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In Deed: A Survey of Programs and Activities Related to Identity and Mission: Regis University

Editorial Board

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capacity. It's a reciprocal relationship."

The Learning Bank is an adult literacy program that grew in response to the needs of the impoverished West Baltimore community in which it was established. Members of the community met and decided they wanted to switch from the one-on-one tutoring system under which the program began eleven years ago to a more formal classroom structure. Today, two dozen Loyola students work with the adult students on their reading and math skills.

Loyola's partnership with The Learning Bank is "a wonderful asset" to the program, says Mary Judith Schmelz, RSM, director of the Learning Bank. "It enables us to provide for our adult learners the kind of individualized attention they need to really make progress."

Community service, of course, can be an end in and of itself. Loyola, however, incorporates the service ideal into a much broader landscape. Service is a teaching tool to help students re-evaluate the purpose of their own lives, to work for advocacy and social change, to seek out the genuine elements in a spiritual life.

About two dozen faculty members incorporate service into their course offerings. Students perform a certain

number of hours of service and discuss the service as it relates to their course of study. They also write papers on the service experience, discussing, for example, what it means to them and how it relates to the course curriculum. For certain courses students can spend even more time in community service and receive a fourth, or extra, credit for their work and their discussion of it. Many students, of course, perform community service without relating it directly to their work in a specific course.

One November afternoon about thirty students who were performing service in conjunction with their course work got together a discussion.

"I felt like I was an invader, that I didn't really belong there," said one student, referring to his walk through a tough section of Baltimore on his way to a soup kitchen. "It was not a place where we belonged, there was an uncomfortableness to it. But then I came to the realization that this was my turf. It's very much a part of my world. It's very easy to separate oneself psychologically from it. But I feel a real interdependence now. 'That's not a place where I belong?' Why not! One thing that I have come to realize is that it's a place where I very much belong."

"When I received the assignment," another student

said, "all these bells and whistles went off about how [I was] going to have to volunteer. Being mandated to serve soup! I said, 'Whoa, how is this going to work if I'm being forced to volunteer?' But this made it a priority for me. Doing it for class was the catalyst for doing it. It wasn't why I did it."

Said another, "Serving in the downtown area gets you out of your routine. For these people who live there, their lives are changing every day. For you, little things don't mean a lot. For them, little things can mean everything."

"I saw people there like my father and me," another student pointed out. "I wanted to find out what got them there—not those that are poor to begin with, their entire lives, but those who became poor more recently. You realize that this could happen to you. It makes me think. I should start thinking about these things day to day, because one day I could be there."

Such comments are common during reflection group sessions at Loyola. It becomes obvious that the act of performing service can be more than just a good deed. It can turn students inward as well as goad them into recognizing that the world they inhabit is not simply one of suburbs and

college campuses. As Fr. Brown describes it, "There are other lenses through which to view the world."

Yet debate still rages at the college about whether or not service has a rightful place as part of the academic curricula. Much depends upon the course of study involved and the commitment of the professor teaching the course.

After three years of formally bringing service into the classroom, Fr. Brown says, "I think everybody's still trying to figure out if and how it works."

Article by Louis Berney

Regis University

Denver, Colorado

Regis University educates men and women of all ages to take leadership roles and to make a positive impact in a changing society. Standing within the Catholic and United States traditions, Regis is inspired by the Jesuit vision of Ignatius Loyola. This vision challenges students to attain inner freedom to make intelligent choices. Throughout this process students examine and attempt to answer the fundamental question: "How ought we to live?"



The Regis Community celebrates the Mass of the Holy Spirit.

Each Fall, when Regis welcomes the new academic year, the Jesuit Mission Group, a task force consisting of Jesuit and lay members of the Regis community, sets goals to deepen the understanding of the Jesuit mission throughout the University. The Jesuit Mission Group plans activities and serves as a resource for individuals, staffs or departments. Beginning with the traditional fall kickoff, the Mass of the Holy Spirit and University Convocation, Regis continues a series of events developed by the Jesuit Mission Group.

New faculty and staff mis-
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sion orientation luncheons are held with Regis President Michael J. Sheeran, S.J., who gives an overview of Jesuit education and Regis's role as a Jesuit university. At "Conversations" dinners faculty from the three schools—Regis College, the School for Profession Studies and the School for Health Care Professions—discuss *Conversations* magazine. An advent lecture series also addresses the past, present and future of Jesuit education, as members of the University share their personal reflections and visions for the future of Jesuit education. There are also

opportunities for those who wish to explore the possibility of undertaking individual spiritual direction during Lent. During Spring and Fall, the Regis University Faith and Justice Institute provides programming that develops awareness of justice issues and examines specific themes pertinent to those issues.

