with them and had helped build their new church. When we finished repairing the second church, everyone in the neighborhood came for Mass to celebrate our hard work. Seeing everyone's smiling face, I realized that we had made a huge difference in the community's life. They would always remember us for our hard work for the church and for our kindness and our long-lasting friendships.

Student Name: Hannah Juarez

Grade Level: 9

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Dallas, Texas

Name of Place where service was given: Huacona La Merced, Ecuador

Describe your service and what you did:

I recently went on a mission trip to Ecuador in July. I joined the organization called "Free The Children" which builds schools in third world countries. The ages of the participants accompanying me on this Ecuador trip ranged from fourteen to eighteen. With my group, I spent

two weeks building a school in the community of Huacona La Merced. When I met the community, the people welcomed us with open arms. The walls of the school were already formed with adobe bricks when I arrived. For the next three days, I helped sand four hundred tiles for the roof. After sanding, my group and I spent four days painting the roof tiles and preparing the concrete to cement the walls. During the entire second week, I cemented the inside and outside walls and finished putting a double coat of paint on the roof tiles. The two coordinators that joined me on my trip only monitored the construction while the participants on the trip actually built the school with the community. On a regular work day, I worked in the community for three hours in the morning and three to four hours in the afternoon. On my final day with the community, the walls were fully cemented and the roof tiles were in the process of being placed on the roof. Over the entire trip, I not only built a school, but I built relationships with my group as well as with the community.

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

Building a newer school benefited the community in two major ways. First, a larger school allows more children to attend elementary school. As a result, more children will receive at least an education at an elementary level, and more children will have the choice to attend high school. Second, the community came together to build a school. Several people from the community would take time out of their day to help in any way possible. The adults from the community came together to build a school which would guarantee the education for their children and the generations to come. I saw a close community grow even closer during those two weeks. At the same time, international friendships were formed between my group and the community.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This Ecuador trip had a major impact on my life, and I learned the true meaning of *Serviam* as well as several other life lessons. First, I learned not to take the value of my education for granted. In my future, I plan to graduate high school and go to college, but in Ecuador, most children from indigenous communities will not receive a high school education because they have to stay home and support their families. Second, I learned that happiness does not come from material items. The Ecuadorians in the community owned very little, but they were the happiest people I have ever met. Instead of being satisfied with the physical items they owned, I saw that the people in the community were satisfied by just spending time with one another. Finally, I learned more about myself and discovered who I was as a person. Before the trip, I did not know anyone accompanying me on this trip, but towards the end of the trip, genuine friendships were created with the people from Ecuador, Canada, and the United States. This lesson is the most important for me as I meet new people in high school. I learned I should not be someone else just to make friends, and the best friends are the ones that accept me for the way I am. Knowing who I am will also help me when I make important decisions for my future. Overall, this life changing trip took me out of my comfort zone and exposed me to the different cultures of the world.

Student Name: Eva Laskowski

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Dallas, Texas

Name of Place where service was given: Trujillo, Honduras

Describe your service and what you did:

On June 3, 2008, I had the opportunity to be a part of the Dallas Diocese Honduras Mission Trip with nine other Ursuline girls. My friend Angela Cenzone had participated in this trip the previous summer and could not stop talking about it when she returned. This intrigued me and I decided to apply for the coming summer. I was chosen and attended a required retreat for all those going at Bishop Lynch on a Saturday morning. There were four schools involved in the mission trip: Ursuline, Bishop Lynch, Bishop Dunne, and John Paul II. We left in the morning in early June and took a flight to San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Then, we took a 6 hour bus ride to Trujillo and spent the night in a hotel. The next day, everyone was split up into two groups: one that stayed in Trujillo while the others went to stay in Benito Oriental. I was chosen to stay in Trujillo and we were taken to the convent where we would be staying. For the next four days, my group and I painted and built a wall around the local church. We also played and taught young children how to make rosaries while their parents aided us in renovating the church. When this part of our service was done, we focused on another church that was further away and required a bus ride. We painted the inside and outside of the church as well. Also, we built pews and helped construct the foundations of a patio by making and laying down cement. My group worked around 5-7 hours a day and attended Mass at least once a day. Once ten days had passed, the two groups reunited and sadly returned home from their home-away-from-home.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

