

Ursuline Educational Services Service Awards 2011 - 2012



Act, bestir yourselves, have faith, make efforts, have hope,
Cry aloud to him with all your heart; then without any doubt,
you will see marvels, if you direct everything towards
the praise and the glory of his Majesty and the good of souls.
(intro to the Counsels)

February, 2012

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

On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Ursuline Educational Services, I am so pleased to send you this report detailing the community service of the students who have received the UES 2011 Service Awards. These outstanding young women and men are students in 15 Ursuline sponsored and affiliated schools and colleges:

Academy of Mount St. Ursula, Bronx, New York
Beaumont School, Cleveland, Ohio
Brescia University, Owensboro, Kentucky
Chatfield College, St. Martin, Ohio
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
Ursuline Academy, Cincinnati, Ohio
Ursuline Academy, Dallas Texas
Ursuline Academy, Dedham, Massachusetts
Ursuline Academy, St. Louis, Missouri
Ursuline Academy, Wilmington, Delaware
Ursuline College, Cleveland, Ohio
Villa Angela-St. Joseph, Cleveland, Ohio

These students have served in a myriad of ways, benefitting so many worthwhile causes. It is truly heartwarming to read the accounts of their service. They exhibit strong leadership, courage, ingenuity and compassion. They have made significant contributions to the betterment of our world already in their young lives. We can only imagine what they will continue to do as they mature “ in wisdom, age, and grace.”

They are living testimony to the value of an Ursuline education. Our gratitude and admiration goes out to their first teachers, their parents, and to the administrators, faculty and staff of their schools who serve as guides and inspiration to them. We are confident that St. Angela is pleased with their actions and their faith and all of us are witnesses to the marvels that these students have brought about by their selfless service.

Sincerely,

Judith A Wimberg
Director, Ursuline Educational Services

Service Awards, 2011

Academy of Mount St. Ursula Bronx, New York

Tina Darboe,
Junior

Describe your service. I volunteered at Concourse House, a place that offers apartments and support to women who are trying to get their lives together. I help with the child-care. During my weekly time there, I help children with their homework and then participate in outdoor and indoor activities with them.

What difference does your service make? These children need a lot of attention. Their mothers are involved in learning job skills and finishing their education. The children need to know that people care about them. The supervisor gives them a lot of activities and helps them to be polite and to share. I think that this is really important if they are to know how to interact with others in the future.

How is this important in your life? I have always been very shy. Soon after I began volunteering at Concourse House, I met a little girl who seemed to be shy just like me. She didn't mix with the others, but would stay by herself. I tried to encourage her and she began to play more with the others. I think I helped her a lot, and it made me think about myself. The children at Concourse House have difficulties in their lives, but they really are very kind. Helping at this wonderful place helps me think about what really matters.

Melissa Hernandez
Junior

Describe your service. For three years, two or three times a week, I volunteer at Renaissance, an organization that offers music education, sports and tutoring to young people who would not be able to afford regular lessons. I do everything: teach guitar, help in the office and tutor students of all ages.

What difference does your service make? I know how much this program meant to me when I was young. One of the students who came to learn guitar was a mentally challenged boy. As he struggled to learn the chords and learned to play, my heart went out to him, and I was very proud when he was able to read music and perform. Everyone at Renaissance grows in so many ways.

How is this important in your life? I have been changed by my volunteer work at Renaissance. I have become much more confident in my own abilities to learn and to perform with others before an audience. I am now part of our Liturgy Group at Mount St. Ursula, take part in our school musicals, and even perform at our "open mikes". I also have a deeper appreciation for others who attempt to express themselves in music and drama.

Katherine Trujillo
Senior

Describe your service. I have been an Explainer at the New York Botanical Gardens for over a year. During the summer I volunteered three times a week and on Saturdays during the school year. It has been wonderful to lead school groups through part of the Garden, teaching them about the plants and animals we find there. Our group sessions change with the season, and sometimes we are able to take them to parts of the Garden not generally open to the public.

What difference does your service make? Many of the children who come for our tours are city kids who don't have much contact with nature. I think it is very important for them to have experiences that make them comfortable with observing the wonders all around us. Now that I am an "advanced explainer", I am able to lead groups through areas where we get to understand "invasive species" and reflect together about the changes in ecology that will influence the future of our planet.

How is this important in your life? I have learned so much, not only about nature and ecology, but also about human nature. We work closely with teenagers from many schools in New York, and we have children from all over coming to the Botanical Gardens. I have had the opportunity to observe many different reactions to all that we find there. I have also grown in my own ability to teach and lead and have had the example of college students who work with us and help us to collaborate.

**Beaumont Academy
Cleveland Heights, OH**

Heather Guhde
Senior

Describe your service. I volunteer at Labre, a program run by John Carroll students. Every Friday night, regardless of the weather and even on holidays, a group of students cooks a meal and then delivers it to the homeless on the streets of Cleveland. Labre was named after St. Benedict Joseph Labre, who dedicated his life to serving the homeless and building friendships with them. The program is not only about bringing the people on the streets meals, but it is equally about building relationships with the people. Since the program is based at John Carroll University, the students there have the first opportunity to participate each week. I take advantage of any openings to join them on Friday evenings.

What difference does your service make? This program makes a huge impact on the people who live on the streets. Just a meal alone helps them with their immediate need to fill their stomachs. But more importantly, the relationships built help them to connect with the rest of society and eventually get off the streets. Providing the meal is just the way to get our feet in the door of their world so we can help them.

How is this important in your life? This service is so important in my life because it has taught me so much. Going to people's "houses" is absolutely humbling. It makes me realize what I have for which

to be thankful. It also puts my problems into perspective and makes me think before I complain about something insignificant. Being in solidarity with people who seem so different, but are really so alike, is inspiring. We're all human beings. So many people seem to judge people on the streets. Labre has taught me to not judge people because of race, religion, socio-economic background or any other stereotype. I have matured so much by participating in Labre.

Elizabeth Clarke
Senior

Describe your service. I participated in a mission trip to El Salvador. The purpose was to meet Salvadorians, listen to their stories, and accompany them in their daily lives. We talked with many Salvadorians about their tribulations during their 12-year civil war, that still affects them today. We also met missionaries from the United States who are dedicating their lives to serving the people of El Salvador.

How did your service make a difference? Each day we would have the opportunity to reflect as a group on the challenges that were presented to us. My goal is to take what I have seen in this beautiful but struggling country to further work for justice and peace in El Salvador, in my home community and in the United States as a whole. I also hope that while I am sharing with my family and friends about the experience, I can light a spark in at least one person, who sees how much need there is to work for peace and justice.

How is this service important in your life? This was a life changing experience for me. I learned that you have to see, analyze, act and celebrate. When there is a need, you have to recognize it, analyze what needs to be changed, act to make a difference, then celebrate with the people the changes that have occurred. Through being in El Salvador, my eyes have been opened to how much need there is all around the world; even though these people had so little, they were filled with so much joy and were deeply grounded in their faith. I learned that once you learn the truth, you can never go back to not knowing the truth. Now it becomes my responsibility to work for change and share the truth with others.

