

# Serving, Voting, & Speaking Out:

## Bonner Students Reflect on Civic Engagement

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Vhat is Civic Engagement?



at the local, state, national, and even international level. All I had to do, or so I thought, was to get students involved whether it be on the playground or the classroom, and they would soon be attending school board meetings and even running for leadership positions.

When the foundation began its extensive research initiative, lead by Drs. Jim and Cheryl Keen, I understood it somewhat begrudgingly, knowing that such investigation was necessary but hardly worth it. I assumed I knew the program and its outcomes.

Imagine my shock when one of the first things we learned was that students in the Bonner program were no more likely to vote than the average student that were holed up in their dorm rooms playing Nintendo five hours a day.

Quickly my shock turned to anger as I became incensed that these students, in whom I had invested so much, both in terms of the Bonner's money and all my time, creativity and commitment, were just as unlikely to vote as the other uninvolved students without the experience Bonner programs offered. How could a student that was engaged in the communit not commit to engage in what is the most fundamental responsibility of our society: to vote.

I spent the next year traveling to colleges and visiting with students, asking them the question of voter apathy: why didn't they vote and what was the leading cause or factor of their politica indifference? I received two main answers on this quest:

First, I learned that the reasons students didn't vote were because we had not asked them to

do so. My initial reaction was, again, exasperation. Why should I have to instruct them to vote Doesn't living in a democracy give a person enough of a reason to get to the polls every couple of years? What I came to understand, after I calmed down enough to listen, was that individuals in programs like Bonner were committed to our expectations and while they may not have felt compelled to vote like their peers, if it was a clear expectation of the Boner program that they indeed do vote, than they were more than willing to comply. In the setting of a closely-kn community, individuals feel compelled to act publicly in their most significant civic duty. The private engagement is what supports and instructs the public act.

Secondly, I found that these students were in fact disappointed in me for being disappointed in them! After all, I had never asked them to vote. There was nothing in the Bonner handbook, nothing in our trainings or our orientations that said we expected students to vote. If I wanted

## "Civic engagement

is the decision to
participate intentionally
as a citizen in the
democratic process,
actively engaging in
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service."

stating students cannot engage in any political activities, including registering people to vote, had an unfortunate deep effect on squelching passion students have for service and interest in politics. Because more than half of the students involved in the Bonner program are enrolled in AmeriCorps, this unintended reality has sometime wreaked havoc on our message and expectations of civic engagement.

The leadership of the Bonner Foundation, in response to students requests for direction and support in civic engagement, looked at every aspect of the Bonner design and inserted in every place we could imagine language, resources, and programs that would encourage and support students to connect service with political engagement. We turned to the very core of our mission and how we articulated our goals and expectations. In identifying who we were and what our purpose was, we identified six Common Commitments, themes that represent our intentions and our purpose. One of those common commitments became civic engagement. We defined it as follows:

"Civic engagement is the decision to participate intentionally as a citizen in the democratic process, actively engaging in public policy and direct service."

We also turned to the Bonner Student Congress for leadership by asking them to take a role in engaging not only other Bonners but also all students on their campus and communities. As a result, all students began to receive intensive trainings around voter registration by leading national organizations and campaigns, which began bringing energy on campuses and in local communities. Sure enough, as our efforts and intentionality increased, so did student engagement in political issues including and surpassing voter apathy.

Several years ago I came across a Civic Engagement Quiz, an instrument developed by CIRCLE out of the University of Maryland (See Appendix I + 2 at the end of this publication). The resource identified nineteen forms of civic engagement that included, but was not limited to, voting. Students were asked if they were engaged in activities such as canvassing, contributing to candidate running for office, and if they had ever worn buttons or displayed bummer stickers for a candidate or issue. The instrument was important as it not only read civic engagement from a broad perspective, but the very construct informed student understanding of what it meant to be actively engaged beyond service and voting. I have to admit that I found myself being stretched and directed as I looked at the key indicators and discovered that there were areas that I had not participated. Yet within a month of taking the quiz, I found myself involved.

#### WRITING EXERCISE

Four years ago, students in the Bonner Prog participated in a reflection and writing exerce that resulted in the book, "Not Merely A Do Student Reflections On What It Means To B Bonner Scholar. We are asking each of you participate in a similar exercise on the them civic engagement. One outcome of this prowill be another publication of student writin

Civic engagement is a frequently used phras with ambiguous meanings. Individuals and g from opposite ends of the political spectrun the term civic engagement to mean differen at times, contradictory things. When the Bc community identified and defined our comm commitments, we state that:

"Civic engagement is the decision to participat intentionally as a citizen in the democratic pro actively engaging in public policy and direct ser

With global conflict, a tenuous international economy, and a presidential election on the horizon, this is an important time to focus c civic engagement and all that it means. Given definition of civic engagement in the Bonner Program's Common Commitments, we know that all Bonner Scholars and Leaders are invincivic engagement through direct communiservice. Now we want to know how else y are, or want to be, civically engaged.

In line with our efforts to extend conversations and programming around civic engagement, each participating school in the Bonner program was asked to administer the civic engagement quiz developed by CIRCLE to their students. Students were then asked to engage in a conversation around their responses and experience with the process. What resulted was a newfound sense of civic engagement from students and program expecatation, which rasied the bar on our actions, commitments, and responsibility.

Students were asked to write about the ways they had come to connect their commitment to service with issues of politics and policy. The articles in this book tell the story of how individual students have made the connection and begun the journey of civic engagement. It is our hope that by creating this anthology, we capture the essence of student awareness, connectivity, and action towards social justice and social change.

Connecting service with political and public life is not just an elective in our democratic society, it is a requirement. If the service movement doesn't foster a democratic culture that leads to the type of civic activities, identified by the CIRCLE key indicators, then it has failed its bold vision and it founding objectives.

The following forty essays were chosen out of several hundred based on their ability to express the importance of civic engagement. Each draw connections of service toward deeper levels of political engagement and public life. Few readers will pick up this collection of voices and read from cover to cover in one sitting. Having done it myself, I encourage you to do so. Knowing this, however, its design is intended to serve as a resource no matter what page you pick up and begin. As a resource, this collection of essays provide a landscape of students' personal reflection, insight, and key perspective. With the inclusion of resources and training modules for student development and professional training, my hope is that it will provide inspiration, instruction and hope for anyone who is making the journey to a more just, democratic, and engaged world.

# explain how your service has connected you into the realm of public and/or political life. For example:

- I. Has it affected your decision to vote?
- 2. Has it propelled you to engage in some type of peaceful civil disobedience?
- 3. Has it made you interested in getting others to vote?
- 4. Has it encouraged you to work for a candidate or a political campaign or to think about being a politician sometime in the future?
- 5. Is it connecting you to an issue or an organization that is working to educate, advocate and organize the public on a local issue?
- 6. Does it inspire to become more analytical and engaged in public policy discussions and debates?

See Appendix I+2 at the end of this publication to take the CIRCLE quiz and view their core indicators of civic engagement. You can access excellent civic engagement resources and data, or for more general information on CIRCLE, The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement, please visit: www.civicyouth.org

students in civic engagement and service as a tool for spurring deeper reflection and consideration. As noted by Wayne Meisel in the introduction, the Bonner Foundation is committed to students being involved not only in direct community service work, but also in systematically exploring and participating in other forms of civic engagement, including political engagement, advocacy, and voting. The Bonner Common Commitments, which are civic engagement, community building, diversity, international perspective, spiritual exploration, and social justice, represent the educational values that we hope that all students will explore and define for themselves in the context of their involvement. This book has been created with

those ideas expressly in mind, and you will find chapters on the following themes: civic engagement, identity, key personal influences, social justice, homelessness, poverty, voting, political engagement, public policy, education, leadership, academic connections, and international perspective. In addition, recommended resources touch on all of the Common Commitments.

What is unique about this book is that it privileges students' voices and perspectives. Indeed, the main feature of the book are about forty essays written by Bonner Scholars and Leaders reflecting on their own understanding of and participation in civic engagement. In addition, you will find photographs taken of or by students involved in service and civic life. You will also find inspiring or thought-provoking poems and quotes. While we have done some work to categorize essays, design questions, and identify additional resources, we have largely left the voices of the students unaltered. That is, you will find the students writing in their own voice, expressing themselves authentically.

#### Using this book

This book is designed for use in a co-curricular or course-based setting as a tool and resource for reflection. It rests on the unique feature of the Bonner Scholars and Leaders Programs — the sustained nature of involvement by students, which ranges from two to

## This book is long:

Perhaps the best use of this resource is over time, revisiting it once or twice a semester by chapter. It is a great complement to the other forms of training and enrichment used by programs in civic engagement who value reflection. The graph (on page 8) articulates an intentional calendar of activities that could be used over a four-year academic program.

and conversations, as well as structured trainings on a range of skill-building topics. The contents of this book are ideal for using occasionally during these meetings and reflections. Facilitators, which often include the Bonner Coordinator, student leader, or Senior Intern, often bring articles, current events, NPR stories, and so forth. Nevertheless, this book may be useful to any program that involves students or youth in service and civic engagement. We envision

that each chapter—which contains four essays, provocative questions, and other recommended film, literary, and training resources— provides great fodder for a rich, substantive exploration and discussion.

Here's an example. In the junior or third year of the program, it is common for Bonner students to focus on social justice. The chapter on social justice includes four wonderful essays written by Bonner students. A Coordinator or Senior Intern could ask students to read two or more of those essays in preparation for a meeting (or even during a longer meeting).. Then have students engage in dialogue about a relevant issue. S/he could plan a meeting that started with a short clip from one of the recommended films.

#### **Introducing Students to the Theory and Practice of Reflection**

Whatever you do with this book, you may want to ground it in a theoretical and practical knowledge of reflection. Service-Based Reflection is a training module available in the Bonner Civic Engagement curriculum that is highly recommended for integration at some point in the Bonner Program experience. This workshop provides participants with an opportunity to engage in thinking about and doing reflection related to service. In doing so, the workshop is designed to expose participants to the elements of effective reflection and its function, approach, and philosophy. By providing a framework and model (based on Kolb's theories), it teaches participants a way to incorporate reflection into any kind of activity, be it service, activism, organizing, etc. In a hands-on way, it also gives participants some ideas about how to do reflection, introducing facilitation tips, tools, methods, and activities.

## In summary, here are some activities to consider from the book:

- Have students read (before or during a meeting) one or several essays. Engage them in focused dialogue, using the questions given or others you have. You may focus on one essay, have them compare and contrast two essays, or focus on a whole chapter.
- 2. Have students read and reflect on a poem in the book. Engage them in a poetry writing or journaling exercise.
- 3. Have students reflect on a photograph or visual image in the book. Engage them in going out and taking photos of people, symbols (for example about empathy or social justice) or images in their own civic engagement that they then bring back for discussion.
- **4.** Have students watch one of the films and engage in a dialogue, writing, or artistic reflection.
- **5.** Have students engage in their own writing exercise, given a specific theme or question, or even the prior civic engagement assignment (see page 4).

A simple way to remember this is to use the cycle of what – so what – now what in designing and carrying out your reflection

#### THE Experiencial Learning Cycle

## Experiencing

"The activity phase"

This is when group members gain a common experience, such as through doing a service project together or, in this case, reading and reflecting on a particular essay together. In this context, learning happens, but if the process stops here long-lasting learning may not occur.

### Sharing

"Exchanging reactions and observations"

This is when learners share what happened and how they experience it. In this part, observations are shared, including how things felt, sounded, looked, and so on. In the context of sharing their reactions to a particular idea or point-of-view, participants may share their own observations or additional stories about their experiences, interactions, and participation, and how this has affected them.

#### Processing

"What happened and Why did it happen"

This is when learners try to make sense of or process what they experienced, what happened, and why did it (or does it) happen. In the context of service, for example, a participant who works at a homeless shelter may begin to process observations and questions about the nature and cause of homelessness, or what types of services seem most useful. In the process of reflecting on a written essay or idea, this may require students using empathy and putting themselves in the point-of-view of the writer in order to draw connections and share their own insights.

### Generalizing

"Relating experiences to everyday life"

This is when learners begin to connect their experiences to everyday life, or to sift through their own mental models or constructions of the world around them. They may begin to generate insights about an issue, responses to the questions they raised through experience and observation.

### Applying

"Using experiences in everyday life"

This is when learners begin to apply their experiences and insights into new actions and endeavors. They can be guided by asking, how will you use what you learned?

	Year I	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Areas of knowledge & commitments to emphasize for the year	Knowledge of self and ability for reflection     Knowledge of community     Exploration of diversity     Community building     Introduction to civic engagement	Analysis of diversity     Knowledge of poverty     Understanding of place     and ability to think     critically around     community     Introduction to forms     of civic engagement	Exploration of forms of civic engagement     International perspective     Critical thinking & systems analysis     Leadership skills and application through practice	Exploration of Social justice     Vocation and career exploration/preparation     Spiritual exploration     Connection to academic study (capstone/thesis)
Skills training and focus for the year	Active listening     Communication     Goal setting     Organization     Reflection     Time management	<ul> <li>Balance/boundaries</li> <li>Budgeting</li> <li>Conflict resolution</li> <li>Mediation</li> <li>Planning</li> <li>Teamwork</li> </ul>	Delegation     Event planning     Fundraising     Grant writing     Running a meeting     Volunteer management	Decision making     Evaluation/research     Marketing / public     relations     Networking     Public education /     advocacy     Public speaking
Types of community roles and placements	Occasional volunteer, meaning role in short- term projects     Exploratory role, learning an issue or agency	<ul> <li>Regular volunteer,         meaning a commitment         to issue/agency</li> <li>Expanded responsibility,         such as with         coordination,         organization, research</li> </ul>	Project coordinator or leader role, including managing of project or volunteers     Expanded leadership, tapping many skills	Planning team or specialist role, including individualized leadership on a project.     May include academic links, research, program design & more
Chapter of this book to integrate for reflection	Chapter 2: Who Am I Really? Reflections on Identity and Purpose     Chapter 3: Who Made     a Difference? How Family, Friends & Community Influence Our Lives	Chapter 4: Social     Justice: Understanding     Inequality and the ISMs.     Chapter 5:     Homelessness and     Poverty: Understanding     Ways to Make Change	Chapter 6: Does My     Vote Count Anyway?     Engaging Politically     Chapter 7: What is the     Generation Behind Me     Learning? Education     and Public Policy     Chapter 8: How Do I     Become a Leader?     Taking Risks to Stand     Up and Stand Out	Chapter 9: How Does     the Classroom Relate     to My Service:     Connecting Curriculum     and Experience     Chapter 10: Bridging     Across Difference:     International     Perspective and     Awareness

rubric social change, it is from a great sense of my own civic responsibility and pride that I have selected, arranged, and edited this anthology of student voice. Being civically engaged is part of recognizing how our humanity and membership in society reflect who we are. Many of the essays in this volume divulge wonderful and personal explorations of civic leadership and engagement, which is often where our passion and drive originate.

By recognizing the power of student reflection, voice, and leadership, this book aims to highlight the potential of youth in making a more just society. Art, books, film, and music are creative tools to express and address issues. It is our hope that the resources in each chapter are utilized to enhance knowledge in and outside the classroom. It is the dialogue, the insight, and the perspective sharing that allows us to expand our minds and beliefs beyond what we know. For example, the media would purport that not voting, not acting, and placating to oppressive gender and racial stereotypes are the norm; that youth ought to be more mindful of appearance and consumption than engaging in political, active arenas. To challenge social ills is a leadership characteristic, one that continues to need support and identification in order to foster social change.

As a founding member of the Willie Mae Rock Camp for Girls and musician outside of The Bonner Foundation, I have found ways to be both civically and radically engaged toward an active vision of a better future, a culture that I would like to be a part of. In my experience from rock camp, being in bands, and teaching courses at Rutgers University, I have witnessed the power and potential youth have in making social change, towards contributing to society, and creatively making a difference. Youth need to know that they matter. They need to be recognized, respected, encouraged, supported, and given leadership opportunities. Facilitators must encourage student voice and simultaneously listen with empathy. By leading with inquiry and reflection, students can be *real* and know how much they are a part of *re-making* culture. The media does not give us a representation of such possibility, and at times, nor do our environments at home, school, or the workplace.

There is power in self-reflection. We must journey in reflection, from the self to unexplored arenas of society, of the local, national, and international environments, of diverse

## Design/Resource

matter, to recognize their potential, and to trust them with leadership roles, ideas, and vision. We hope this book helps to imagine ways students and facilitators can collaborate towards making a difference in the world by being creative, civically active, and engaged.

Many of the voices in this anthology express personal transformation from experiences with social issues

"In every way, youth can be active agents towards social change, by eradicating social issues that concern them. It is our civic responsibility to make youth matter, to recognize their potential, and to trust them with leadership roles, ideas, and vision. We hope this book helps to imagine ways students and facilitators can collaborate towards making a difference in the world by being creative, civically active, and engaged."

such as poverty, homelessness, gender inequity, LGBT issues, politics, voting, education, and international dialogue. After having read and worked with these stories, I have come to understand that to be civically engaged is to take time to get to know yourself and your passions, as well as the people around you, and those in different situations. Using dialogue, knowledge from the classroom and experience, individuals must un-learn and challenge social stereotypes that place people into segregated categories and "boxes," by using knowledge and insight. If we reflect, know that we matter, that our voices have power, then we must build alliances with similarly minded individuals to create the change we wish to see, as Gandhi once hoped.

By way of connecting the personal with the political, these student voices are situated for alternative discussions and reflections. We desire students to bridge what they learn from the classroom with their *practice* in service sites, internships, and from their own local communities. We encourage dialogue, sharing perspectives, changing one's outlook by stepping in various

sets of shoes, and pedagogical strategies that can harness and catapult student empowerment. Immediately following this introduction is Tami Wallis' essay entitled, "Journey of Transformation." Tami's essay offers a glimpse of the kinds of inner reflective work we've identified in students who are transforming the knowledge of the self with the academic, the community, and beyond. She identifies the starting point of the process in becoming civically engaged. It is the most simple inner reflective question, "Who am I?" We hope the

transformation. This all started with asking one question: Who am 1? Upon realizing the swer, I decided to change who I was into who I wanted to be. My choices have enriched my e, and have even led to changes regarding my major and career path. These transformative iestions and changes all come down to a matter of civic engagement.

I grew up in a small town in Northwest Oregon. I was living in the country, poorly me-schooled, and was extremely isolated. I was not involved in any extracurricular activities,

ubs, or community organizations. My parents were overly strict and reprotective and so although I was always brought up to do good for others, y isolation kept me from following through. After feeling like my isolation as keeping me from reaching my potential, I ran away at seventeen and came legally emancipated: I was deemed a legal adult. When I left home and itered the real world, I was naïve. I knew how to balance a checkbook, how do my laundry and take care of myself, but I soon learned that there was ore to life that I had yet to discover.

Who was I? Asking this question at seventeen years old was initially onfusing and yet brought me growth and self-assurance. After getting past the ovious, that I am female, student, friend and daughter, I realized that I am raid. I am anxious. I am eager. I am excited. And I am something no one ants to admit: ignorant. My ignorance is the first that needed to change, and mediately. We all have a part we play every day in the world, and I did not ant to be a dead weight that perpetuated ignorance. So I had to ask myself: 'hat role do I want to play in this society? I realized that I want to be a citizen ho pulls her weight, who appreciates the options we have and the choices we ake every day. I wanted to feel a part of something bigger than just my life. I wanted to have a

become civically engaged.

y, a vote and a choice. I want to take advantage of the opportunities available to me. I needed

Trying to understand what it meant to be civically engaged was very difficult for me. I knew



## Tami Wallis explains:

"I realized that I want to be a citizen who pulls her weight, who appreciates the options we have and the choices we make every day. I wanted to feel a part of something bigger than just my life. I wanted to have a say, a vote and a choice. I want to take advantage of the opportunities available to me. I needed to become civically engaged."

been something I had to figure out on my own, asking myself a lot of questions, which has been the biggest turning point in my life.

After getting my high school diploma, I applied to Portland State University. I was interested in their biology program, and was hoping to be a doctor. During the first month of my freshman year, I came across a program called *Student Leaders for Service* (SLS). SLS is a program that sends students into the community to provide meaningful service to nonprofit organizations for 5 to 10 hours per week. When not serving in the community, SLS participants serve on campus by promoting civic engagement and recruiting other students to become civically engaged in their communities. I saw this as a perfect opportunity to serve in the community and expose myself to people who had a passion for helping others as I did.

I have been in *Student Leaders for Service* for three years and in that period of time I have learned that there is more to life than going to school, going to work, and having a social life. I spent my first two years at PSU as a biology major, but something happened to me during that time. I realized that though biology feeds my intellect, serving others and working in the community feeds my heart and soothes my soul. At the beginning of my junior year, I changed my major to Community Development. Instead of being a doctor, I am going to work in nonprofit organizations. This is what I need to do for myself. It is important for me to know that I am contributing to something bigger than myself.

I like to think my life is like a book. As I progress, it is the same book, just a new and different page. Being involved and committed in my community, I have grown and found out so much about who I am and the chapters in my life, which are becoming more interesting as they evolve. In my youth, I spent much of life living in a contradiction, in isolation, and being ignorant. Being involved in *Student Leaders for Service* and the *Bonner Leaders Program* has been the most enriching time of my life. Now, I make choices everyday that involve helping others. It is vital for me to surround myself with people that want to make a difference in the world so that I can also make a difference, share my story, and contribute to making social change. I am determined to leave this life, this society, and this world better than I experienced it and found it to be in my youth.



Who Am I Really?

metaphors. Many of them draw upon their experiences to understand how their service has expanded their vision of the world, and how to be a part of improving it.

- Amy Hammond, a Bonner Leader at St. Mary's College (Moraga,CA), explores her experience working at the Museum of Children's Art, where she comes to the realization that civic engagement can often be the "dirty little jobs" that are needed to grease the wheels of community-serving agencies and programs.
- **Sam Bulow**, a Bonner Scholar at Berry College (Rome, GA), presents an intriguing perspective on civic engagement as an emotional connection with community members. While a Yankee studying in the South, he has found ways to be a mentor in the public schools, coming face-to-face with the issues faced by immigrants, lowincome people, and others in a community where he finds belonging and motivation.
- **Sarah Beth Watson**, a Bonner Student Congress Intern from Berea College (Berea, KY), offers a challenging and cross-cutting approach on civic engagement that includes historical contexts, education, direct action, reflection, and hard questions about how we truly live life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.
- Jonathan Zur, a student at the University of Richmond (Richmond, VA), explores the importance of leadership, experience, and reflection. Connecting his Bonner experience to his current work, Jonathan explains how engaging individuals across difference to share and process their experience and knowledge.

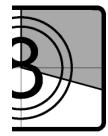
## After reading the chapter, disc

- I. What ideas or attitudes, if any, do these perspectives have in common? Is there message that you most identify with in more of the essays? How did you beco introduced to the term or notion of cirengagement?
- 2. Dirty little jobs or high-minded abstract discourse? In your experience, which r closely describes the civic engagement yourself involved in?
- 3. What questions of character developme values are considered in these essays? I have another perspective you'd care to discussion?
- 4. Is being civically engaged a notion that y for? Who are you really? Have you sat and reflected on who you are and what important to you personally?

#### ://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules\_pdf/BonCurPersonalVision.pdf

ou are looking for strategies for incorporating deep reflection and analysis around the direct ice that you do, check out the Service-Based Reflection: How It Supports Making Service Meaningful lule, which offers a pedagogical framework and tools. Available on the Bonner website: <a href="www.bonner.org">w.bonner.org</a>

ou are looking for a way to engage in telling your story and hearing others, consider using the tion: So What Do You Do? Personal Exploration Exercise, available at ://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules\_pdf/BonCurSoWhatDoYouDo.pdf



Movies you might use to spur discussion include:

**About My Mother**. Directed by Pedro Almodóvar, 1999. "Todo Sobre Mi Madre" revolves and the life of an organ transplant coordinator, Manuela, who after the death of her only child, off from Madrid to Barcelona to find his father.

Is Like Us. Directed by Jane C. Wagner & Tina DiFeliciantonio, 1997. Documentary following young urban teenage girls as they grow up within a 3-4 year period and the issues they face.

w to Make an American Quilt. Directed by Jocelyn Moorhouse, 1995. Finn is a young uate student, finishing a master's thesis, and preparing for marriage but thoughts of the end of life intrude. She spends a summer at her grandmother's house, learning about experiences of community that end up shaping her own.

e an impact on his community and the world.

**phit Proof Fence.** Directed by Phillip Noyce, 2002. A true story about three girls who were n from their aboriginal mothers and placed in indentured servitude by the Australian ernments and escape by following a rabbit proof symbolic fence.

**Breakfast Club.** Directed by John Hughes, 1985. Five students are forced to spend the day sturday detention. At first they are quiet, but later they start talking and learn that behind the rior, they are all the same.

Bibliographic materials you might find interesting for introducing of continuing the conversation about civic engagement include:

#### Russell Banks, Rule of the Bone.

A captivating story about self-discovery narrated by a homeless youtle living on the edge of society; a lost boy who maps the cruel world the surrounds him with mother-wit, humor and appealing honesty.

#### Lee Bolman and Terrance Deal, Leading With Soul

The book reveals the personal path to leadership requiring a knowled of self and a servant-leader mentality. Current issues such as the changing nature of work are raised.

#### Richard Nelson Bolles, How to Find Your Mission in Life.

Offers an exploration of the spiritual aspects of finding one's place in the world; originally an appendix to "What Color is Your Parachute."

#### Po Bronson, What Should I Do with My Life?

Author explores his premise, that "nothing is braver than people facing up to their own identity," as an anthropologist.

#### Pearl Fuyo Gaskins, What Are You? Voices of Mixed-Race Young People.

A thoughtful collection of interviews, essays, and poetry of over 40 young adults ranging in age from 14 to 26 who relate their experience growing up multi-racial in the United States.

#### Daniel Quinn, Ishmael: An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit.

Through a series of philosophical conversations with the unnamed narrator, Ishmael (a gorilla) lays out a theory of what has gone wrong human civilization and how to correct it.

#### James McBride, The Color of Water

The book is a success story about identity, purpose, life, while address racism, poverty, and compassion.

#### Tricia Rose, Microphone Fiends: Youth Music and Youth Culture.

In assessing the role of culture in catalyzing social change, authors see styles and rituals as a means by which economically and sociall marginalized youth claim public territory for themselves.



## Amy Hammond observes:

"What is civic engagement? By definition civic means of or relating to a citizen, a city, citizenship or civil affairs. Engagement would therefore imply being active, servicing, participating in events, jobs, or tasks involving citizenship."

a vast land of linoleum awaiting my thumbs and razor blade. Crossing this territory of kid creativity couldn't help but ask myself, "Why am I doing this?" Although alittle pretentious I admit, I felt that I was somewhat overqualified to be scraping floors. Was this why I joined the Bonner Leaders Program?

Well, no. I had more of a social justice super woman image in mind when I filled out the application. I was going to feed the hungry, save the children, defend gay and lesbian rights, assist

AIDs victims, comfort the convalescents, but most of all, I was going to achieve all of this in 90 hours. But when it came to applying to a site, I resorted to work at the *Museum of Children's Art* in Oakland, California. I figured at least I could put a red check mark next to save the children on my list of social action and civic engagement. Unfortunately, when I arrived at MOCHA (Museum of Children's Art) I was slightly disappointed with the size and lack of grandeur. My job description was somewhat uplifting. I was assigned to the onsite education department, which did sound impressive. But those were just fancy words for "Assistant and Queen of Kid Mess." I found myself rearranging bits of colored construction paper, unclogging Elmer's glue tops and yes, on my knees scraping the floor. Not exactly my picture of civic engagement.

Yet, we might ask ourselves, "What is civic engagement?" By definition "civic" means of or relating to a citizen, a city, citizenship or civil affairs. "Engagement" would therefore imply being active, servicing, participating in events, jobs, or tasks involving citizenship. But, often we use the term civic engagement in a rather ambiguous manner as a hundred dollar word used to

spice up our description of the campus's service program. Voter registration drives, petition or protests are forms of community and political involvement. After I became a part of the MOCHA family, I wondered how I could be civically engaged regardless of my job description and the *lack* of political involvement it had. I was not doing anything radical or history-making like fighting for gay marriages in front of the San Francisco courthouses. I was simply helping kids learn about art and helping MOCHA function as a non-profit organization. So I floundered in this definition of civic engagement. I had a strong passion to participate on this level of social justice, but I did not know how to relate it to my particular situation.

One day while I was argenizing and rearranging the art supplies for a filed trip I came to a

everyone went upstairs to the meeting and left me flying solo, two families came in for our op-in art hours. After the initial two families, two more came in. Art-filled pandemonium llowed. I was trying to cover the phones, the open studio and the front desk. Finally when ere was a break in the chaos, all of my supervisors came back downstairs. They were intinuing their discussion of figures and numbers, which seemed very important and a vital scussion for MOCHA as a non-profit organization.

At that moment I had an insight. My job was not just cleaning up after kids or even helping em do mixed media art, it was to assist my supervisors so they could be responsible for aking MOCHA function and prosper. Non-profits do not have a lot of money to utilize so erefore, they function due to the labors of volunteers and federal-work study students. In that gard, my job at MOCHA was a metaphor for the Bonner Program. Bonner Leaders do the ty jobs that help those in more powerful positions complete tasks in order to benefit their ciety. We are the cleaners, fixers, aids, paper-filers, front-desk watchers, and on-call support stem to our sites. We keep the house standing tall and strong, allowing it to smoothly open d close its doors to the trafficking of service.

Seven months and gallons of paint, glue and glitter later I have integated to my site at OCHA very nicely. I have a deep sense of belonging at MOCHA. As I assist a boy with arning disabilities and his mother create tissue paper collages, I am aware of why I work at OCHA and why I am a Bonner Leader. Civic engagement is no longer an abstract term lating to those only politically involved but relating to me in the *here and now*. Teaching ildren, from different ethnic and financial backgrounds, the foundation of art while providing conditional positive regard, is my engagement in my city.

I am positive that the feelings of uncertainty and doubt have occurred in all Bonner Leaders. times of despair and depression we seem to ask ourselves why but these feelings are just a rt of the Bonner Leader program and they are rewarding. Questions are what made me arch out the reason for my dedication to service. We have all faced days that seem productive to an ultimate cause, yet they are balanced by those moments that help you realize u are truly matter are are needed. Those of us in the Bonner Program are all called to service

- Amy remembers having a certain imater mind of a "social justice super woman." Does her initial image of cengagement in the Bonner Leader program differ from reality?
- 2. In what ways can Bonner students had direct impact on society? How is Am work already having a direct impact a society?
- 3. What are some ways we can directly impact society, here and now by discovering who we really are indivic
- 4. What are some other simple ways we make a difference in our neighborho and communities and be the change wish to see?

TODICITIS CHAL CALITICE DE SOLVES DY MACCHINE COLOTISION.

wonder how many people need me, I wonder how many eople are only concerned with their personal affairs, I ronder why second graders believe they can change the rorld when most college students refuse to try.

hear the voices of ten-year-olds at the Madison County Boys and Girls Club. I hear the future talking to the governor and rith the local Adopt-a-Grandparent citizens.

see concern for children, homeless, abused, and I see my iends trying to help.

want every child to have a happy home, every person to ave as many warm meals a day as they need and a bed in hich to sleep. I want to help.

am a volunteer, a voter, a believer, and a dreamer.

pretend that every college student really does care abut ther people in the world. I pretend that there is no racism r sexism present. I pretend that the world is a positive place or everyone. I can pretend, but I cannot forget the truth.

feel confused when I think about my role in the future of nis nation. I want to help, but who, what and how? I feel so nuch needs to be done.

who want to dedicate their lives to helping.

I cry out for peace, equality, and social justice. I will be heard when my voice meets the voices of others like me.

I am hopeful for the future, actively trying to change the world now, and learning from the past.

I understand the potential for change and the results I could produce as long as I dedicate myself.

I say I want to change the world. I say we can make a difference. I believe what I say.

I dream the same dreams of many others, I dream about a better future.

I try to make a positive impression for kids; I try to think of new ways to meet the needs of young people.

I hope I never loose sight of my goals and hope, with the help of many other people, that the universe is a better place when I leave it that I entered it.

I am here, right now. That is why I can change the world one child, one program at a time.