In keeping with the Jesuit tradition, the Center for Service Learning was formed to cultivate in students an understanding of their personal responsibilities and an appreciation for the diversity of the global community. As part of a Regis

University education, students are challenged not only to graduate, but to be "men and women for others." The Center's goal is to provide an educational experience for students while instilling in them the notion that service to one's community is a lifelong pursuit. The students who participate will gain an understanding of their ability to affect their communities for the better.

During the first three months of the 1993/94 academic year, 325 of the one thousand traditional undergraduates at Regis University performed 5600 hours of community service.



Regis Freshmen work on a home during Freshmen Service Day 1994.

Without mandating service, the Center has developed a program so comprehensive that students who pass through four years at Regis will have been exposed to service through their academic study, athletics, club involvement, and/or campus life.

Programs and services offered by the Center for Service Learning include a Volunteer Clearinghouse which facilitates placement for students who aren't enrolled in a service learning course, but would like to do service work. Freshman Service Day puts new freshmen in a variety of service learning settings as part of their orientation. The Cascade Project works with youth who are academically and socially challenged. Each year approximately fifty Regis students commit four hours per week to spend time with a child from a local elementary, middle or high school. The Cascade Project is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. There are many other options provided locally from the Center for Service Learning including Into the Streets, a one day national service initiative.

During Spring Break each year, students travel to Nueva Rosita, Mexico and Belize City, Belize to participate in service projects and learn about each of the cultures. Families in both countries host the students by housing, feeding and inviting them to participate in

their family activities.

A unique community service project at Regis is Romero House. Romero House is a residence for University students located in the North Denver Mexican barrio where Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and parish is the Catholic spiritual center. Members of Romero House commit themselves to building a Christian faith community in the heart of the barrio, which is a fifteen-minute ride and a cultural world away from the campus. They freely share with one another their lives, their faith, their commitment to justice and their desire to live simply among disadvantaged people.

The Master of Arts in Community Leadership, offered in the School for Professional Studies, helps to form sensitive and articulate leaders who can serve humanity in a variety of educational, church, and societal environments. Special features include a student community drawn from around the world, a flexible learning format designed for full-time working adults, a welcoming of families with free child care for children and teens and the availability of a full-time staff for year round consultation.

Finally, Regis University received a grant in the amount of \$25,558 to create the Northwest Partnership Addressing Literacy₃



Rockhurst students mixed fun with community service at a campus-wide service project during Freshman Orientation.

(NPAL). The grant provides each of the participating locations with specific hardware and educational software, training of school librarians and students, and involves parents and the community in the grant-related activities at each school.

Participating in NPAL along with Regis are a local elementary and middle school. Students from Regis serve as mentors to students at both schools and children are encouraged to continue their studies at Regis's Dayton Memorial Library during evening hours and during weekend hours, with mentors from the University

Rockhurst College Kansas City, Missouri

SERVING THE
LESS FORTUNATE
IS THE FIRST
LESSON AT
ROCKHURST

When more than two hundred people, mostly freshman students, showed up at the first all-campus service project at Rockhurst College, it signalled a new era at Rockhurst. Karen Every, newly-appointed director of Service Learning at Rockhurst

her eyes. "The students' response was tremendous," she says. "The project clicked for everybody."

The project, titled the Finucane Service Project, was launched during freshman orientation week in 1993. It was named after the Rev. William Finucane, S.J., director of campus ministry at Rockhurst, who died in 1993. Fr. Bill, as he liked to be called, was beloved by student and community members for his dedication to service and for his fun-loving, jovial personality. He died in April of 1993, a few months short of the project's launch.

"Students decided it had to be named after him" says Every. "His

vision was the key for the success of the project." Originally, committee members wanted to send students throughout the city for this. Fr. Finucane insisted, however, that the focus should be on the immediate neighborhood, which is composed mostly of low-income and minority households. "He wanted to cement our relationship with our neighbors. . . to help students learn about them, not to fear them," says Every.

"To this date, Fr. Finucane provides us with the instrument of measure for the projects," Every adds.

Traditionally, the students who organized activities during