Leslie Candelliere
Senior

Describe your service. Fellow classmates and I, led by our teacher, Sr. Erin Zubal OSU, went to the Lucasville state Penitentiary to participate in a peaceful protest and prayer vigil as the State of Ohio used new injection drugs for the first time in an execution. After Johnnie Baston was executed, our trip continued to the State House in Columbus. We talked with representatives about the issue of capital punishment and to promote Senator Ted Celeste's bill to abolish the practice in Ohio. I continue to work to educate others, especially my peers, about capital punishment.

How did your service make a difference? My service in combination with others makes a difference to those waiting on death row to be executed. These people do not have their own voice; we are called to help them. Although they need to pay their dues to society for their crimes, execution is not the answer.

How is this service important in your life? This service is still important in my life. I was not familiar

with the issue prior to my Peace through Justice class. When I was informed, it really struck me. It appeared to me as a vicious cycle. This service made me realize we truly need to fight for justice, even though it may sound like a cliché. It is the truth. I am working with the drama department on Dead Man Walking, a play by Sr. Helen Prejean, CSJ, to educate the community on the effects of capital punishment.

Margaret Wagner
Junior

Describe your service. I participated in the 2011 March for Life in Washington, D.C. Along with others from St. Mary's Church in Hudson, OH I protested the unnatural destruction of life through abortion. My primary focus in the march was to stand up for the unborn, "those who have no voice." Through this experience and service of representing those known and unknown to me personally, I began to realize the true value and respect that a human life deserves. At Beaumont, I worked with the Social Justice Club administrators to propose new ideas that could help educate the Beaumont community about "respecting Life." We were able to narrow our list down to a few important ideas that we think will have the greatest impact on the Beaumont community. We implemented these ideas in the current year's Respect Life activities. I take part in Respect Life activities at St. Mary's and also in the preparation for Beaumont's participation in the 2012 March for Life and in our school's Respect for Life Awareness Month.

How did your service make a difference? The March for Life made a difference in the larger community because it demonstrated to others that many people, including young adults, value and respect life. In the Beaumont community, my service made a difference because it empowered me to voice my opinion at school and join the Social Justice Club. My involvement has been enhanced by the participation of other students in the club. We are working as a group to help the students at Beaumont become more aware of the importance of all life and why it should be valued.

How was this service important in your life? Being part of the March for Life made me realize that life is truly important and should not be taken for granted. It also made me aware that not everyone respects life. However, just by us students taking the initiative to be part of the March, we did inspire others to say yes to life.

The service to the Beaumont community gave me the opportunity to share my passion for respecting life with my classmates. It also allowed me to know that I can make a difference, even in a small community.

Brescia University
Owensboro, KY

Leslie Powell
Leanne Meyers

These students serve Brescia University as members of the Student Activities Planning Board (SAPB). They both worked over 20 events the first semester of the 2011-12 academic year. Their service included

planning, implementing and promoting campus events and attending leadership conferences. In addition they committed to attending weekly meetings as members of the SAPB. They have averaged over 100 hours each the first semester, providing community building and entertainment activities for the Brescia University campus.

**Chatfield College
St. Martin, Ohio**

Brandy Balon
College Sophomore

Describe your service. As a member of Team Chandler and Chatfield College Student Government, I secured the support of the Student Government to have our “End of Semester Dance” to benefit Shelby, a 14 year old who is suffering from Osteosarcoma, an aggressive form of cancer. We decided to give Shelby a “Prom-like Dance” because she might not make it to her own.

How did your service make a difference? Everything we did made Shelby’s family become more like family to us. We were able to help them during Shelby’s battle with cancer. Even now that Shelby is gone, the family is still involved with Team Chandler. Shelby’s family was more than grateful for Chatfield and Team Chandler coming together to make some of Shelby’s dreams a reality. In addition, the Chatfield community is more aware of Team Chandler and how important it is to families.

How was this service important in your life? The service has touched me in so many ways. First of all, it made me look at life from a whole different point of view. Before meeting the Foster family (Shelby’s), Chandler touched my heart. He was such a fighter, and the day we heard he was in remission was a very blessed day for everyone. When we met Shelby, she was fighting to live. She accepted the fact that Osteosarcoma was a very aggressive type of cancer and that she had a long road ahead of her. She never complained or even hinted for pity. She wanted to live a normal teenager’s life as much as possible. In my long talks with Shelby, I learned so much about life, people and love. She taught me never to take anything for granted. She was the most appreciative person I’ve ever met. In her final stage of life, at home with Hospice Care, hooked up to IVs, unable to walk, she was worried about everyone around her. When Shelby passed, she took a part of me with her.

As we at Team Chandler sponsor another child, we know there will never be another Shelby, but another child with different challenges whom we will help as much as we can.

**College of New Rochelle
New Rochelle, New York**

Cassandra Irons
School of Arts and Sciences, Senior

Describe your service. I serve the community of the College of New Rochelle. As an RA, I plan and implement programs that benefit students. Last year I created “Ally Week” which focused on how to be an ally to different groups on campus, including students with disabilities, those who deal with chronic illness and members of the LGBT community. I also helped Spectrum, the newest club to be recognized

on campus. This club supports the kind of programs highlighted in “Ally Week.” My colleagues and I worked for over a year with Campus Ministry and Student Government to insure that the club was aligned with the mission of the College and in accord with the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. In addition, I support the Honors Program and am editor of the Femmes d’Esprit, the Honors magazine. I also volunteered at a camp for pre-teen girls in West Virginia

How did you make a difference? Founding Spectrum serves both the LGBT students on campus as well as the entire College community. Spectrum advocates for respect and concern for every person regardless of identity, making a positive contribution by bringing this awareness to LGBT related issues through positive educational programming. Spectrum’s spirit of activism and education is designed to work within the mission of CNR, which is to show “respect and concern for each individual.” My service at the camp in West Virginia made a significant difference in the lives of those young girls. We made such an impact that we have been asked to return again this summer.

How was this service important to you? I believe one of most important gifts we can give to others is our time. This is how we can show respect and value our fellow human beings. This service also exposed me to a different culture and way of life. Learning about the abject poverty in Appalachia did not do justice to the true hardships residents face. By being there, even if only for a week, I was able to share in their struggle and provide them with some support. Service humbles me and allows me to be more thankful for my life, which in return makes me want to volunteer for programs that make a difference in someone else’s life.

Zenobia Pointer
School of New Resources, Senior

Describe your service. I initiated two programs in conjunction with the Brooklyn Public Library. The first one was the Community Partnership Program, a joint venture between local businesses and the Library, to create a positive presence in our communities while giving our one million cardholders more reasons to use their library cards. The local businesses provide incentives (discounts and special promotions) to encourage library card use. The second program is BPL’s first mural, which grew out of my relationship with one of the business owners, Sunset Park. The owner offered the Library a permanent wall space to create a community mural. Another non-profit, Groundswell, joined the partnership and designed and created a mural “Roots of Knowledge”. Groundswell recruits professional artists and New York public school students, primarily from low-income and working-class families, to create public works of art.

How did your service make a difference? The Community Partnership Program created a positive atmosphere in our community and helped the Library to serve more people. The mural in Sunset Park illustrates the diversity in the community. The colorful mural represents the demographics that distinguish Sunset Park. It also illustrates the mission of BPL to transcend barriers and unite communities through free, open access to knowledge and the arts. BPL is an organization that is not confined to a building and is a place that continues to raise awareness of the library throughout the community.