. -.. - .

uses and proposed solutions have been myriad, but to me it is intuitive that the solution lies close home. I believe that the core of civic engagement is involvement within one's own community. /ithout that, the motivation to engage in national politics wanes. I mean, our vote really won't ount anyway, right? Yes...and no. In many ways my vote, or your vote, is not going to count. It will robably not ever be the one deciding vote in any election. But what is true for you and me, and

rery individual in this country, is not true of the whole. Our votes matter, a lot. So hat does this have to do with being involved in the community? Everything. As we at closer to home, the stakes rise. We are no longer talking about abstract masses, it about our neighbors, about our communities. Our voice is no longer one nong millions, but one in thousands or hundreds. Suddenly, the consequences of ir choices are very real and personal. As Davis said, "in community persons nnot be distant or marginal."

If community involvement is so important, how do we become engaged? The iswers are many, but there is one which has helped me, and that has been my ork as a Bonner Scholar. By being engaged actively in service I have found myself sing drawn into the local community. As a college student, wrapped up inside the ibble of academia, and a foreigner, I sometimes feel as a yankee in the South. nere would seem to be barriers to my connection to the community. In some ays there are, but my service work has helped me break down those barriers.

Sam Bulow observes:

"That the core of civic engagement is involvement within your own community. Seeing first hand how far a little help and understanding can go, has motivated me to work to create change not just in college, but in my life."

hool system in Georgia. By being a regular volunteer at a local soup kitchen, I have become onscious of the issues of hunger and poverty that plague so many communities in America. Before I sign working with the Latino population here I was totally unaware of how important this growing ad dynamic group is or of the huge challenges that surround their growing numbers. My service ork has raised my awareness tremendously and while that awareness does not directly translate to the creation of solutions, it is a first step.

One of the most important things that have happened to me through my work as a Bonner was

ve you ever been at a retreat or event th a group that connected you on an notional level? What did you appreciate out that sense of community? What was portant to you?

n says that one of the most important ings that have happened to him in his rvice work was the development of an notional connection with those around m. Is an emotional connection something u have experienced in your service work?

you feel that emotional involvement in mmunity service work at a local level ads to civic engagement on a national ale? How? Give an example.

llege campus facilitate or inhibit your derstanding of your local community at ge? Explain.

towards a common goal. During our freshman retreat last year the camaraderie that developed among our group was inspirational. We connected in a profound way to one another and that has carried through. One week of joint service did more to create a sense of community amon us than a year of school! We became emotionally connected to one another and became a cohesive community of our own.

The importance of the emotional connection that invariably develops when we participate i service should not be underrated. Michael Schudson, of the University of California at San Diego defines citizenship as a person's, "emotional identification with a nation." If we use similar logic, person is a member of a community when they emotionally identify themselves with it. The development of these emotional connections is closely related to the level of community involvement. If a person is actively participating in activities, especially service work, they will develop a sense of connectivity to those around them, which will connect them in profound ways to the community in which they live. Connection and emotional attachment can motivate members to participate in politics and community organizing. The stakes are higher for them because they are united in emotional engagement.

One thing that has surprised me about my service has been that it has created more than just concern and connection for those around me, but on a national and global scale as well. By working in a small community and beginning to understand some of the challenges people face living in the small city of Rome, Georgia has opened my eyes to the challenges that confront the world. Knowing that poverty afflicts billions of people in the world is difficult to comprehend, but seeing poverty within my own community suddenly makes it real. I have found in my short time as a Bonner, my social consciousness has grown immensely. Seeing firsthand how far a little help and understanding can go has motivated me to work to create change not just in college, but in my life. My service work has drawn me into one small community, but has inspired me to be an active citizen, not just of this nation, but of the world.



Photo: Bonner Scholar Warren Wilson College.

In order to make change you have to be able to be a change. And change takes work."



## Sarah Beth Watson observes:

"We have been called an apathetic generation of citizens; we certainly are not. We are idealists and at best, visionaries. We are dreamers. We continue to reflect on that which has affected our youth. We are in a constant fit of passion, believing that our individual vignettes are the gateway to a better tomorrow."

of voting; allusions to Emerson, Kennedy, Gandhi, and more-or-less mention of partisanship. In the end you will have the scope of every current blazing issue in the world, yet still want a better solution. We have been called an apathetic generation of citizens; we certainly are not. We are idealists, and at best, visionaries. We are dreamers. We continue to reflect on that which has affected our youth. We are in a constant fit of passion, believing that our individual vignettes are the

gateway to a better tomorrow. We are at the round-about of our lives. We whirl about hoping for the *right* moment to turn down the *right* road. College is a semi-constant state of in-between. Neither here nor there, we are residents of either multiple places or no place; we are an isolated community. We hardly feel informed about the current issues which affect us and the political legislation which shapes our society. We wonder at the integrity of our politicians. We seek immediate results if we are to have any faith in the process of change. We commit ourselves to service because it enables us to see ourselves more concretely as active agents in a meaningful and growing world; we get immediate feedback for our efforts. Our idealism becomes practical, and our future is neither lost nor hopeless. We serve because it teaches us humility, leadership, love.

We serve to fulfill our human nature, seeking for ourselves what life holds dear, which may be a compatible and well-fitting niche in society. We mentor children, we fill potholes, we paint white picket fences. We also build bridges which will last a while on earth. When we have put the world into perspective, it then will have our political feedback. We will, in the moment, have much to say. When we know ourselves and we have been able to see life through a variety of lenses, we will then be the voters, the teachers, the politicians.

Our democracy rests in this fact alone, that though we see all the injustices of our nation, we can combine our wisdom with the political process in order to improve its social, political, and environmental conditions. From Suffragettes to the Emancipation Proclaimation, we have seen how small voices grew to become massive justice movements that impacted our nation towards equality, justice, and human rights. Our actions and our services, then, must come from a lens of understanding and objective reasoning. To be *civically engaged*, we must combine our works and all our efforts, holding our own country true to its word, that it ensures each and every person the

ograms and citywide food drives. My brother is a soldier, and I am in a state of hiatus. I am at moment when one pauses to rest, though there is more to be said. I am a break between ro equal and significant thoughts. My brother has seen things I will never see and has faced ecisions I have not yet had to face. He has a base of experience that my Liberal Arts Education in shed no light on. History paints a pattern of peace through blood, sweat, and tears. After a soment of agony, the only thing left to feel is joy, and perhaps, relief. But do we continue this cle? Is it really all that we know? It seems that most of the progress in this world has been e direct result of armies of men and women; mothers, brothers, sisters, fathers, sons and ughters who dream of freedom and change. When I consider my own station in life, what I low of the lives of others, of the political process of this nation, of other nations; when I insider what the United States is founded on, the very basic elements of life, liberty, the pursuit happiness; and when I consider my freedoms and my opportunities, my three square meals a y and my freedom to pray, to write and to wear pants, I must be more grateful than indignant. nust activate myself.

I learn, in steady measure, to combine my education with my accomplishments in a process of flection. It is my education, in fact, that feeds my desire to act. And it is my very act, which ts my mind and heart to reflect and assess the harm and good that is achieved by my hands. this way, I continue in a cycle which only increases my involvement, only ever-increases my erest in the political world. The more I commit myself to service, the more inevitable it comes that I will strive to create a more ideal future. The more I learn of effects, the more ensely I search for the causes; I create new causes and new lasting effects. In searching, I scover those solutions that have been overlooked and unimagined. When we, as citizens, are le to combine what we know of the political process and the history of the world, with what a daily experience in our own communities, and with our individual visions of improvement and ange, we then become individuals who have mastered our souls. We then achieve the changes at are needed in the world. We then are a people civically engaged in our society. We then plement a goodness which will last a while on earth, for all people, and for all generations reafter.

- I. Sara remarks on how our generation o is seen as apathetic; would you agree? what ways do you find that our genera is in fact active, but takes a different m of involvement?
- 2. If you believe our generation is apather how might you generate actions to challenge indifference, raise awareness, influence motivated change?
- 3. Reflect on Sara's description of civic engagement, much of which includes the knowledge of the political process, wo history, and changing perspectives. Whe kind of civic engagement do you believ realistic for you?
- 4. Sara is passionate about being active an creating new causes and effects. What you passionate about? Create your ov definition for civic engagement, including your personal passions and insights.

On this day, we have come together to lay the foundation for a community that will he here forever.

The value of our precious time will be measured by the endless efforts of our mind and

the relationships that we build will become the price of our mortality.

By working together on this day, we are fighting the dehumanizing injustice of yesterday.

We have embarked on a journey to learn the meaning of living a worthy life in hopes that finding ourselves is a respectable price.

The knowledge we gain from this shared experience embodies community building from

its beginning to its unreachable ending.

On this day, we work together towards a common goal to build a community and nourish our souls.

The work that we are doing represents who we are striving to become.

Even though when this day is over our spiritual growth will continue.

The friendships we have built bring us closer to each other.

The community we have made will sustain our friendship forever.

On this day, we have made our mark in history and Bonners will forever see that on this day we build a community, a nation, of the future.

#### Kristi Matthews

Guilford College

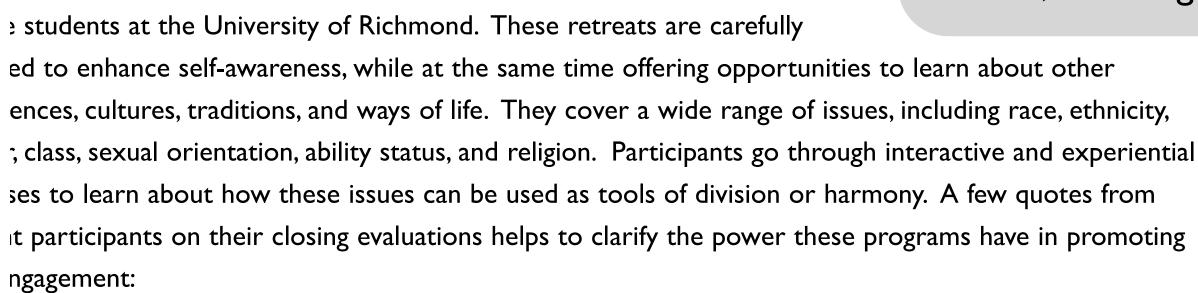
Honor of the National Bonner Service Day events for students in the Bonner network. nect from what I pass on my drive into work each day and what I do when I get to my office. Since ting in May 2003, I have worked as Director of A More Perfect Union, a community-wide collaborative focusing on inter-religious understanding in the aftermath of September II<sup>th</sup>, 2001. More specifically, I on reaching out to and educating others about Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and communities from the Middle nd South Asia. The work I do is built upon three years spent as a Bonner Scholar at the National rence for Community and Justice (NCCJ) Virginia Region.

y approach to civic engagement both during my time as a Bonner Scholar and s a Bonner alumnus has been to *bring groups together*. I have focused on ways for diverse groups to come together, dialogue, and find places of gence and mutual understanding. This concept seems to be foreign to those tand outside of a building with signs. While there are times when protest is ortant statement and can lead to significant policy and social change, I that the concept of civic engagement is most effectively put into practice engaging individuals in the process of true information gathering, coupled cilitated dialogue. They then can make decisions for themselves and use experiences and education for greater good.

Then I was a Bonner Scholar working with the National Council on Community stice, I witnessed the ways the organization sponsored diversity and human ns-oriented retreats for high school students on a national scale. I was able 1 and support many of these retreats during my time working in the Virginia 1. Similarly, A More Perfect Union helps sponsor such retreat programs for 2 students at the University of Richmond. These retreats are carefully



"I work to expose individuals to new information, points of view, and experiences, which allows them to choose for themselves how to best become involved and aware...[and] cover a wide range of issues, including race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability status, and religion."





athan describes an instance he observes two osing groups avoiding dialogue with one ther. Where have you witnessed similar cances of disconnect?

than discusses of crossing boundaries and isting fear of difference. Do you think this is y, necessary, or vital? How can this bridging achieved in personal, communal, social, and n international spheres?

onesty important to civic engagement and dership? What about mediation? What er characteristics can you list?

than acts as a mediator. How might this I or role be an important one for you as a ial change and civic engagement advocate?

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"[This] has been one of the most amazing experiences I have ever had. It has changed my perspective in a matter of days. Now I hope that prejudice in any form can slowly become acceptance and understanding. Everyone should get to experience this emotional roller coaster."

"This was the most amazing experience I have ever had. I truly feel I connected with each person on a very personal and individual level. I will never forget what I've learned and the people I have met. I now feel the courage and strength to continue with my goals for cultural diversity."

"I feel that I have grown and become the person that I want to continue to be... I feel less of a victim and more as a source to a solution."

Civic engagement is certainly about voter drives, political campaigns, and civil disobedience. I hav made the decision to participate intentionally as a citizen in the democratic process, actively engaging in public policy and direct service. I work to expose individuals to new information, points of view, and experiences so they can decide how best to become involved with this new found sense of awareness In doing so, recipients of the services offered by the NCCJ-Virginia Region and A More Perfect Union are empowered to vote, protest, and advocate as informed, thoughtful citizens who understand the complex issues facing their communities.

I applaud the fact that the protestors outside the abortion clinic are standing up for themselves. They are holding firmly to their beliefs and dedicating time and energy to their cause, which is certainly admirable. Perhaps they are even influencing the opinions of others. I question, though, how much of a difference they are able to make by standing outside a building with signs, when they will not even talk to the people nearby. Having seen the power of dialogue to bring together people of different races, religions, and backgrounds, I hold firmly the belief that bringing community members together to learn from one another is the most effective way to cultivate informed and engaged citizens. Through the honest sharing of ideas, experiences, and perspectives, strong communities can put true civic engagement into practice and break down the barriers that segregate us.





# Who Made a Difference?

tow Family. Friends. and Community Influence Our Live

involvement. The essays reflect on the importance of seeing where you've come from, the communities of which you have been a part of, and what you can learn from the people and experiences throughout your youth.

- Mary Xiong, a Bonner Leader at the University of California (Davis, CA), explores the role her parents, Hmong immigrants who have experienced the terrors of war, have shaped her commitment to be civically engaged, which influenced her involvement with the Governor's Recall in California.
- **Grace Brutto**, a Bonner Scholar from Berea College (Berea, Kentucky), shares some poignant examples of the values she learned in a household with foster parents and her experiences during college, which has allowed her to explore the issues of poverty and her own background in a new light.
- **Kristi Merida**, a Bonner Scholar at Union College (Bourbourville, KY), tells the story of how her childhood involvement in her fathers' campaign later triggered her work for a local television station on covering the election and electoral process, reinforcing the value of political participation.
- ▶ **Karly Wilkinson**, a Bonner from Maryville College (Maryville, TN), remembers back to her childhood and the influence the political involvement of her family had on her. From an early age, these experiences carried into her service work, her dedication to voting, and her perspective on the world.

## After reading the chapter, discuss:

- I. The essays in this section reference the rol of parents and family upbringing in shaping our core values. Besides family, who or we else shapes our core values, in your minds and experiences?
- 2. Did you grow up talking about values with your parents, siblings, or family members, did this communication of values happen i more subtle ways? In what settings does value formation and clarification happen the most?
- 3. Have you had experiences during college (
  the classroom or community) that challen
  you to change your perceived values or to
  stand up for your own?
- 4. Describe some of your own or friends' experiences with dealing with clashing values; what are some of the lessons you take from these experiences and observations?

#### //www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules\_pdf/BonCurSharedVision.pdf

ur Bonner Program is looking for a way to explore the dimensions of diversity within your munity, you may want to utilize the modules *Groups Within Groups* or *Identity Circles*. Both of e activities are suitable for identity reflection and discussion. Available at: ://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules\_pdf/BonCurldentityCircles.pdf

xplore the importance of mentorship in defining values and choices, check out the module tion: The Bridge Builder Poem and Reflective Discussion, available at ://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/modules\_pdf/BonCurBridgeBuilder.pdf



Movies you might use to spur discussion include:

*n Brockovich*. Directed by Steven Soderbergh, 2000. An unemployed single mother comes a legal assistant and almost single-handedly brings down a California power company cused of polluting a city's water supply.

od Will Hunting. Directed by Gus Van Sant, 1998. Will Hunting, a janitor at MIT, has a gift mathematics which is discovered, and a psychologist tries to help him with his gift and life.

a Wonderful Life. Directed by Frank Capra, 1947. An angel helps a compassionate but spairing businessman by showing what life would have been like if he never existed.

*Ilion Dollar Baby.* Directed by Clint Eastwood, 2005. Maggie, a poor waitress from a sfunctional family decides to seek out her dream of boxing; in the process she wins the nilial love of a trainer with similar struggles.

andals and human accounts of experience and identity.

e Emperors Club. Directed by Michael Hoffman, 2002. In everyone's life there is that one rson who makes all the difference.

ne Spitfire Grill. Directed by Lee David Zlotoff, 1996. Percy, upon being released from son goes to a small town with no future to deal with her past.

Bibliographic materials you might find interesting for introducing continuing the conversation about civic engagement include

#### Russell Baker, Looking Back.

In these eleven essays, Baker brings a profound, even elegiac sensibility to bear on a gallery of heroes and rascals who have, for better or for worse, stirred America.

Kate Young Caleu, The House Where the Hardest Things Happened A chronicled journey of explorations of religious teaching and searching, as well as problems with certain religious expressions.

Max L. Christensen, *Tuming Points: Stories of People Who Made a Difference*. Reflections on leadership in America and those whose decisions and activism changed history.

Judy and Amanda Ford, Between Mother & Daughter: A Teenager and Her N Share the Secrets of a Strong Relationship.

The book is jointly written, and the authors explore such issues as trust and freedom; difficult subjects are covered, such as avoiding guilt trips, with an emphasis on finding ways to stay connected.

Henry A. Giroux, Breaking in to the Movies: Film and the Culture of Politics.

By addressing the profound pedagogical role of film in contemporary society, Giroux demonstrates how it dramatically shapes the way young people come to terms with today's most charged social issues.

Tony Hendra, Father Joe: The Man Who Saved My Soul.

Hendra is put under the tutelage of Father Joe at a Benedictine abbey in England. Expecting punishment he experiences an openess that changes his life forever.

Marjane Satrapi, Persepolis 2: The Story of a Return.

After living in Europe as a student, Marjane decides to return to her native Iran. Her families liberalism and emphasis on her personal worth exert as strong an influence as Europe. A graphic novel.

Michele Serros, How to Be a Chicana Role Model.

A collection of short stories that illustrate a person's journey through life, overcoming obstacles and learning from mistakes.

Shel Silverstein, The Giving Tree.

## Mary Xiong observes:

"The importance of voting did not strike me until I saw how concerned my parents were about the turmoil that was taking place...My parent's dedication of trying to make a difference in the world by voting, had a great impact on me."

voting. I honestly thought I played a very insignificant role in a society that was ridden with people that have much more power and authority. Even though voting was something I was not too concerned with, I registered to vote after a presentation was given by my high school government teacher. When I reflect back, I realize how everything was laid out for me. I did not have to go to an office to get an application, nor was the registration form extensive.

Hence, the excuse that registering to vote is too time consuming is a faulty one.

The importance of voting did not strike me until I saw how concerned my parents were about the turmoil that was taking place throughout the world. My parents, who received very little formal education, had a much better understanding of what was taking place in society then I did. As Hmong refugees, my parents suffered first hand the terrors of war and economic sufferings. Though my parents could not explain in a *sophisticated* way the hardships of war and lack of freedom, the simple fact that my parents could vote as naturalized citizens was enough to get me interested in the issues of civic engagement.

After seeing my parents concern and hearing numerous stories of their own struggles in war torn Laos, I made a commitment to keep up with the news affecting all Americans and all citizens of the world. It was important to me that I could provide information to my parents and at the same time, voice my opinion by eventually exercising my power to vote. The dedication my parents exerted in their efforts to make a difference in the world through voting, had a great impact on me. For my parents, it was important to satisfy their duties as American citizens.

Voting in California when there was a recall for the Governor was a very crucial moment for my parents and I. The issues of war and civil liberties encompassed the world, but in California, the issues of the state budget had captured my attention along with most California citizens. Though there were many drawbacks in the recall, it seemed to me that our American political system worked. Average citizens had the ability to protest if they felt elected officials were not doing a sufficient job. Many California citizens engaged in civic engagement as a result of questions that surfaced with the overall condition of the state of California.

Although the recall replaced the Governor, the truth is that the recall did not fix any of the

ograms being cut. Such a drawback would have a huge effect on low income school areas at rely on outreach programs to get students interested in colleges and universities.

I am a student who uses outreach programs as a platform to get to where I am now; I re strong emotions that surround the possibility of outreach cuts because they effect me. It only have I discussed my opposition of outreach cuts with my parents, I have reicipated in signing petitions to stop outreach budget cuts in California. The power in ng educated about current issues and relaying information back to family and friends goes ong way.

With my participation in the Bonner Leader Program, I have been exposed to many idents who take civic engagement very seriously. These young leaders are sharp, talented, I often more than willing to share their viewpoints on issues. By working with these iders, I have had the chance to grow not only as an individual but as a leader who iderstands the importance of civic engagement. The Bonner Leader Program has been very en to new ideas and ways of improving civic engagement activities. I have been very lucky work with such a great group that fosters growth in all individuals. As a result, my iticipation in civic engagement has had a strong impact on me: I am more vocal, express concerns as an American citizen, and know that I am not alone in my vocation.

- I. Give examples from your personal life community that have motivated you to become civically engaged.
- 2. Mary discusses how her parents' dedicato being informed and active in world politics influenced her, especially becauthey were immigrants from Laos with education and yet were very politically informed. What are your reactions?
- 3. Mary mentions that working and being exposed to leaders has made her take engagement seriously. What leadership models do you have? Are you a rolemodel?
- 4. Have you experienced a situation when program you benefited from was threato be cut? What have you done?

My name? My name.

Does it matter?

I think it is bitch or hey you or woman.

Does it really matter?

I'm stuck here
in this place
this job
this family
this life.
With no way out.
Does it really matter?

Where did the time go? The time of another life another place another face another voice.

Does it really matter?

I want to live, and I want to love. But not like this; not here in this place with this man. Does it really matter? Hell, yes, it matters!

It matters for me.
It matters for her.
It matters for him.
It matters for the voice
of the One who gives us life.
Does it really matter?

I certainly hope so.

## Reverend Lyn Pace Wofford College

This poem was written as a reflection excercise instructing to put oneself in another's shoes and write what their inner thoughts might be.

ouths to house and feed certainly led to many problems. Eventually, those problems became too uch and my biological parents gave up trying to provide for us. At the age of two and three years d, I was responsible for finding food and begging for shelter from anyone I could find who had a llf a heart for me. From time to time, social services would step in and place us in foster homes, parating us along gender lines, but it was always only for a short period of time.

In 1988, my four siblings and I were adopted into a middle class family. This was a step up in the orld, even though our new *middle-class* family was still below the poverty vel, according to the statistics set forth by our government. We ate food like was going to disappear if we did not eat it all at once. If it was on your plate id if you did not like it, you ate it anyway or you would have to have it cold rethe next meal. Food was never wasted, even though we never really had seed for food. We were able to provide most meals from the vegetables that me out of our organic garden and from purchasing everything else we seeded in bulk. Peanut butter sandwiches, of course, were always a favorite ack or lunch.

Grace Bruing in the order of the poverty was a step up in the order of the poverty vel, according to the statistics set forth by our government. We ate food like was going to disappear if we did not eat it all at once. If it was on your plate if we did not eat it all at once. If it was on your plate we seed to have it cold "We gain kruing else we seeded in bulk. Peanut butter sandwiches, of course, were always a favorite struggles with ack or lunch."

It was okay to pass down clothes and wear the same pair of pants more an once in the same week. Brand names were unheard of in my household.

The have your basic needs met was just enough to be satisfied with because ore importantly, you had a whole familial community at your fingertips for teractions and knowledge. Later on it seemed, going to college would be what ould actually qualify us as middle class. Who would pay for college was never a question, because I ad scholarships from high school and I had Berea College to count on because of their labor

ogram.

Attending Berea College, where diversity and poverty go hand-in-hand, has opened my eyes to righter things. I can begin to shape who I want to be in the future. The work I choose to do will resent daily reminders of where I have come from and where I want to go. The Bonner program is allowed me to explore and examine my past within the context of the present. I have been able examine on a daily basis issues of hunger and homelessness. I have been able to become civically

### Grace Brutto explains:

"We gain knowledge of civic engagement through history and individual struggles with success stories. So, I tell of my own story and of my own civic engagement."

aving experienced first hand hunger, poverty, d homelessness, Grace's dedication to these ues have become her passion in the work she es. What experiences have you had in life at may have factored into what you do now?

w can our personal experiences be used in werful ways to make a difference? How are ey important to organizations, communities, or e world of politics?

no are some of the people who have inspired u to be civically engaged? List qualities of a od role-model and share them in a group tting.

w will you continue to stay involved in the ues that you currently serve? Do you often re back the good you have received? Draw a cle of giving back that seems appropriate to u.

can be eliminated that I have dedicated much of my time fighting for this cause through simple means: democratic process and direct service. From my first Bonner summer, living and workin in a homeless shelter in Denver, Colorado, to building homes at the Jimmy Carter international Build in Valdosta, Georgia, I have worked both on educating myself and my peers about homelessness. I have worked with the Berea Community Food Bank for the last two years and listened to others stories of hunger and poverty. We gain knowledge of civic engagement through history and individual struggles with success stories. So, I tell of my own story and of my own civic engagement.

Even just to sit and listen to women and men cry when they realize that their choice is to either pay the rent or let their children go hungry for that month, I give hope where hope is lacking and offer all the encouragement I can. In the classroom, I am able to give voice to these people through my papers, research, and presentations. The combination of applying what I see in daily life to my academics prepares me for a future dedicated to social work and social policy I believe civic engagement is the action one takes for a public cause, either up-front and center or behind the scenes. Food drives, church groups, and scout groups allow me to share my vast knowledge on hunger issues. I am able to petition with Bread for the World to the Congress and the President to focus policy-making on hunger issues. So, I have gone from personal interest to public awareness of issues surrounding hunger and homelessness.

I plan on continuing to work on these issues as I graduate from Berea College. I appreciate these formative years and the many people I have been able to meet and share with. I believe so strongly that hunger and homelessness can be eliminated, and so I will continue tell stories to people in order to enhance public awareness of what they can accomplish through direct servic and the democratic process.



Volunteering is one way of giving back to the community, which is in fact a political issue. My service of domestic violence shelters has enabled me to witness the importance of domestic violence laws. If m more conscious and my experience with survivors enabled me to voice my opinions; speaking up or a cause through service politics."

Photo: Bonner Scholar Warren Wilson Colleg

# Kristi Merida explains:

"I personally have acquired some of the most helpful knowledge in my life in the past couple of years through service. It is one thing to be an educated person but true wisdom comes through experience; doing community service is a perfect way to get it."

service experiences were initiated through this program I also had many previous opportunities to take action in my community.

Having come from a small town in the south, southern hospitality plays a key role in my everyday life. In my hometown and college community we are faced with many of the same civil problems as much of the rest of the world. Having grown up the daughter of a local politician, politics is something that I am quite familiar with. I have been lucky enough, though I did not think so at the time, to be part of several political campaigns; as a result, I have grown to become accustomed to the electoral process.

I reached the legal age to vote, like many of my classmates, during my senior year of high school. I can vividly remember when the local county clerk came to our senior English class. Many people were unaware of who he was and what business he had in our school. Yet I knew exactly who he was and what his intentions were. He wanted to register us to vote in the upcoming elections. Having been raised by a family with very strong political beliefs, I immediately knew what political party I was to join. My parents and older brother felt very strongly about this particular party both locally and nationally, which had an effect on me.

Luckily, not only did I become a registered voter during that year, but was able to vote in an upcoming local election. This was very important to me as the first election I was able to actively participate in the events leading up to and after the electoral process.

When I was a senior in high school I gained some of the most valuable experiences. During that year I worked for the local television station and participated in several local events where I learned to deal with new technology and one of the most challenging aspects, the public. Together, other high school seniors collaborated on a successful live coverage of the primary elections. Our duty was to help the candidates be heard by the people of the county, which was very important and very exciting for us. We offered every candidate free airtime through an interview where we asked general questions and concerns to voice their opinions on relevant issues that coincided with the election.

nofficial results before they were reported back to the television station headquarters. At ne appropriate time, some of us reported results to the public live from the studio. During own times we managed the station when we were not receiving any results and played re-recorded material. We showed footage from earlier in the day of people going in and ut of the polls, advertisements from our sponsors who helped make the coverage ossible, the interviews we conducted of the candidates, and a special interview with the punty clerk responsible for keeping the electoral process running smoothly. As a public ervice notice, I interviewed the clerk about the many steps of the electoral process, which as a great experience. This interview became one of the most important events in the ection.

That year was very significant for me. I obtained hands-on experience that could never e taught in a classroom to the degree I learned via practice. During the election I had to audy, but the work I conducted at the station allowed me to receive first-hand information om many politicians and be a part of a dialogue that mattered. I have been very privileged be a part of my community through my experience at the station, which has allowed me participate in civic engagement. Civic engagement is a very important role in being a tizen of the United States of America. I personally have acquired some of the most helpful nowledge in my life in the past couple of years through service and volunteering. It is one ning to be an educated person but true wisdom comes through experience; doing momunity service is a perfect way to obtain it. I am exuberant about the contributions I ave made and will spread my excitement to those who cross my path. Being civically wolved in our nation is a part of being an American citizen and part of being alive.

- I. Do you think it is typical for high school seniors to be thrilled about voting? WI why not?
- 2. In what ways do you think the fact that Kristi grew up in a political family affecher enthusiasm to vote?
- 3. Kristi states in her essay that, "true wiscomes from experience and doing community service." Think of experience you have had that made you wiser and events where your service effected you your community.
- 4. "Civic engagement is a very important as a citizen of the United States," Krist explains. Would most of the people y know believe in this statement? What your interpretation?

ey son, what you thinkin about today? was just thinking about Jeff and what he will say amn mom, I can not understand why he wants to stay gone e stays gone so we can enjoy dusk and another dawn

eah, I suppose you are right, but I worry about him so much at night, II I see is him having to fight on, I feel your pain, but think about how his mama feels very time it rains, an you imagine the shit that enters her brain?

lo I can't mom, I don't know what keeps Aunt Rita breathin,'
When she is dreamin and starts believin her son could be leavin this place Vell, I guess she stays alive feeling her hope inside, nowing that if her son dies, he will have a smile on his face

lom, I was talkin to this girl the other day and I was listening to the things she had to say, ut her words filled my heart with rage so I began to pray on, you must remember to keep an open mind and not look real hard because you will find nat some people truly are blind

oy, I am not saying that your mind is the only way, at if the things this girl had to say, rought your heart to me this day, help her feel what you feel ut mom I am not sure if I can complete the task ou ask because every word, rom the first to the last seemed to come from a poisoned flask nat did not know what was real.

And mom, when I think of the things I love about this lanc From American Bandstand to late nights with TV Land and the feeling when I stand to My Flag These are the moments of passion that I feel from every nickel to every five dollar bill, And I know they are real signed in approval with a stamp and seal of love

Son, I love to hear your words talk and the strength I see in their walk,
And to know that I did something right in my life
To know that I was not a young person leaving her baby,
Too close to the knife that would cut him too deep

Baby, you tell that girl that she can believe what she wants to believe,
But when she lays her head to sleep
And is able to dream what may seem to be peace
Let her remember there is only one reason she is free

Mama, I will do my best to help her understand this boy that is growing into a man,
And why I am proud to stand to salute a piece of cloth But if she closes the door and chooses to ignore the feelings I have to convey,
I suppose I will just say okay and walk away.

member the first presidential election I ever cared about; I was ten years old and the election was stween president George Bush and Bill Clinton. This election was a very important one for my family, I felt that it was also a very important one for me.

I remember at that time, we had a mock election in school where most of the votes went toward e Republican President. I went home puzzled at why my vote ended up in the minority. My mom was a surprised because she knew that a Catholic grade school consisted of many Republicans due to a few ager political issues at hand. Despite out voting efforts in the fifth grade, I knew that

ection, my mom took me with her to cast her ballot. I was so excited because e let me go behind the voting curtain and punch all the votes into her ballot. That ght she made me stay up with her as all the results started pouring in. I will never rget the excitement and joy that my mom felt when we found out that Bill linton had won. I was excited because she was excited, but I still did not truly inderstand all the implications that went along with voting at that age.

