

**Network of Sacred Heart Schools  
Summer Service Projects - 2008**

**ISEA (Institute for Social and Environmental Analysis) –**

**The Sprout Creek Farm, Poughkeepsie, NY**

**Dates: July 20-26**

**Participants: Coed – Entering 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

The project provides Network students the opportunity to deepen their spirituality in a setting that is inherently inviting of awe and wonder at God's creation. The nature of the farm environment requires tremendous learning and thinking about many things that most young people have never experienced: among them - animal husbandry, sustainable agriculture, gardening, construction.

What did you learn that will significantly affect your life?

- I learned that there are many simple things I can do to help the environment even when one lives in the city
- How to get along with a variety of people and really become a solid unit/family-teamwork
- How to respect nature
- How to help the world
- Self-confidence is necessary in service
- You always have a Sacred Heart family to turn to
- How important recycling is
- Learning about composting
- Farmers don't get enough money; respect from society-also-I gained a deep respect for nature
- I feel a lot closer to the land
- How much compost can help the earth
- The significance of conservation
- Composting
- Not to waste food (unfortunately, I don't have a chicken bucket at home)
- How to work with others, specifically those who are not working for the same reasons I am
- Composting and facts about voting
- Patience-Waiting for food, not wasting
- Ways to save energy
- Appreciating farms and animals and the environment more
- How to work well with others
- How to be comfortable in a coed environment with nature
- It is our jobs as humans to respect all life in all forms
- I learned a lot about myself, and I've realized that I don't need to change to impress others. I feel like I've made great friends just by being me
- Ways to keep the environment clean and to consume healthier foods which support local farmers
- I learned a real lesson in responsibility. I think that by seeing the amount of care that goes into farming, I have a new understanding of what it is to take charge of something that will affect so many lives
- Composting
- The fact that I need to take showers to conserve water

## Project Harvest –

The Sprout Creek Farm, Poughkeepsie, NY

Dates:

**\*\*August 3-8 – Girls only**

**\*\*August 10-15 – Girls only**

**Participants: Entering 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> Grades (see above for sessions)**

Project Harvest serves the many groups who benefit from the Poughkeepsie Farm Project, a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), and those who work and eat at the soup kitchen (the Lunch Box).

### From the students:

I lived milking goats and cows.

I am now more conscious in my decisions involving food. I feel more exposed to the world in which we live.

I am considering volunteering at a soup kitchen regularly. I am going to buy more local food. I am also going to inform others of the information I have received.

I learned that I can make changes that affect the world.

I am going to try to reduce my ecological footprint.

Some of the work on the farm was really hard but milking the cows was the most challenging.

I will try to turn off the lights and faucet more often ó take shorter showers.

I learned about hunger, food, water, and world issues. I learned about how farms work and how animals are taken care of.

We are blessed to have this Earth and we should share it and take care of it together.

To work in my garden at home ó plant more vegetables and fruit instead of buying them.

## Juvenile Justice – Chicago

Dates: July 5-13

Participants: Female – Entering 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades

Students will look at different support structures that work to help young people who are at risk for a variety of reasons (prevention programs, alternative high schools, etc.) Students will learn about how the State of Illinois makes decisions about the prosecution of juvenile offenders as well as particular case-studies.

### What some of the students said about the project:

Awesome ó I loved the peer jury experience.

Advocacy about kids in jail/prison might be hard because people don't have sympathy (usually) for those kids who seem to be detained because of only their misguided actions. It's a challenge though worthwhile.

I did not realize how brain development and trauma are part of the lives of some of the kids in the system.

I would like to establish a peer-tutoring program for students afterschool.

## Helping Hands & Hearts – Greenwich

**Dates: July 5 – 12**

**Participants: Coed – Must be 16 years of age by July 1, 2008**

Students will work alongside future home owners as they build homes and discuss the broader issues of housing and homelessness. The school has a relationship with Habitat for Humanity in Bridgeport.