How was the service important in your life? My life has not been easy. I became a mom when I was in my teens and had to drop out of high school to support my wonderful son. I had to re-evaluate myself

and quickly realized that school is important and I couldn't allow having a baby stop me from changing my life. I wouldn't allow myself to become a statistic. My primary goal was to make a change and become a responsible woman. I earned my GED and then registered for CNR's School of New Resources, DC37 campus in 2008. I was ready, and it was one of the best experiences in my life. My service work within the context of my academic career helped me acquire a solid reputation for establishing effective networking and strategic alliances.

Erika Leigh Petrora
School of Nursing, Senior

Describe your service. As a member of the College of New Rochelle Student Nurses' Association, I was one of the organizers of CNR's Blood and Bone Marrow Drive, the Annual Breast Cancer Walk at Purchase College and Go the Distance Walk at Westchester Medical Center. I have been very active in the Student Nurses' Association at the local and national level, attending and coordinating Association events. I have written articles relating to Healthcare reform and the H1N1 virus for the Association's newsletter The Protocol.

How did your service make a difference? I have made a difference in the nursing student community by helping to broaden the definition of nursing. Nursing is comprised of a multitude of responsibilities and attitudes. I have been a part of many activities and events hosted by the SNA to further the education of my fellow nursing students.

How was this service important in your life? Throughout my life, I have wanted to help others. When I came to The College of New Rochelle, I felt as though I was missing a certain aspect in my life. I joined SNA and found the missing piece. Through SNA I have been able to interact with and help more people. I have developed a deeper connection to my peers and the College community. All of SNA's activities and events that I have been involved with are very important to me. They have helped me develop skills in communication, leadership and working collaboratively with others.

Patricia Ganues Williams
Graduate School

Describe your service. My regular volunteer activities over many years include: mentoring at-risk young adults in Mount Vernon at Nelson Mandela High School and at my church; prison ministry at both the women's and men's facilities at Westchester County Penitentiary, Valhalla; participating in the Thanksgiving and Christmas food and clothing drives at my church; coordinating a Toys for Tots collection in conjunction with the US Naval Reserve at Christmas.

How did your service make a difference? My ministry has made a difference to so many teenagers, young adults and families over the years. I am truly blessed because I have touched so many lives through my various service activities. Personally I am very proud of the more than 50 people I have had the pleasure of guiding to CNR. Young men who were gang members are no longer in a gang, young women who were on a path of self destruction became college graduates, ex-offenders now have jobs, homeless have homes, ex-addicts are clean and leading productive lives. These people have proven to me time and time again that I have made a difference in their lives.

How was service important in your life? To make a difference in changing lives through sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ is one of the greatest accomplishments a person can achieve on earth. Doing the will of God and fulfilling my destiny and call to service gives me personal and spiritual fulfillment. Nothing on earth can compare to the most important aspect of my life.

**Sacred Heart Academy
Louisville, KY**

Kayla Swiatek
Sophomore

Describe your service. I pushed a “fun cart” through Kosair Children’s Medical Center in Brownsboro, KY. I made rounds to each room in the Emergency Department, giving to patients and siblings activities appropriate to the age level of each. I reported to the Child Life Therapists, and they guided me in deciding how to occupy and entertain each child. I also made crafts to be displayed the Emergency Department, taught the patients to make seasonal crafts and aided nurses of Child Life Therapists whenever necessary.

How did your service make a difference? Since hospital visits are often frightening for children, I tried to make the experience more enjoyable by keeping them occupied. I hoped to brighten each child’s day even if it had started out badly or they were not feeling 100%. Finally, I tried to change the way visitors view a hospital by making their visits more comfortable and even fun.

How was this service important in your life? I have always been interested in the medical field as a possible career. Working as a hospital volunteer has confirmed that interest and has led me to consider pediatrics. By experiencing the inner workings of a hospital, I have become comfortable with the hospital setting and am beginning to understand what being a doctor or nurse will entail. Each day I volunteered strengthened my desire to become a doctor. I have learned to be more personable around the patients and their families, and I have grown to feel in my element in the hospital.

Allyson Fleming
Junior

Describe your service. For the past five years, I have volunteered at Four Courts Senior Nursing Home. I have the honor of spending time with the residents who are some of the most knowledgeable, kind and honest people I have ever met. When I arrive, I make a loop around the facility, saying hello to the residents. I know which ones like to have a visitor and those who prefer to keep to themselves. Those who like conversation have shared their lives, families and childhood memories with me. After my residential visits, I work with the Activities Director, Kristy, in planning events. I have four friends who volunteer with me, and Kristy is very open to our ideas. If there are no events to help with, I push a cart from room to room with ice water, magazines and a nail-polish kit. The female residents love the pampering they receive from us.

How has your service make a difference? I have made a difference in the lives of those I serve at the

nursing home by brightening their day. Many teenagers do not see the desperate need of our elders. I have continued my volunteer work at the nursing home because of the indescribable joy visiting the residents has given me. I have supported residents through personal losses, such as the death of a spouse. When Margaret lost her husband, I used the little money I had in my wallet to buy her a small bouquet of flowers. The now wilted flowers still remain in her room, and every time I visit Margaret she tells me stories of the cleaning crews attempts to throw the flowers away and her steadfast refusal to let that happen. I firmly believe that one small deed of kindness can make someone's day. It is my hope that through my small acts of kindness, such as holding the elevator doors open for a resident or painting a resident's nails, I can enhance their happiness, if only for a day.

How is this service important in your life? This service is important in my life for a multitude of reasons. It has taught me to put others before myself. It has forced me to develop time management skills in order to balance school, sports, service and time with friends. The residents help me with life, too. Whenever I become overly self-pitying, a resident named Rose reminds me just how good my life really is. The residents have become a second family to me, and I know I can confide in them when I am having problems at home, school, or with friends. As my own grandmother has begun her own mental deterioration, I am grateful for the patience and kindness I have learned by volunteering at Four Courts. The people at Four Courts have helped shape the person I am today, and for that I will be forever grateful.

Kennedy Jackson
Junior

Describe your service. On Y-Corps Service to the South (sponsored by the Kentucky YMCA Youth Association), I traveled around the southeastern part of the United States on a school bus doing service work with sixteen other teenagers. During a period of nine days we did service projects in 10 states. We worked in an art gallery promoting social change, several community gardens, built a garden the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans and fixed up schools in Mississippi, among other projects.

How did your service make a difference? While traveling, one of our most important jobs was to immerse ourselves in the community and do all that we could to make an impact on the people we served and the place where we served. For example, in New Orleans, if we had not repaired the community garden at the school, weeds would have overtaken the existing plants and the school wouldn't have been able to establish fresh beds in the coming school year. Also in New Orleans we got to know the kids on the block where we stayed. They were genuinely happy to have us play with them and share dinner, too. These kids had been through a lot since Katrina.

How was the service important in your life? I have participated in two Y-Corps trips; one was around the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the other around the south. The people I have met have become my family and they have had a huge impact on my life. The experiences on these trips have made me a more well-rounded and open-minded person. Because of my service, I am the person I am today. The experiences I have had doing service have taught me so much about the world around me and I can credit service for so much in my life.