These experiences provided me with a strong background for civic engagement. Im sure it was not shocking to anyone when I registered to vote as soon as I ould. I still remember all my friends saying that nothing really important happened hen people turned eighteen, but I felt like registering to vote was my admittance to society. I felt a sense of pride and duty with my voter registration card. I knew at being civically engaged was extremely important and crucial in a society that

# Karly Wilkinson reflects:

"When I see the suffering that people endure, I do not see the fact that we are all meant to be created equal. I see that our government is set up to help the more fortunate rather than those who actually need help."

ows people to have a say. In high school, I was the girl that always started discussions on political atters because I was curious to see how others felt about the issues at hand. It absolutely shocked me at some of my friends decided to vote for a particular candidate for their opinion on one issue and one sue alone. To me, I thought it was more important to take all my core values and beliefs and weigh em against all the candidates. I knew that I would not agree with every minute detail that a candidate d, but I knew that I had to vote for someone who would try to do the most good for the greatest nount of people. I tend to look at elections with a utilitarian viewpoint. I believe strongly in the power one vote.

recalls memories from her parents' vement with politics that influenced her child. What influences have you had ring up in regards to politics and voting? they influenced you to this day?

ou recall specific events that effected your s on politics and current beliefs? If so, were they and how did they effect you?

discusses issues that concern her ding privilege, injustice, and access. What erns do you have that run parallel to her

this statement? Why do you think it not say people instead of men? What rvations regarding gender, race, class, or al orientation spur discussion from this ment?

passionate about and has therefore passed this passion on to me. My mom, dad, and grandmother have been my role models in terms of caring for others enough to stand up and make a difference I saw the compassion and love that they were able to display and it caused me to want to make a difference in the lives of others less fortunate.

When I applied for the Bonner Scholarship and received it, I knew that I would have a more complete college experience utilizing my desire to do service work. As a result of Bonner and my college experience at Maryville, I can say without hesitation that I have become a better and more well-rounded individual. Through seeing the struggles of those less fortunate than myself, I was able to see the ever-growing importance of being civically engaged. I realized more than ever that out rights as citizens to vote and stand up for what we believe in is the only way that we can fight to make human experience more equal and just. When I go to my service site and see the injustices that people endure, I am puzzled by our political system and their take on the statement that all men are treated equal. For example, what about women and children? Why not work towards having all people be treated equal, across the board?

When I see the suffering that people endure, I do not see the fact that we are all created equal. I see the fact that our government functions to help the more fortunate as opposed to those who actually need help. In my eyes, it is the role of the government to take care of *all* people in our country, not just the privileged few.

Without a doubt in mind, experiences in the Bonner Program have made me more aware of the injustices of our society. The awareness of these injustices has in turn empowered me to become more concerned with our political system and my duty as a conscientious citizen. I was taught by my family to be civically engaged, which the Bonner Program has reinforced. With my entire future ahead of me, I feel prepared and empowered to stay civically engaged for the benefit of all people.





Understanding Inequality and the Isms

commitment to people, to a cause or issue, and to making a difference through a variety of strategies for civic engagement. Some people call this sensitivity a *justice* nerve as an individual finds commitment to working for social justice and equality.

- **Toccarra Cash**, a Bonner Scholar at Spelman College (Atlanta, GA), volunteered with the *Victim-Witness Assistance Program*, an experience that awakened her to the realm of advocacy and public life by finding commitment to support survivors of domestic abuse.
- \* Mary Ann Somaine, a Bonner Leader at Rider University (Ewing, NJ), describes the life changing impact of her involvement serving through AmeriCorps at the *Trenton Area Soup Kitchen* and how it led her to redefine herself from apolitical to political, change her academic major, and influence her long-range plans.
- **Taylor Fields**, a Bonner Scholar at Maryville College (Maryville, TN) tells the story of being called to action by working at *MC Families*, an agency struggling to help mothers prepare for the GED. Her direct service prompted her to evaluate both her own attitudes about the homeless, the environment, and the need for prolonged action to keep needed services and public policy secured.
- Juliana Perry, a student from Earlham College (Richmond, IN), describes how her service work has influenced her involvement in social issues such as education and the treatment of youth, human rights, and the civil rights of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered, and Queer (LGBTQ) communities.

#### After reading the chapter, disc

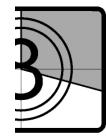
- I. Have your experiences amplified the proof connecting your direct service work addressing root causes, voting, working campaign, or tackling advocacy and pub policy issues?
- 2. Why do you think service gets a wrap c being a band-aid or less powerful than advocacy/political action?
- 3. What obstacles do people who become inspired and politicized through service community involvement face? What ca done to surmount such obstacles?
- 4. How might service expose individuals t different identities, lifestyles and perspe that can enrich their lives?

#### egies. http://www.bohner.org/resources/moudles/nome.num

xplore gender and the issue of how being male or female relates to issues of equality and ce, consider the activities in the module *Building Gender Awareness* and/or *Deepening Gender reness*. Go to: <a href="http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/home.htm">http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/home.htm</a>

ngage with others in an exploration of how racism or homophobia may negatively affect community and ways in which to become more aware of and help to stop these udices, consider *Racism*: Deconstructing It and Homophobia: Eliminating It.

re are several good training resources in the areas of advocacy and activism, which delve skills like letter writing, media campaigns and meeting with elected representatives. sider the modules Advocacy 101 and Advocacy 201.



Movies you might use to spur discussion include:

k is...Black Ain't. Directed by Marlon Riggs, 1995. This film jumps into the middle of osive debates over black identity.

Don't Cry. Directed by Kimerley Pierce, 1999. A true story about a transsexual young on named Teena Brandon, who attempts to live amongst a homophobic environment as idon Teena and the injustices he experiences.

ister. Directed by Patty Jenkins, 2004. A dark tale based on the true story of Aileen ornos, one of America's first female serial killers. Wuornos had a difficult and cruel childhood ued by abuse and drug use in Michigan.

th Country. Directed by Niki Caro, 2005. A fictionalized account of the first major successful all harassment case in the US: Jenson vs. Eveleth Mines.

Triangles: A Study of Prejudice Against Lesbians and Gay Men. Directed by Warren Blumenfeld, 7. Looks at discrimination against lesbians and gays, using archival footage and interviews to front social attitudes toward homosexuality.

- e Oleander. Directed by Peter Kosminsky, 2002. Astrid is a young teenager who journeys ugh a series of foster homes after her mother goes to prison. Astrid struggles to handle the lenges of living life on her own.
- <sup>7</sup> Zone. Directed by Maggie Hadliegh-West, 1999. A documentary on voyeurism and the encounters of objectification women experience on the streets.

Bibliographic materials you might find interesting for introducing continuing the conversation about civic engagement include:

#### Gill Hague and Ellen Malos, Domestic Violence: Action for Change.

Deconstructs domestic violence: what it is and why it occurs, along wit details on safe housing options and social services available to women survivors and their children.

Daisy Hernandez, Colonize This!: Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism
A broad collection of essays by young women writers, academics, and
activists from a range of cultures and sexual orientations. Contributors
consider how family and experiences have influenced them.

#### John Perkins, With Justice for All.

Justice cannot come from government programs alone, for they victimize the very people they were designed to help. Author offers relocation, reconciliation, and redistribution as solutions.

#### Suzanne Pharr, Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism

The first book on homophobia and sexism, it is essential reading for the whose lives and organizations are affected by homophobia and sexism.

Narda Razack, Transforming the Field: Anti-Racist and Anti-Oppression Perspectifor the Human Service Practicum

This primer to anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work practices explores the ways in which power and dominance are embedded in every facet of fieldwork.

#### William Reiser, Love of Learning: Desire for Justice

A collection of essays on creating an atmosphere of creative excellence and effective social justive for undergraduate students.

#### Eric Shragge, Activism and Social Change.

Shragge offers students and professionals a historical look at communit organizing and local activism from its development in 1960 to the contemporary practices of today's young activists.

#### Alice Walker, The Color Purple.

A feminist novel about an abused and uneducated black woman's struggle for empowerment.



# Toccarra Cash explains:

"These pillars of our community, my sisters, are cracked and deteriorating, bruised and neglected, yet people in power who can make social change through the media, representation, law making, and by example, simply turn the other way as if nothing is wrong with the behavior of mistreating women physically, sexually, or emotionally."

much. The Bonner program played a significant role in that transformation. I always knew I loved helping people, but the idea of catalyzing widespread change as just one person seemed next to impossible. Now, I am a junior. I may still be one person, and I still might require the strong dose of joy that comes from helping people, but I now realize that I can affect change, however small it may be.

I believe everyone should obtain an interest in an issue concerning our global community and immerse part of their lives (if not the majority of it) in being involved in its solution. Through service, I have realized that I have an intense

connection with the socially unrecognized issue of domestic violence. Domestic violence is something that I have always wanted to change since I was a child witnessing my mother being subjected to such abuse. I truly believe that when you are angry about something that is unjust, it can give you a strong desire to make change. This is not easy, since internalizing learned violence must get *un*-learned. Like a missing puzzle piece, my service has *connected* me to a deep level of change. It has given me a vehicle in which to channel the desire from where my anger had originated and propelled it to being part of the solution.

Through volunteering at the *Victim-Witness Assistance Program*, I connected with women who work towards being empowered enough to resolve their position as domestic abuse victims or witnesses effectively. It has definitely led, and continues to lead me, into the realm of public life. I consider myself a full-fledged advocate for annihilating violence toward women in my local community. This allows me to cross all social barriers that separate us by race, religion, sexuality, socio-economic status; I am able to charge through all those

steel doors of categorization and simply arrive at the true and vulnerable hearts of women in need. I consider all women my sisters, and my heart grows deep in compassion for my fellow community members.

make up most communities. vve all know a building, or a community, cannot stand on a cracked and deteriorating foundation. Knowing this, I feel propelled into a public and political life. I feel passionate that there needs to be much stronger laws passed by Congress pertaining to domestic violence, which I plan on mobilizing and petitioning for throughout my life. These pillars of our community, my sisters, are cracked and deteriorating, bruised and neglected. Yet people in power who can make social change through the media, representation, law making, and by example, simply turn the other way as if nothing is wrong with the behavior of mistreating women physically, sexually, or emotionally. My service has given me the strength, courage, and voice to say "Something is happening, whether you want to recognize it or not." It takes a lot of courage to admit there is a problem, but it takes ten times that much to move toward solving it. My involvement through service has given me the willpower to commit wholeheartedly towards solving the problem of domestic violence, which is literally killing women.

Catapulting me into the sphere of advocacy and public activism, I hope and pray that in years to come, my reflections continue to show growth in the strength, courage, and wisdom that my service provides towards eradicating domestic violence and abuse; a major social issue that has effected many womens' lives, including my own.

- I. What are some ways to fight the notion you, as one person, are not able to ma difference?
- 2. Do you agree with Tocarra about the n for action surrounding domestic violer How can you be involved?
- 3. How does the media, social norms, and beliefs effect, stimulate, or halt change? What are some of the barriers?
- 4. Toccarra talks about how political leade neglect issues of domestic violence. H can you work towards understanding t origin of violence and abuse towards women, starting with notions of domir power, and social constructions of general

Standing by a swamp on a hot, dry July afternoon
Sitting on a porch, silent for hours
Chasing, running, holding back tears
Riding a horse for the very first time
Learning about the man who stalks you day and night
Razor back ribs

Swimming for thirty seconds and not moving anywhere
50 Cent, The Jackson 5, Eminem,
Indian Girls, Indian Boys, Pioneer Girls, Pioneer Boys
Full of fear day and night
Full of laughter night and day

Long talks of racial judgment

Finding the courage: being friends with someone new

Long talks of home abuse

Finding the courage: living with a foster parent crew

Long talks of future outcomes

Is this where I step in?

My duty in engagement, my duty has it been found?

These children scared of nothing but fear in everything in return...

I was called for civic action. I see the injustices here

My service as a counselor my work not nearly done, For who else is going to help them, Who else I will not stand for no one.

I hear my call to duty - I see it straight ahead An impact I have made and an impact shall see them through

These children, my future, my engagement to a civic life

# **Sarah Gnizak**Berea College

ep at a time.

entered college as a psychology major, not for any special reason other than I enjoyed helping in I just figured I would get through college and work in a school as a counselor. At that time litical views were non-existent. I simply had no interest in politics. All of that changed the

semester of my freshman year when I received notification of my nomination in AmeriCorps Program at my school. I applied and was enrolled in the important that I was in for when my service began at the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen.

I was to tutor in the adult education program, work in the kitchen, and onally serve on the lunch line. It took a few months to get used to this nament, but after I got to know some of the patrons, I felt as if I was helping my rather than strangers. Some of the conversations I would have about life, in, politics, and philosophy with the patrons have turned out to be the most citual conversations I have had during my entire college career. These citions made me realize that I needed to become not just an AmeriCorps seer, but also an advocate for my fellow citizens.

nat spring, when it came time to choose classes for the fall of my junior year, I was necessary to minor in *Multi-Cultural Studies*. That semester I took a course 3, *Class, and Gender* in which the professor started the first class by asking how of us considered ourselves to be *political* and how many of us felt we were al. As I mentioned before, my interest in politics had been very limited prior service in AmeriCorps. I raised my hand and stated that I was apolitical until I ie involved in something that changed my views on politics. The professor me what made me change my views to become political. I answered by saying I

rved at TASK for the past year, was signed on for another year, and felt that through that ence it became my responsibility to become an advocate for the people I served. My civic ment has

# Mary Ann Somaine explains:

"My civic engagement has led me to become a voice for the voiceless, homeless, and distressed. I feel an indescribable sense of responsibility to make people more aware of the hidden members of our society. I'm not about to take on the entire world at once, so I am starting with raising awareness at my university...Through raising my own awareness of the world around me, I am able to pass on my new knowledge to others."

nat courses are available on your campus at connect with service work? How ght you start such a course if one does of currently exist at your school?

ry Anne writes about the "voiceless izen." Who are these people and why do ey have *no voice*? How can we speak for em in ways that empower them to speak r themselves?

nat do you think about Mary Anne's pint: "I feel an indescribable sense of sponsibility to make people more aware of hidden members of our society." Do you are her feelings?

nat power can be made through spreading vareness? What is the power of voice or pressions of duty and justice?

am not about to take on the entire world at once, so I am starting with raising awareness at my school. I was involved with starting a *Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Committee* at Rider University, and though small in size, I have confidence that our group will continue to reach more people than we can imagine. After seeing the results of our first few events to raise awareness, I know that even one person can make a difference. I say this because in my case it took one person to make a suggestion to another person, and from there, awareness was raised to a level above what was anticipated for the first year. Our organization was formed and established on campus in the fall of 2003.

Through raising my own awareness of the world around me, I am able to pass on my new knowledge to others. Had I not become involved in working at TASK a few semesters ago, I would not have the confidence that I could effect, sway, or change opposing views. I educate myself and by both speaking in class about my experiences and hearing the experiences of other students. Some of these discussions have helped raise my interest in learning about political candidates and public policy. I have become more versed regarding the political parties who are running for office and what groups vote for, or against, certain political issues. This form of civic engagement has helped me narrow my career choices, and while I am still not sure exactly what I want to do after I graduate, I know that social justice will always be a part of my life.

I will not become a voiceless citizen. I will stand up for those who are invisible. I will vote in a way that will have a positive outcome for those who need it most. I will remain aware of social issues and problems and work to find solutions to them. I will not be silenced or ignored, because I have looked into the eyes of those who have been dealt an unfair hand and I see their pain and frustration. I have worked side by side with fellow Americans who are homeless and have no family or income. As a human being I cannot let other humans live in this way, and after my experiences, I feel a responsibility to get something done to make my civic engagement effective in changing the world.

ople like them...people like us
ie is not fair, while people are aware.

urning a bling eye to many of the worlds injustices, thinking racism,
ussism and sexism do not exist.

'hat more do you want? Do what you have to do to survive. encing emotions, unspoken generalizations, assumptions rule human ought, fighting against stereotypes while conforming to them.

ving up to expectations, living life blind, people like that, eople like them, people like us...people, human people, too busy oking outside when we need to look within. he world is crying, can you hear it? The unspoken emotion and hurt everywhere can you feel it? I am better than who? ow do I advance myself? I want a good life. Living for the good life or ing life good; is it only skin deep? nink about it, work to change it, say what you mean and mean what u say. Do I love wealth? Climb the ladder and break through the ling, do not be a sell-out; desire to be in a circle I am not a part of.

oney, class, and race rule everything.

oking down in disgust while looking up in admiration.

ne world is watching me, this is managing to get by, swimming in cess; love thy neighbor but love thyself first.

slax, you got to the top. Where have all the smiles gone?

ke away the money and the color, who has the power? What is real, nes difference really come from the core of humanity?

rowth of the spirit is loosing the race, what can I do, see what is ue, I can educate myself, I can educate others, I can love my self.

an love others, I can love people like that...

sople like them...people like us."

#### **Charlotte Collins**

Oberlin College

She was impeccably dressed, tall and slender, hair pulled back smoothly in a bun.
She sat alone, a GED Study Guide on the table beside her. She had finished her breakfast when I arrived, but still lingered over her coffee.

As I reset the space across from her, I asked:

"Good morning. "How are you today?"

She replied:

"Good morning. I am nervous. I am studying to take a test." Seeing the GED book, I asked:

"Are you studying for the GED?"

She responded:

"No, I graduated from high school. But I've been reviewing fractions. I have taken the test several times before, but never when I was sobe It is going to be different this time."

I concluded:

"Good luck."

I hurried off to respond to my supervisor's beckoning - meaning, with the fractions.

"Good luck," I said a second time, silently - meaning, with the addiction.

What are my addictions, I asked myself - Comfort, respectability, busyness, consumption? What are the addictions that keep us from ending homelessness?

#### **Betty Hible**

Director, Bonner Scholars Progra
Berea Colle
The Women's Dining Roo
S.O.M.E. (So Others Might Ea



# Taylor Fields states:

"I realized that, although we live in one of the richest and most powerful countries in the world, we still have people who go to bed hungry...I hope to continue to educate myself about issues that interest me and pay close attention to how the government influences the daily lives of citizens in our country."

of miles away. In my experience, it has become clearer to me that I have a responsibility to take an active role in the politics that concern my community. As a person who has been given the opportunity to receive a higher education, I have a greater responsibility to those who are not giver that same chance. The education that I have received is not only academic, but also knowledge that comes with experience and privilege. Yet, I have been exposed to a variety of concerns including health care, aid for the homeless, and environmental concerns. One of the greatest issues of concern to me has been improving the education system. Serving the homeless and working at

Maryville College Families (MC Families), has thus inspired the call for me to take action in two particular issues of concern, education and homelessness.

My role at MC Families gave me a perspective on educational issues in Tennessee. MC Families was an Even Start program for mothers and their children. Volunteer tutors spent their time helping mothers study for their GEDs or working with their children in a separate classroom. For the past two years, I worked to improve early childhood education. As a tutor, I often gave one-on-one attention to children through reading, playing educational games, and providing positive interaction. The gift of programs like Even Start is that they ensure that all children, despite socioeconomic background, will be able to begin school with the same educational background as most of their peers. As the only program of its kind in Blount County, MC Families has served as an alternative way for young mothers to finish high school while providing resources for childcare.

Unfortunately, MC Families faced closing its doors due to lack of funding and support of the program. The possible closing of MC families caused concern for me because it served as a reflection of where our educational system could be headed. In addition, for some mothers this meant ultimately losing their last opportunity to finish hig

school and find work to support their families. As I learn more about the issue of *Even Start* funding and other education topics, I hope to take an active role in creating a system that works for all students and in what ways one can empower women. In addition to my placement

cond thought to the people I pass on the interstate or under bridges on my way home. ruggle was seen in their faces and I wondered how they ever arrived at such a place of esperation. I realized that, although we live in one of the richest and most powerful countries the world, we still have people who go to bed hungry. I realized that extreme poverty could the lowest point in a person's life. As Megan, one of the directors of *Volunteer Ministries* stated at they had seen all sorts of people come through their doors, even people with degrees of flucation as high as a PhD. Homelessness in America speaks volumes about the reform that eds to take place in funding such programs of support. The government should take a more tive role in providing resources for people to overcome their struggle; there is a great need to ach beyond providing a simple meal.

I was recently asked who runs the government and after reflecting for a while I responded, e. The power I have been given to voice my opinion reflects the responsibility I have to *take tion*. My experiences through the Bonner Program have allowed me to see the outcome of king issues to heart and taking action. In realizing this, I hope to take an active role in local slitics as well as national issues. I plan to exercise my right to vote in November and pay close tention to the debates, especially regarding issues of education and the economy. I have been ven the power to vote and I will take full advantage of that privilege. In addition, I plan to serve y placement with a renewed sense of responsibility. The organizations I serve are only effective the people running them are passionate about the concerns and people they serve. In Intermore, and most importantly, I hope to continue to educate myself about issues that terest me and pay close attention to how the government influences the daily lives of citizens our country.

Through taking part in a variety of placements, I have been challenged to take a new look at aspects of my community. The Bonner Scholarship Program gives students the opportunity to eate a passion for their community and nourish it. Through a renewed sense of responsibility, I n called to take action on a political level through voting and continue to educate myself about e many issues present in our world. The Bonner Scholarship Program challenges me to see e world around me, take notes and realize I have the power to implement the changes in

changes in society you are passionate a how might you spread your privilege to others?

- 2. Taylor says that although we live in one the richest and most powerful countrice the world, we still have people who go bed hungry. What reasons can you conwith as to why this reality continues to prevail?
- 3. Taylor makes the point that the organiz she serves are only effective if the peorunning them are passionate about the concerns of the people they serve. Do the government share the same mission these organizations set out to do?
- 4. Educating yourself about issues that affer you and those around you is a process continues well into adult life. How do plan to continue this process in your calife?

walking down the street a hurried walk a nervous glance adjusting her purse further under her arm she builds a silent wall to keep her safe I wonder what she's thinking I hope she is not afraid I know I wear my hat turned round and that my pants sag down I may look tough but back home I have a mom and two sisters I know it is not her fault she is only "being safe" but it hurts just the same to be mentally insulted and labeled as a threat just because I am a man a black man The tension spreads down the street

the staccato of her heels stabs my brain

I should just go another way What if she screams? What if she runs? What if the police come? I would be accused, and I would be wrong because I am a man a black man I just want to go home now I am as scared as her so I turn down some alley so I no longer have to fear her fear the fear of a society which makes her so afraid and makes me, a man,

a man,
a black man,
her worst fear...

ays and see how government policy affects life in the communities in which I have served. Service has ade me closely examine policies and positions with which I have become familiar through my activist ork, as well as the smaller ways in which my perceptions have changed in the course of my work.

Growing up in a suburban area with ample property tax funding for public schools, raised by well-lucated parents, I had little opportunity to see major problems in government policy regarding lucation. Doing service work and tutoring in Richmond, Indiana, has been eye opening. I see 'rerworked, underpaid, and under-qualified teachers, and the effect of these variables in the students I tor. Students who fall behind or who have been held back do not receive the attention to be taught

hat they need to know, or get diagnosed for possible learning disabilities. udents with parents who have the knowledge and time to help them with eir school work, or the financial ability to hire tutors can succeed in such system. However, those who lack these privileges are far more likely to il or barely scrape through school. The school *itself* appears to rely on reats of suspension, expulsion, or arrest for small infractions to discipline udents, rather than *addressing* the issues that contribute to discipline oncerns.

The problems are somewhat overwhelming, but among other things, ere are a few ways in which I realize I can respond through the mocratic process. First, though education issues no longer affect me rectly, I now carefully read candidates educational policies, records, and ilosophies before voting. This is a direct result of what I have seen in the chmond schools. I tell others what I have seen and encourage them to y closer attention to education, even if they do not have a direct stake in e matter as someone raising a family, or if they are fortunate enough to e in an area with good schools.

# Juliana Perry examines:

"Sometimes I have to compromise, because many people have not learned what I have through service or from having close LGBTQ friends and do not understand the laws that are discriminating. I must settle for a candidate who pays the most attention to LGBTQ rights without completely alienating the rest of their constitutency."

Through service, I have become familiar with issues I have had little direct nowledge of from my private life. *Appalachia Service Project* trips and our first year service retreat to needville, Tennessee, have taught me about conditions in rural Appalachia, and about where the

na says that those who lack privilege are more likely to fail or barely scrape ough school. Have you witnessed similar atment? How might you change that and ally distribute privilege and power?

ween different groups of people? What ghts have you gained from this experience out belonging or bridging differences?

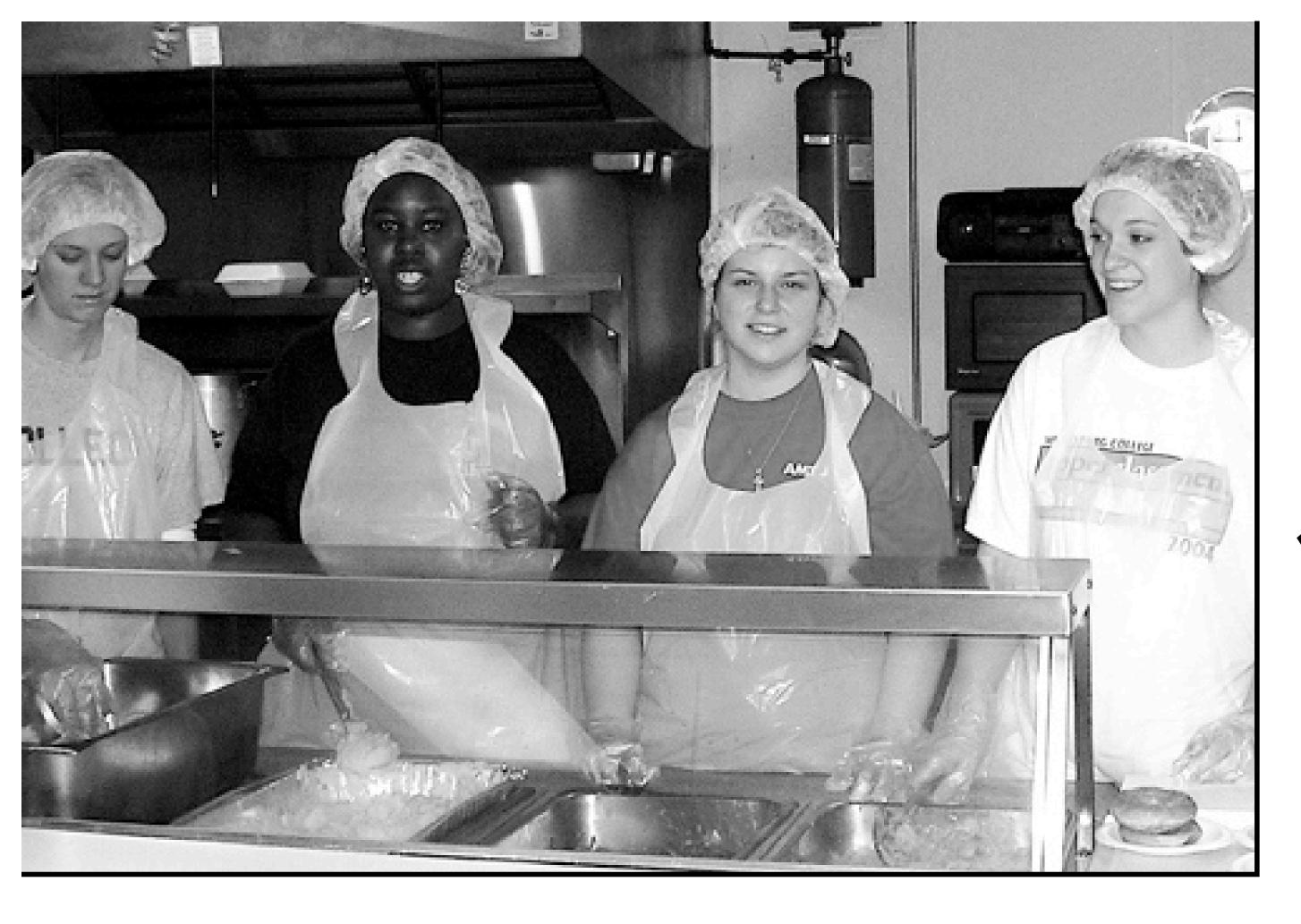
v has service opened up your spectives to diversity issues, equality, ial justice, or discrimination?

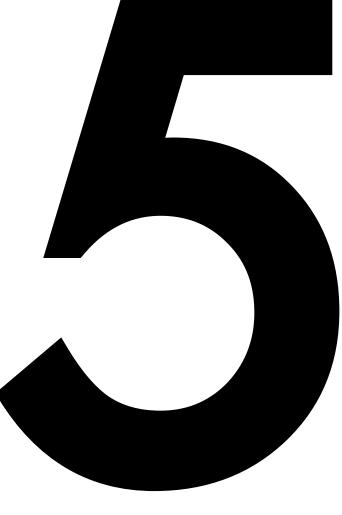
It other forms of discrimination keep the rld from being more socially just?

issues abroad as well as in the United States.

Service has also made me very familiar with state and federal government policies on certain issues. I spent a summer doing most of my service with Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, which is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, the transgendered, queer [LGBTQ] and people with HIV or AIDS through impact litigation, education, and public policy work. My primary projects a this organization were to give out information about legal and support resources to people who requested them, and to research articles on same-sex couple parents. This work made me aware of state policies (or lack thereof) and employment discrimination, harrassment faced at work, child visitation or custody tights (again, lack thereof), and all the rights and privileges that married couples enjoy that same-sex couples in this country cannot. I examine and question candidates' policies carefully before voting. Sometimes I have to compromise here, because many people have not learned what I have through service or from having close LGBTQ friends and do not understand the effect of laws that are discriminating. I must settle for a candidate who pays the most attention to LGBTQ rights without completely alienating the rest of their constituency. In this imperfect situation, I make sure to talk with people, when it is possible and reasonable, about these issues, in the hopes of spreading understanding about the importance and relevance towards eradicating homophobia.

Service has made me question policies I might otherwise dismiss. It has made me speak ou when I might otherwise remain silent. It has made me a more active participant in the political process. I pay attention to issues that discriminate people based on difference, I write my representatives, vote and discuss public policies openly. Service has made me more certain thar ever of the importance of voting and of encouraging others to be open to engaging with fellow citizens in our communities.





# domelessness and Poverty:

public policy, voting, social services, and activism, to continue to fight poverty and its degrading and dehumanizing effects on communities. By working directly with people in economically-deprived situations, students often find their stereotypes about the poor and the nature of poverty shattered as they gain renewed energy for social justice.

- **David Thon**, a Bonner Scholar at Mars Hill College (Asheville, NC), and an international student, shares how his work with *Big Creek People in Action* exposed him to the conditions of poverty faced by many people in the Appalachian region, and his dismay that the issue of poverty is not one of great concern for American citizens. He identifies a commitment to continue to serve and advocate to address the gap between American ideals and realities.
- Nicholas Austin, a Bonner Scholar at Morehouse College (Atlanta, GA), reflects on his experience witnessing poverty and brutality as a young boy in Washington, D.C. As a college student, he connects his service in West Virginia with larger social issues surrounding poverty, homelessness, and the gap between races.
- Amy Cooper, a Bonner Scholar at Hood College (Frederick, MD), describes how her work at Frederick Community Action Agency, a transitional shelter for homeless people, made her aware of a reality she didn't know existed and later solidified her commitment not only to vote but to change the system to better serve its members.
- ► **Katie Jenkins**, a Bonner Leader at Washington and Lee College (Lexington, VA), describes her realization that direct service work, while valuable, will not eliminate the systemic roots of poverty. Through her service, stereotypes about the poor were countered, and she has begun to engage in deeper and broader ways to eliminate poverty.

#### After reading the chapter, disc

- I. What has your service experience expo you to or taught you in terms of the conditions of poverty and the ways to eliminate poverty in people's lives and communities?
- 2. Have you been able to reflect on and ar the issues that connect to poverty and income? What kinds of policies, in you views, reinforce poverty?
- 3. What have been some of your thoughts feelings as you engage in direct service other ways working with low-income communities? When have you been inspired? Frustrated?
- 4. Do you think your own personal class background influences your choices and experience working within communitie what ways?

rides some helpful strategies and is available at: www.bonner.org.

plore issues and attitudes around class and poverty, consider having a dialogue using module Four Corners. Design or pick statements that have to do with class.

urces in the areas of advocacy and activism, which delve into skills like letter writing, ia campaigns and meeting with elected representatives. Consider the modules *Advocacy* and *Advocacy* 201.

night also consult the work and websites of Bread For the World, Oxfam America, and the Campaign.



