

# Welcome to Community Service

Community Service has always been a tradition at St. Ursula Academy. Thousands of students have been touched by these ideals of Christian service.

St. Ursula Academy's mission stating that we are "*a nurturing Catholic educational community that unleashes the potential of each student to become a woman of faith, integrity and courage committed to building a better world*" is the underlying philosophy that informs our goals and programming in the Community Service Office.

St. Ursula hopes to instill in our young women a passion for helping those in need. As an office, we do not have required service hours for each student. Instead, we hope that each student understands that service is an expected part of the culture of our school. Therefore, it is presumed that students will participate in service in some capacity throughout their four years at St. Ursula. Our service programs provide opportunities to be active in our community, develop relationships, and practice our faith.

The service program was designed to achieve the following goals:

- Inspire students to leave their comfort zones and serve those who are marginalized in our society.
- Create a culture in the school in which service is an expectation and part of the learning process.
- Educate students and school community about issues of social justice.

## ANNUAL EVENTS

**Canned Food Drive:** An entire school effort to collect canned goods, dry goods, and blankets for those in need in our local community and in Appalachia. This drive is held in November and food is delivered in time for the Thanksgiving holiday. We have been able to support 5 local pantries, as well as 200 families in Smith, Kentucky with the proceeds of this event.



**Personal Care Drive:** A drive to help non-profit agencies support those in need by donating products for basic hygiene and health. Items include toothbrushes, deodorant, combs, razors, socks and underwear, as well as old reading glasses, school supplies, and household items. Usually held in February.

## **MISSION COLLECTION for DEVELOPING NATIONS**

A monetary collection during every Advisory period. The Mission Collection has become a part of our mission beyond our nation and has truly become a tangible expression of our care of others...our service to the poorest of the poor through donations. The goal for our students is to donate \$5.00 per month to support various non-profit agencies in developing nations.

Some examples of PROJECTS we supported last year:

- The donations we sent to Kenya, Africa helped the HOPE COMMUNITY CENTRE build a kitchen and a dormitory for a school where young children go who have lost their parents.
- The money we sent to Nicaragua helped empower and inspire folks in Managua, where they have a community center that provides literacy classes, music, and cultural classes to raise the spirits of the poor.

## **SERVICE PROGRAMS**

**Bulldog Buddies:** The St. Ursula Academy Bulldog Buddies Program is a tutoring and mentoring program designed to foster the growth of students from local Elementary Schools. The high school mentors and their Buddies will engage **weekly** in a variety of academic and social activities in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment. Many of the children at these schools come from families that are dealing with difficult issues. As a result, the children themselves may be struggling with behavior and attention problems, as well as low self-esteem. It is our hope that through the sensitivity and support of the St. Ursula buddy, the younger students will begin to feel better about themselves, realize how much they have to offer, and recognize the great opportunities that exist for them outside their present situations. In addition, our students will grow as people as they interact with those different from themselves and realize how important it is to contribute to our community. Our Bulldog Buddies Program also sponsors enrichment programs at each site several times a year. The enrichment activities focus on Music, Art, and Technology. We work in collaboration with the Art Museum and our St. Ursula music and technology departments for these activities.

**Open to Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors**

**Contact: Mrs. Kemper - Community Service Office**



## **SERVICE CO-CURRICULARS**



**Student Outreach Services (SOS):** The goal of this group is to motivate and coordinate students to do service outreach in the greater Cincinnati community. The student leaders of this Co-curricular apply to be part of a leadership board. These student leaders decide on various agencies at which they would like to volunteer. Then they create presentations about their outreach opportunity and recruit other students to volunteer with them at a particular non-profit agency. The service commitment is most often once a month. A few examples of the agencies we partner with are:

- Bethany House Shelter
- Ronald McDonald House
- St. Margaret's Hall
- Starfire
- Dress for Success

Open to Sophomores through Seniors on a first come, first serve basis.

**Due to the increased participation by Freshmen in SOS, we have created:**

**SOS Rookie Group:** This outreach group introduces the Freshmen to a wide variety of service in a larger group setting. This group is open to freshmen only, and will have 6 events, 3 in the first half of the year and 3 in the second half of the year. Throughout the year, students will have the opportunity to experience several types of service, such as working with the elderly, light rehab, assisting the disabled and volunteering with children. These opportunities will help students decide which type of service suits them best.

**Open to all classes**

**Contact: Ms. Kemper and Mrs. Platz - Community Service Office**



**Catholic Social Teaching Action Team (CSTAT):** CSTAT is a network of Catholic Schools and parishes which assist students, educators, and ministers in engaging in peace and justice activities. The work of CSTAT is rooted in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. The CSTAT group at SUA will be dedicated to providing

opportunities for students to learn more about social justice issues such as fair trade products, homelessness, and poverty. Then the members of this club will help to lead and plan social justice advocacy activities. **There will be 2-4 St. Ursula students chosen each year to be leaders of this group and also represent St. Ursula on the city wide CSTAT planning with other participating schools and parishes.**

**Open to all classes**

**Contact: Ms. Kemper - Community Service Office**

## **IMMERSION SERVICE EXPERIENCES**

### **Appalachian Delivery Trips:**

The Appalachian delivery trips are outreach programs designed to serve the needs of the community in and around Harlan County, Kentucky. This year there will 1 trip in which the St. Ursula community collects a variety of items from food to personal care products and delivers them to Lucy's Mission at Martin's Fork prior to Thanksgiving as part of our Mission Trips Program. While there, students visit with the people in the community and assist where needed.

**Open to all grades, priority given to upperclassmen**

**Application Required – announcements will be made when applications are available**

**Contact: Mrs. Platz, Community Service Office**

**Summer Mission Trips:** While immersing students in a different culture, mission trip experiences foster a sensitivity and appreciation for the struggles of the poor and the disenfranchised. This appreciation is becoming more and more critical in our increasing diverse and global world. Mission trips help to broaden the scope of community service to which our students are invited. Summer Mission Trips focus on service to our local, national, and international communities. The trips are usually for one week during the month of June. In the past, we have had trips in Over-the-Rhine in Cincinnati, Ohio; Camden, New Jersey; Billings, Montana; and Managua, Nicaragua.

**International Mission Trips:** Due to the scope and preparation needed for international mission trips, these trips are offered every other year. The information and application process also begins in the Fall for these experiences versus the late winter as for the other trips.

**Open to rising Juniors and Seniors, Application and interview Required – announcements will be made when applications are available – usually in late winter.**

**Contact: Ms. Kemper Community Service Office**



*St. Angela Merici instructed her Sisters to “Build community wherever you go.” With these encouraging words we offer a variety of service programs to enable our students to do just that.*

*How can YOU get involved? Apply to be a member of one of our service organizations, join one of our co-curriculars or consider taking an immersion trip! Whether you choose to be part of the Community Service Program through SUA or not, every student can participate in service by collecting, donating, promoting and supporting service both in and out of St. Ursula Academy, as we “put our whole soul into the enterprise we have undertaken” the same way St. Angela counseled her faithful followers to do.*

*As Freshmen, we hope the students begin to learn about our service opportunities and actively engage in the annual school Service Events. We have limited the out of school opportunities for Freshmen because we want them to adjust to life as a St. Ursula student and explore what interests them most before they commit to a specific service opportunity.*

*We will ensure that our students have a strong experience of working for and with those in need in our local community and beyond our borders. Parental participation is always encouraged. Please feel free to contact any of the activity moderators listed.*

*Thank you for your support!*