Emily Crow
Junior

Describe your service. I volunteered in Guatemala as part of the organization HIM. We provided food

for people, helped set up a doctors' station and also taught Bible Studies to the children.

How did your service make a difference? Each of the activities we were engaged in affected peoples' lives in a positive way. The hungry were fed, those who needed a doctor and medicine received the help they needed, and the children were taught about Jesus.

How was the service important in your life? This service truly changed my outlook on life and the way I see other people. Now I hold all of the people close to my heart. This service taught me the importance of human life and that many times the basic rights of human beings are not being met. I feel that I was doing what Jesus asks us to do.

St. Ursula Academy Cincinnati, OH

Kristin Swope
Senior

Describe your service. I volunteered at LeBlond Boys' and Girls' Club in Over the Rhine. I spent time with the 9 and 10 year old boys, playing basketball, pool, and X-Box. I also helped younger boys and girls read and also did art work with them. In addition, I also am active in our Student Outreach Services (SOS) Club at school. I volunteer on a regular basis with Starfire, an organization that works with disabled teenagers.

How did your service make a difference? I think I made a difference because of the connection I made with two of the boys I worked with. There was one, especially, who ran up to me when I arrived, giving me a big hug. I think my service also served the community because I (and the others) were able to give the children love and attention. Our being there also helped the workers because there were so many children there, almost too many for them to take care of by themselves.

How was the service important in your life? My volunteer activity made me want to work with inner city kids when I get older. I saw their need to learn how to treat each other better, and have the full opportunity to grow and become successful in life. I was thrilled when, after my volunteering, I saw one of the little boys and he said Hi to me. It gave me the assurance that I really had made a difference in some of the kids' lives even though I was only there a short time. By doing this volunteer work, I have a better outlook on my life and the lives of others. I take in new experiences and learn from them.

AnnMarie Graham
Senior

Describe your service. I served as co-chair of the annual Canned Food Drive and was responsible for the planning and execution of the drive. This involves promoting the drive in my school community, pre-cavassing and collecting donations from my friends and neighbors, sorting and delivering the donations of the student body.

How did your service make a difference? The students of St. Ursula Academy supplied three local food

pantries and Lucy's Mission in Harlan, KY with nearly 53,000 pounds of food over the span of two highly successful annual Drives. The donation to Lucy's Mission also includes blankets and fresh fruit. The poverty in Harlan, in the heart of Appalachia, is unimaginable. Our donations help those who live in impoverished situations both in Harlan and in Cincinnati.

How was your service important in your life? Leading the Drive was an invaluable life experience. It tested my organizational and motivational skills. In a world filled with corruption, I met people who are pure of heart and happier than one would think possible given their situation. The people of Appalachia are often stereotyped as substance abusers and law-breakers, but the truth is that their outstanding characteristic is love, which is boundless among "mountain people". Even those living in severe poverty were consistently giving to their neighbors. Carolyn gave up her big-city dreams to run the hometown mission. Jo Ann suffered the loss of two grandchildren, but kept faith in God and continued to run the local soup kitchen. Nelson moved back to an insolvent home to care for his granddaughter. These are among the kindest people I have ever met. They inspire me to give, and I hope inspire others as well; these people are hardworking, kind and honestly deserving of everything possible.

Mary Beth Herman
Senior

Describe your service. I participated in a mission trip with six other students and two teacher chaperones for a week in rural Appalachia. For five days our group, with the guidance of the Christian Appalachian Project, worked on an elderly woman's home. We put concrete boards up around the open bottom of the house, installed new windows and doors, put siding around the trailer and built a new back stoop/stairs. Each night we reflected on our work and bonded with each other.

How did your service make a difference? Our service helped Rose very much. She would tell her multiple friends and family who visited her that her house was undergoing "remodeling and winterizing". She lived in terrible conditions, but the little construction we did made a huge impact on her life.

How was the service important in your life? This service experience was entirely different from anything I had participated in before. I was able to completely immerse myself in service for the five days and create a visible and meaningful impact on someone else's life. It felt extremely satisfying to see how our work turned out. I will forever remember my mission trip and the work we did.

St. Ursula Academy
Toledo, OH

Laura Earl
Senior

Describe your service. I am a worship leader at River of Life Community Church. I am responsible for organizing the worship service by planning the music and working with the Worship Team to make each worship service a unique opportunity to encounter God.

How does your service make a difference? Because we create an environment for worship for my church community, each member can actively thank and praise God. By allowing others to express themselves

through worship, I have encouraged the members of my church family to develop their relationship with God.

How was your service important in your life? Music has always been my passion. On my walk with God, I feel called to minister and share God's love through worship and song. I am honored to participate in this act of service as I watch heaven touch earth every week.

Mary Gibbons
Senior

Describe your service. I have volunteered at my home parish in many different projects and activities. I have worked the concessions at the Knights of Columbus Bingo and volunteered at their monthly Food Closet, distributing food to the needy. I have helped with set-up for our parish's annual Festival and also helped with children's games. I volunteer at the weekly Fish Fry in Lent. I assist the Music Ministry and am in charge of the music for Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. I have also volunteered with the Knights of Columbus Ladies' Auxiliary and with the Altar Society's Rummage Sales.

How did your service make a difference? Many hands make less work. Younger people providing help to our institutions helps relieve the workload of many older people who have been doing these activities for years. I honestly believe that these services indirectly promote our faith and are an outward form of discipleship. This service sets a good example for others and may actually lead some to join the Church or just aspire to be like those they see volunteering. Most of the volunteering for the Knights of Columbus (fundraising activities) is specifically for people in need of various services.

How was this service important in your life? Not only have I felt the positive effects of helping others, but I have also learned many valuable life lessons from the people with whom I have served. I also believe that it has instilled in me the discipline needed to continue these activities throughout my life. Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." This is what service allows me to do.

Anna Studtman
Junior

Describe your service. As a Hospice of Northwest Ohio volunteer, I am involved in making the entire Hospice experience more enjoyable for all involved. I visit patients and keep them company during the last stages of their lives, especially if their families are not able to visit. Providing fresh ice water, delivering flower arrangements, or even manicuring the ladies' nails are a large part of what I do as a volunteer.

How has your service made a difference? I truly believe that simply having someone to talk to during the last stages of one's life can give that person a feeling of relief and peace. Teen volunteers provide smiling faces and helpful attitudes for the family members of the patients in the Hospice program as well.

How has this service been important in your life? Last year, my grandmother and one of my best friends passed away within a month of each other. While this was a difficult time in my life, I continued to volunteer at Hospice. It helped me deal with the loss of both loved ones because I could help others who

were going through what I had just experienced. I also get just as much out of helping others as they receive from me. I find myself appreciating my life and my youth much more.

Anna Davies
Junior

Describe your service. A few years ago, my brother and I started an organization called Kicking HIV/AIDS out of Africa. We collect new and gently used soccer balls and equipment and ship them to Ndola, Zambia. Each pastor who graduates for Kafakumba Training Center in Ndola receives a soccer ball, a pump and a few other items. When they return to their villages, they can use the soccer balls to attract big crowds, promising to have a game. Before the game begins, the pastor can teach information about HIV/AIDS, which can save lives.