Movies you might use to spur discussion include:

Homeless to Harvard: The Liz Murray Story. Directed by Peter Lavin, 2003. Based on a true story. Liz s her high school diploma in two years while homeless and wins a New York Times scholarship, which les her to attend Harvard University.

n County USA. Directed by Barbara Kopple, 1976. Kopple explores the life of coalminers on strike and orate America in a small Kentucky town. She shows the town's building and residents, as well as shots of idated housing and barren land.

It from Me: Life after Welfare. Directed by Emily Abt, 2001. Four women's tales of dependency, loss, panic, recovery within the welfare-reform system.

iolor of Fear. Directed by Lee Mun Wah, 1994. A racially diverse group of sixteen men were gathered by tor Lee Mun Wah for a dialog about the state of race relations in America as seen through their eyes.

That's Not. Directed by Christine Brown, 1993. The film looks at the inadequacies of the Canadian are system, how it perpetuates poverty and lacks incentives for obtaining work

Honors. Directed by Alek Keshishian, 1994. Armed with a copy of a Harvard student's thesis, a homeless makes the desperate student an offer: in exchange for food and a place to stay during the harsh winter, vill return the thesis one page at a time.

Bibliographic materials you might find interesting for introducing continuing the conversation about civic engagement include:

Sheila Baxter, Still Raising Hell: Poverty, Activism and Other True Stories.

Provides a true account of a woman who grew up living in extreme poverty that became an anti-poverty activist. A great resource to understanding and fighting poverty in the 21st century.

Pem Davidson Buck, Worked to the Bone: Race, Class, Power, and Privilege in Kentucky.

Approaches poverty from a historical and economic perspective; reveals how social systems can keep people poor rather than provide equality of opportunity.

Jason DeParle, American Dream: Three Women, Ten Kids, and a Nation's Drive to End Welfare.

The American Dream is something that family after family cannot achieve: this book explains why.

Barbara Ehrenreich, Nickled and Dimed: On Not Getting By in America.

Challenges the idea of the poor as deficient; demonstrates that even an industrious, hard-working white woman may not make ends meet.

Eliszabeth Fox-Fenovese and Catherine M. Wallace, Selling Ourselves Short: Whallace, S

Personal reflections, autobiography, and analysis on what confronts women and to live this knowledge with faith.

Martin Luther King, I Have A Dream.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968), civil rights leader, advocate of worldwide social justice, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, advocate for freedom, nonviolence, and interracial unity.

Katherine S. Newman, No Shame in My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner of Rebuts the idea that the government is incapable of helping the poor; suggests public policy options that could support poor people in finding employment and adequate income.

David Shipley, The Working Poor.

Author interviews working people; profiles offer an intimate look at

# **David Thon** explains:

"You cannot really understand how poverty and homelessness are serious problems in our society today, unless you are personally engaged in community life...I think fighting poverty should come next to fighting terrorism in the world."

people. Throughout my service, I have realized a growing weakness in the connection between the United States Government and U.S. Citizens. I would have said our government but unfortunately I am *not* an American. Before I came to this country two years ago, I heard and read a lot of positive promotion of the U.S. But when I got here, I was surprised to see poor and homeless people. It led me to question how democracy works in this

most powerful and rich country. Is the role of the United States Government being met when it comes across as being only arrogant and wasteful; leaving its citizens to decide the fate of their lives?

Over spring break this year, I went to Coretta, West Virginia with my Bonner peers to work on a project called *Big Creek People in Action*. The local community had been affected by poverty for many, many years. I was shaken by the power of the stories related to poverty amongst the local residents. As a group, we had the chance to go to the local high school and talk with students about the possibility of going to college. The students didn't believe in the possibility of attending college because they knew that their parents would not be able to afford to pay for them to go. The effect of neglect and poverty is like a disease, and it had inflicted these young people. They were born and raised in it! I heard one of the children say: I will never come back to this community once I leave. I felt concern. What would that mean for the future of that community in years to come? I really sympathized with these young people, and I was afraid to tell them that nowhere in the United States was poverty not a social concern.

The issue of poverty, which is the mother of homelessness, is of great concern to me as an individual. I wonder how many Americans will make poverty their number one election issue in the future electoral process, which is always just around the corner. I wish I had the right to vote in this country and have political power to influence and support those who care to change the way we create and look at poor people in this country. But, I hope as I continue to serve both the local and the wider community, I will be able to create and raise a sense of awareness and advocacy amongst people. It really bothers me when I hear

overty and homelessness are serious problems in our society today, unless you personally an inspection of the next two years of my Bonner service, I will rise up in y involvement to make the United States government more aware of this human disaster. It is poverty should come next to fighting terrorism in the world today, of which the nited States government is fully committed. And this should begin first here in the United ates and then across the entire face of the earth.

Above all issues, poverty is the most important to me. It is poverty that causes smelessness. I realize a big gap exists and continues to enlarge each day between the nited States Government and its people. I would like to appeal to my fellow Bonner tholars, Leaders, and other graduates to advocate strongly for the attention to the issue of everty as we go out to serve both the local and wide spread communities we can effect are often already apart of. Those of us who can vote in this country should take lvantage of that privilege. I understand that dealing with governments like the United ates is not an easy task. But I believe that is what it takes to be a Bonner Scholar, to make e impossible possible and to add your piece to the puzzle. I am glad and grateful for the exportunity to help others by listening and actively working on poverty issues. The kind of experiences I have gained in my area of interest and community service have become luable assets to my future life. My Bonner service has changed the way I look at the nited States and the world, and I want to eradicate issues of poverty, one community visit a time.

- I. Is poverty a surprise to you? How mig you have dealt with children in commu who believe they never could attend coif you were in David's shoes? How do think poverty can be overcome?
- 2. David explains that he sees a big gap between the government and its peopl what ways do you agree with David's observation? What role does the government have in narrowing the gap what role do the people have in makin happen?
- 3. How much should the government inte within the lives of its people? To what extent can the people intervene with t government?
- 4. How might you work to eradicate homelessness and poverty? What do y think are the major reasons that keep social issues alive?

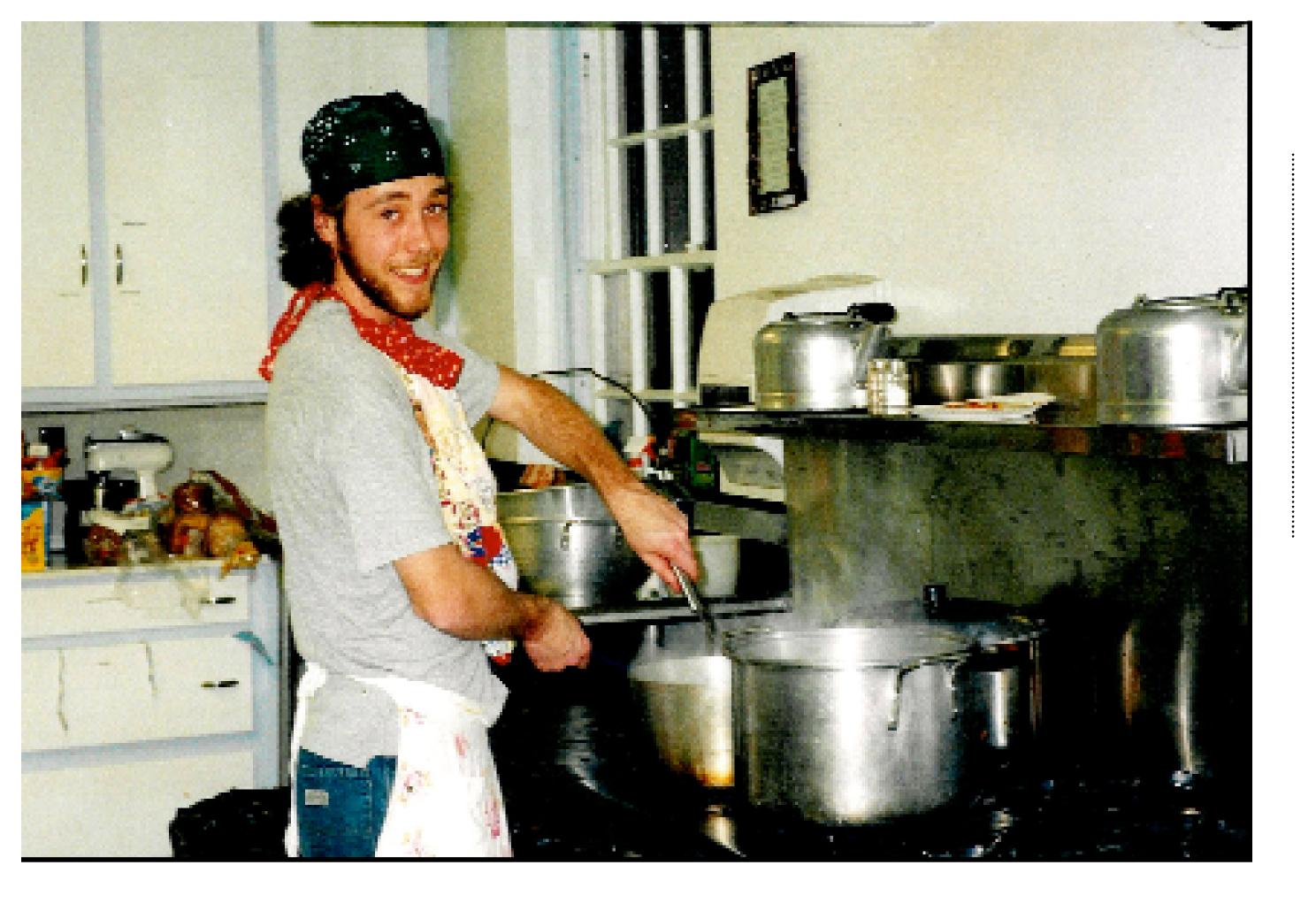


Photo: Luke Keeler cooki food for the ASPAN Homeless Dinner. *Berea College*, Week of Service Trip, 2003 in Washington, D.C.

3onner has taken service out of the realm of simply doing and incorporated it into my thinking. My ind now focuses on ways to work with the poor, to fight against social injustices, and to do my part improving the world."

#### Nicholas Austin examines:

"The next generation of leaders should be armed with more than legal knowledge. They must understand the realities of the people their decisions, skills, and judgments impact...I know that my personal experiences will lead to the bridging of the gap of understanding in America. The more we learn about each other and our various backgrounds the more compassion and good will we are apt to have for our fellow man."

nosily peeked from bening their parred windows for a look at the ensuing commotion.

Thoroughly transfixed, I watched the cool black sheet cover the lifeless eyes of the mysterious man. Strangely enough, I felt myself being drawn closer. With each step the distance between me and what was lying underneath the dark sheet decreased. As I inched closer, with my small II-year-old feet guiding each step, I felt my body run cold with fear. Yet, I could not look away.

My mind teemed with questions. What had he done? Was he really dead? Was that what happened to you when you died? I reached up and grabbed onto the yellow police tape

while continuing to gape at the puzzling scene unfolding before me. Suddenly, I felt my body stiffen as a pair of warm hands grabbed me from behind. I screamed only to realize it was my mother, wearing a disapproving look. While being swiftly dragged back into my house by my mother, I thought about the man with the dark eyes. It would be years later until I would come to fully understand the dynamics of that lurid event.

That year, 399 people violently lost their lives on Washington, D.C. streets. Over 85% of those deaths involved minorities from underprivileged backgrounds and children often witnessed such violent episodes. In many cases, numerous children who witnessed the violence would go on to become part of the violence as a learned behavior. With inner city school systems beleaguered by apathetic parents, funding cuts and building dilapidation, at risk students fail to graduate. Having witnessed the perils of drug dealing and petty theft, these students fail to realize other available options. In many cases, the politicians, teachers, police officers, the very people these children needed to pull them from the brink of lawlessness, never lived the lives they did. They could not empathize with the realities of urban warfare and lowered expectations.

Spending my days walking through the prestigious halls of College contrasted with nights that drowned out the ring of hollow gunshots reverberating in the alley below my bedroom window, was difficult. Sure, I had earned a scholarship to a great school, but what about my friends, my neighbors, the unfortunate ones without parents that even cared what they did with their lives? Laying there in the nighttime shadows I

often wondered: How could minorities in America get such a bad deal? Three years later, in the mountains of Coretta, West Virginia, I found the answer to my question.

small town nestled in the valley. Structures that resembled thin slabs of cardboard than they d houses lined the dusty road. Tiny white children played in yards while their tattered clothes and to them like rags. In shock I watched the unthinkable, the unimaginable. Hidden by the ountains and old coal quarries existed a forgotten people.

My Morehouse Bonner community service group of fifteen African-American men soon alized that these West Virginians had endured an inexcusable crime. Their country failed them. ne system left them at the mercy of the mining companies. The citizens were forced into an alivable existence.

Our group helped the West Virginians repair roofs on their general store, community center id other buildings. Some students worked with elderly citizens to help clean their houses and rds. Although the physical work we performed proved beneficial, the realization that poverty id lowered expectations that transcended race intrigued me. Just like the forgotten II-year-d on the corners of inner city Washington D.C., the children in West Virginia faced a life of overty and scant opportunity. Instantly, I realized that the answer to the ills facing America rolved from a simple problem, a lack of understanding.

The next generation of leaders should be armed with more than legal knowledge. They must iderstand the realities of their decisions, skills, and judgments and how they impact other sople. Without this understanding, the injustices of life in the inner city of West Virginia will live inforever. I know that my personal experiences will lead towards bridging a gap of inderstanding and dichotomies in America. The more we learn about each other and our rious backgrounds the more compassion and good will we are apt to have for each other. The important of the information in the information our humanity.

I. Nicholas connects his experience with and poverty with the current service v he does. How does your service conn to broader social issues?

2. One of the major issues regarding pove that there is a lack of understanding ar connection across racial differences, according to Nicholas. Would you agree How might you cross the borders?

3. Leaders need to be equipped with a set of their own experiences and the realishow their decisions, skills, and judgement effect others. In Nicholas' view, human what binds our sameness and uniquent How might you encourage this sense of humanity in your leadership?

I cried for an old lady who lives by herself.

cried for the young person who parked in the handicapped parking with no reason to do so.

I cried for the man in the big truck blocking the entrance of the store

I cried for the old lady who spoke up in the grocery, while clinging to her walker.

I cried for the teens that laughed at her, thinking she was crazy.

I cried for the clerk who finally gave her a chair to sit in while I shopped for her, since they had no wheelchair.

I cried for the stock boy who smiled when he realized why I was making so many trips up and down the aisles.

I cried for the cashier who made the bags light so I could carry them more easily.

I cried for the old lady as she struggled to get back into the car.

I cried when she told me she had not eaten lunch and it was near dinnertime.

I cried when I helped her into her apartment, knowing that I would soon have to leave.

I cried when I unpacked the groceries and put them in their place.

I cried when she thanked me for my time and my help.

I cried when I had to close the door.

cried when I realized that she reminded me of my own grandma, who passed four years ago.

I cried for those who do not get to experience what I do through my service. I cried for those who serve with me, because together we really can make great

This poem was written after an experience I had driving an eighty-year-old woman to the grocery store. I was moved by how other people affected our visit. It seemed as if nothing was going right. It was hard for me to see through the troubles we experienced, the injustices and prejudice of agism, and I felt real disheartened. There are people that don't think about how their actions affect others, who go about their day blindly, not worried about anyone but themselves. Like the lady parked in the handicapped spot just because it was closest to the door, when she clearly had no disability and no parking tag; or the young clerks who felt the need to laugh at an elder for asking why there was no wheelchair in the grocery store. After reflecting back on that da I realize that I made the best out of the situation and the lady even commented about how nice of a time she had. I chose to care and offer a smile and a helping hand. I will continue to do so because one day, I too will be in need of help, and I would like to think someone will be there during my time of need We can make a difference!

Amanda Cople Berea Colleg

lowledge and aldol it has given the. Thy hist boilier site, i redelick confining action agency, was a ansitional shelter for my town's homeless. My experiences there were invaluable, more enriching than y curriculum could have offered me. As a social work major, I have studied the social welfare system. s a Bonner Scholar, I have become a part of it. In the classroom, I learned about TANF, Medicaid and the ousing Act. As a Bonner, I have seen the daily implications of these laws in people's lives.

My work at the shelter made me aware of a reality I never before knew existed. For instance, on a Id friday in February, I accompanied my supervisor and one of the agency's seworkers, to different locations in town that were frequently populated by the meless, in order to conduct a survey that would assess the needs of the pulation. Many of the locations we visited were places I was aware of, such as e soup kitchen and the day labor plant, and other places I thought I was familiar th. We parked along the side of a highway, that my friends and I had traveled so any times on the way to the mall or to eat out, and followed wheelchair tracks to the woods. What they led us to was a world I had no knowledge about and anged my perspective.

As I stood there shivering, I looked at the makeshift community of tents, and ondered how the winter had been survived. The answer was barely. I had seen ike frequently at the soup kitchen, where I volunteered weekly. He would always Il me that I had to stop smiling so much, which would always make me smile. nat day he told us that at some point throughout the winter, each one of the nts had collapsed due to heavy snow; that some nights were so cold, he could rely move his feet. Mike went on to explain that he had lost his job about six onths ago, and had no family in the state. S omeone had suggested camping out him. Thousands of blue collar workers across America joke that they are one y check away from the streets. The scary thing is that joke is a reality.

While it was easy for me to get caught up in the microscopic aspects of the ork I was doing, I frequently reminded myself that in order for things to truly improve, changes needed be made on a larger level. Feelings of frustration and helplessness that were triggered when clients ere refused help or were left ignored on housing lists for months became conviction for a better

# Amy Cooper states:

"My great hope is that when I tell people about all that I have learned from my Bonner experience, they will listen. I try to explain it in a way so that they are able to see that poverty is not someone else's problems, but rather a problem of the nation. I want residents of the shelter to realize they are a part of a much bigger system. I hope they see that while we all must take responsibility for our own actions, the fact that citizens are suffering such hardships is a testament to the fact that the nation is not working to its full capacity.

nat are some stereotypes we have about e homeless? Where do they come from? poverty a race, class, and/or gender issue?

y talks of the hidden places of poverty:
'here are the hidden places of poverty in
ur community? How would you go about
ding them if you didn't know where they
e?

ve you had an encounter with the meless? If so, what did you take away om the experience?

y was working on a survey to assess the eds of the homeless population. Why it is cessary to assess their needs when it is apparent that what the hungry and omeless need is food and shelter?

woods that day in February, and watching the cars go by on the highway, I wondered how passengers probably had no idea of the world they were hurriedly driving through. I remember knowing that I would never be similar again. I began wishing that the whole world would stop and look and actively do something to eradicate homelessness. Even politicians may take a glance while driving by, yet often they do not truly *look*. They are out of touch and do not have the same innocent compassion as my young heart and the hearts of the people I work with. I would do anything to advocate for the residents and for people like those that I have met, which has led me to consider entering the political realm.

My time as a Bonner Scholar has not only increased my understanding of society, but also my confidence. I am now more likely to engage in discussion, simply because I believe in what I am saying. It has made me able to more clearly define what it is I believe in, what my vision of the ideal society should look like. My great hope is that when I tell people about all that I have learned from my Bonner experience, they will listen. I try to explain it in a way so that they are able to see that poverty is not someone else's problems, but rather a problem of the nation. I want residents of the shelter to realize they are a part of a much bigger system. I hope they see that while we all must take responsibility for our own actions, the fact that citizens are suffering such hardships is a testament to the fact that the nation is not working to its full capacity. I have often talked to residents regarding this. One resident, a sixty-year-old who is deaf and has muscular dystrophy and prostrate cancer, was extremely intelligent, aware of the political spectrum that had helped bring him to such a state. He would talk about Sweden where someone like him would never end up at a place like this. I hope that improved knowledge and a more concerned, compassionate leadership will lead to a better nation. I know that sharing the story of a three year old girl crying "I want my own home! I do not want to live in any more places like this!" will help others to have the same drive to make a difference and take action.

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aying for a miracle to leap through all this she has been exposed to e remembers how she felt yesterday, ying with Barbie dolls in a dreamland far away, ever thinking about the rain or where it would take her today

easy being nine all the time, never having to unwind from the bind, at follows us all through our body and our mind to our last breath it for a little girl with her whole world wrapped up like a string of pearls, st everything with one wave that hurled her death

Tybe she will recover tomorrow, forget her pain and sorrow, ove on with her new borrowed strength r maybe this baby of nine will find more time to weep and whine, cause why should we expect her to shine through these clouds

nere is a little boy that lives on the coast,
ying to make the most out of this overdose of pain he has been dealt
was playing baseball his last noon,
t quickly the earth spun and delivered gloom,
nd this little boy would soon face his most feared doom

iving to bear this new thought on his brain, and still he must be able to sustain his composure to keep his sister sane that a load for a boy of thirteen, I suppose he's living the American Dream, a sure this is his ideal scene for the movie of his future

ope he can find light through his tears, rise above his years, and silence all the negativity and only hear hope's voice his boy must do what he can to make a stand, me would say become a man without being given a choice

iere is a single mother walking the street corner,

She has lost all that was anything, now all there is to do is sing,
And so she finds herself in hope of finding that one th
Will she get there, will she find her saving grace,
Drift to some open space, and lose her in this distatemotion

There is a lonely brother riding a Greyhound south, Salty tears streaming down his cheek into his mouth, but all he feels is love

His family on his mind, his hands tense and his heart k He searches his prayers for someone to help him find is lost

He cannot be weak because the answers that he seek Are not found by turning the other cheek

Thus he chooses to stay strong, blocking out all of the view He sits back and begins singing a Miles Davis song, and back to where he belongs

New Orleans' babies are everywhere singing their sor Singing until their hearts are contempt, singing all nigh These babies echo the most beautiful melodies, Spreading through the air creating wonderful tranquili

People will stare and project into the air,
The question that accompanies their glare of curiosity
These babies will sing everyday,
until the blues have went away,
Until everyone sees that they have found their way ho

In some respects, I was right. There are poor people who are lazy, immoral, or struggling ith drug addiction just as there are rich people who are. But in my service, I have met many, any impoverished women and men who are honest and hardworking. They are poor because ey lack marketable skills. They are poor because we need people to clean our hotel rooms, rve our food at restaurants, and do the *dirty work* but we do not want to pay such workers ell or offer benefits. They are poor because Wal-Mart and other corporate giants have run eir small buisnesses out of business. They are poor because factories are moving overseas, rcing them to work for whatever they can get, not what they deserve.

Seeing hardworking people struggling to get ahead and usually failing made e rethink my theories on poverty and the volunteer work that I do. ommunity service sometimes feels like putting on a band-aid on a gaping wound at really needs stitches. There will never be enough tutors in inner-city schools doctors volunteering at free clinics. Soup kitchens will always run out of food the Salvation Army will never have enought warm winter coats. We will ever be able to change the impoverished as a collective group with just indouts.

Systems that have been set up by the government to help low income people on not directly reflect the needs expressed by the people are part of the roblem. Most government officials do not know what it is like to be poor so ey cannot fully understand the problem or know the best way to give help lequately. Therefore, there is a gap between what is needed and what the overnment perceives. I think in too many cases poverty is perceived as a

oblem that can be fixed by just giving money, but poverty can be a lifestyle that traps a person; us aid should include a process of learning life skills, how to be an advocate with voice, and by to achieve one's rights.

Through my service, I believe that I have made valuable contributions to society and to the ammunities in which I have served. But more importantly, I have learned that while soup tchens are wonderful and many individuals benefit from them, they are not addressing the



# Katie Jenkins explains:

"I have redefined the word service: It is not just donating money or giving an old piece of clothing away, it as actually touching the life of someone through a relationship of support that allows that person to better their life. As a Bonner, I have a duty to inform people that until we as a country and community teach the skills of life and pay attention to core issues in our society, important issues such as poverty will persist."

Has Katie's perspectivechallenged your notions on what causes poverty? If so, how?

Katie has found a way through her service work to address poverty at a deeper level. In what ways can you address your service area "at the root of the problem?"

What other arenas in society need to have tools to make change? What area are you passionate about and how do you envision addressing the issue?

How can your voice be a powerful tool?

themselves and working in solidarity with one another. I saw hotel workers asking to be paid fairly and treated with respect by their managers. I saw parking workers asking for the right to organize and bargain collectively. I saw mothers and fathers asserting their right to affordable health insurance for themselves and their children. These were hardworking Americans, the Americans who work full time jobs and then some, and still live at the poverty line. Nobody wanted a hand out, they were simply asking for the right to work and support their families. For me, fighting poverty means working for social justice. It means empowering people to help themselves and stand up for the wages and benefits that they deserve.

My Bonner experience has shown me many different aspects of poverty and the lives of the underprivileged. I have seen children who have worn the same clothes many days in a row and are ashamed of how they look. While they can simply be given more clothes, the more important issue is how they feel about themselves. What they really need is confidence, belief in change, compassion, and a helping hand. Through Bonner, I have redefined the word service: It is not just donating money or giving an old piece of clothing away, it as actually touching the life of someone through a relationship of support that allows that person to better their life. As a Bonner, I have a duty to inform people that until we as a country and community teach the skills of life and pay attention to core issues in our society, important issues such as poverty will persist. I have become more willing to voice my opinion because if people don't, then nothing will ever change. We all need tools to break down the walls of poverty. My voice and advocacy are mine, what's yours?





Does My Vote Count Anyway?

Enaaina Dalisiaalla

and leadership is part of seeing how their political voice and choice counts. Do our votes count? Engage in what these students have to say:

- **Christina Brown**, a Bonner Leader from Washburn University (Topeka, KS), describes how important it is to have your voice heard and not be dependent on others beliefs in order to define your own. Christina connects her service with mental health agencies with the opportunity to vote and addvocate social change.
- Rania Daystar, a Bonner Scholar from Guilford College (Greensboro, NC), discusses how the personal is political. She explains how important voice, reflection on prejudice, and participation in non-profit service agencies can fuel social change.
- **Kevin Kester**, a student from University of Louisville (Louisville, KY), uses an analogy of an oyster's pearl to describe his understanding of his youth, purpose in life, and discovery. He uses this idiom as he connects his experience and growing awareness to the service work he does.
- ▶ Rodolfo Sangion Forti, a Bonner Scholar from Union College (Barbourville, KY), discusses the importance of voting from his perspective as a Brazilian immigrant. Comparing his experience from Brazil to the United States, Rodolfo presents how taking part in the political process through voting is essential for youth everywhere.

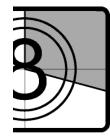
#### After reading the chapter, disc

- I. Is service political, in your view? When service not political? Is service a way f person to express political commitmen an issue?
- 2. Do you consider yourself politically awa How about politically *active*? Why or w not? Is being politically active a value c yours?
- 3. What makes reflecting on or talking abc politics, candidates and views about pul policy difficult whether it's at home or campus? How can we create discussio regarding voting and the ways we interpolitics, public policy, and social change?
- 4. How do people who are politically enga move beyond preaching to the choir? I there ways to counter what many think widespread individual and community apathy?

ou want to plan and run voter education and registration drives, try the module Get-Outote. If you need a way to inspire and engage students to make the connections between
ice and voting, try the module Bridging the Gap Between Service, Activism, and Politics.

ou want to enhance your communication and persuasion skills and get in the mindset of a ic official, check out the tools in the *Facilitation 201* and 202 modules.

ou are looking for ways to think deeper about the decisions you and others (including cicians) make and how they affect our lives, explore the activities in *Vocation:The Two Choices sion-Making Exercise*: <a href="http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/home.htm">http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/home.htm</a>



Movies you might use to spur discussion include:

reheart. Directed by Mel Gibson, 1995. A tale of William Wallace, a man who assisted the dom of Scotland from imperialist British rule based on the injustices he witnessed.

Jawed Angels. Directed by Katja Von Garnier, 2004. Defiant young activists take the women's age movement by storm, putting their lives at risk to help American women win the right to vote.

tion. Directed by Alexander Payne, 1999. A high school election that satirizes the election veen Bill Clinton, Ross Perot, and George Bush.

Woman, One Vote. Directed by Ruth Pollak, 2005. Documents the seventy-year battle for nan suffrage, which finally culminated in the passing of the Nineteenth Amendment to the stitution.

Generations of Suffragettes: The Women's Rights Movement. Films for the Humanities & Sciences, 3. Six generations of Stanton (beginning with Elizabeth Cady Stanton) women have fought for ality in the voting booth, the classroom, and the workplace. This concise overview of the women's ement in America uses interviews, archival footage, and photos to spotlight key contributors.

men Vote 2004: The Margin of Victory. Third Wave Television, 2004. Women Vote is designed to note debate and encourage women to vote in November. Women who are experts in the areas conomy; health; education; terrorism and security; and the environment give their perspectives. may be a useful tool to inform women and encourage them to vote.

; on the Prize. Directed by Henry Hampton, 1987. A documentary about the American Civil

continuing the conversation about civic engagement include:

Alan Abramowitz, Voice of the People: Elections and Voting in the United States.

Deconstructs the continued disengagement of American citizens from voting and the reasons for the ideological realignment of the Democratic and Republican parties.

Jane Adams, 20 Years At Hull-House.

Jane Addams founded Hull House in 1889. Her passion for peace and the injustices she witnessed became urgent demands upon her creative efforts and interpretative skills.

Robert Banks and Kimberly Powell, Faith in Leadership: How Leaders Live Out Their Faith in Their Work And Why It Matters.

This book offers examples from leaders in various fields to demonstrate that faithfullness and leadership can successfully combine.

Yvonne Bynoe, Stand and Deliver: Political Activism, Leadership, and Hip Hop Culture.

Bynoe shows how hip hoppers can create a sophisticated dialogue about what constitutes leadership, politics, and political action.

Douglas Henton, John Melville, and Kim Walesh, Civic Revolutionaries: Igniting the Passion for Change in America's Communities.

Filled with real-life examples of unconventional civic action now underway across the U.S.A., provides the intellectual and operational framework for exciting advances in America.

Frances A. Karnes, Suzanne M. Bean, and Rosemary Wallner, Girls and Young Women Leading the Way: 20 True Stories about Leadership.

Twenty examples of leadership, written by females who took action in their schools and communities to initiate change.

Christopher Kush, The One-Hour Activist: The 15 Most Powerful Actions You Car Take to Fight for the Issues and Candidates You Care About.

The One-Hour Activist is packed with insider advice from elected officials, professional organizers, lobbyists, and journalists who sharetips for getting your message across.

Lois Beachy Underhill, The Woman Who Ran For President: The Many Lives of Victoria Woodhull.



# Christina Brown explains:

"Voting is taking control over life changing events, ideas, and legislation...The local elections are just as important as the national elections and participating in both can help make your voice heard...By tracking the issues that matter to those I serve, I can then empower them to advocate on their own behalf."

civically involved. The involvement I had in service in the past was done out of the expectations of family members. As a young adult, I chose the political party my parents chose. As I grew older, and became more involved with vulnerable populations, I decided that the party I was affiliated with no longer matched the beliefs and values I had. It made me wonder how many people go through their civic life dependent on others and do not seek out truth for themselves.

I do service work at a community mental health center. The population of clients that I have the most contact with is a group of individuals who have Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI). The concerns of this population are specific. How will I pay for treatment or medication when I cannot work? Will I have to depend on the government for aid, and what will I have to give mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically to receive aid? To take advocacy one step further by becoming civically involved is important to both me and the mental health consumers I serve. The mental health system in the state of Kansas, and the national level at large, is in great need of support, which has lead me to look critically at these issues, and question how they are addressed. Are the decisions made in Washington, D.C. really made to help those challenged with SPMI? Who is making money off lobbying efforts to eliminate support? Which political parties support mental health endeavors? I have thought a lot about these issues since volunteering at my placement. I have thought about what I can do to make a difference.

Voting is a gift and a right. I have struggled in the past when considering the importance of my vote and how much it matters. I have seen several instances where candidates were voted into office by a narrow margin of victory. My vote supports a candidate, but it is also shows support of the issues. The issues that different candidates support may help or hurt the people I work with, which is why I carefully consider the positions of each side before voting. I keep in mind what issues are important to mental health consumers and myself. To me, voting is taking control

participating in both can help make your voice heard.

So I try to stay informed and up-to-date on bills and legislations that will affect me and the people with whom I volunteer. I follow commissions regarding Mental Health support and track progress that is made. This allows me to be informed and educated about bills that may impact those served at my site. Analyzing the potential legislative changes, and what they will mean for the people I work with, is another way I am civically involved. By tracking the issues that matter to those I serve, I can then empower them to advocate on their own behalf.