As a teenager in a technology dominated society, I cannot help but feel emotionally attached to my laptop, cell phone, and iPod. I feared leaving them at home during my Honduras mission trip and could not think how I would survive with what seemed my lifelines. Other than the fact that I would have none of these items, all my clothing, shoes, and other necessities had to be packed in a single backpack. This meant I could only bring three t-shirts and two pants on a trip where I would constantly be sweating. As a girl who very much cares about her outward appearance, I did not know how I would survive. However, within the first day of my arrival in Honduras, I immediately forgot about these two issues. I saw how the local people had around four articles of clothing and little or no technology in their lives and they seemed much happier than most people living in the United States. I could finally live my life without the distractions of technology and caring about how I looked because, for the Honduran people, happiness comes from within oneself. For one of the few times in my life, I completely felt alive because I was so immersed in what was going on around me. I realized how much stress I felt from material goods and felt free just by a simple separation from these impediments.

Also, I believe that, through this experience, I have come to fully comprehend the true meaning of Ursuline's motto of *Serviam*. For the majority of my high school career, I had thought of *Serviam* as simply aiding those in need by donating canned goods or organizing a fishing tournament, but in reality, *Serviam* is so much more than that. In order to entirely feel the power of *Serviam*, one must feel like they have received something in return through their service. This is not necessarily meant in a physical sense but in a spiritual or emotional sense. I learned that

true happiness in not based on what type of phone or car I have but how I experience life. Furthermore, I discovered the great importance that Christ holds in the hearts of the Hondurans. Their faith in him provides them with courage to face the next day and hope that it will be easier than the day before. Through my experience in Honduras, I have come to have a deeper relationship with Christ because I felt his power through my service and collaboration with the Honduran people.

Student Name: Blair McDonald

Grade Level: 10

School: Ursuline Academy

City: Dallas, Texas

Name of Place where service was given: Plano Parks and Recreation Therapeutic Programs

Describe your service and what you did:

I became a one-on-one buddy with a mentally challenged child to lead them through various activities like dance, arts and crafts, and song time so that they may feel the joy and excitement that everyone deserves to feel as they grow up.

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

The disabled children that I serve learn choice, involvement, and self-direction through new challenges and socialization. All of this helps the kids to learn to live healthy and independent lives.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

For the past three years, I have worked with a young boy with autism named Nolan. I have had the gift of watching him accomplish things that I never thought were possible. Every time I see him master something new or even a smile on his face, I realize just what it means to serve.

Student Name: Sarah Bertero

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline High School

City: Santa Rosa, California

Name of Place where service was given: Delhi, India

Describe your service and what you did:

I will be traveling to Delhi, India with "Doctor's Goodwill Foundation," and providing medical care to people for whom it would otherwise be unavailable.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service is important in my life because it includes the two things I love most. Medicine is my calling and caring for others is my passion. This service combines the two in a way that will be life changing.

Student Name: Amelia Lincoln

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline High School

City: Santa Rosa, California

Name of Place where service was given: Lima, Peru District: Santa Clara

Describe your service and what you did:

This past summer, my CBSL project partner, Allison Zegarra and I traveled to Lima, Peru. We established a children's camp titled Proyecto Amistad which was open to children, toddlers to seventeen. Allison and I raised money and supplies here in the United States, taking what was donated and a few purchased items to Santa Clara, Lima, Peru. We became involved with one particular village through the Un Vaso de Leche government milk distribution program in Peru. We worked in the Pueblos Hovenos of Santa Clara, teaching the children short English lessons, arts and crafts and sports. On a daily basis we provided the village with kilos of rice, beans and lentils for their soup kitchen and on certain days brought packets of powdered milk. At the conclusion of each day we handed out Spanish children's books, tennis shoes and snacks to the kids. We worked hand in hand with the mothers of the village to make the two-week camp a special experience for the seventy children who participated. Our goal was to create a fun and safe learning environment for the kids while providing aid and respecting the dignity of a group of people in need.