When I am in Zambia, I teach classes to pastors, help women discover their full potential in life and play with local kids. This has always been the highlight of my trips. We have given them new soccer balls, coats, gloves, hats, toothbrushes, and more. We also give the kid a friendship bracelet that we tie around their wrists. These bracelets are just string woven together but the expressions on the kids' faces when they get the bracelets is unforgettable.

How does this service make a difference? I hope that lives have been saved and lives changed. The children who have become my friends have impacted my life and I hope I have done the same for them. Some children have been able to stay warm on nights when they would have been cold and have fun when they would have been bored. My greatest hope is that the children now have hope for the future and a reason to keep going, even when things are tough.

How was this service important in your life? This service work has not only opened my eyes to world around me, but it has also sparked a light that will illuminate a path for me to follow in my life – one where changing lives one at a time is the top priority. It is hard to forget the smile on a little kid's face, or the look in his eyes, when he says "asante sana" (thank you very much in Swahili).

St. Ursula Villa
Cincinnati, OH

Shannon Brown
8th grade

Describe your service. I volunteered at the summer camps at the Cincinnati Zoo, where I assisted an instructor. I would take kids to get a drink of water, go to the bathroom, help with crafts, get the snack ready, and keep the kids in line on hikes.

At St. Vincent de Paul, I helped with the free health clinic by adding patients to their database. During the Angel Toy give-away, I was an elf. I would take the kids to see Santa, help them make crafts and tell them stories while their parents were shopping for their gifts.

How did your service make a difference? By helping the teacher at the Zoo, I enable him/her focus on teaching. Also I made a difference in the community at St. Vincent de Paul by helping patients receive better care and by keeping the kids entertained while their parents shopped.

How was your service important in your life? This service was very important in my life because it gave me a chance to give back to my community. It also gave me a chance to do something good with my free time, instead of sitting at home and doing nothing. I also developed my self-confidence by working with and being around different people. I also got a chance to teach the kids during the summer camps, which I really liked.

Molly Barresi
7th grade

Describe your service. I was a member of Team Zoey and raised funds for a little girl named Zoey Penny who has Progeria, a rapid aging disease that causes children to age 7-10 years faster than they should. I got started over spring break by helping my friend fundraise with his school in Mountain Lakes, New Jersey. I realized that I wanted to help, too, in Cincinnati.

How did your service make a difference? I raised over a \$1000 in Zoey's honor for the Progeria Research Foundation.

How was the service important in your life? This is important in my life because it makes me feel good that I am helping, not only Zoey, but also children across the world with Progeria.

Ursuline Academy
Cincinnati, OH

Claire Hayes and Shivani DeSai
Juniors

Describe your service. We were our school's liaisons to the larger Montgomery committee planning the Montgomery, OH American Cancer Society Relay for Life. We were responsible for getting all information to our school and promoting the event at Ursuline. We played a crucial role in recruiting teams from Ursuline who raised a significant amount of money and were an important component of the event.

How did your service make a difference? By raising funds for the American Cancer Society, we supported their efforts in the fight against cancer and raised awareness of all they do. Not only do they fund research to find a cure for cancer, but the Society also provides a 24-hour hotline, a transportation service, and Hope Lodges, residences for patients undergoing treatment. This relay is one of the largest in the area, and is the largest high school run event, raising over \$200,000.

How was this service important in your life? Both of us have been impacted by cancer. Becoming involved in the intricate planning process and getting others involved provides hope for both of us and allows us to continue to fund cancer research.

Kaitlyn Grounauer and Kathryn Carrier
Seniors
Erin Honebrink
Junior

Describe your service. We volunteered with a family of 15 children after school, helping the children with their homework. Many of them have learning or physical handicaps. As volunteers at Ingle's, we assist with preparing a snack for the children, tutor them as they complete their homework, partake in small talk with the children, and play games with them. As project leaders for The Ingle's it is our responsibility to secure volunteers, communicate with Mrs. Ingle, ensure everyone has a ride to the home, and send out weekly reminders to the volunteers.

How did your service make a difference? We are making a difference in these children's lives as well as their parents. Many times when the children get home from school, they are eager to share their day with someone. Having 15 children to nurture makes it difficult to give individual attention to each child. As volunteers we make sure that the children receive the attention they deserve. Many times the children become frustrated when doing their homework. We are there to reassure them and to help them work through their homework.

How was your service important in your life? We are the real benefactors in this service. We have learned so much about the meaning of life and the value of family. Each and every child brings something unique to the table. Not a single one complains about the disability that keeps them from being the "normal" child. They have each other, and that is what is important. Whether they are part of the family through birth or adoption makes no difference to them. They are all proud to say, "I am an Ingle." The Ingles remind us to be thankful for what we do have and to love others unconditionally. Also they have taught us to place more priority on time spent with our families just through watching them interact with each other.

Hannah Stoker and Margo Rusconi
Seniors
Anna Rusconi
Sophomore

Describe your service. We volunteered at the Madisonville Education and Assistance Center. We help wherever we are needed. This ranges from working in the food pantry, serving dinner, or watching the kids.

How did your service make a difference? We were really able to help MEAC and their clients. We made a difference for MEAC by making its job easier. We also made the life of MEAC's clients better too.

How was your service important in your life? MEAC became a second family for us. The clients and fellow volunteers are people we could joke around with and have fun. But, we do more than just have fun. There's no better feeling than after we leave MEAC. We're both proud and humbled by the whole experience.

Ursuline Academy
Dallas, TX

Lila Lehtola
Senior

Describe your service. When my mother returned from a mission trip to Sonaguera, Honduras four years ago, she told me of the need for wheelchairs. Since my freshman year, I have been fundraising for a nonprofit, Christian-based organization called Free Wheelchair Mission. I started with little fundraisers like bake sales, garage sales, letter writing campaigns and phone-a-thons. Then I moved on to bigger projects because I knew I wanted to send a crate of 550 wheelchairs to Honduras before my graduation. This is when I organized a golf tournament and later a walk at my school.

How did your service make a difference? This wheelchair project impacts people hundreds of miles away by giving them the “gift of mobility”. Instead of crawling on the ground with shriveled and bleeding scabs on their knees and legs from crawling, they can get around on the wheelchairs made of lawn chairs and bike tires. It also impacts those of us who are raising the funds. Having the wheelchair on display at the fundraising functions reminds us all how fortunate we are to have two working legs.

How was this service important in your life? When I think of the Hondurans who would have to crawl if they didn’t have these wheelchairs, I remember how grateful I am to be able to walk. This gratitude charges me to want to help others have this “gift of mobility” (Free Wheelchair Mission’s motto). I have been determined to raise the funds to send a crate of wheelchairs to Honduras ever since I heard of the need from my mother. A crate of wheelchairs costs \$35,167, and so far I have raised \$20,000. I know I can reach my goal with the help of my support team – my family, friends and fellow Ursuline students. The Walk I organized was successful and I hope it becomes an annual event. With all the help I’ve received for the fundraising events, I know my Ursuline sisters and I have grown closer because of our spirit of Serviam. The best part about this service project is that I have been able to combine two things that are close to my heart – my school community and the invalids in Honduras.

Carmen Barrett
Senior

Describe your service. Last summer I had the unique opportunity to go on a mission trip to Honduras with about 60 other volunteers. I went to Bonito, a remote village in the mountains, where we built a church. This involved carrying bricks, mixing cement, shoveling mud and completing other manual labor tasks.