I can feel that the intensity of my civic involvement has increased since I began volunteering with persons in the mental health community. Empowering them to become self-advocates on a personal and civic level is a goal that the staff strives for at my service site. By seeing the struggles of the people we serve and hearing their stories, I am able to connect what I do to what their needs are. My service has allowed me to reflect on mental health and the importance of civic involvement. Because of my experience, I know I will always be committed to mental health advocacy. My service site has changed the outlook of my future and opened myself to unforeseen career paths. I have grown personally. By becoming aware of the work that still needs to be done and the legislation that needs support, I know I have also grown as a citizen who is a civic leader.

- I. Christina writes that she saw the need civic involvement, but never saw hersel within that picture. Do you see yourse that picture? What are your personal motivations for being involved?
- 2. Do you feel that your vote is importar "gift and a right," which can make a difference? When you vote, what factor influence your choice?
- 3. Christina claims that local elections are as important as national ones. Do you believe this is true? List the ways stud can be educated about and participate local elections or politics.
- 4. Christina points to public policy as one the key means of advocacy. What are examples of how one can engage in pupolicy?

#### What drives a student

to care
to be there
to do more than their share?
Is it fair?
that some have to do more just

### to participate in

cannot wait
for some change around here
I hate
the problems in this state
of affairs so muddled
i am irate
at politicans continuous prate
and prattle about

#### civics

I have seen too much to believe all these gimmicks watching these people mimic justice fairness freedom we have worked for too long to let this get in our way but how to change the day-to-day

to get around it behind it in it talk to it seduce it not appeasement not fulfillment

#### engagement

with what makes things the way they are so far nothing else has worked so let us attack what lurks behind this scar Our weapons:
Voting Lobbying Protesting Serving

Knowing Believing Acting

[Driven Female Voice] So what drives a student to participate in Civic Engagement?

[Crowd] Everything!

distrust our democratic system and the morality of our legislators. I find that this is generally true amongst my peers. We do not feel that our concerns or our desires for a more socially just world are represented by any potential, or present, political leader.

What Bonner and service work have taught me, however, is that involvement in the political process is a necessary step that must be taken in order to carry out and protect service agencies with whom I work. For the longest time I

and protect service agencies with whom I work. For the longest time, I thought of voting as picking the better of two evils. Although I still feel that this is somewhat true, I now better understand the importance of voting. The voices that can offer the most wholesome solutions to the problems in society are often those who are very involved in the community but often absent from the political process.

In working with service agencies in my community, I began to see clearly the effect that social spending cuts have on the ability of these agencies to provide for the growing numbers of the needy. We cannot and must not waste time attempting to solve social problems with only a community approach. As students, as thinkers and educators, we must understand and confront social problems from a systemic approach.

Being involved has really connected me to the community, to the campus, and has committed me to the search for a more healthy society. Combining my service work and my studies has really been valuable to me and has drawn the connection between service and activism.

Bonner creates such strong connections to the community and to social awareness. In doing so, students feel encouraged to take an even greater role in bettering the lives of those with whom they work. In this way Bonner greatly encourages students to become involved politically. Being involved with Bonner has made service work so much more personal to me, as well as shown me the importance of making the political system begin to work for



# Rania Daystar explains:

"By seeing the struggles of the people we serve and hearing their stories, I am able to connect what I do to what their needs are...My service has allowed me to reflect on mental health and the importance of civic involvement. Voting is a gift and a right. The issues that different candidates support may help or hurt the people I work with, which is why I carefully consider the positions of each side before voting."

Is Bonners we are educated to understand didentify our own prejudices and our vn stereotypes; as voters, we need to mand that politicians are required to do e same." How can this accomplished on a ily basis as Rania suggests?

nat strategies have you discovered in orking towards empowering others yet it usurping their voices?

nia suggests that social change requires a stemic approach. Would you agree? Why why not?

you agree with Rania that the ability to the change you wish to see is a part of eating social change? Do you ever feel e your voice isn't heard? Are you using ur voice and vocation in ways that are dible? and our own stereotypes, and as voters, we need to demand that politicians are required to do the same. I truly believe that the kind of community involvement and service we conduct as Bonner Scholars has turned us into some of the best leaders our world will ever see. I believe in Bonner, social work, and the ability to be the change I wish to see and to *create* that change. It is because I believe in

, to betiliers the are equeated to arracistaria aria racitary car ethir prejudices

these idealistic goals that I know I *must* become involved politically and to encourage those around me to take notice of and participate in the political

process. If we do not participate, our voices are never going to be heard.

We must be politically involved; it is our duty to expand our social education to all who are willing to hear us. It is also our duty to protect these social organizations that have taught us so much about our community, about our country, and about our own misconceptions. Most importantly, being involved with these service agencies has taught us so much about ourselves and about the power an individual can have to create visible and tangible changes. We must use the political system to protect these service agencies from extinction. Because we are students, we are at a greater advantage to help and to educate: it is our duty to do so.

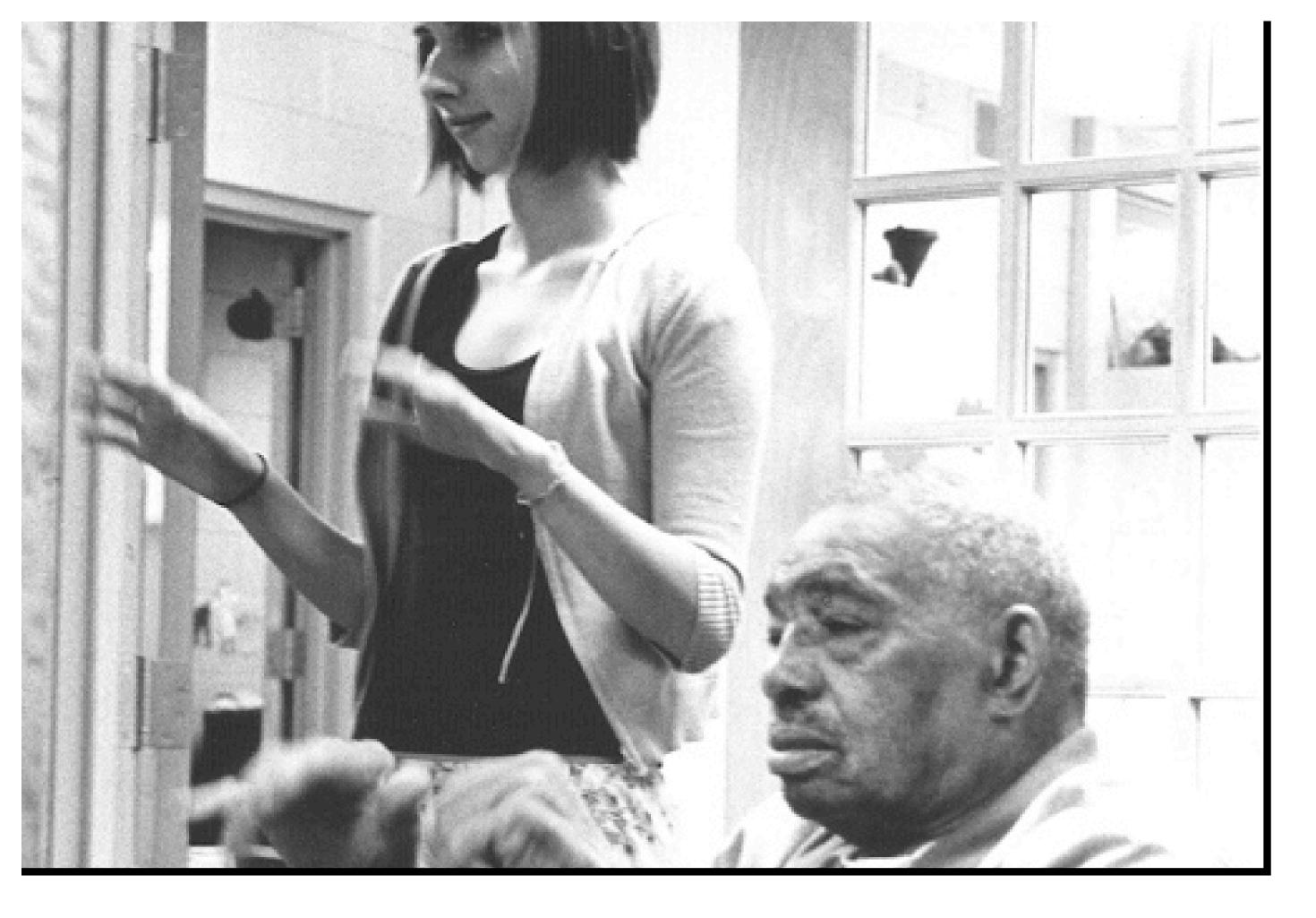


Photo: Courtesy of Esther Martin, Earlham Co

When I enter the voting booth, images of those I serve, the site where I work, and the work I do, ome with me. They remind me to take into consideration those without a voice, whose daily ruggles go unforeseen and forgotten: the teen without a home, the parents who want to provide nore for their families, the unsafe streets that children and youth reside. My one vote has the apacity, the say, to provide just a bit more light in their lives."



#### Kevin Kester states:

"Civic engagement is a broad concept, yet much more than simply voting for a candidate at election time. In fact, the lone act of voting is hardly being civically engaged if you do nothing more."

Civic engagement is a broad concept yet it is much more than simply voting for a candidate at election time. In fact, the lone act of voting is hardly being civically engaged if you do nothing more than just that.

As a Bonner I was involved with other people in a productive environment that worked hard to accomplish all necessary tasks. My friends and I were always aware of what was going on in the Beltway and across the world. We understood that it was important to know the things that shaped our world. As a participant in the democratic process my vote could be powerful, as witnessed in recent elections. Hence, I believed it was my responsibility to be well educated and open-minded about my political decisions.

The role Bonner played in shaping my civic beliefs was through personal involvement with other citizens through education and volunteer sites. The program helped shape my beliefs about multilingual education in the U.S. by placing me as an ESL assistant in an elementary school. My understanding of racial and ethnic identity was expanded as I worked with at-risk and low-income families. The program enriched my knowledge of what one persons role within a group format is and how that role relates to the democratic process. The union of AmeriCorps and Bonner brought together ideals of community empowerment by placing Bonner Leaders in communities throughout the nation, changing the lives of both.

I mean not to sensationalize the program or our role within it but to be true to the positive transformations the program encourages. The following story is a testament to the University of Louisville AmeriCorps Bonner Leader program, directed by Kim Johnson, of which I partook in my final year at the university two years ago.

In the weeks leading to graduation my AmeriCorps Bonner coordinator told me that the world was my oyster. At that moment I did not fully understand her. Shortly after graduation I went to Europe, as a gift to myself, to practice German and unknowingly, to find pearls of wisdom in this oyster of a world. I left Europe two weeks later with an enhanced knowledge of German, a bag full of chocolates, and a belly full of Bavarian beer. I am now in the transition period between graduation and my long anticipated move to Japan. I spent my days lounging around my apartment before going to work at UPS in the evenings. I continued to

e-teen Hispanic students. I thought of Daniel, a young, Spanish-speaking kid from alifornia. Daniel liked to tell stories, but he mixed them with true statements. I metimes it was difficult to distinguish the truth from fantasy, but it was always tertaining to listen to him talk. I believe Daniel enjoyed our lessons; a smile always me to life on his face when I called his name to begin our lessons. Remembering aniel made me realize that experience taught me a lot. Despite how far behind he as in keeping up with his classmates, he indirectly taught me how to teach ESL ildren and the importance of multilingual education in the U.S. He reminded me of e importance of imagination, which Einstein said "is more important than knowledge."

I have been reflecting on what Kim Johnson told me that the world is my oyster d remember now that her comment was followed by an encouraging remark that we build all become beautiful pearls. If this is true, then surely the AmeriCorps Bonner ogram helped shape me into the pearl I am becoming as I learn, reflect, and sperience the world.

- I. What do you think about Kevin's staten that the lone act of voting is hardly be civically engaged if you do nothing mor What other acts, besides voting, are examples of civic engagement?
- 2. How have the experiences in Kevin's life helped him to develop and connect with the people and work that he does?
- 3. Kevin reflects on the comment that the world is his oyster. What other phrase have friends or mentors offered you as advice? Have these phrases assisted you reflection and encouraged you in some way? How?
- 4. Reflect on Einstein's statement that imagination "is more important than knowledge." How does this relate to t metaphor Kevin uses about the oyster pearl? How might imagination be mor important than knowledge in politics, government, and voting?

This is my Service
This is my Passion,
This is my Life,
And I want it to mean something.

I want to make a difference,
I will try to change a life,
I want to be a friend,
I will try to be a role model.

Who I am and what I do, Affects who others are and what they do.

They see my actions and they hear my words,
And long after I am gone (hopefully) they will still
See and hear me.

For better or for worse, I will Shape the Future.

So you see in a way it is all about me, Because who I am and how I treat others, Can affect how others will treat others.

The children may be the future,
But the power to shape the future
Lies in those who guide and teach them.

This is my Service,
This is my Passion,
This is my Life,
And I want to make a difference.

I want to make a difference,
I will try to save a Life,
I want to be a helper,
I work to be a leader.

Its is all about me,
But it is reflected in them.
It is all about me,
But it affects everyone.

I want to be
The change I see in them,
Because they are the future,
Every little thing that I do,
that you do,
counts.

Jennifer Timberlake Berea College what will happen in my country, state, county, and city. My views of being able to vote have varied, mostly because I come from another background than most United States citizens. I am originally from Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Since I was sixteen years old, I was able to vote in my country. In Brazil you chose whether or not you want to vote before you turn eighteen. I chose to vote because all of my teachers in high school worked to motivate students to participate in civic affairs.

This motivation stemmed from the belief that if you want to change something you need to do it yourself. I believe that change does not always come from external stimuli such as major events, but they come deep within oneself. You need to change in order to change something you believe in. In America I do not see that desire from most of the youth I have come in contact with who participate in civic affairs or who have the privilege of being in an academic environment. From my perspective, the more education people have, the more likely it is that they will participate in civic affairs. Educational attainment has a powerful influence on civic der feat

Education starts at home from the influences and beliefs of parents, peers, siblings, and community members. This is the first place where we find the basis to make our judgments and opinions. At school, challenges take place between people with different beliefs, backgrounds, and opinions. We must listen to those voices equally and respectfully in order to hear and consider all different points of view.

I think the best way to make change in the long run is through education and by letting people know about the effects voting can have on their lives. Most of the time people do not know or think that just one vote will change society. But what they do not see is that its *not* just one vote if *all* of us create dialogue early on with one another. To witness the confusion, the



# Rodolfo Sangion Forti expresses:

"We need to use the democracy that has been provided to us and ensure an equal, shared democracy across difference and fear. We need to make sure that youth feel motivated to be a part of the future and encourage them to engage with civic duties. Once we can create this type of climate, more and more young people will realize how important one vote is and how it can cause the whole society to shift."

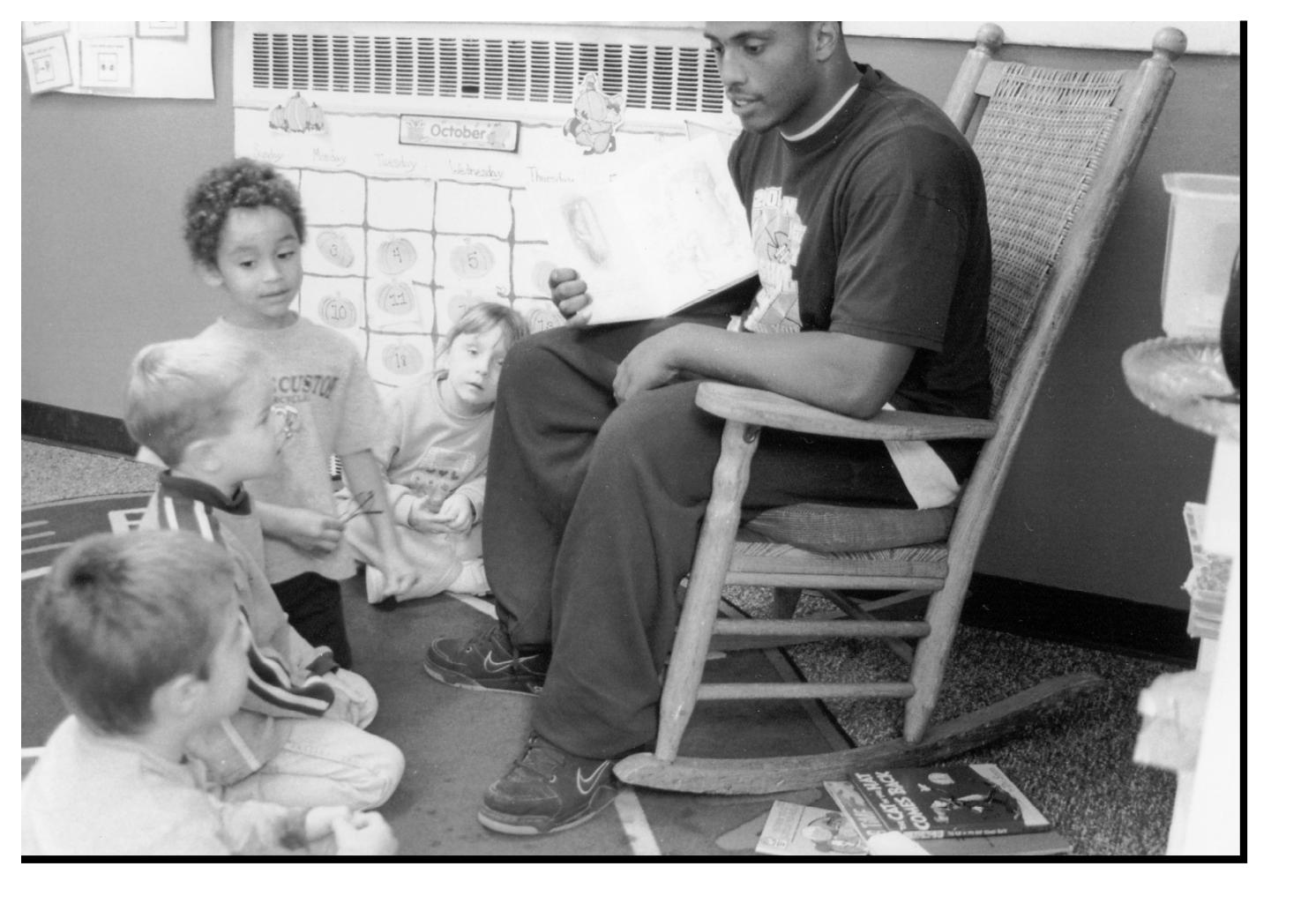
dolfo explains how important both ucation and voting are, especially from his perience growing up in Brazil. How might achers motivate and encourage students to gage with civic affairs?

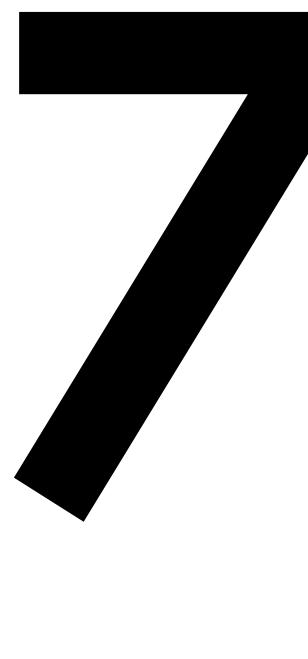
w does the media factor into whether uth in the U.S. are motivated in civic affairs? the media is so influential, how might it be a werful tool for youth to make social ange?

dolofo says that we must vote and the act casting a vote is an act towards making cial and political change. How do we llectively become allies, share dialogue, and te together?

a society we must direct public attention to nat higher education can do to make change d ensure an equal, shared democracy across ference and fear. How might you take this atement by Rodolfo and make that happen? ow would you begin to take action? influences the beliefs and choices of the public. In my view, the mass media has beome one of the most powerful forces on Earth. It can change how one views an event, an idea, or a message over time locally, nationally, and globally. Politicians have learned to use the television in order to help their campaigns and gain voter ratings. To be civically engaged, we must reflect on the tools that we have the power to influence and understand how we are targeted by the mass media. We need to become an audience that is more demanding then held captive by the constructed images and messages we digest everyday.

My conclusion is that civic engagement is necessary and we *as the society* must direct public attention to what higher education can do to make change. We need to use the democracy that has been provided to us and ensure an equal, shared democracy *across* difference and fear. We need to make sure that youth feel motivated to be a part of the future and encourage them to engage with civic duties. Once we can create this type of climate, more and more young people will realize how important one vote is and how it can cause the whole society to shift. Take it from me, whose experience taking part in the power to vote in Brazil since age sixteen effected my civic engagement. Make your voice matter! Seek out the questions to your answers throughout and amongst your peers and education. Your votes will be what sets a good society apart from a bad one.





# That is the Generation Behind

public policy and its efforts to ensure civil rights.

- Marilyn Lopez, a Bonner Scholar at College of the Ozarks (Point Lookout, MO), reflects on her work in school districts to support English as a Second Language students, which has directed her to public policy initiatives like the No Child Left Behind act.
- Rebecca Madill, a Bonner Scholar at Emory & Henry College (Emory, VA), discusses how her studies of Public Policy and Community Service have encouraged her to better understand the policies that affect children's schooling. Her service experience put her in touch with children in ESL classes and their needs, while her coursework has helped her to see what policies shape the childrens' schooling and how she can affect them.
- Ashleigh Smith, a Bonner Scholar at Carson-Newman College (Jefferson City, TN), shares an insight about how her professional interest in education and teaching has helped her to see the connection between the work of the legislature and her own future.
- Peter Frey, a Bonner Leader from Allegheny College (Meadville, PA), discusses the importance of mentoring youth and living a life that is meaningful, rather than what is expected. He suggests a new definition of "successful" stemming from his role as a resource to a single parent family.

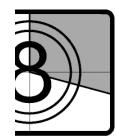
#### After reading the chapter, disc

- I. Many students are involved in service in educational arena. What are some of t key issues and policies that shape the q of schooling for children and youth?
- 2. What are ways you can learn more about public policy and how it affects the dail experiences of people in the communit (and ourselves)?
- 3. What are some of the factors that lead people with similar commitments and experiences to view ideas and policies different ways?
- 4. What activities led you to make connect between what you experience directly through service (in the classroom, for example) and the policies that shape the context?

lules available at: <a href="http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/home.htm">http://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/home.htm</a>

recommend going to the extremely resourceful Highlander Research and Education Center site, a center Myles Horton helped create and where Rosa Parks and others were cated as organizers: <a href="http://www.highlandercenter.org">http://www.highlandercenter.org</a>

visit the Media That Matters website, which offers a wide range of films by youth who are ing a difference: <a href="http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org">http://www.mediathatmattersfest.org</a>



es you might use to spur discussion on issues relating to mentoring and ation include:

'Elliot. Directed by Stephen Daldry, 2000. Set against the background of the 1984 Miner's ike, Billy Elliot is an eleven year old boy who stumbles out of the boxing ring and onto the let floor. He faces many trials and triumphs as he strives to conquer his family's set ways, er conflict, and standing on his toes!

The Right Thing. Directed by Spike Lee, 1989. A hot day on a New York City street, eryone's hate and bigotry smoulders and builds until it explodes into violence; reveals racial ejudices and stereotypes in all their guises.

s Can! Directed by Mel Henry, 1994. Promotes awareness of the Girls Can! Program that its gender bias in schools.

I to Manhood. Directed by Narcel G. Reedus, 1994. An emotional testament to the brothers to are reaching back into the community to save young black boys. This documentary traces steps taken by the Fulton County Human Sevices Department as it coordinates an all night, ensive mentoring workshop held in Atlanta.

Kill a Mockingbird. Directed by Robert Mulligan, 1962. Atticus Finch, a lawyer in the pression-era South, defends a Black man against an undeserved rape charge and his kids inst prejudice.

\*\*Not Bars. Directed by Mark Lansman, 2001. Documents the youth-led movement against massive prison industry in the US.

Bibliographic materials you might find interesting for introducing or continuing the conversation about civic engagement include:

Linda Delp, Miranda Kramer, Sue Schurman, and Kent Wong, Teaching for Change Popular Education and the Labor Movement

Documents the work that popular educators are actively creating to change education.

John Dewey, Democracy and Education.

Philosophical examination of demcracy and education.

Pablo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed.

Discusses the dynamics of oppression, marginalization, and in what ways education can be a catalyst to social change.

bell hooks, Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope.

hooks challenges the way institutionalized systems of domination (race, sex, imperialism) have used schooling to reinforce dominator values.

bell hooks, Teaching to Transgress; Education as the Practice of Freedom.

Feminist writer and English professor hooks shares insights, strategies, and critical reflections on pedagogical practice.

Barbara Lewis, What Do You Stand For? For Teens: A Guide to Building Character.

This book, a compendium of ideas, activities, and resources, focuses on self exploration to develop positive traits such as caring, empathy, respect, peacefulness, and responsibility.

Rebekah Nathan, My Freshman Year: What a Professor Learned by Becoming a Stu-Looking for a way to close the gap between her and her students, Nathan enrolled in her own university as a freshman. She found that many students who seemed uninterested in the whole idea of school were actually intensely curious and passionate about their education.

New Light Leadership Coalition, Youth Leadership Development Workbook: A Guid Emerging Youth Leaders.

Addresses issues such as organizational development, conflict resolution, team building, career planning, political activism, networking, and the principles of leadership to name a few.

Susan Smith and Dennis Wilson with Nancy Johnson, Nurtured by Knowledge: Lea to Do Partipatory Action Research.

# Marilyn Lopez states:

"Being in the Bonner Program has truly made me more conscious of the things schools try to ignore, which leave real problems unresolved and perpetuate issues that are harmful to youth."

the international children that had recently immigrated to the area. Most of the students lacked the ability or confidence to communicate with the teachers and other students because they had not been formally taught the English language, and there were not enough teachers to provide them with adequate language instruction they require.

Most school districts in the Ozarks cannot afford to hire trained ESL teachers. This leaves the children with little to no help in schools. Some of these children feel competent enough to advance in their education with little to no help, but many will dropout because they do not believe they have the ability or the opportunity to succeed. During my time working

within such environments, I began to compare the two schools I worked in. It was the additional burden of a lack of funds in one particular school that provided the most significant contrast. Both schools had ESL teachers, but the wealthier school district had three teachers with two aids (K-I2), while the other school had just one ESL teacher (K-I2). Both schools had a great need for assistance in working with these children, especially in the school that could only provide one ESL teacher. All of the immigrant children had two common goals: to become fluent in English and to adapt to the ways of the American culture. For without additional staff and resources, any level of success would prove to be very difficult for the children who needed the most attention and care. Most would say that our children are the future and that we should help them in every way possible. Without the help they need, it was difficult to think about the future that these students would have to look forward to.

In the past, President Bush declared a No Child Left Behind policy. I believe this was a good move on behalf of our nation. We need the resources to hire after-school care because it is not right for any child to be left behind. Although there is still much that needs to be done to improve our school system, this policy was a step in the right direction.

I strongly believe that advancements need to be made in school districts. Youth deserve to have the absolute best, and if we as citizens have to take out a little more money from our pockets, then so be it. The problem is that, even though parents feel they deserve to have the best school system for their children, those same parents and other voters are not willing to

buth. For example: not hiring any more teachers because they choose to spend money on ther arenas, often specific athletics. The schools have a lot to work on and they need to stribute their money more wisely, with students' well being and education as priorities. /ith time, I believe all of this can be accomplished, but it takes a social effort to fulfill these sions of giving the children of tomorrow a better life.

I have not planned on becoming a teacher or a school faculty member, but in the future hen I do have children of my own, I see myself getting involved with PTA and the school pard. In future presidential elections, I plan on voting for improvements in our economy, approvements in the lives of youth, and the right for a better education system.

I believe Bonner has made a positive impact in my life. It placed me in the heart of the ommunity and allowed me to see the things that need to be done. Many times we feel as if e do not have a say in what happens in the community, but you would be surprised to see ow many of the community leaders turn to you for advice or a second opinion. With oting, openness, awareness, and involvement, you really do have a say in what the future will old for students and our nation.

I. What societal problems have you come contact with during your community se experiences? What might you do to he solve these problems on a local or natic level?

2. How might someone like Marilyn help convince voters, the schools, and the gr community that it would be worthwhile support and education?

3. Do you feel that you have a voice in you community? How have you made your heard, or how might you do so in the fu

4. How do you give back to the generation behind you and create a better culture them to live in?

Children's faces,

The faces of tomorrow.

Displaying already at this young age

The burdens of our time.

They laugh and play games.

I laugh with them and pretend

That I do not know what is in store for them.

A good paying job?

With benefits?

Healthcare even?

A home to call their own?

Probably not in this lifetime.

Can I really smile and play along,

Knowing how impossible these things are to come by

With the way things are going now?

We all hope for these things.

They hope for these things too,

Although they might not know it yet.

I can laugh with them because I have hope

That we will do better in years to come.

We can do better.

They do not deserve to be forgotten

In plans for the future.

They are the future.

And they laugh;

So I laugh,

And play like today will outlast tomorrow.

## **Cheyenne Mize**

University of Louisville

Policy and Community Service major at Emory & Henry College. I was a little confused, wondering what kind of career this major prepares students for. Do they do service for the rest of their lives? do they get a paycheck? Then I saw the topics the courses offered, which included learning about the my of rural Appalachia. I did not know much about these issues. But it did not take long for me to ind become familiar with the ways in which knowledge and community are connected. If I want to we the situation for people in West Virginia, I need to know why, contextually, the community has come present state. I had always questioned volunteer work as some sort of temporary fix. I just did not that through inquiry, experience, theory and practice a solution could be found.

now see that the solution can be developed by deconstructing and understanding the situation ch a problem is based. Becoming informed is a top priority for me, as I desire to go beyond rary solutions. Being informed is the deciding factor in whether or not I vote. For the past ars, as my eighteenth birthday drew nearer, I have been considering the voting process and my it. I understood I had the ability to make a difference with my vote. With my new college sions, I can look back and still agree with this. Of course voting makes a difference. Why else we do it in a place as free as America? I used to believe that I would never be fully informed lly, I figured politics were for *political people*. I knew nothing about the people from my town g for the school board; other than seeing their signs and hearing the community gossip about sm.

g Creek People in Action, as the organization is known, does a tremendous range of service to ople in the rural area of McDowell County, West Virginia. My first service trip was quite a as I saw small wooden houses falling apart on the side of the road. Driving towards the dark downtown, I realized something can be done to fix this. Big Creek People in Action has nized the role of politics and is attempting to fix the many problems facing the area. I am ing to see how important government policy is in areas that need change. By seeing how much policy is in areas that need change.

ing to see how important government policy is in areas that need change. By seeing how much of an political decisions have on places like McDowell County, I am growing confident enough to say, I believe and it is worth standing up for.

y feelings about the United States of America have become stronger since beginning my service work. I sel like there is power in our government to do anything, and it is the people's obligation to make sure

# Rebecca Madill explains:

"I want to raise awareness that there are plenty of people left that need our advocacy, especially since so many people my age are in the ideal privileged world of the college campus."

you connect service with politics to be adovcate of what you believe in? What e some solutions you apply in addressing mmunity issues?

necca makes the connection between her lucation - both in the classroom and rough experience - and her ability to gage in making change. What activities we helped you make that connection?

s service ever acted as a bridge between ereotype and reality? How could more of ese bridge crossings occur?

ould you agree that college is a privilege? ow do you plan to use this privilege as a ol to make social change? If I% of the orld's population receives a college gree, what should you do with that ivilege to make a difference?

local community has became wide open to me through my service. I have been able to work with migrant workers, kindergarteners from a school within a low socio-economic area, and sixth-graders who are just now beginning to understand that the world is imperfect and at times unfair. The community is diverse yet similar, as it is a rural area, and seeing people come together for things like ESL tutoring and after-school programs show me how much we all lean on one other, that we are allies.