Describe how this service was important in your life?

This service was not only important in my life; it changed it. I now have a deeper understanding of what it means to be poor, to be happy and to feel love. It was the most powerful and humbling experience I have ever been a part of and, as a result, I have not stopped learning from it yet. The relationships that developed are still fresh in my mind and first in my heart. They push me every day to utilize my opportunities to reach my potential; potential that for them may never be given the chance to develop.

Student Name: Allison Zegarra

Grade Level: 12

School: Ursuline High School

City: Santa Rosa, California

Name of Place where service was given: Peru

Describe your service and what you did:

The desire to do my service project in Peru began three years ago when I visited Peru and witnessed the widespread poverty. After my trip, my goal became putting the Ursuline motto of "Serviam" into action by helping the children of Peru. In 2007, Peru was devastated by a severe

earthquake so I organized a two week coin drive at Ursuline High School. The money raised built a preschool daycare in Pisco, the area hardest hit by the Earthquake. For my senior service project, I wanted to do something more to help the children of Peru so I organized a nine day children's camp "Proyecto Amistad" or "Project Friendship" in an extremely poor village outside Lima, Peru. The goal was to teach the children songs, games, arts and crafts, cooperation, team building as well as some English phrases. My partner and I collected over two thousand five hundred dollars from Rotary Clubs and other organizations. Also, we collected art supplies and sports equipment used during the camp. Over 75 children ages 2-14 attended the camp each day as did 20 mothers. Every day the children participated in arts and crafts, sports, and songs in both English and Spanish. Other goals of the project were to provide a daily glass of milk for each child and vegetables for the cooperative soup kitchen to add nutritious food to the children's diet. In addition, we gave the children books, t-shirts, art supplies, shoes, and sports equipment. Lesson plans translated into Spanish were left for parents and children to use. Throughout the year, I will continue collecting shoes, books and dental supplies to send to Peru in the spring

Describe how this service was important in your life?

"Proyecto Amistad" is important to me because helping ease global poverty and serving others are two of my missions in life. Working on a project in Peru is doubly important to me because my father was born in Peru and most of my family lives there. Also, I am pleased that I could use my time and energy to bring joy to Peruvian children by teaching songs, games and how to work together. From my project, I have learned more about the Peruvian culture, how people think, behave, and care about each other. Also, this project helped me sharpen my organizational skills, learn how to be a better observer, teacher, problem solver, and risk taker. My interest in people coupled with my desire to serve, has lead me to become involved with a variety of service projects overseas. In 2007, I traveled to Pune, India, where I stayed for two weeks at Sangam, the Girl Scout World Center. Along with fifty other girls, from nine countries, we planned and ran a camp for the children of migrant Indian construction workers. This experience gave me the inspiration and model for my Peruvian project. It also taught me to respect differences in work styles and ideas. I learned, in order to work as a team, we had to communicate, collaborate, and cooperate but most importantly we had to trust and respect each other and especially the children. My Peruvian project was more effective because I incorporated lessons I learned in India into "Proyecto Amistad." Teaching children who speak another language was challenging but I learned we could communicate using signals, facial expressions as well as Spanish. Being immersed in another culture, exposed me to different ideas, food and customs which helped me value the differences and similarities between people and cultures. Service has also taught me to believe in perseverance, and in the power of hope. Even in the most difficult and dangerous situations, I have seen people working hard to improve their lives. Also, living with people in extreme poverty has made me appreciate the many opportunities and rights we have in our country. Serving others in "Proyecto Amistad" changed my life because I learned the power of taking action in order to make a difference in the lives of children.