How did your service make a difference? I was amazed at how little the people in Bonito have, but how gracious and welcoming they were to us. When we first arrived, their current place of worship was literally falling down. We constructed a building of bricks and mortar to replace a shelter that was an awning made of leaves. The building was merely a small part of the impact we missionaries had on the community. It is my belief that spending time with both the children and the adults giving them hope and guidance was the most beneficial.

How was your service important in your life? As a privileged American, adjusting to Honduras was very difficult. The ever-present heat, limited diet, cold showers, insects and travel sickness left me count-

ing the days until I could return to the comforts of home. When I thought things could get no worse, I witnessed something that changed my mindset completely. While I was working alongside the Honduran villagers at the construction site, one man in particular stood out for me. Jose, a man aged beyond his years, worked as hard as the more able-bodied men on the crew. Jose had an open wound with a bone protruding from his shattered leg. As a poor man, he could not afford medical attention. But he did not complain; he just worked on in quiet dignity. He had almost nothing, but he took what he was given and gave generously.

Against the backdrop of Jose's suffering, my trials and tribulations in Honduras and back home seem ridiculously small. No lesson I have learned from my parents or at school can equate to the message I learned from this simple man. His strength and commitment to the task at hand despite insurmountable difficulties opened my eyes to the significance of love, integrity and humility. Jose truly changed my life.

Sara Aranda
Junior

Describe your service. I did my service at KIPP TRUTH Academy (Knowledge is Power Program). The mission of this public charter school is to provide underserved children in our community with free high quality education. The school day is from 7:30 AM to 5:00 PM Monday to Thursday and 7:30 to 3:00 PM on Friday. There is a mandatory Saturday school once a month and also a required summer school. I attended KIPP from 5th – 8th grades and it changed my life. I had never heard of college or imagined that I would end up coming to a school like Ursuline before going to KIPP. I volunteered on Saturday school by helping one of the teachers test students to find their reading levels. I also went with the students on their community service projects. Now I am mentoring a KIPP student.

How did your service make a difference? By testing for the students' reading levels, it took some load off the teachers, and they were able to help the students as soon as possible since they received the diagnostic information so quickly. In tutoring the students, I try to make things clear for them and I also try to motivate them. I believe in them and tell them so. The students have told me how grateful they are for my help.

How was your service important in your life? When I first went to volunteer at KIPP I thought of it as a good way to get service hours and to give back for everything the school had done for me. I thought that tutoring younger kids wouldn't be too hard. Little did I realize that those kids have so much more to teach me. I learned that each one is a unique individual. Some come from unstable homes. I began to notice how important it was for them to have someone listen to them, talk to them and believe in them. The students helped me value what I have, and they have become my motivation. Honestly, I feel like I need them more than they need me.

Carolyn Oliver
Junior

Describe your service. I have been involved with the Invisible Children Club. This organization, based in San Diego, works to end the use of child soldiers in Central Africa. A local rebel group, called the Lord's Resistance Army, has repeatedly committed atrocities across Central African Republic and South Sudan. For 25 years, the LRA has abducted children, used them as soldiers and sex slaves, slaughtered thousands of civilians and disrupted life in these countries. Our club raises funds and works at mak-

ing the students at our school aware of these atrocities. In doing this we are trying to end violence with peace. This year, with the ideas of other students across the country who are involved in this effort, I have started a new program: Abducted. This program is aimed at a terrible problem in Northern Uganda – the LRA abducts 1 in 6 girls. At our school, that would translate to 133 girls being abducted. Our club members distributed 133 kits that contain ideas about raising funds. Students who volunteer to be part of his program pledge to raise \$50. It is a new way to spark innovation and initiative in the minds and hearts of Ursuline students. Abducted challenges the Ursuline girl to develop leadership skills and understand the patience and hard work that is an integral part of Serviam.

How did your service made a difference? Our club has raised about \$3,700 and our goal is to raise \$7,400, which is the amount needed to buy one radio for a vulnerable village in Central Africa. Armed with radios, isolated villages can warn each other about possible future attacks by the LRA. These warnings can decrease the number of civilian deaths and child abductions. Called the Early Warning Radio Network, this system of communication is a joint effort between Invisible Children, the UN and the Catholic Church. In addition, the Invisible Children group has started construction on the first rehabilitation center for former child soldiers. Rescue teams search for child soldiers to return them home. Schools are being built to prepare boys and girls to be future leaders in their countries. Funds raised for Invisible Children go to these projects.

I am also dedicated to sharing my passion for this work with my fellow students. Changing lives is not just a job for adults. In the last 2 years, our club has grown from five members to 50. This is a great example of how global awareness can positively affect my local community.

How is your service important in your life? This service has helped me discover who I want to be in spirit and what I want to do with my life. I want to be part of a community that works for equality. There are more slaves in the world today than at any other point in history. Women and young children are taken advantage of all across the world. This is the reason I am part of Invisible Children. Getting to know a young woman from Central Africa whose cousin was abducted by the LRA and escaped, has made the issue even more real for me. Invisible Children has a saying: “Proving the universal through the specific”. I plan to follow that motto in everything I do.

Ursuline Academy Dedham, MA

Shannon Lydon, Mary Joseph, Rachel Sulmonte
Seniors

Describe your service. We volunteer at the Dedham Food Pantry, collecting, sorting and distributing food. When other volunteers can't be there, we fill in. When the pantry supplies are running low, we spearhead food drives in local schools and secure permission from local markets to seek donations from their customers.

How did your service make a difference? Our service brought food to a community in desperate need. In addition, we supported the work of an organization that reaches out to a community in need. We are making a positive impact on the lives of individuals who are struggling to make ends meet. In addition to food, they can receive personal care and household items that cannot be purchased with food stamps.

How was this service important in your life? It makes us feel grateful for all that we have been given,

things we have taken for granted in the past. We appreciate more now how blessed we truly are. It also has raised our awareness of the needs that surround us in our community and that we can help those in need and truly make a difference in their lives.

Gabriella Santone
Senior

Describe your service. I have a black belt in Karate, and I volunteer to teach a child with Down Syndrome at a Martial Arts Center. Together with Boris, I learned Karate and integrated new methods to facilitate his martial arts learning.

How has your service made a difference? I gave a boy a chance to fall in love with martial arts, a task that other instructors shrugged off or did not want to take on. Boris received an outlet for his emotions and was finally able to succeed at an art he loved.

How did the service impact your life? Boris taught me how to be patient and change my teaching methods. I began integrating music into our lessons. He would move his feet to the beat and came to memorize what moves he had to do. Boris also taught me unconditional love. He always took lessons with a smile on his face and whenever he accomplished a difficult move, instead of a traditional high-five, I received a hug. I never had to tell him how proud I was of him, because his smile showed me he knew it in his big heart. Although we did have our difficult lessons, Boris taught me how to teach and love.

Megan Wheeler
Senior

Describe your service. I started a Liturgical Dance group at my school. Before teaching the group, I have to spend time choreographing, practicing and reflecting on a dance that will lead our school community into prayer. Our group dances at school masses and other functions.

How did your service make a difference? My service has helped to incorporate liturgical dance into the masses and events at Ursuline. Our dance helps to provide another way for students to become involved both in their school and their faith by being part of the masses.