Recently, I have participated in ESL tutoring and it has been an eye-opening experience. I have worked with children from difficult home situations and seen rural poverty, but working with migrant workers was new. I began to see just how important it is that all of us living in America have the same opportunities. Why should some people who are born in America receive basic privileges that these people do not get? Some of these men and women were illegal immigrants and they cared about learning, about living in this country where they can make enough money to live. I used to be intimidated when I saw migrant workers around town, but now that I have gotten to know a few workers and their families, I do not really see them as migrant workers. I see them as Americans, since they are living here just as I am. They are friends with whom I share dinner with and they are the little girls playing on the lawn who are very much a part of that real American dreams of children who smile with hope. These are people who still have a long ways to go to be recognized as equal citizens, against the grain of classism and racism. This is a cause worth standing up for.

I enjoy discussing my service with my friends, family, and other adults. I want to raise awareness that there are plenty of people left that need our advocacy, especially since so many people my age are in the ideal *privileged* world of the college campus. The Bonner Program has made it impossible for me to stay in that ideal little world, and I am very grateful to have the opportunity to draw connections between service and politics as an adovcate of what I strongly believe in.

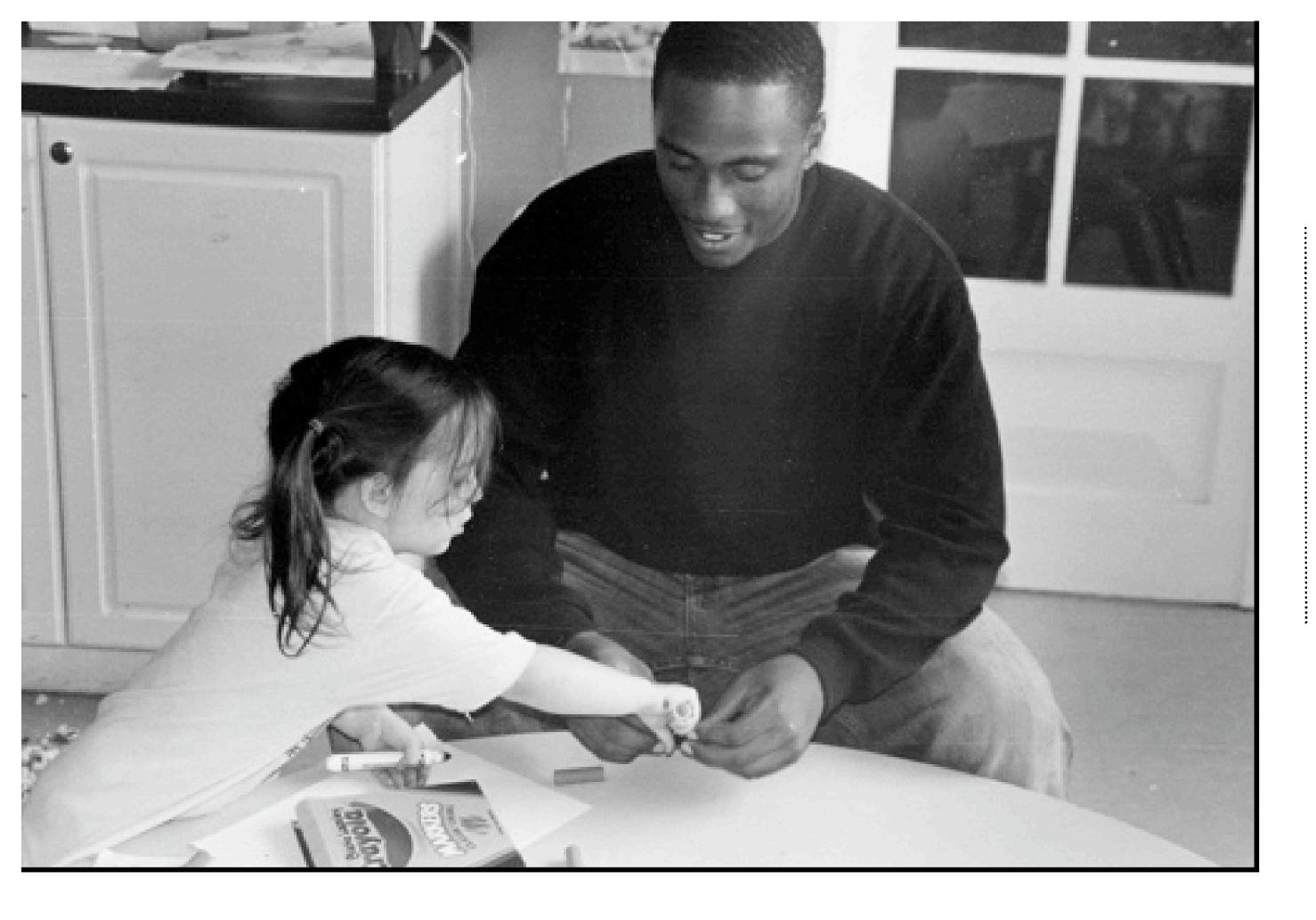


Photo: Taken by Jenny Me Bonner Scholar, Earlham College

Good schools are vital to development of strong educated adults. Every proposal for budget with lore cuts to school funding, especially correlating with low testing scores, must be addressed. Well-bunded education is essential for the generations to come – without proper consideration at the overnmental level, this will not be possible."

# Ashleigh Smith states:

"If the government determines my salary, the amount of money my school will receive, as well as the laws and regulations that will govern how I teach, then I want the ability to determine who my government will be. Through dialogue with my peers, professors, and teachers in the community, I have begun to understand how the decisions my government makes will impact my future students, classroom, and the approaches I will take to educate."

nation, it seems, has divided itself once more, and I am an island amidst the tumultuous waves of democracy. Or perhaps more appropriately, I am the eternal fence-rider, caught between two fields of grass that seem equally green.

Being a fence rider can have its advantages. For example, I can usually find a middle ground with anyone who can make a valid point. After all, fence-riders do not have to commit to simply one idea. I can just as easily play the devil advocate, since in essence I do

not feel passionately for one side or the other. I also have the freedom to agree with both parties on different issues. This, however, almost always proves to be a double-edged sword as the dilemma of whom to vote for generally ensues. By election time I generally feel that a rousing game of Eenie-Meenie-Minie-Moe is the best determinant for choosing a candidate to vote for; and if that fails, I can always simply copy my parents. They are, after all, pretty smart. In any result, I usually keep my head out of politics, as it almost always results in a terrific headache or worse yet, a severe case of apathy towards nearly anything political.

Recently, though, something bordering on the miraculous has begun to occur within my cognition. I am beginning to realize that those I elect will play a significant role in my everyday life. For example, I am an education major. Since I have neither the time nor the funds to pursue another major going into my senior year, and since I love teaching so darned much, I plan on doing so when I graduate. I am an optimist by nature, but even I know the economic ramifications of choosing such a career. Until recently, though, I did not realize that the Tennessee State legislature usually determines the salary of public school teachers or the effect politics have on education professions. Through my Bonner service work in local schools as well as through my Teacher Education course work, I have begun to understand how local, state

and federal policy affect the classroom, and I take those issues to heart. For instance, in the past, many teachers I know criticized parts of the No Child Left Behind act. While they

ised only on the test scores of his or her students is not accurate. Teachers I respect have onfided in me that they feel pressured into teaching to the *test*, rather than teaching for e sake of *learning*, in order to ensure that their school meet standards established by acts ich as *No Child Left Behind*. Through dialogue with my peers, professors and teachers in e community, I began to understand how the decisions of the government will impact my ture students, classroom, and the approach I take.

If the government determines my salary, the amount of money my school will receive, well as the laws and regulations that will govern how I teach, then I want the ability to etermine who my government will be. It is my responsibility to be informed about political ndidates and it is my right as an American citizen to vote for the candidate who I believe ill best represent my ideals and interests when making laws. When I realized this, I finally iderstood the importance of being a civically engaged citizen, and even more so, I realized e importance of passing this realization on to others. Civic engagement does not merely id where I begin, rather, it extends beyond to the millions of people who, for whatever ason, are fence-riders as well. For if my Bonner service work has taught me anything, it is taught me the importance of reaching out to those in need and giving them the oportunity to have a voice, as someone gave me the same. Through my service work, I sgan to realize the importance of stepping off my fence and making a decision about what stand for After all, fences are not as comfortable to sit on as they initially appear.

- I. What are some pros and cons of being fence-rider? Is remaing somewhere in middle a better place than extremes? or why not?
- 2. What decisions does the government that affect you in your everyday life? Tof arenas such as human rights, travel, education, health, and any others that your can think of.
- 3. Ashleigh has discovered that local, state federal policy directly impacts her chosmajor and subsequent career. Can you those ties between the government an your future career?
- 4. Reflect on your own schooling. How a when has public policy effected your o education? How would you have liked education to have been constructed? might you give that feedback to school a better education awaits students in t future?



Photo: Courtesy of Jean Everage, DePauw Univer

am aware that I cannot purge all social ills cast upon the world today, but I do believe a legal lucation would offer me the opportunity to do so by giving me the resources to address these sues. I want to give back to others by ultimately becoming an attorney dedicated to the nonprofit ena and advocating the rights of the disadvantaged; especially women and children."

rage, and a pure bred golden retriever lounging on the sofa. On the way to this dream, throughout high and college, civic service and involvement in the community is all too often considered something people do, such as clubs, organizations, athletes, and people of weath with money to give. Rarely is one raised in this country with the mindset to recognize their own blessings, the needs of those around and the opportunity to help their own family, community, country and world. After the American dream led and a family is established, there seems to be little time out of the busy schedules of those parents milies to give towards the integration of themselves into their immediate civic infrastructure. There are any other things to worry about, and so suddenly, life quickly passes by. While many citizens

any other things to worry about, and so suddenly, life quickly passes by. While many citizen : from the resources of our country in fulfilling their dreams, many have never genuinely or tently engaged in living out the definition of what is means to be a citizen or community er.

fore coming to Berry College, I would have liked to think that I was fairly active in doing my 3 a citizen, first in Paraguay and then here in the United States. Becoming a Bonner scholar my first semester was the first of many steps that would end up taking me to where I am After almost four semesters here at Berry serving the Bonner program, my eyes have been d to things that I had never seen before but that had always been there. Perhaps that is the ep in fulfilling the role of being a citizen; seeing the opportunity, seeing the need, seeing the ility to make things better. That was definitely the case with me as the first program that my attention had mentoring at its center. It was a bit ironic how it all worked out, but I up with a family: a mother, her 18-year-old daughter, 15-year-old and 13-year-old sons. It was a school setting, rather in their home, their real life setting. I was exposed to a way of life I had en before. I had seen what it was like for horrible things to happen to people on TV; sexual, I, verbal, and emotional abuse, poverty, but never in real life. I had never before witnessed the of such implicated life suffering with my own eyes; to smell the smells and hear the hurt of Having the chance to work with Bubba and Vincent, the two boys, took me deep into this new, n world that quickly became part of my own community of fellow citizens and neighbors. ne work I do is a direct service in the community. I am in essence, responsible to myself, the

r Program and most importantly to Miss Mincey and her two sons for spending at least ten hours with week. This is a relationship that is in many ways unique, intimate, professional, emotional, and very ary. I have a definite emotional identification with these young men and their family. Through that

# Joshua Kumrits explains:

"It seems to me that a world full of people who are able to live a dream and taste the beautiful essences of life is much better than a world where only a few are able to partake in what all should experience. In order for all of us to live sounder, more fulfilling lives, we must at times take a break from pursuing our dreams so we can help those next to us realize and achieve their own."

nat education issues do Joshua's flections raise? Where do you see arning like he describes happening in your mmunity?

hua describes many insights he has gained om sharing time with two teenage boys no have been victims of abuse, poverty, d a broken home. How might policy or ucation help eradicate some of these cial issues?

w do you handle some of the issues that shua has mentioned in this essay? ivilege, power, domestic violence, youth, ger management, sexual abuse, identity ues, and mentoring?

In you remember a real life mentor or le-model you have had in your life? What bod out to you that might be a aracteristic of a good mentor? Are you a entor?

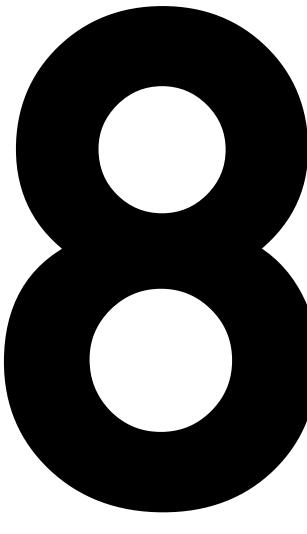
intense. The effect of an immensely dark upbringing has had painful side effects on these boys and the whole family. Situations arise while we are together: confusion of appropriate sexual behavior, behavioral problems such as domestic violence enactments, frequent emotional breakdowns, as well as anger management and identity issues as Black Americans. These enactments represent what these boys are going through, what they are living, who they are struggling to become, and what is going on inside. As I invest my time and effort to them, I realize often with an accompanying depressing thought, that there are so many kids just like this so many families, so many moms with the same stories of hurt and pain, who are crying the same tears. My time with the Minceys has sparked the fire inside me to do whatever it takes to help others understand the importance of having this knowledge of how to invest time and help improve the public good, how to start right here in Rome, taking part in acts and services that make the public lives of our citizens better with support.

and Vincent extends well beyond hanging out and having a good time. The issues that arise are

I know that the time I spend with the boys, whether it's driving in the car singing, playing video games at my house, going shopping, and having those tough, but necessary, conversations about life and direct problems at hand, that I take part in encouraging and supporting these two young men as they grow up as at-risk youth. I can only do so much as one person, and because of this, the act of relaying this message, which calls all citizens to first understand and then fulfill their civic duty as citizens, is just as important as the act of community involvement itself. The Bonner Foundation has taken upon its shoulders to spread the message and fan the flame that urges all to allow civic-minded behavior to become the norm of our everyday life. My job with the mentoring program has allowed me to do just that. In fact, it is not a job, it is now a part of my life. The Mincey boys are not just mentees, they are family.

It seems to me that a world full of people who are able to live a dream and taste the beautiful essences of life is much better than a world where only a *few* are able to partake in what *all* should experience. In order for all to live sounder, more fulfilling lives, we must at time take a break from pursuing our dreams so we can help those next to us realize their own. That is what civic engagement is all about; it is knowing that the person over there could have easily been me and how encouraging it would be to have a mentor who cared.





low Do I Become a Leader?

students share why advocacy is important.

- **Daniel Cellucci**, a Bonner Scholar at the University of Richmond (Richmond, VA), calls attention to the atrocity of genocide in Rwanda and his work in a Virginia state government office to raise the need for speaking up for justice through both service and advocacy.
- **Brett Cherry**, a Bonner Scholar at Antioch College (Yellow Springs, OH), shares his own concerns about the "delusive veil of partisan politics," the role of the media and lobbyists in the wake of September 11th, and the need for direct civil engagement by citizens in order to reclaim the power of individual citizens and revitalize the democracy.
- **Zach Pfister**, a Bonner Scholar at DePauw University (Greencastle, IN), makes a persuasive case for the importance of voting and education about the political process for mainstream Americans, in an era where only 50% of elibgible voters vote, but cautions against civil disobedience as a tool for increasing civic engagement.
- ► **Helena Vonk**, a Bonner Scholar at Oberlin College (Oberlin, OH), discusses her engagement with civic duties as a young woman of color standing up for youth rights and social, racial justice. In her essay, she links her activism with her ability to recognize a social issue that directly impacts her community as well as to see failure as a small hurdle to reaching success.

#### After reading the chapter, disc

I. Have you been involved in advocacy? V you get involved? How is advocacy work, view, similar to and different from direct s What makes it an important part of civic engagement?

2. How are advocacy and civil disobedienc different methods? What are your views a need for or role of civil disobedience in the States or other nations?

3. What are some of the stereotypes assorwith people involved in advocacy, direct sepolitics? Discuss some of the stereotypes for each of these groups. What are some address and counter those stereotypes?

ou need a way to engage peers in addressing and resolving difference of opinion, you may nt to use the activities in the module *Conflict Resolution*. If your group is looking to build an ance to fight for something or move a community forward, you may want to visit the ideas Coalition Building. All modules are available on-line at:

<u>p://www.bonner.org/resources/modules/home.htm</u>

engage in a discussion about citizenship and group member definitions of it, including ocacy and protest, try the Citizenship: Rights and Responsibilities module. Also: Advocacy 101, ocacy 201, and Lobbying 101.



Movies you might use to spur discussion include:

*Vialogues for an Inclusive Democracy.* Directed by Southern Region Council, 2002. A rich crossection of comments from African American and Latino/a leaders.

iandhi. Directed by Richard Attenborough, 1982. The biography of Mohandas K. Gandhi, who rose om a small-time lawyer to India's spiritual leader through his philosophy of non-violent but direct-tion protest.

*lotel Rwanda.* Directed by Terry George, 2005. Ten years ago some of the worst atrocities in the story of mankind took place in the country of Rwanda. Events went almost unnoticed by the rest the world. In the face of these unspeakable actions, inspired by his love for his family, an ordinary an summons extraordinary courage.

as Madres: The Mothers of the Plaza De Mayo. Directed by Susana Munoz & Lourdes Portillo, 1985. Iffers an understanding of Argentinian history in the 1970s and 1980s and the empowerment of omen in a society that renders them silent, yet collectively mother's demand the fate of 30,000 sappeared sons and daughers.

**1alcolm X.** Directed by Spike Lee, 1992. The biopic of the controversial and influential Black ationalist leader.

alt of the Earth. Directed by Herbert J. Biberman, 1954. This film shows how a group of Hispanic iners who are discriminated against with dangerous working conditions and unsanitary housing etter their lot through industrial action. In the process the miners also have to change their titudes towards women.

the conversation about civic engagement include:

Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, *Grassroots: A Field Guide for Feminist Active*Like punk rock, feminism is based on the idea that you, an average person, have the power to take matters into your own hands. Take advantage of the opportunities your life provides for creating justice.

#### Mary S. Hartman, Are Leaders Born or Made?

Discusses insight on women's leadership and the surrounding question if leaders are born or made, or perhaps both.

#### bell hooks, The Will to Change.

hooks examines the stages of a man's life, from babyhood through boyhood to the teenage years into manhood. She finds patriarchy plays a role in most socio-sexual ills.

Paul Loeb, The Impossible Will Take a Little While: A Citizen's Guide to Hope in a Tin Fear.

Features essays by a range of social leaders.

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, The Leadership Challenge.

The keys these author identify as crucial to leadership are: to model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart-.

Larraine R. Matusak, Finding Your Voice: Learning to Lead...Anywhere You Want to Ma Difference.

Offers a practical set of tools to provide the knowledge and skills necessary for effective leadership, and shows how one can pursue passion and leadership within one's talents.

Steve Max, Organizing for Social Change: Midwest Academy: Manual for Activists. With new information on the trends, technology, and concerns of the new millennium, this guide book examines how one can bring about needed changes by learning from the experiences of those who have succeeded.

Deborah L. Rhode, The Difference "Difference" Makes: Women and Leadership. The contribution of some of the nation's most distinguished women leaders respected scholars on women and leadership, and perspectives are covered.



happened not that long ago (over a decade). But how could such an atrocity take place again? How could the world forget the horror of the Holocaust or the Armenian genocide? How could we make the same mistake again?

Ignorance and Apathy. In 1994, the average American did not know where Rwanda was, let alone care about what was happening within the tiny African country. Thus, when peacekeeping

troops were requested, there was no pressure on the government of the United States or any other government to provide for them; the massacre was allowed to continue. If ignorance and apathy are to blame for the Rwandan genocide and countless other preventable tragedies, what is the solution? The answer is *civic* engagement.

As Bonner Scholars we share several common commitments. During my four years as a Bonner Scholar, the common commitment that has been mostimportant to me has been civic engagement. I had the distinct privilege to serve with both the Virginia Office of Volunteerism (VOV) and the Virginia Office of Newcomer Services (ONS), both of which are divisions of the Department of Social Services. Throughout my time with both offices, I experienced the frustration and overwhelming dimensions of state government. The most enlightening part of this experience was the lessons I learned about citizenship.

Having the perspective of an insider to state and local government, I can tell you every vote counts. Jobs, policies, budget expenditures and ideologies can be changed with one trip to the ballot box. Everyone hears the numbers of unemployed, the amounts of debt, the low percentages of citizens that vote. As Bonner Scholars we see the faces and stories behind those numbers. But we often forget that we can *change* the numbers by exercising our rights and duties as citizens - thus changing lives for the *better*. My first service site, the *Virginia Office of* 

Volunteerism was closed because lawmakers needed to cut a tight budget. VOV was cut because it was seen as unnecessary. The legislature saved an insignificant amount of money, but five people lost their jobs, Virginia volunteers lost a valuable resource, and I lost my service site. VOV

**Daniel Cellucci** quotes Martin Niemöller:

"First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the Communists and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist. Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me."

was closed bassies no one shake uh

irelated conflicts, and unwelcoming communities for several years. Upon arrival, refugees face irsh realities: their new home lacks proper support systems, ESL provisions, and a welcoming titude from society. Often, refugees suffer because *no one speaks up on their behalf*.

Advocacy is not just political, it's about social justice. Through my service, I have learned at civic engagement is not just about candidates and elections, it is about families, children and sople who survive off hope. As Bonner Scholars we see the needs through our service work id we should be leading change both with action and advocacy. It is our job to show the chness a child brings to the world, the gift a refugee gives to a community. It is our duty to ow the world its own potential.

I began with a lesson from history on Rwanda and I shall close with one as well. During the olocaust, Pastor Martin Niemöller wrote this of his experience:

First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for the Communists and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist.

Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me.

rolunteer in the hopes that in speaking up for those without a voice, there will be someone ere to speak up for me. Too many have been silenced for too long. Break the silence and eak up.

- I. Why do many Americans take democr for granted? Why do you think so man people from other countries find Amer to be a country that may provide a beaulife?
- 2. Why are Americans typically unaware international issues? What resources you use to keep up to date on global rand events?
- 3. What it the point of Martin Niemöller words? What do they make you think in regards to the importance of speaki out?
- 4. Daniel descibes a few key points in his evolution of leadership skills. What state out as key points in your own journey?

7511116 hitting I cannot deal with them I do not want to go back mean hateful they are beyond my control I cannot relate to them poor hurting I cannot help them I cannot face them mistreated unloved doesn't anyone care? can't anyone else help them? needy deprived something has to be done someone needs to care desperate begging what can I do? who am I to help? looking asking I have to answer I have to care I am the

answer

# **Lauren Bell**

Rhodes College

they question whether voting still holds its democratic value. Those who lobby for vernment-sanctioned violence within and outside national boundaries must be held accountable for eir mistakes. We must stand against the bloodshed of war that seems to pervade so much of nerican history.

The delusive veil of partisan politics of both the right and left of the political spectrum is no nger suitable for providing comfort to the concerned citizen. The attacks that took place on 9/11 pport this assertion. Recent information surfacing within the mainstream edia identifies government bureaucracy as anything but democratic. The esidential election of 2000 revealed the irrational elements embedded within mechanized system of voting that was hardly questioned prior to the events

Elorida Legislation such as the Patriot Act and the Homeland Security Act

"If we are to

esidential election of 2000 revealed the irrational elements embedded within mechanized system of voting that was hardly questioned prior to the events. Florida. Legislation, such as the *Patriot Act* and the *Homeland Security Act*, notion as arbitrary political reactions rather than democratically conscious ts. These bleak circumstances reap both paranoia and apathy in their wake. culture of fear pervades American society. For a world establishing a balized economy, humanity seems to be drifting farther apart. Our way of is being replaced by laws of consumption dictated by free rather than fair ade.

Direct civil engagement by citizens of this country is not only needed, but perative if we are to restore democracy within this country. The mainstream edia, of both print and broadcast news magnates, are a reflection of the plitical processes that shape public policy in the U.S. today. A more coherent iderstanding of ideological and factual information provided by federal stitutions and media cartels is crucial if American citizens are to understand e role they can play in a democracy.

The war campaign in Iraq is teaming with ideological propaganda, playing the exact culture of fear that was created by the 9/11 attacks, the 2000 election, and government gislation in the name of national security. Citizens must be careful to not mistake symbols and thoritative assumptions for factual evidence. If people in the U.S. are to initiate viable forms of civil gagement they must first understand how they filter the information handed to them. But how do zizens begin to take on such a feat in the midst of a crisis of perception in the U.S.?

# **Brett Cherry** examines:

"If we are to begin this journey towards a real democracy, we must begin with ourselves. We must come to understand how we can affect others in surrounding communities, why the same social and domestic problems continue to haunt us, and what is our role is in either shaping or solving them."

ther than voting a candidate out of office, w can the public hold lobbyists and liticians accountable for actions the public ds un-democratic?

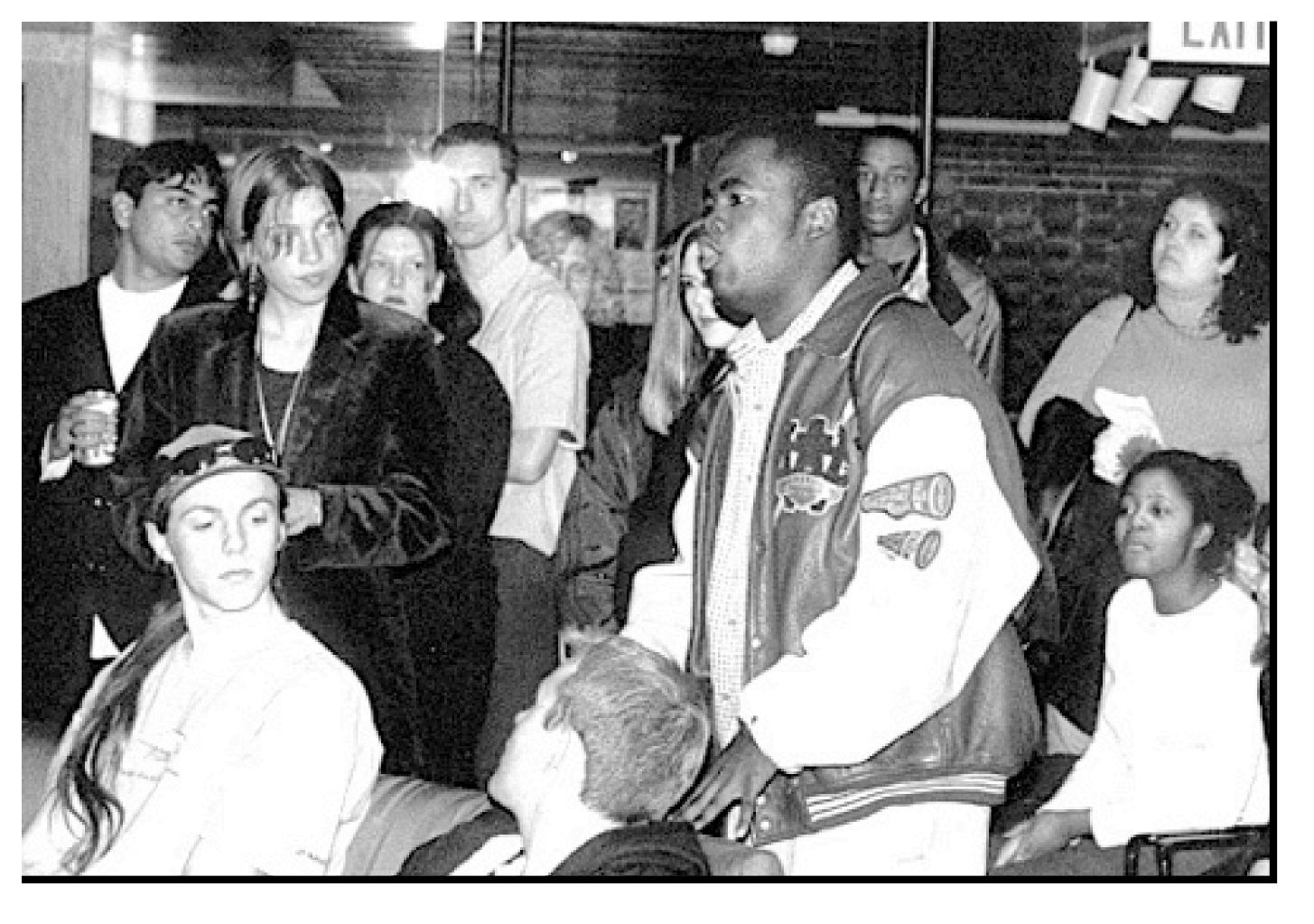
ett discusses social movements as being a od example of civic engagement; what ovements would you have wanted to be a rt of in the past? What about currently? the future?

'hat kind of leadership skills are necessary be effective in a role as advocate and gaged citizen in the way Brett describes? scuss different notions of leadership.

ett states suggests that more analysis of e information we receive from the media d other outles is needed. How might you gage in such analysis? brought forth the right to vote for all citizens regardless of individual differences. The principle political strategies that I have examined for myself focus on an increased mindfulness of my interactions with others when engaged in any form of community service. When communicating with others, I realize that everyone views the world through their own preconditioned lens of reality. This makes it difficult to form a genuine discourse. The main reason for this difficulty is that individuals generally attempt to force others to agree with their preconceived notion of how the world (and all its political, religious, and social structures) should work.

Social movements (especially those based on democracy), were usually not characterized by everyone in agreement, but instead were devised using a specific, yet broad, outline of principles that could be applied in order to achieve certain goals. I realize that a mutual understanding must be achieved of the greater community before I can even begin to share and listen to the ideas of others. Unity is key in any successful movement that strives for the experience and expressions of freedom.

Voting in and of itself may unify the public for a finite period of time, but this method is just a small part of achieving actual democracy. If we are to begin this journey towards a real democracy, we must begin with ourselves. We must come to understand how we can affect others in surrounding communities, why the same social and domestic problems continue to haunt us, and what is our role is in either shaping or solving them. The biggest lie perpetrated by partisan politics, media, lobbyists, and bureaurocracy is that the public is nothing more than a passive observer. It is used to cover-up a far greater truth: that every U.S. citizen has far more influence on the governing body than what he or she may realize.



want to learn how to make my voice heard even louder and how to direct my issues to a overnment official who can look at the core problem and put something into action. I want to be olitically engaged. I just need time and resources to become more educated about politics. I am vically engaged: I feel the need to connect my community service to issues concerning politics and ublic policy."

Photo: Courtesy of The Bonner Foundation photo archives



White House, the September 11th attacks, and the fall of Saddam Hussein. The 20th and 21st century have proven that we American citizens are not civically engaged enough to prevent many of these events from happening.

Voter apathy is at its worst in decades and people don't think that one vote makes a difference. As a Bonner scholar and as an American citizen, I believe it is not just a right but a duty to be civically engaged. With only 50% of the United States eligible voters actually participating in

the elections, American elections are merely about which party can get more members to the polls then what party has the better candidate. This is very alarming in a nation that boasts of being the leader of democracy, especially when only half of all persons qualified actually *participate* in democracy. My disgust for this apathetic approach to politics has not affected my decision to vote. The reason why is because I am an American who does vote, and who votes with pride.

Civil disobedience is not the answer here. One should not be disobedient in order to make Americans want to be more involved in politics. On the contrary, we should put more emphasis on educating the American public on the political process. I am talking more than a government class during a high school senior year. I propose that every high school across the nation have a required civics class. This would educate students on the importance of government rather than just explaining how it operates. On campus I helped facilitate *Political Action Week* at DePauw. It was a week promoting political awareness and voter registration; I was proud to participate. This summer I served in two internship capacities. The first was an internship for Indiana Governor Joseph Kernan. The second is separate internship on his campaign. I believe this is the optimal opportunity for me to civically engage myself and promote the same ideas to others across the state.

Today more than ever the word *politics* gets dissociated with its real meaning or what it is supposed to stand for in this nation: democracy. Today many Americans associate the word with crooked two faced and under-the-table bribes. That is not always the case. I stand up for those

### Zach Pfister expresses:

"If people sit at home watching the television, complaining about men and women dying overseas; if they don't agree with an economic policy passed by Congress; and if they don't agree with a Supreme Court decision, then they need to be a part of making change. Officials are only put in their positions because we, the voting public, elect them."

overnor Evan Bayh served this state to the utmost capacity, as did his successor. Now, another eat leader, Joseph Kernan, will continue to lead Indiana in the right direction. I have had the ivilege of interning for former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Hamilton is truly one for the sople and by the people, having served in the House for over thirty years. With my small yet gnificant experience in politics throughout the university so far, I believe there is more out ere. *There must be.* 

These men are inspiring me to excel in this field, and I am convinced that one day I will.

nere is nothing more meaningful to me than to serve my community, state, nation, and God. I ill vote in the primaries and in the general elections. And I don't care if the men and women I ite for win or lose by one vote or a million; however, I will be able to say that I lived up to my ities as a citizen of the United States of America. If people sit at home watching the television, implaining about men and women dying overseas; if they don't agree with an economic policy issed by Congress; and if they do not agree with a Supreme Court decision, then they need to a part of making change. Officials are only put in their positions because we, the voting iblic, elect them.