### **After School Learning – Bloomfield Hills**

**Dates: June 30 – July 11**

**Participants: Coed – Entering 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

We will be working with children from Pontiac. In the mornings, we will be doing educational enrichment and in the afternoons, we will be doing hands-on learning through field trips and other means.

#### Quotes from a Power Point made by the students:

Today we met the kids. We went to two activities with them. Then we ate lunch. Later we took them bowling. We saw many of the kids out of their comfort zones, bowling or being at Sacred Heart. After bowling, we went to the Lighthouse and played on the playground with them.

Today we learned that bonds with the children are easily made. Just after one day we already have a strong relationship with them. Bowling with the kids was a good way to bond with them. Hopefully, these bonds will grow stronger within these two weeks.

Today we ventured to the Cranbrook Science Museum with the Pontiac children. While we would have enjoyed ourselves, the kids were mainly interested in the bats. We were given a snack and that made us believe the trip was over. Psych! We went on a short nature walk where we saw a log cabin/tee-pee replica. Everyone's exhaustion is setting in and naps are becoming more frequent.

As Shaun has said, "All good things must come to an end." Today was our last trip with the children and needless to say, it was very happy and sad all wrapped into one. We went to Metro Beach and the kids seemed to really enjoy it. At first we played for an hour in an open field before having grilled hot dogs and chips. After a short trip to the playground, we went to the pool. Everyone had a great time. It wasn't until we arrived at PATH that it hit us: the trip was finally coming to a close. Tears were shed, but everyone is healing fine. We know we are leaving them with new lessons learned, new friends, and a million memories.

### **Clown Academy – Princeton, NJ**

**Dates: July 19<sup>th</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>**

**Participants: Coed – Entering 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

Clown Academy is a Network Service Project designed for students entering grades 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>. Converting boundless energy into creative expression is only one of our goals. Besides all the fun the students have at Clown Academy, they achieve serious educational results. Issues of teamwork, self-confidence and presentation, goal setting and reaching are among the benefits yielded through this network project. Students will be taught such circus skills as juggling, unicycle riding, stilt walking, tight rope walking, globe walking, and swinging on a trapeze. Each student will also create a clown character complete with make-up, costume and wig. After

learning slapstick and pratfalls each student will perform in a clown gag. Giving our students the chance to showcase their new talents is important, so the project will culminate in a circus performance held at Princeton Academy of the Sacred Heart.

From students:

The Clowning Academy was a very exciting and unique experience for me. I learned many skills. I also learned valuable lessons about not giving up and that I need to work to achieve what I want. I made many new friends. I experienced all of those amazing smiles on the children's faces as they watched us perform.

One of us went into a room with a little boy while receiving chemotherapy. It was very inspirational giving back to not only the patients, but also their family members during their hard times.

Clowning Academy taught me how to be a teacher and how to have patience because everything does not come easily.

This whole work service project has really been an amazing experience. I now plan to take my skills into hospitals, birthday parties, and other little things that children would really enjoy. One of the greatest gifts in life is to be able to put a smile on someone else's face, and that is exactly what Clown Academy is about.

**We Serve all Brands! – Omaha**

**Dates: July 20<sup>th</sup> - August 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Participants: Coed – Entering 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

This project will have a double focus: students will serve children at two different sites and also learn about careers in allied health fields and early childhood education. Munroe Meyer Institute on the University of Nebraska Medical Center Campus is a nationally recognized program for children with serious disabilities.

From the students:

“Staying in a house with nine other girls for two weeks was overwhelming at first, but I can't imagine my life without these girls. Meeting and working with underprivileged and disabled kids has opened my eyes and changed my perspective of the world.”

“I have had such an extraordinary experience so close to home. I have met so many wonderful people, both in my community and from across the country, that I know their impact on me will be something I will feel for years to come.”

“On this service trip, I was able to befriend nine amazing and gifted girls; girls that in the future will change the world for the better. Despite the fact that I was the teacher for the kids I worked with, they taught me priceless lessons about life everyday. One of which was that what I was doing was making a difference, even if it was a small one because I knew that one kid in the world was smiling and laughing because of me, and that is all that matters.”