How was this service important in your life? It allows me to share my love of dance with others in a way that also relates to my faith. It is very satisfying to me to watch other students learn the choreography that I created. It is something I want to continue to do.

Emily Riordan
8th grade

Describe your service. I volunteer with three organizations that serve adults with cognitive disabilities. One is the Stoughton Association of Exceptional Citizens (S.A.E.C.), another is a monthly Bible Study for special needs adults and the third is the Special Olympics Integrated Sports Program. At S.A.E.C. I assist with recreational activities; at the Bible Study, I am a teacher; and, for the Special Olympics, I help kids play seasonal sports, teaching them they can be as physically fit and active as their more typical peers.

How has your service made a difference? I hope my services in these special needs communities have made lasting impressions for those with whom I have been so lucky to work. I hope I make them feel special and loved. I honestly feel honored to know and be so close and have such great relationships with “special” friends.

How was this service important in your life? My service shows me how lucky I am to be able to do all the things I can do. Those of us who are not faced with disabilities should appreciate the challenges “special” people go through on a daily basis. I enjoy seeing them so happy and smiling when I am working with them. I know first hand how wonderful these “special” people are because I am very close to my aunt who has Down’s Syndrome. We see and talk to each other every day. We do puzzles together, play games and talk. She tells me everything and feels she can trust me. We are best friends and I love her so much. I find spending time with my “special” friends very rewarding and look forward to seeing them each time we meet.

Ursuline Academy
St. Louis, MO

Carly Kleinheider
Sophomore

Describe your service. This past summer I went to Nicaragua to help a village get clean water. While I was there, my group dug trenches so pipe could be laid in order to bring safe drinking water to the village. We also helped in the building of a feeding center and restrooms. This involved the challenging job of mixing rock and cement.

How did your service make a difference? The families no longer had to walk miles a day to obtain clean water. The school children could eat in the feeding center with protection from the almost daily rains. The community we served seemed very grateful for our help and saw us as a blessing in their lives.

How was your service important in your life? I realized that it is not all about me. There are so many bad things going on in the world and if I take the time to look around I could really make a difference. Going to Nicaragua has changed my life. Never again will I take what I have and only want more. I am so incredibly blessed and going to Nicaragua has shown me how I can bless other people.

Christine Zobel
Senior

Describe your service. I knit. I knit headbands, scarves, neck warmers and hats for patients of all ages and both genders at the Cancer Center at Barnes Jewish Hospital.

How has your service made a difference? I am building a collection of the knitted items and will give them to the hospital when I have one item for each inpatient. I hope this has a great impact on them.

How was your service important in your life? It is important to me because my grandma, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer on January 24, died on November 13. She is the reason I started knitting and is the reason I will continue. I chose Barnes Jewish because that is one of the places my grandma was treated.

**Ursuline Academy
New Orleans, LA**

Marci Holstein
Senior

Describe your service. I went to a small village eight hours out of Guatemala City with a group of over 50 people to help bring clean water to the families who lived in 25 houses scattered through the mountains. After hiking to the house my small group was assigned, we connected a gutter to the house, drilled holes in the water tank, and then taught them how to use the faucet and when to change the filter. Many days we had the opportunity to play soccer with the kids.

How did your service make a difference? Before we installed the water tanks, the people had to hike miles every day to get somewhat clean water. We heard many stories of babies being swept away by the water. We were saving lives! One day the impact of our work was made real for us. We were playing soccer with some of the kids. They stopped the game to run to the water tank (we had installed) and drank the water. This was the most memorable moment of the trip because we could see what we were there to do. The people of the village embraced us with open arms and smiling faces.

How was this service important in your life? I am truly thankful that I was blessed with the opportunity of going on this trip. The people were inspirational in that they had what we would consider “nothing” and turned it into something. The trip taught me that what really matters is being surrounded by people who love and care for you. We went to help the people of the village, but they were really the ones helping and inspiring us to be better Christians. Next summer I plan to go back, and our task will be installing solar power in the same houses.

Leah Alday
Senior

Describe your service. I volunteered to help with the planning, the preparations and the execution of World Youth Day. This involved script writing, rehearsals, and filming for the opening ceremonies and setup for the various tables, booths and chairs needed for the event. I was in charge of a group of Junior High students, guiding them throughout the activity periods.

How did your service make a difference? I believe that those who attended world youth day (my peers, religious, parents, religion teachers and other volunteers) were inspired by the message of the day: “Like a good neighbor, God’s always there.” I hope that my service, based on my faith, was an inspiration to others. By helping the Junior High kids, I assisted them in learning to listen to everyone’s ideas and grow closer together.

How was this service important in your life? It helped me grow in my faith and developed my desire to serve. There was a lot of work to do, and I had to learn creative ways to balance my schedule so I could fulfill my commitment to this service. The end result, a wonderful World Youth Day experience for so many, was worth the time and effort I had given to this event. Adults I worked with and my friends, too, said that the experience changed me for the better. I had to overcome my natural shyness to be part of a true team effort.

Chloe Mena
Senior

Describe your service. For several years, I have volunteered at two camps for sick kids. One is a camp for kids with cancer. I had attended this camp since I was four years old since I was diagnosed with Neuroblastoma, a rare form of cancer, when I was a toddler. When I changed from being a camper to a counselor, I had responsibility for 12 sick little girls. I helped them with everyday tasks and also comforted them when they were homesick. I also helped at a camp for kids with pulmonary disease.

How did your service make a difference? I wish I knew how I made my campers feel! I only know that when I was in their shoes, I felt free like a butterfly when I was at camp. No doctors, no hospital beds, no constant prodding with needles, no nausea, just kids and lots of fun! I hope I made my campers forget their troubles and feel at peace with life. I feel that I accomplished that. I could tell by the smiles on their faces. By a vote of the entire camp one year, I received the "My Hero" award for my service.

How was your service important in your life? My mom is an Ursuline grad, and she always wanted my brother and me to do community service. So it has been important in my life as long as I can remember. I wanted to give back for what was given to me. "To whom much is given, much is expected." I am a survivor, a fighter, a lover of life, and accustomed to overcoming seemingly insurmountable obstacles, so I wanted to make sure that kids learn to "JUST LIVE, LOVE, LAUGH!"

Bridget Nourse
Senior

Describe your service. I have volunteered for several years as a camp counselor at the John Calvin Presbyterian Summer Camp. I assisted the head teacher in the care of the campers who are between the ages of three and five. I helped ensure that the campers enjoyed a safe, fun and educational summer camp experience.

How did your service make a difference? I helped the kids have a safe and fun summer. They spent time outside playing with friends and learning new skills in a safe, Christian environment.

How was this service important in your life? There is nothing more fulfilling for me than giving my time to help better the life of someone else. I especially enjoy volunteering with children because they are our future. This service has also helped me discover my passion for educating children.

Ursuline Academy
Wilmington, DE

Allison Buenaga and Myriam Grise
Seniors

Describe your service. We researched, proposed, presented, planned and executed a service trip for 10 Ursuline Academy students to Piura, Peru. Each day we would select a service activity. We built hous-

es; delivered food, clothing and furniture to the needy; cared for the sick at the church-funded hospice; taught English at a local school; and conducted “vacation bible school”; visited young girls at a local orphanage; and visited seniors at a nursing home.