When you turn on the TV tonight and CNN or Fox News reports another soldier dead, or nother tax cut increase has been passed, ask yourself: "Would this be happening if I would have sted? Would I have had to pay higher taxes or lower taxes? Would my mother have better enefits? Would my Social Security have been more protected?" These are the questions the merican public can ponder and wonder if things would be the same if seventy-five or eighty ercent of the voting public had voted. Change will not happen if you sit at home on election lys. When that day comes around, I know where I will be. Do you know where you will be?

- I.As a citizen, how do you access information the candidate's political platform and prior political/public service record? Do you remedia alone? How has political advertises influenced your perspectives regarding candidates?
- 2. What personal and professional qualities w strong candidate for President and other service offices possess? How do you guaş candidate's ability for office?
- 3."Civil disobedience is not the answer here," is a statement Zach uses in his essay. Have you been involved with a protest or other for civil disobedience? At what times is civil disobedience an appropriate answer?
- 4. Could you see yourself as President or Gc one day? Reflect on that imagination. Wh would make *you* a unique leader? And how would you encourage youth to vote?

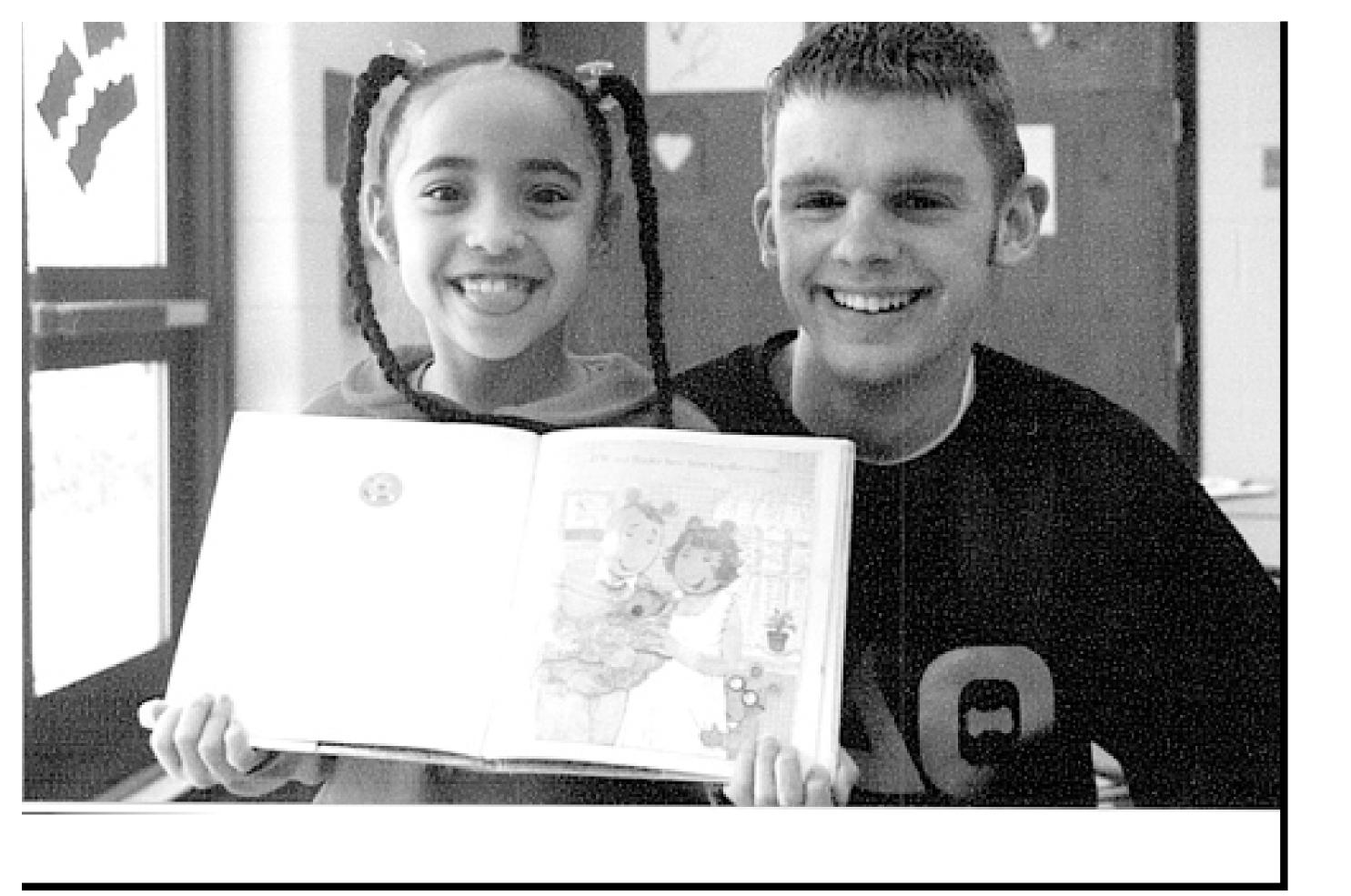


Photo: Courtesy of the Bonner Foundation photo archives

Direct service and civic engagement go hand-in-hand in that they are both excellent methods of ving back and extending support to causes that mean something to us. I am of the opinion that rery single person is a unique, important individual who has the power to make a difference and ould have the right to stand up and be counted. Civic engagement is an excellent means of giving

my mother might actually get a job, and even if she did not we would *not* become homeless. Growing up poor is part of what inspired me to help others in my community; I was given numerous opportunities to achieve more, which I did, but I always knew I would give back to the community I came from. Due to this reality, civic engagement has always played a major role in my life and has deepened my interests and connection to the political realm.

My first act of civic engagement that I can remember happened in eighth grade when I joined a youth group to organize against *Proposition 21* in

California. *Proposition 21* was viewed by the community as an act that would target young people of color from disadvantaged backgrounds and possibly even go so far as to criminalize youth. *Proposition 21* lowered the age of those eligible for the death penalty to fourteen, and allowed gang affiliation and graffiti to be considered felonies. The changing regulations on those crimes worked so that youth, mostly of color who are poor and disadvantaged, would find themselves in prisons much younger.

As a young woman of color, I knew that I was at risk. Even standing on a corner with three other people could result in getting an automatic sentence to juvenile hall or even to a worse extreme: prison. Therefore, I took action by challenging the system. I began actively canvassing and informing the community through information sessions. I organized a rally in order to prove to voters that the youth of my community were not criminals, nor would they allow such a proposition to pass without their voice and rights being heard. In the end, *Proposition 21* passed in California, but cities in the Bay Area of

#### Helena Vonk states:

"As a young woman of color, I knew I was at risk; therefore I took action by challenging the system by canvassing the community with information sessions. I organized a rally in order to prove to voters that the youth of my community were not criminals, nor would they allow such a proposition like Proposition 21 in California, be passed without their voice and rights being heard."

leadership the youth in my community demonstrated. It was this experience

California signed resolutions against the law in support of all the efforts and

lena took action against *Proposition 21* cause of the racial injustice and harm that buld effect the youth in her community. 'hy do you think *Proposition 21* was eated? Why do you think it succeeded spite the actions of the community?

w have you taken action and challenged a stem that you felt needed alteration? as your experience in activism led you to ntinue efforts towards social justice?

re you surprised that at the end of the say, Helena mentions she is a freshman, d yet she has accomplished so much? Do u feel you could make a difference by anding up for those whose rights are ringed?

is my current focus. I have become very involved and am becoming more and more interested in aspects that connect various social justice causes to one other.

As a first-year at Oberlin College, I am very inexperienced and naïve, but I feel that I have so many opinions and fresh perspectives to contribute to dialogue in and outside of the classroom. My dedication to civic engagement has me looking forward to more service in the new communities I represent, come to understand, and be part of its interlinking political and social discourse.





# low Does the Classroom Relate

outside of class, students often gain a deepened commitment to active citizenship.

- Femily Allen-Wiles, a Bonner Scholar at Earlham College (Richmond, IN), shares how her studies in political theory have been enhanced by the experiential learning of working with a Womens Coalition in Northern Ireland and Organizing Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to reinforce that citizenship is a balance between rights and duties.
- **Liana Johannaber**, a Bonner Scholar at Warren Wilson College (Asheville, NC) decribes how she has claimed her education by creating an Integrative Studies major with a concentration on *Community Design and Development* that truly integrates her academic work and service experience.
- **Jalea Morgan**, a Bonner Scholar at Concord College (Athens, WV) responds to a professor questioning about why children are dieing in the streets; yet ordinary citizens respond to support a man with his own petting zoo in order to question why people get involved in remote, trivial issues yet ignore the consistent and daily suffering of human beings.
- ▶ **Joseph Bynum**, a Bonner Scholar from Rhodes College (Memphis, TN), uses the analogy of teaching a man to fish in order to explore purpose in life. He discovers that the more aware of the correlation between politics, service, and his role in them, the more intertwined they become.

#### After reading the chapter, disc

- I.What knowledge and skills gained in the classroom have you applied or put to t test through service or community involvement? Do you find the theories knowledge you learn in the classroom hold up as *true* outside the classroom?
- 2. Has your interest in learning been chang or augmented by community involvemed How has, or how can, service reinforce importance and relevance of academic learning?
- 3. In your view, what elements make up a class or course of study that reinforces notion of good citizens? Share an exant of a course that inspired you to be mo aware or active.
- 4. What really ignites and inspires you in the classroom? Share some examples of grace teaching or engaging activities.

n discussion on how the college experience can be extended into the real world and make ige. Some workshops to consider off the Bonner website are: Reflection, Leadership pass, Four Corners: Building Appreciation for Diverse Ideas and Dialogue, Want Ads, Building a onal Network, Building Career Networks, Power Mapping, as well as resources in Communityed Research and Service-Learning that are available at <a href="https://www.bonner.org">www.bonner.org</a>.



ies you might use to spur discussion include:

ngerous Minds. Directed by John N. Smith, 1995. Teacher and ex-marine Louanne Johnson cepts a full-time job at a Los Angeles high school without realizing the students in her class highly intelligent, who suffer from social problems. She must learn how to understand them make a difference.

clining by Degrees: Higher Education at Risk. Directed by PBS, 2005. In this revealing cumentary, veteran correspondent John Merrow takes you behind the ivy-covered walls of 2 University to see if it is delivering what is promised.

na Lisa Smile. Directed by Mike Newell, 2004. A non-comformist teacher at a private school courages her female students to pursue their individuality and challenge sexism in society.

Holland's Opus. Directed by Stephen Herek, 1996. As Holland discovers "life is what ppens to you while you're busy making other plans." As the years unfold the joy of sharing contagious passion for music with his students becomes his new definition of success.

sic of the Heart. Directed by Wes Craven, 1999. The true story of a young teacher who nts against the Board of Education in her bid to teach underprivileged kids in a Harlem school beauty of music through the violin. In her struggle she loses everything as the system comes who on her with all their might but her determination for the kids happiness helps her to ttle back with wonderfully and inspirational results.

nd and Deliver. Directed by Ramon Menendez, 1988. A dedicated teacher inspires his dropt prone students to learn calculus to build up their self-esteem: they do so well they are continuing the conversation about civic engagement include:

Cheryl K. Davis, Motivated to serve, motivated to learn: Theorizing care in the composervice-learning classroom.

Dissertation on service-learning that links theory with practice.

Heidi Gottfried, Feminism and Social Change: Bridging Theory and Practice.

Feminist methodology grows out of an important qualitative leap in the feminist critique of the social sciences: the leap from a critique of the invisibility of women, both as objects of study and as social scientists, to the critique of the method and purpose of social science.

#### bell hooks, From Margin to Center.

The feminist movement continues to be one of the most powerful struggles for social justice taking place in the world. hooks addresses a broad range of interconnected issues related to gender, race teaching, and media.

#### Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed

An activist's approach to racial inequality and the ways oppression operate

#### Paulo Freire, The Politics of Education

An activist's approach to popular education and its capacity for securing transformative change.

Cathryn Berger Kay, The Complete Guide to Service Learning: Proven, Practical Ways Engage Students in Civic Responsibility, Academic Curriculum, & Social Action.

An informative book for those interested in creating or overseeing service-learning programs.

Dian Marino, Wild Garden: Art, Education, and the Culture of Resistance
Discribes the cultivation of learning; nurturing the production of knowledge and challenging assumptions using reflection and art.

Frances K. Stage and Michael Dannells, Linking Theory to Practice: Case Studies for Working with College Students.

Offers twenty six case studies on student affairs that reflect the complexity of today's environment at colleges and universities. Challenges students to consider multiple overlapping issues within a single case study.

M. Elizabeth Tidball et al, Taking Women Seriously: Lessons and Legacies for Educati



### Emily Allen-Wiles explains:

"Our role is to make sure that the people we work with understand and feel empowered to change the system. We are in a unique position to be able to create this type of change as students, educators, and those who will become members of multiple and new communities."

participated in the democratic process.

While I am not a fan of early political philosophy, Plato's idea of the *body politik* amazes me. The community is just that, *a community*, and when one part is hurting, broken or not fulfilling its role, the whole community ceases to function properly. When people are not fully engaged citizens, the polit structure suffers.

That is part of the reason why outside the classroom walls of Earlham College, I am so passional about voter registration. The idea of voting has always been important to me. I turned eightee years-old a week before the 2000 election, and I was so excited because voting is the most be way of voicing your opinion in a way that actually counts toward something. I have grown up around protests and civil disobedience, but voting is something you can do quickly, consistent peacefully and in private.

A few semesters ago, I spent time in Northern Ireland where the local community was preported for an election. I worked for a small, cross-community party, the *Northern Ireland Womens Coc* Despite all of the underlying problems with the political system, the organization saw voter turnout as central to successful social change. They scoffed at the fact that the U.S. had fifty percent registration yet only half of that percentage actually votes during presidential election even fewer turn out for elections outside the presidential realm.

Wanting to expand service work and understand voter apathy when I returned from Irelanded up spending a summer working with *Organizing Institute* in Cambridge, Massachusetts was about twenty five other college students who cared about issues and getting people *involved*. program in and of itself revitalized me in terms of believing there *can be* change. In coordinat *Organizing Institute* and the Bonner program, I extended my internship to *FenwayVotes!* This

with *Organizing Institute* and the Bonner program, I extended my internship to *FenwayVotes!* This organization is part of the *MassVotes! Group* that works to increase voter registration and voter turn in Massachusetts. At the *Fenway Community Development Corporation*, the parent organization to *FenwayVotes!*, they believed voting was key to creating an actual viable neighborhood. By increasing voter turnout, the neighborhood could become a political force that would have to be considered when

le in the future working towards making the government accountable to the entire citizenry. The pect I find the most troubling about low voter turnout is that it is *unreflective of the American iblic* as a whole. By having a few groups in power overrepresented and others so iderrepresented, the issues that are talked about during the election are skewed. Since older, nite, upper-class people have the highest voter turnout, issues like Medicare, Social Security and x cuts are hot topics. Not to say that these aren't valid issues, but they are not the primary cus or immediate need to all groups who make up America. Since politicians aren't addressing nat young people and minorities care about, they are turned off from politics, only furthering the cle of apathy and discontent.

As Bonner scholars and leaders, we do much of our work with the groups that we relate to or n learn from in and out of the classroom. It is the obligation of all Bonners not only to vote, but make sure that the people they work with know why it is important to vote and how to access ting booths and registration. The programs we work with are consistently struggling for money. many cases, we are doing work that the government should be doing; we are taking care of the seds of the citizenry. Our role is to make sure that the people we work with understand and feel npowered to *change* the system. We are in a unique position to be able to *create* this type of ange as students, educators, and those who will become members of multiple and new mmunities.

Citizenship is a balance between rights and duties, and many people forget that there is a give d take between the two, similar to the balance we negotiate between school and service, and eory and practice. While I thoroughly believe that voting is a good and necessary first step, it is no means the final solution. Contact your representatives. Write letters to the editor. Protest. sycott. There are hundreds of non-violent ways to make your voice heard. And make sure that e people you work with do it too. Don't forget that youth grow up and can become educated sizenry. It is by creating real, actual change that we can make sure all the service we do draws e connection of how voice, knowledge, and advocacy will balance a new America.

the people you attend class with as we the individuals you work with?

2. Emily explains that being an American c is a combination of rights and duties. I believe this, what do you see as the rig of citizenship? How are you exercising them?

3. How do you balance school and service as you might negotiate rights and dutie What other balances or negotiations c you encounter in your daily life?

4. Emily explains that politicans don't addrawhat young people and minorities care about, and therefore, these groups feel apathetic. Would you agree? How mig you get people to address the issues the young people and minorities face?



Photo: Courtesy of Yuliya Daniels, Earlham College.

Citizenship is a balance between rights and duties, and many people forget that there is this give and ake between the two, similar to the balance we negotiate between school and service, theory and ractice. Our role is to make sure that the people we work with understand and feel empowered to hange the system. We are in a unique, balanced position in order to *create* this change."

Emily Allan Wilso

ioi a diad educacion incorporacing more, academies and ser mee. /

student at Warren Wilson College is expected to work fifteen hours a week, engage in 12-18 credit hours of academics a semester, and complete at least 100 hours of service before they can receive their diploma on graduation day. During my freshmen year at Warren Wilson College, the idea of truly integrating the three seemed like a futile task as I awkwardly attempted to juggle them. I went to classes where I explored various fields and disciplines attempting to answer the grand question, what will I major in? and the even bigger interrogative, what will I do after I graduate? I worked between classes at the Service Learning Office on campus tutoring at-risk youth in the local Asheville area while attempting to establish relationships with local agencies in the Western North Carolina area. With the little bit of free time that remained I usually tried to simply catch my breath! The triad education that, in theory, was meant to be a true synthesis of work, service, and academics, was feeling more like a power struggle between the three where none of them truly succeeded to the fullest extent.

It was not until my junior year that I realized that the amalgamation of the triad components were going to have to begin with me *choosing* to *claim* my education instead of simply *receiving* it. It was time for me to declare, not only my major, but my power as a human being of creative possibility in this world. With my newfound declaration came the ease of integrating service with academia and field work. My major flowed easily into fruition and my work and service began to reflect my passion for civic engagement.

I am an Integrative Studies Major concentrating on Community
Design and Development. I see virtually every problem, from the macro
global crisis we face to plights within local neighborhoods and housing
districts, which are intrinsically linked to the demise of local, sustainable
communities. I have committed my time and sense of purpose to the



## Liana Johannaber explains:

"The triad education that in theory was meant to be a true synthesis of work, service, and academics, was feeling more like a power struggle between the three where none of them truly succeeded to the fullest extent...I realized that I had to choose to claim my education instead of simply receiving it."

o you see ways to integrate your academics, ork, and service? Do you think it is a sponsibility for your academic institution to inforce a "triad" of education (i.e. academia, ork, community service)?

you think a well-rounded education volves more than just academic study? plain.

nat is the difference between claiming your ucation and receiving it?

w might you begin negotiating a balance of ork, learning, and service in your academic reer to better suit you post-graduation?

On the weekends, I often give my time and energy to a local ecovillage, *Earthaven*, which is dedicated to caring for people and the Earth by learning, living and demonstrating holistic, sustainable culture. All the work I do is geared towards working with agencies to support and act as a network to help other students link and share similar interests. I finally feel the three components of my triad working together in perfect symphony. I am prepared and excited for a future after college that will draw out these elements into a civically engaged soul.

olds me captive with those eyes, strong and fiery and loving, and vulnerable, too.

'd to say why we are so close.

t the conversations we have had and the smiles we have shared, two n generations apart laughing and talking together like a church supper.

the months we have known each other, a bond has grown that I left hope will never be broken. Though our visits have never traveled ther room in this nursing home, we have gone so far in friendship and twasn't always like that. It took time to trust and to become rtable with each other, and for her to believe I would come back every But once we got that down, our friendship bloomed beautifully!

one day, right before Thanksgiving, I had just done a bang-up job on a big station so I was in a mood of elation. I made a quiet telephone call in ck of the office and suddenly became worried. She is no longer at the al she has been at for so many days so I call the nursing home, she is no there either; she is no longer of this world.

up unseeing and heedless of anything save the memories of what we and I stumble through the wind and cold back to my dorm room. stop crying.

he hug my roommate offers me and cling like a lost a suddenly unknown storm.

days to come I remember so many things, the stories of her childhood, smanhood, the hardships she bore and the strength and dry humor she en to the last days of her life,

light and warmth I grew to treasure, especially when nothing else

well.

"It'll come a good rain in the spring," she had said one day, "and the nexits green everywhere you look. You don't know what you can bear till y have to. You don't know the strength you have till then." As she would me the stories of her family and her life, I felt that I knew her family we enough though I had only ever met one of her sons yet she had told m much about them.

Finally, remembering, I smiled.

Remembering these phrases of hope and strength, and trusting in that c great promise I believe in above all, I know that she is happy now, too. remember her telling me she was ready to go. But I will miss and will f long time.

Months later, weeks before the green spring rain, at a meeting for the school's Bonner Scholars, we are told to create something in the spirit of civic engagement. My mind simmers about t his idea for a few weeks, and I remember my friend, and the way we talked together, learned from each other, and gre I learned from her — what it means to engage with someone deeply, to

transform gradually from a server to a friend; the mutuality, and the joy

And so I tell her story.

pain, the triumph and disappointment.

Rachel Si Berea Cc



### Jalea Morgan states:

"When people believe they can do nothing to make a difference, they need to be encouraged and educated in order to realize what social issues are, how they work, how they are perpetuated, and how to make a difference."

group, we began discussing how constituents must contact their government representatives to make change. However, the professor continued to explain a true story that had our minds racing. A man hits a deer with his car in a neighboring state, takes it home, and puts it in a homemade petting zoo in his backyard. When congressmen attempt to shut down this petting zoo, the congressional offices became flooded with letters to keep the unofficial zoo open. It was amazing, the amount of letters that streamed into local representatives offices, over a deer.

Children at local schools wrote letters in class, people of the community wrote letters in their spare time. They all attempted to make a difference.

You may ask yourself: what do children dying in the streets and a deer in a contested petting zoo have in common? The answer is nothing. When the deer story hit the airwaves, citizens were up in arms to protect this woodland creature. However, when a story of a child dying hits the airwaves, many citizens simply turn the television off or put the paper down, perhaps with a moment of mourning, but return to their daily lives. Does anyone else see something wrong with this scenario? Is it that the media is flooded with these stories people become desensitized or is it because citizens do not believe they can do anything to make change?

When people believe they can do nothing to make a difference, they need to be encouraged and educated in order to realize what the social issues are, how they work, how they are

perpetuated, and how to make alter them. A dose of ambition and a little bit of heart can help, but as students, we have time to spare to encourage hope and spread what knowledge we've gained from our communities and over the internet and organizations are always in need of volunteers and support. Anyone can make a difference, no matter how small. Next time you pick up a paper and see a story about a small innocent child being harmed, be it by poverty, poor education or discrimination, do not just throw the paper down and go about your life. Educate and question others, including yourself, on issues that can be changed or eradicated. Attempt to take initiative and you may save a life, a life that could mean a major difference in both your community and the very future of the world, including your own.

- I. Jalea tells two stories about reactions public to a story about a deer and con it to a story about a child. Reflect on events and outcomes of the stories, considering the reasons for the differe responses by the public.
- 2. Do you think people sit idly by while injustice occurs around them because have been desensitized and feel helples a combination of both?
- 3. Who are some of the professors who challenged your way of thinking? Explain how they informed, engaged, and challe you.
- 4. What other ironies you recognize, com and contrast? How might this be a use strategy in supporting social change in outside the classroom?

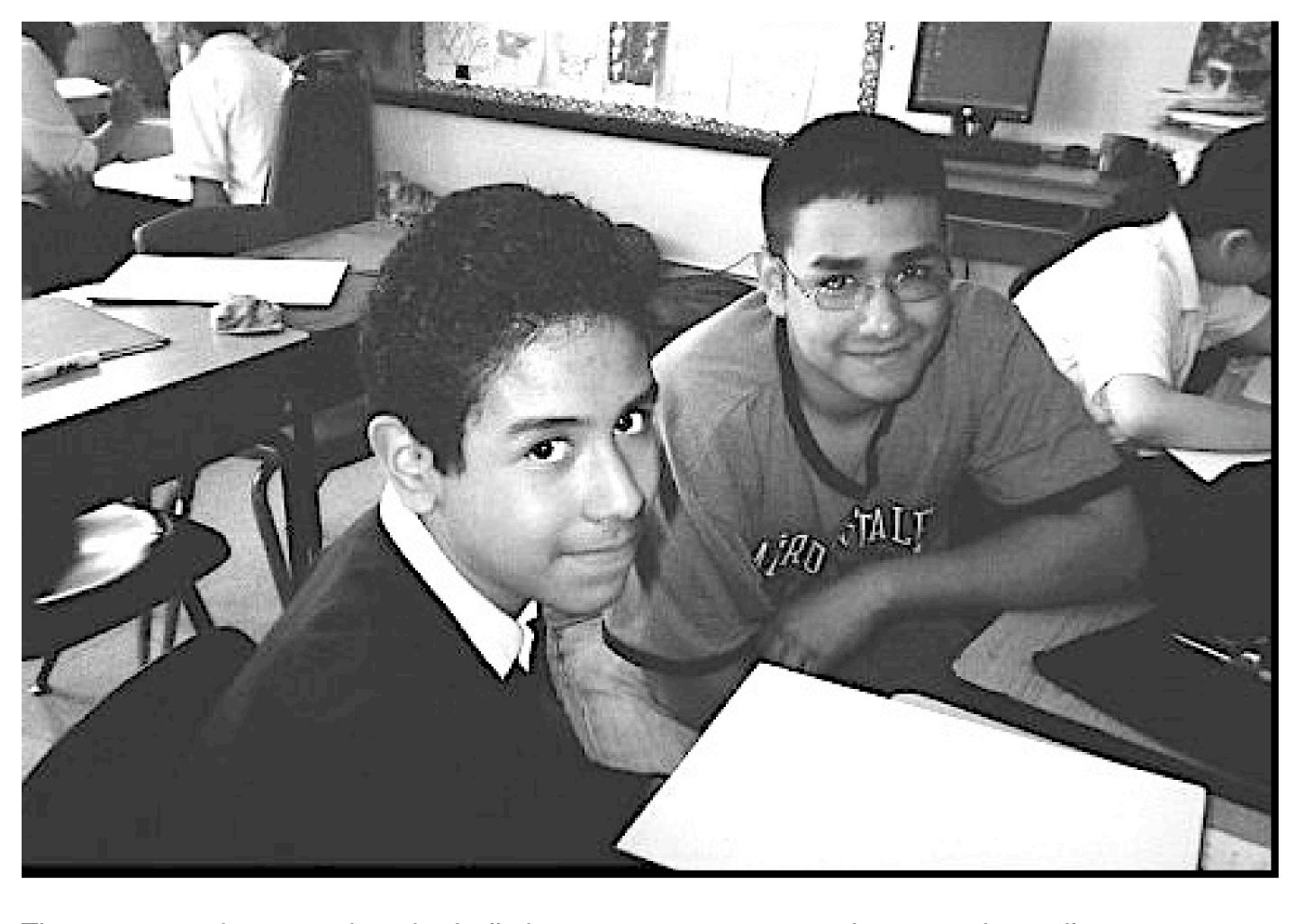


Photo: Courtesy of Jean Everage, DePauw University

There is so much we can do individually, but a massive way we can be engaged civically is olunteering, which is letting go of our time to help others live their lives to the fullest. Many times s citizens, we complain about what our president has failed to do or contribute, but many of the roblems we have in the community can be resolved by a united civic engagement. Together we have een able to establish charities organization and clubs to help uneducated children organizations and

school to my current status as a college student. These services have spanned street cleanups, tutoring, serving as a mentor, and being a jumping gym for pre-school students. These sites and activities have been very meaningful and heartfelt, but I have often felt they are not enough. I often reflect on the saying: giving a man a fish feeds him for a day, but teaching a man to fish feeds him for a lifetime.

Recently during a mentor session, I was enlightened and inspired by comments and opinions of some peers whom I considered politicallyminded. Prior to this session, I was very apathetic to the word *politics*. I shunned television programs such as *Dateline* and *Larry King Live* for their seemingly political connotations. My daily dose of *CNN Headline News* was only for an update on sports events and tabloid airings. I say these things not to show myself as highly insular, but to convey the small attachment I had with politics and my everyday life, including volunteer services.

Referring back to the mentor session, there were three basic categories in that group. One was the highly passionate, politically-minded, the second was the *I watch the news once a week*, and the last was the nonchalant *please do not bore me* goup. The dynamics of the group were not always that fixed or extreme but was the general scope to which those involved varied regarding their investment in politics. Yet one day, the topic of civic engagement came up as well as the benefits such engagement can offer society. This became a life shaping and changing conversation for many of the participants, including myself. The most important and effective comments incorporated the ideas of this analogy of teaching a man to fish instead of just handing him one. To parallel this to service, teaching a man to fish creates longer lasting benefits for those who need it to provide for themselves. Offering service and learning, knowledge and experience lends

## Joseph Bynum states:

"I equate my feelings to service with a familiar saying of giving a man a fish feeds him for a day, but teaching a man to fish feeds him for a lifetime...Offering service and learning, knowledge and experience lends itself to an outcome that is more rewarding and fruitful for those that are served than those who are serving...I have the ability to share openly, both my own knowledge and the knowledge I must gain from the perspectives I come to understand through dialogue."

itself to an outcome that is more rewarding and fruitful for those that are served than those who are serving.

What do you think about Joseph's analogy of teaching a man to fish instead of handing him one? What can you teach that could change society one step at a time?

What initatives and insights do you think civic engagement offers to a world that experiences injustice and imbalance as well as creative exploration, discovery, and hope?

How might you engage a group of people with diverse views, that range from apathy to active civic participation, in a real conversation in and out of the classroom?

How might groups form to create real change? How might you join a pre-existing group or begin one of your own in school, with your friends, your organization, or in your community?

for all students, despite their different political standpoints, to unite. Civic engagement can lead to many new initiatives and has the capacity to create insights to bring about change to a much needed world.

This new enlightenment has allowed me to become more aware of the correlation between politics, service, and my role with the two. I have been encouraged to vote, speak out, and become a hands-on person. I now feel and articulate the importance of advocacy and lobbying. It is my duty to share service with those who can benefit from it more than I could. I have the ability to share openly, both my own knowledge and the knowledge I must gain from the perspectives I come to understand through dialogue. I now have a tool with which I can hopefully *teach a man to fish* and perhaps, offer a fish for which we might share.



ridging Across Difference:

engagement. Their global experience often encourages bridging across differences while articulating how to make a difference to society at large. Their insights and observations are wonderful and prove the power of voice, new viewpoints and perspectives, and reflection.

- **Tanya Madenyika**, a Bonner Scholar at Guilford College (Greensboro, NC), describes her cultural upbringing in Zimbabwe, where she learned early the notion and importance of community. She questions the messages that youth have received in regard to becoming involved in times of strife in ways that later compromise their voice. She hopes for a day that many youth, like her, will be equipped to enact change.
- **Michael Washington**, a Bonner Scholar at Morehouse College (Atlanta, GA), describes how the experience of being in South Africa brought into focus dilemmas about the purpose and impact of his service abroad, while bringing it home that real change was happening within him.
- **Joliette Emaa Juncadella**, a Bonner Scholar from Guilford College (Greensboro, NC), discusses her experience as a Hispanic female who recognizes the importance of language through her work with ESL (English as a Second Language) students.
- ▶ **Damian Lang**, a Bonner Scholar from Union College (Barbourville, KY), describes an enlightening experience at a diverse seminar. He observes how important sharing different perspectives are, including his own viewpoint as a bi-racial British immigrant.

#### After reading the chapter, disci

I. What communities (physical, geographica identity based) do you feel you are a pa Has your sense of belonging to that community ever been enhanced by mov outside of that community? Share a stc

2. What are your own associations with be American? What experiences have you that contribute a national sense of ident for you (whether you are an American from another nation)?