“To be able to describe an experience like this, which is so rare and unique is impossible. There isn't a word or sentence that explains the connections, friendships, laughs, memories, tears, hardships, and adventures that I have shared with ya'll.”

From the students;

I feel more confident and I also feel like my views on life have been expanded by the experiences I had with children held back by a disability and children held back by their family life, neither of which I have.

An insight: I remember how small my problems are in the grand scheme of things and just how happy and successful people can be despite their problems.

I loved living with nine strangers and in turn forming friendships with them. But most of all, I loved knowing that I made a difference, however small, in a disabled or underprivileged child's life.

Most important to me is that on these service trips do change you and help shape you into the person you will become. I will be hard making people understand because it was so amazing!

I want to share how much people need to look beyond the surface to the actual person ó don't look at the disabilities!

It is hard to explain what an extraordinary experience I have had here!

### **ISSP (International Summer Service Project) – Seattle**

**Dates: July 26-August 3**

**Limited to 12 students**

**Participants: Female – Entering 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

Participants in this project will experience firsthand the international nature of the Schools of the Sacred Heart when they live and work in community to serve the elderly, poor, and marginalized of many nationalities in the greater Seattle area. Students interested in this project should be open to learning about another culture and have an appreciation for diversity. Reflection is a key element of this project.

From the students:

Serving the men at St. Martins had a big impact on me. It opened my eyes to what people have to suffer through everyday like knowing where they will sleep at night or where they will get food. It is just a huge reality check on my life and also the changes that need to be brought to society.

This experience completely changed the way I view the homeless. For the first time I saw them as people just like me.

### **Serving Immigrant Children/A Favor de la Imigracion – Houston**

**Dates: June 7-14**

**Participants: Coed – Entering 10<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grades**

The students will be working with two schools, one a bilingual charter school serving mostly Central American children who need work on their English skills and academic skills in grades 1-5; the other mostly Mexican children ages 3 and 4 who need school readiness skills and one-on-one-work.

From the students:

I have seen people from all over the country who I don't think I would ever have met before.

I loved this project as I was able to spend one-on-one time with kids from east Houston.

I feel like I made a big difference in the people's lives and helped in the school.

I loved serving the children and seeing their progress was so rewarding.

### **Katrina Krewe of Hope – New Orleans**

**Dates: June 28 – July 5**

**Participants: Coed – Must be 16 years of age by July 1, 2008**

Students who participate in this project will be bearers of hope and will perform significant service to counteract the ongoing (possibly forgotten) struggles in the city of New Orleans during this post -Katrina era. By experiencing the rich cultural heritage of New Orleans students will have the opportunity to experience diversity in a unique manner. Besides the service dimension of the program, there will be educational input, demonstrating how Katrina unveiled some key national environmental and social issues.

### **St. Madeleine Sophie Summer Service Project – El Cajon, CA**

**Dates: June 15 - 21**

**Participants: Female – Entering 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades**

This service project offers the opportunity to work with, and assist in, the training of developmentally disabled adults, from 18 through Senior citizens, at the St. Madeleine Sophie Center in El Cajon, California. You will be helping the staff at SMSC and more importantly interacting with the adults. You will be working on different projects: cooking, Art, Computers, gardening and supportive employment. You will spend time reflecting on your experience and developing a sense of community among those you serve, as well as those with whom you live and work.

#### What some of the students said about the project:

I will share the knowledge I have of disabled adults who are usually an under estimated population.

I have learned not to judge others by their physical or social appearance.

I was able to give my help to the consumers but I learned that they shared their love and internal faith with me.

I was able to get to know the consumers and other Network students.

I was helped to talk with people I did not know and learn to build relationships.

I was able to interact with a population that I have never interacted with before. I was able to see how they are not as different as I thought.

The consumers had so much to share.

I can now build community with others that are different than mw because I am not able to fine the similarities.

I will encourage my friends to attend this project and tell them how comfortable this project was.