How did your service make a difference? Physically, we did many things for the people of Puirá and helped make their lives a bit better. Emotionally, we helped to strengthen their hope. Everyday we could see the difference we were making through the smiles on their faces and the many hugs we received. The gratitude they showed us was the most rewarding thing of the whole trip.

How was this service important in your life? Our outlook on life was changed. We get caught up in having the newest technology and clothes. The people in Puirá lead fuller lives because they have strong faith and a focus on God and family and not on materialistic things. The people taught us to be happy with what we have and always be ready to help others. We saw the face of Christ in them. They strengthened our commitment to Serviam.

Katie Desch
Senior

Describe your service. I volunteered with the elderly and with children. At Wilmington Hospital, I was assigned to the Acute Care of the Elderly center. I spent time with several of the patients, assisting them with tasks of daily life. I also had the opportunity to assist several doctors and nurses and meet different patients.

At the Delaware Art Museum I worked with younger kids, being responsible for them during their time at the Museum.

How did your service make a difference? I gave joy to the elderly I worked with by listening to their stories, talking to them and caring for them. I tried to make the jobs of the doctors and nurses a bit easier. I also welcomed visitors, making them feel at home.

At the Art Museum, I taught the children how to cooperate with each other and to step out of their comfort zones to meet new people. The kids saw me as a role model of what they should be doing.

How was your service important in your life? I learned many life lessons. I came to appreciate the elderly. I had the chance to “step in their shoes” for a little while to see what they are experiencing. I wanted to help those who needed assistance eating, going to the bathroom and those who have no visitors or lunch buddy. I learned a lot from their stories, too.

Veronica Marvel
Senior

Describe your service. Last summer I volunteered as a Student Intern/Volunteer at Pennsylvania Hospital in Center City Philadelphia. I was stationed on the Labor and Delivery and Maternity floors. I did a lot of clerical work since they were short handed. I also got to be a part of admitting women to the APU unit and had the opportunity to watch the basics being performed. I also visited the patients’ rooms to refill water and provide new towels or extra pillows.

How did your service make a difference? I was surprised to find that my service was really appreciated by the staff and the patients. One person stands out in my mind – Bev, who was the clerk for the Labor and Delivery Unit. I came to appreciate the huge job that was hers; basically, she made the whole unit run smoothly. She multi-tasked all day long. I was able to relieve some of the stress that built up during those hectic days. I'll never forget seeing her beaming face when she saw me swiping my ID card through the door. She enjoyed talking with me, and I know I helped her with her multiple tasks. My service was not saving the world, but I learned that helping others even in small ways is important.

How was the service important in your life? It gave me a snapshot of a possible career. I was also able to help others. It was an honor to be a part of such an amazing hospital with an awesome staff truly dedicated to their patients. I have a huge respect for doctors and nurses and the job they do every day taking care of patients. Sometimes my days were boring, but I grew to understand that I was performing tasks that were very helpful to them, and they often told me how grateful they were to have me there. Since the patients' stays are short, I wasn't able to form relationships with them. However I was there for the birth of a family friend, and that was exciting.

Ursuline College Pepper Pike, OH

Fashion Focus Student Organization

Describe the service. Fashion Focus members produced and modeled in fashion shows to raise funds for social service agencies and the Sr. Charlotte Trenkamp Scholarship Fund.

How did the service make a difference? The fashion shows produced income for ten different agencies and for the scholarship fund. The agencies were able to serve their clientele, and two deserving students received scholarships to Ursuline College.

How was this service important in the lives of those who participated? Producing the fashion shows allowed us to make a difference in our community while giving the participants practical experience for the future. Since our fellow students receive the scholarships, we personally know those students who benefitted from our efforts.

Student Nurses of Ursuline College (SNUC)

Describe the service. The SNUC does wonderful things all year, but especially with "Cookies and Carols for St. Angela Center", their outreach to the retired and infirmed Ursuline Sisters of Cleveland. The student nurses baked cookies and delivered them to the St. Angela Center, a skilled nursing facility for the Ursulines. They stayed to sing Christmas Carols for and with the sisters.

How did the service make a difference? The sisters were grateful for the visit, and it helped keep them connected to the College, which shares a campus with the Ursulines and the St. Angela Center.

How was this service important in the lives of those who participated? The students realize that they are blessed to have the Ursulines residing on the same campus with the College. The students appreciated the opportunity to dedicate their time and talent to the sisters who have been such generous sponsors of Ursuline College. The smiles of gratitude on the sisters' faces will stay with them forever.

Ursuline College Athletics

Describe the service. Student athletes did yard work for elderly residents, as referred by the Tri City Consortium on Aging. They raked, weeded, trimmed and removed debris from the yards of those residents identified as needing help.

How did the service make a difference? The residents who received the help were grateful that their yards were tended to because they are unable to do the work themselves. They appreciated having their homes look cared for.

How was the service important in the lives of those who participated?

Working in yards allowed us to get to know the residents personally and see who was benefitting from our efforts. Looking at before and after pictures truly brought home the feeling of accomplishment and pride to be of service to our community.

Villa Angela-St. Joseph High School Cleveland, OH

Kaja Kijauskas
Senior

Describe your service. I volunteered at All Souls Cemetery in Kirtland, OH. The cemetery lacked a organized system of identifying the Veterans' grave stones. After seeing the lack of care and maintenance of these Government headstones, my math teacher Mr. Minades asked me to get a group of students together to catalog the graves for the cemetery's system.

How did your service make a difference? We provided a record of veterans' names and the location of their gravesites. Many families expressed appreciation for our efforts, as did veteran organizations and groups. The Cuyahogo County Council honored us for our work at the cemetery.

How was this service important in your life? This service allowed me to step outside myself and see the good I was doing for others; not just the families of the veterans, but the veterans themselves. I was making sure that the memory of the men and women who served our country would not be forgotten. That was my greatest accomplishment.

Emily Oligny
Junior

Describe your service. I volunteer on a regular basis at the Euclid Animal Shelter. I mostly take care of cats, cleaning their cages, their litter boxes, sweeping and mopping the cat room. I also take care of the smaller animals such as hamsters, snakes, chinchillas, ferrets, guinea pigs, birds, hermit crabs and the gecko.

How did your service make a difference? The other volunteers appreciate my service because then they are freed from those tasks to do other needed jobs at the shelter.

How was this service important in your life? Volunteering at the animal shelter has changed my life in so many ways. It has made me less selfish, and it has taught me to respect all life. It has helped me become a happier person, knowing that I'm helping to save the lives of many of God's creatures.

Jaelyn Rogers
Sophomore

Describe your service. I was a camp counselor and lifeguard at Camp Cedar Hills. I helped conduct activities and group games, as well as leading my groups of kids each week.

How did your service make a difference? I helped ensure the safety of the campers and make sure they had fun. I was also able to help with kitchen duty and other jobs around the camp. I helped the kids enjoy their summer vacation.

How was this service important in your life? I hope I served as a role model for the kids, and I tried to make sure they had as much fun at the camp as I did when I was a camper. I grew attached to some of the kids, and I love all the campers, fellow counselors, as well as the other staff. I walked away with an extended family that I wouldn't trade for the world.