3. What are the values or assumptions that have you think are the result of your na identity? How has that identity influenc other unique perspectives?

u are looking for strategies for incorporating deep reflection and analysis around the direct ice that you do, check out the Service-Based Reflection: How It Supports Making Service ningful module, which offers a pedagogical framework and tools. Available on the Bonner site.

u are looking for a way to engage in telling your story and hearing others, consider using *Vocation: So What Do You Do? Personal Exploration Exercise*.



es you might use to spur discussion include:

Stories About Leaving Home: Mothers, Daughters, Monsters & Japan. Directed by Shelly Silver, 1996. intimate portrait of Japanese women ranging in age from 15 to 82, who talk about their lives, nilies, and society.

thers and Others. Directed by Nicolas Rossier, 2002. By jailing thousands of Arabs, Muslims, and uth Asians without evidence or due process after 9/11, this film asks whether America is retuating the cycle of hate and ignorance.

*1 of the Spear.* Directed by Jim Hanon, 2006. A true story of a violent tribe in Ecuador who kill missionaries and end up departing from violence as well as caring for the enemy tribe they once lently raided.

m Hollywood to Hanoi. Directed by Du Thi Thanh Nga, 1994. A documentary that chronicles the ector, a Vietnamese-born American, who returns to the country of her birth to try and come to 25 with her personal history.

the One that I Want. Directed by Lionel Coleman, 2000. cumenting Margaret Cho and issues that plague both Asian Americans and non-Asians alike.

: Lost Boys of Sudan: A Documentary. Directed by Megan Mylan and Jon Shenk, 2003. Follows two

Bibliographic materials you might find interesting for introducing continuing the conversation about civic engagement include:

Gloria Anzaldua, La Frontera/Borderlands.

The author vents her anger on all oppressors of people who are culturally different and reside in the "borderlands" of identity.

Bill Bigelow and Bob Peterson, Rethinking Globalization: Teaching for Justice in an World.

Through numerous role-plays, interviews, poems, cartoons, and hands on teaching, the book spotlights the creativity of group work.

Debbie Bogenschutz, Zenzele: A Letter for My Daughter
A Harvard-educated native of Zimbabwee now living in the United
States writes about what it means to be a woman in Africa.

Leigh Dingerson, The colmotion guide to youth-led social change.

This guide for a new generation of activists will teach and inspire youth to learn from the history and heroes of our century and lead the way to a new millenium.

Marc and Craig Kielburger, Take Action! A Guide to Active Citizenship.

An inspiring piece about making a difference in your hometown and around the world!

Uma Narayan, Dislocating Cultures; Identities, Traditions, and Third World Feminism Questioning the problematic roles assigned to Third World subjects, Narayan examines ways in our understanding of issues.

Shari Stone-Mediatore, Reading Across Borders: Storytelling and Knowledges of Resistance.

The text sets out to theorize the intellectual value and historical role of stories and to rethink the border between story and truth, narrative and knowledge.

Miranda Yates, Roots of Civic Identity: International Perspectives on Community Sen and Activism in Youth.

This book brings together an international collection of essays that describes the state of community participation among the world's youth as they construct their civic identities through community service and political activism.



## Tanya Madenyika explains:

"I got closer to realizing what it truly meant to have a voice in the community and to be an individual who can speak for change if need be. I drew nearer to realizing that youth can play an important role in the community, in a social and politically context."

society. With a national identification card in one hand and a driver's license in another, a sixteen-year-old Zimbabwean has the right to vote and become identified as a civic individual whose voice is recognized.

However, like many other Zimbabwean youths, I had been involved in the community before I turned sixteen. I was aware that a community lacks definition without active members inside of it. I was involved in school clubs that gave me the opportunity to go into society and meet community members. We were never forced to be involved in the society and we were never denied the opportunity to do what we felt needed to be done, as long as it fell within the realm of authority approval. In this

kind of guarded environment, we still created a huge difference in the community by fundraising for local shelters and homes for the elderly, but we knew we did not have a voice against the authorities. Rules were set for us to work with and follow. Our role was not to argue with the system. Therefore, our civic engagement consisted of direct community service, negotiating amongst authorities and public policies. This was how it was in our society. As a child, I watched how authorities disbelieved in community power. It was a huge challenge not giving into their belief.

Eventually, I turned sixteen and I continued engaging in the community through direct volunteer service. I got closer to realizing what it truly meant to have a voice in the community and to be an individual who can speak for change. I began to realize that youth play an important role in the community in a social and politically context. Around this time, my country experienced a major transition as it approached a presidential election in which for the first time in post independent history the ruling political party had strong opposition. There was a significant split between the people who were part of making the community and created a void that was hard to fill. There was a drastic change in the way the government was run, which not many people liked, so a new

transition that could benefit as opposed to oppress them was desired. The political

nere was something that needed to be done to improve the situation but no one knew what do. The government had full control of what was to become of the country and as it ignored ar community, we began to fade.

This became one of the major reasons why youth began to *lose* their voice in the country and how they became *used* by political parties. Forming youth groups for campaigning, it became e norm to see young Zimbabweans participating in violent demonstrations and getting rested for avoidable misdemeanors. Youth were blinded by what was happening around them and were not getting the support that we *all* needed. People were trying to figure out the tickest, not necessarily the best, way to alleviate the problems that surrounded them. The youth ho had gained the chance to air out their views and opinions in the country's decision akingbefore, felt they had lost that power entirely. Many were not only unaware of what the cuation in the country was truly like, but misguided as to what we could do about it. I failed to ke part in the Presidential elections because of these occurrences and I was afraid to be pulled. I could not *afford* to be pulled in.

Because Zimbabwee was experiencing a lot of political and economic turmoil, the youth ere stuck with no guidance and nowhere to turn to in trying to improve their countries' cuation. Many young people like myself opted to leave the country to seek better portunities. We hoped to learn a means to teach the right way forward when we return exter equipped to make a difference. I hope to have the knowledge and power to educate, lvocate, and organize the public on local and global issues back to Zimbabwee.

I am still learning the political structure of the United States and I do not think it is all that fferent from Africa. I want to learn as much as I can and act for change. Civic engagement is e way to go. I strive to gain knowledge in order to return with hope, experience, and the ols to make change in Zimbabwee and use my voice and leadership to reclaim my civic ommunity.

- I. Tanya tells of how Zimbabwean youth differently engaged in the community. you think that young people are similar manipulated in the United States as Tan describes them to be in Zimbabwee?
- 2. What can we learn about the value of voice in America from Tanya's experien Zimbabwee? Do youth have a voice ir country? Brainstorm and discuss with groups.
- 3. If Tanya was speaking to you about the situation in Zimbabwee, what advice w you offer her?
- 4. Do you think it was a good strategy for youth in Zimbabwee to leave the coun order to learn methods of social chang through education and alternative soci Why or why not?

was pretty tired, feeling close to dead. s soon as I fell asleep, I was back up, omething caused me to sit back up. ut I was not in my room, it was all different, was on a street, I had changed that instant. ly clothes were rags and full of tears, was covered in dirt and long hair. he streets were dirty and full of trash, he buildings crumbled and ready to crash. walked the streets .nd observed the surroundings, he people looked dead s they shuffled around me. saw one man who had dropped his things, Vhile another robbed him leaving nothing. came to a hospital that seemed run-down, hen I saw untreated patients, ho were waiting around. or hope, medicine, and maybe a cure, ut the doctors seemed callous and unsure. then came to a bench where I had to sit down, o think of what I saw nd reflect on the sounds. few minutes later someone sat next to me, was a young girl, not more than thirteen. ne stared at me waiting for me to say: What happened here? Vhat happened today?" ne smiled and looked to the ground, hen she answered in a quiet sound:

She got up, shook my hand then left, While I sat there in disbelief and pain in my chest. Then the surroundings began to spin, And what was inside burst from within. Now I stand in a town where the streets are paved, The people friendly, the world more aged. Everyone was equal, everyone got along, No matter their position, they stood together strong. The hospitals were clean, and the doctors actually cared, The leaders knew the issues and their information shared. The unity was calm, quiet, and neat, I watched this world with even more disbelief. Could it be possible to achieve such unity? A tight knit nation that could be claimed a community? A place where opinions mattered not, Only the solutions of problems took the top. A place where ends never justified the means, Where people worked hard for what they need. I wanted to stay in this neat little world, For the future bright with nothing of spoil. But then I awoke, I was back in my room. The sun was rising into a new day of events, A new day of choices, and paths to tread. But what choice will I take, what world will I choose? The one where everyone was educated and knew, That the key to community is unity. What world will I make into reality? The choice is in the hands of tiny voices like mine, I will make choices to change the course of time

## Patrick McGrady Berea College

portunity to do ample work for my local community and do engaging service projects with my llow Bonner students. The work that I did this past summer was far from my regular service. rganized by a fellow student, the opportunity arose to pursue a service opportunity abroad.

An idealist at heart, my focus has always been doing activities and services that are not only eneficial on a local level, but that will have an impact globally. My service opportunity with *Operation ossroads Africa* allowed me to take my idealism abroad and put some hard work behind it. Before on the trip all I knew about Namibia was that it was located in Southern Africa. This changed dically as I entered a whole new world and a new set of perspectives in this summer long journey.

Getting past customs into Namibia was a challenge without proper visas. 'e were briskly turned away at the Namibian customs gate and had to return another area in South Africa. During the week it took for us to obtain plunteer visas we were finally able to participate in a rewarding experience in hannesburg. Here's a journal entry from one of the many days I spent there:

#### journal entry from 06-22-04:

Now! How to explain what I experienced today. As a group we met a man named Fix before riding a taxi into a large township outside of Johannesburg called Alexandra. The view from the taxi, on the way to a clinic we were going to work at, were of houses on top of houses, as though the construction design was to cram as many homes into the smallest amount of space. Driving up, it felt like a different world in comparison to the house we were staying at. At the clinic, my first reaction was a feeling of numbness. Surrounding the clinic were houses built out of what looked like scrap material and neighborhood children wearing next to nothing. I have seen commercials in the U.S. with Christian organizations asking for money to give to Third World Countries, but they never encapsulated the direty of the overall situation. Many people were out on the street, seemingly with

nothing to do and nowhere to go. It was quite unsettling and I felt imbalanced trying to maintain some sort of

coherent outward appearance. What could be said to people that could be helpful? Am I even capable of

understanding? And how would people respond? This was a very humbling experience; I wasn't as ready as I

thought I was to experience the extreme cultural and geographical differences I was visually soaking in. I was

## Michael Washington reflects:

"Before going on the trip all I knew about Namibia was that it was located in South Africa. This changed radically by the end of this summer long journey, as I entered a whole new world and a new set of perspectives."

ave you ever travelled abroad and had an eye ening moment? What was that like? How did compare to your situation back home?

nis journal entry, Michael discusses the ference between the houses he drove by, nich resembled shacks, and the place he was ing housed at. What kind of clarity do you ink that brought to Michael?

'hat can be said to people that could be useful international communities? Are we capable of derstanding their situations? How might ople respond?

'hat do you think Michael means when he says at there are more similarities between mmunities across the ocean than there are ferences? Or that he felt like the uniforms adents wore masked a lot of what they were periencing?

doing HIV/AIDS outreach by walking door to door and conducting house visits. I was thinking "ok...really?" To help has a different meaning when you actually have to do it as opposed to just think about it. We separated into pairs, I was with a guy named Will. Two workers came along with us, one had become involved in the program because her aunt she was very close to died of AIDS. We walked in the street for

quite a few blocks and people just stared at us. I wondered what we looked like to them. Conversations from the community stopped briefly as we passed. The police continued to cruise through town. I felt so

displaced. Maybe there were some similarities between communities across the ocean after all.

On our walk, we saw private schools for children with families seperate from schools for those orphaned due to parents who died of AIDS. I felt like the uniforms they wore masked a lot of what they were experiencing. It some how just "looked" better. We approached several people, most of the women smiled sweetly as we told them what we were doing. We had packets of information and condoms that we were handing out to people who needed them. We handed out over 1,000 condoms and most individuals accepted informational pamphlets, especially those written in English. There was a version we had written in Afrikaans, but most of the South African population had a strong distaste for the language calling it "the language of the oppressor." Everytime I asked one of the workers about it I got a passionate response starting with her sucking her teeth and sounding exhasperated. I could sense the hatred. She even "bunked" or failed her class in school because she simply refused to learn the language...

As you can see, the experience was emotionally charged and profound. I used to go home and reflect upon my service with a humble sense of duty. While abroad this summer, there was no going home; I was there with and among the people. Through my experience through Bonner and through *Operation Crossroads Africa*, I still maintain my commitment to service locally and globally, across the borders of the U.S. and South Africa.



Photo: Courtesy of Shannon Effler, Earlham College

We all cannot be Martin Luther King Jr.'s or Gandhi's, but we all have the power to better our own ves and the lives around us with simple acts of kindness and validation. The most fundamental ecessity for human happiness is love, a sense of love that is fundamentally about respect and alidation of one's neighbor, both civically-locally-and to one's neighbor halfway around the world."



needs of the individuals. Our government in Washington, D.C. cannot be involved in every little aspect of society. It takes dedicated members to take action in educating, promoting, and defending local grassroots organizations that protect and aid members of society. If Washington won't come to the individual, then it is the job of the members of each community to take their community to Washington.

It is important to note that civic engagement is not just an American term; it is widespread and encompasses all kinds of different ethnic groups. Looking at the make-up of this country,

there is a large population of documented and undocumented members that walk this land and work its' fields, factories, and other businesses that fuel the economy. Civic engagement includes emphasis on these distinct groups of people that make up the United States.

Guilford College is an institution that prides itself on its involvement with different organizations that work with local members of distinct racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds. Among these are volunteer sites that work with the Montagnard Degas, Hispanic community, imprisoned people, and youth.

The Montagnard Dega Association for example, works with Hispanic children. At the center, volunteers help children with their homework and encourage them to grow as individuals by planning activities that involve group work. This group work, in turn, teaches them interpersonal skills. The individuals in this group are among many minority groups in this country. By providing a space for them to study and learn, volunteers are aiding these children with a resource that, due to the realities of the situations of minority groups, most likely cannot be provided for them by their parents.

I remember growing up as a Hispanic here in the United States. I remember the lack of support I received at home regarding schoolwork, homework, and school activities. I know that the lack of participation of my parents in my schoolwork and other school related events was not due to a lack of care but to an inability. Their language deficiency limited them and, in a sense, separated them from my life as a student in an English-speaking world. I would bet that for many of these *Montagnard* kids their reality at home is similar to mine. The letters that are addressed "To the parents of..." fail to recognize that the parents

Joliette Emma Juncadella expresses:

"It is important to note that civic engagement is not only an American thing; it is also a people thing. Looking at the make-up of this country, it is obvious that its' members are not only natives; rather, there is a large population of documented and undocumented members that walk this land and work its fields, factories, and other businesses that run the economy. Civic engagement includes emphasis on these distinct groups of people that make up the United States."

we the help and support of adult mentors who can come alongside them and help them in ings that sometimes their parents can't, such as the completion of homework.

The Glenwood ESL Program works with Hispanic adults who are working to learn iglish. Hispanics nowadays are the largest minority group in the United States. They make a major part of the economy and yet face there is little access for them to learn the iglish language and therefore, progress. Due to this fact, many members of the Hispanic immunity have had their civil and human rights abused. Due to the lack of language oficiency, a majority of these abuses go unreported. Members of this community are not lucated on their rights and the resources they can reach out to for help. They suffer in ence. The only way to break this silence is by speaking out about these injustices. The ost powerful tool to accomplish this is the individual voice. Many members of the merican society have gone out of their way to teach English to minority groups, thus giving ispanic people a voice and a tool to defend themselves. Yet, this is not only necessary for e Spanish community but for the hundreds of people and groups that share the resources this country with English-speaking neighbors.

Volunteers are the heart of this society. Civic engagement is what has kept, and will ontinue to keep, this society alive. The world often recognizes the United States for its lvancement and power. The American society is more advanced than many other nations it much can be done for its' members to help, protect, speak out, and aid others. Civic igagement is and should always be color blind, resist stereotypes, and empower those who e oppressed or disadvantaged. Volunteers and civic engagement promoters are the heart this country and the fuel that has kept America alive.

My experience as a Bonner student has taught me the power of the individual. As a ember of the Hispanic community here in the United States, I plan to continue working ith my community. I will continue aiding and encouraging them in the many ways I have arned with the resources I have gained as a college graduate. I thank Guildford for owing me the opportunity to be a member of the civic engagement movement and for aching me how I can impact the world.

- I. Joliette experienced a distinct divide fr her parents and living in an Englishspeaking world. How might you chan ESL programs to assist families such a hers?
- 2. How might pressure be alleviated from youth who come from different backgrounds and may have a difficult receiving education that communicate their language? How might you bette facilitate the instruction of English?
- 3. Do you work with a group that you raethnically, or historically relate to or a part of? Despite language, how do yo communicate or participate in diverse groups?
- 4. Joliette explains that civic engagement color blind, resists stereotypes, and empowers those who are oppressed disadvantaged. How might you work make this statement ring true in the future?

Why is it we've gotten our selves in this mess?

Some people seem, to not care for others
What does that mean? Not trusting each other?
How can we solve problems with that type of thought?
Every man for himself, if so then we fall.

Not knowing what to do, we live in fear
Too afraid to talk, not showing what we feel,
It is time we start and make a change
To release us all from what surrounds us in this cage.

It starts with us, not them, he or she Involving ourselves in a group community What type of activity you may ask? Well any such thing that helps to build unity.

This could lead to better things, not only for you or me,
But family as well, which you just might see
Family of faith, or family of heart
In the end it all works and improvement starts.

What can we expect for our future and goals
It is too hard to tell if we just stand-alone
Movement of soul in some type of way
Will surely help us to break away from the old.

You think you can start something? You think you can do it?

**Luke Keeler**Berea College

ear: "Wake Up!"

Coming from England to America was a big adjustment for me. I was not aware of the ways which the American government worked. A lot of countries believe this is the land of eedom, equality, and opportunity but from the point of view of an immigrant, my perspective 1 these notions differed drastically. Before I was a Bonner I really had no respect for the U.S. overnment, because of the way I was treated in the immigration process. I was treated as

lough I owed the officers something as an outsider entering the country, but son it was brought to my attention that my view was similar to those who ere actual *citizens* of this country! A lot of peers throughout high school and ollege saw the government as some mythical authoritative body that did not anything but set discriminating rules and take from minorities. Some peers d not care about the government, as long as it was working and keeping verything in line that benefited them. In this case, they were happy to be norant.

After joining the Bonner program, my views of the government has not cally altered, but it has given me the *hope* of being able to change the way the cople in this country live. I learned that the U.S. government is not what akes up America but it is the *people* that live here that make America. If we in change people one by one the nation is bound to follow. Bonner took me, personally responsible resident of the U.S., and turned me into a articipatory, justice-oriented citizen. The only way we can change the overnment directly is to vote and keep acting on what we believe is right. I yself can not vote, but I think that the people who have that right should cercise it. Blood, sweat, and tears were given in order to obtain that right. The are we to not fulfill our duties to our ancestors, our country, and urselves?

I recently was privileged to work with *Hands on Memphis*, a nationwide time to at in cleaning up and improving the city of Memphis. This opened my eyes to y civic duties as a resident and what very different people face from their multiple points of

ew. I listened to eight speakers doing their best to represent people that had been put into

Damian Lang describes:

"Recently I went to an empowering seminar that touched me personally. For a long time I felt that I was different to everybody else as I did not fit into a box, even though I was often placed in one. I am bi-racial and though I appear to be one identity my other counterparts remain ambiguous. As a result, I am often told that I am something I'm not. Stereotypes are not accurate: its time to change them."

immigrant from England. What periences have you had where someone sumed something incorrectly about you? ow have you managed these encounters?

mian had a great experience with the ect diverse seminars with various presented groups in dialogue. Working wards eradicating difference, identity litics, and stereotype has influenced him speak out. How might you organize such diverse event on and off campus?

mian mentions visiting a civil rights useum that was informative. Could you ganize such an outing to make your mmunity more aware of the history of e nation, other countries, and groups?

an immigrant from Britain, how might amian participate in supporting positive d empowering social change in America? ow might his perspective be helpful to uth in his community?

state of their community and in what ways he attempts to change the stereotypical images that are often projected onto it. Another speaker spoke on behalf of people infected with AIDS. They wanted to change how people viewed HIV positive individuals and knock social assumptions off their backs. Similar discussions from representatives of the Puerto Rican, African American, Disabled, Feminist, Fair Wage and Urban League groups filled the seminar. These speakers represented groups often left in the margins, yet unite together in the quest to gain equality and freedom to life and liberty. Seminars, like the one I was privileged to attend, change the way people view themselves and the social groups they have been placed into. These seminars empower people and give them the knowledge they need in order to go out and change society. Seminars like *Hands on Memphis* let people know they are not alone in wanting change; many different and unique groups share similar sentiments.

The seminar touched me personally; for a long time I felt that I was different to everybody else as I did not fit into a box, even though I was often placed in one. I am bi-racial and though I appear to be one identity my other counterparts remain ambiguous. As a result, I am often told that I am something I'm not. The speakers from this event voiced and informed the audience that stereotypical assumptions are not accurate: it is time to change them.

The biggest thing that this service trip did for me was to help me stop and realize that there are freedoms we take for granted, that we don't appreciate, yet people died for those to keep those freedoms in tact. The civil rights museum showed me that African Americans died to vote, women fought to vote, and now people don'twant to vote. This experience convinced me that everybody has the right to keep this country and the world from going down the drain, and that will always take work and civic engagement.



## Appendix I: CIRCLE QUIZ

#### Civic Engagement Quiz – Full Version

The civic indicators measured in this quiz can be used in two ways to measure civil congagement for a group. First, they can be used to compare the pattern of civic engagement in a group of people of the pattern of civic engagement found nationally. Second, these in dicators can be used to measure changes in civic engagement after a group that been exposed to a program or other treatment.

Several cautions should be noted about tusing the indicators to measure the efficiences of a youth program, an organization, or a specific curriculum, or just to compliare a group to the Level's of dividengagement obsileved nationally:

- Many programs that are valuable to youth may not spark an immediate change in these indicators, particularly if the program is run over a short period of time or is not very intensing which a case, giving young people the indicators in the form of a pre-and post-test triangle of always yield results, and most likely will not capture new changes. The most appropriate measures may be more specific to the content of a project. For example, students in an environmental service-learning program should learn about the particular ecosystem in which they are working. The above indicators will not reflect changes in environmental knowledge. Only if the project is in tense or lasts for a considerable period of time would we anticipate changes in the civic indicators listed above.
- All of the indicators measure behavior that can be quantified. So me types of circle via lues, motives, and behaviors may be better a sessed through qualitative measures such as open -ende d in terviews where young people can describe their activities and intentions. If you are using the indicators to assess circle engagement in an organization or program, additing qualitative methods to your evaluation will give a richer picture of your program and the youth in nvolved.
- The indicators were developed from a national sample, and as a result, reflect dividactions that can be measured on a national scale, but may not all ways be community specific. For instance, the national sample had allow representation of Native American youth. Consequently, the indicators do not include dividactivities that may be common on a reservation or in a tribal community. Similarly, if you are working with extremely engage dyouth, their dividentary indicators may not be reflected in the indicators. Please adapt the indicators to fit your needs, and addiner indicators to the list Supplementary engage dyour abetteridea of the uniqueness of your program and the young people eyou work with.

Community Problem Solving  1. Have you ever worked together with someone or some group to solve a problem in the community where you live?	( ) Yes, Within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, But not within the last 12 months	( ) No, Never
<u>Volunteering</u> 2. Have you volunteered or done any voluntary community service for no pay?	( ) Yes, Within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, But not within the last 12 months	( ) No, Never

Indicate whether you have volunteered with any of the following types of organizations or groups:							
2A . Religious group	( ) Yes, Thave volunteered within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, I volunteer once a month or more	( ) Not within the last 12 months				
28. Environmental organization	( ) Yes, I have volunteered within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, I volunteer once a month or more	( ) Not within the last 12 months				
2C. Civic or community organization involved in health or social services	( ) Yes, Thave volunteered within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, I volunteer once a month or more	( ) Not within the last 12 months				
2D. An organization for youth, children, or education	( ) Yes, I have volunteered within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, I volunteer once a month or more	( ) Not within the last 12 months				
2E. Any other group: (describe the group)	( ) Yes, Thave volunteered within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, I volunteer regularly - once a month or more	( ) Not within the last 12 months				

Group Membership  3A. Do you belong to or donate mo ney to any groups or associations, either locally or nationally such as charities, labor unions, professional associations, political or social groups, sports or youth groups, and so forth?	( ) Yes	( ) No
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Participate in run/vallofide  4. Have you personally walked, ran, or bileyd ed foir a charintable cause — this is separate from sponsoring or giving money to thin a type of event?	( ) Yes, Have done it within last 12 mont hs	( ) Yes, Butnot within last 12 months	( ) No, Never
Donate to a char <u>ity</u> 5. Besildes donating monley, have you everdone anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause?	( ) Yes, Have done it within last 12 mont hs	( ) Yes, Butnot within last 12 months	( ) No, Never

#### Elector al Indicators

Voter Registriation 6A. Many pleople are not regill stered to vote because they are too busy or move around often.  Are you current liking i stered in your election district, ionnot?	( ) Yes, Definitelγ	( ) I1hinkso	( ) No
Yot ind 6B. We know that most people don't voite in all elections. Do you vote in both national and Local elections?	( ) Yes, Always	( ) Yes, Usually	( ) No
Yolunteerf or a Candidate or Politi cal Campaign 7. Have you volunteered for a polit i cal organitzation or candidate running for office?	( ) Yes, Within the last 12 months	( ) Yes, But, not with in the last 12 months	( ) No, Never
Persuade Others to yote for a candidate or party  8. When the relision election taking place, do you try to conviouse people to yote for onal gainst one of the partiles or candidates, or not?	( ) Yes, Always	( ) Yes, Usualiy	( ) No
Display Campaign Button or Stoker 9. Do you brean a campaing button, put a still demon your car, or place a single in front of your house?	( ) Yes.	( ) Yes.	( ) No

#### Indicators of Political Voice

Contacted a Public Official			
11. Contacted or visite dia public official –	( )	( )	( )
at any level of government – to express	Yes,	Yes,	No,
kour opinion?	Within the last	But, not within the	Never
	12 months	last 12 months	
Contacted a Newspaper	, ,		
12. Contacted a newspaper or magazine	(_)		( ) N=
to express your opinion on an issue?	Yes, 	Yes,	No.
	Within the last	But, not within the last 12 months	Never
Contacted a Radio or Television Talk	12 months	1881 12 11011018	
Show	7 1	( )	7 1
13. Called in to a radio or television talk	`Yeέ,	Yes,	No.
show to express your opinion on a political	Within the last	But, not within the	Never
issue, even if you did not get on the air?	12 months	last 12 months	
Protested			
14. Taken partin a protest, march, or	( )	( )	( )
demonstration?	Yes,	Yes,	No,
	Within the last	But, not within the	Never
	12 months	last 12 months	
Signed an Email Petition			
15. Signed an e-mail petition about a	( )		(_,)
social or political issue?	Y <b>6</b> 8,	Yes,	No.
	Within the last 12 months	But, not within the last 12 months	Never
Signed a Written Petition	12 11011818	1001 12 11011818	
16. Have you ever signed a written	7.3		7 1
petition about a political or social issue?	, , Yes,	Yes,	No,
per ter recent repaired or o conta toolio;	Vithin thelast	But, not within the	Never
	12 months	last 12 months	110301
Boycotted			
17. Have you ever NOT bought	( )		( )
something from a certain company	Yes,	Yes,	No,
because you disagree with the social or	Within the last	But, not within the	Never
political values of the company that	12 months	last 12 months	
produces it?			
Drugos <del>ta</del> ol		+	
Buycotted 12 Hana iau kanalist aasaatsiisa kaasanaa	<i>}</i>		
18. Have you bought something because you like the social or political values of the	\		l, β Na
company that produces or provides it?	Yes, Within the last	Yes, But, not within the	No, Never
company marphonices or produes it:	mulling blenast 12 months	last 12 months	nevel

#### Classifying Individuals by Type of Engagement

One of the many innovations of The Civic and Political Health of the Nation report is a "typology of en gagement" This typology classifies individuals—into four groups based on their participation in a range of civild and electoral activities. The checkliet below lists. diactivities and electoral activities from the questions one should use to measure civithe civic engagement quiz, and provides an easy way to add up the number of activities an individual is involved in. Each box in this checklist corresponds to a quiz que stion with the same number: After administering the e quiz, place a check in each box to which a respondent gave a positive answer: The in u checked in each column: count the number of boxes yo

Typology of Engagement Checklist

Ciuio Activities			Electoral Activities		Political Voice Activities			
C#	Activity/Question	Yes?	C#	Activity/Ouestion	Yes?	Ω#	Activity/ Oxeration	Yes?
1	Worked to solve a community problem		6B	Always vote in elections (regular voting)		11	Contracted/visited a public official	
24	Volunteered regularly for Religious Group		7	Volunteer for a political campaign or candidate		12	Contacted a newspaper or magazine	
28	Volunteered regularly for an Environmental Group		8	Persuade others to vote		13	Contracted a radio or television talk show	
2C	Volunteered regularly for a civic or community organization		9	Wear a campaign button or put a sticker on your car		14	Protested	
20	Volunteered regularly for an organization for youths children or education		10	Work or contribute money to a candidate, political party, or or organization that supported candidates		15	Signed an email petition	
2E	Volunteered regularly for any other group					16	Signed at written petition	
38	Active member of a group					17	Boycotted a company	
4	Personally walked, ran, or bioyoled for a charitable cause.					18	Buycotted or bought something to support the values of a company	
5	Besides donating money, done anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause?					19	Canvasced – going door to door for a social or political group	
	Total Number of Activities (add number of affirmative responses)			Total Number of Activities (ackl number of affirmative responses)			Total Number of Activities (ackl number of affirmative responses)	

Once survey results have been tabulated for an individu-

al, respondents can be classified in the following way:

Disengaged : 0 or 1 checks in BOTH columns.

Civic Specialist : 2 or more checks in the civic column and 0 or 1 in the electoral column.

Electoral Specialist : 2 or more checks in the electoral column and 0 or 1 in the civic column.

Dual Activist : 2 or more checks in BOTH columns.

Nationally, based on the 2006 survey from the 2006 Civic and Political Health of the Nation , 15 percent of all adults 15 and older are Dual Activists; 13 percent are Civic Specialists ; 24 percent are Electoral Specialists ; and 48 percent are Disengaged .

Table 1 – National Survey Results for 19 Measures of Civic Engagement from The Civic and Political Health of the Nation , 2006

	Tron	n The Civic and Political Healt	The Civic and Political Health of the Nation		, 2		
	15+	Civic Indicators	15-18	19-22	23-25	15-25	26+
1	20%	Community problem solving.	23%	16%	18%	19%	20%
2Å1 to	22%	Regularly volunteering for a non-					
<u>245</u>		electoral organization.	23%	15%	16%	19%	24%
3B	24%	"Active" member in-group or					
		organization.	22%	20%	18%	20%	26%
4	34%	Participating in fund-raising					
		run/xall//ide.	21%	18%	12%	18%	15%
5	27%	General fund raising for charity.	28%	24%	19%	24%	28%
		Bectoral Indicators					
68	50%	Always vote (for age 20 and					
		okter).		23%	29%	26%	56%
7	2%	Regularly volunteer for a					
		candidate or political	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
		organization.					
8	32%	Persuading others to vote for a					
		particular candidate or party.	38%	31%	36%	35%	40%
8	25%	Displaying campaign buttons,					
		signs or stidiers.	27%	20%	23%	23%	28%
10	11%	Contributing to a campaign,					
		party or group.	8%	3%	9%	7%	14%
		Indicators of Political Voice					
11	18%	Contacting officials.	11%	10%	10%	11%	22%
12	10%	Contacting the print media.	8%	5%	6%	7%	11%
13	8%	Contacting the broadcast media.	9%	8%	8%	9%	8%
14	7%	Protesting.	13%	11%	10%	11%	5%
<u>15</u>	19%	Signing e-mail petitions.	15%	18%	15%	16%	21%
16	24%	Signing written petitions.	17%	18%	20%	18%	26%
17	35%	Boycotting.	28%	30%	33%	30%	38%
18	32%	Buycoting.	29%	30%	28%	29%	33%

Appendix 2: CIRCL Core Indicators of Civic Engagement