Personalizing the Baylor Mission

*Preparing students for worldwide leadership & service*

Supplemental materials

- Student stories – How Extraordinary the Stories (Selections attached.)
- Five Benchmarks of Meaningful Service (File attached.)
- Active Citizen Continuum (File Attached.)

Have students break up into small groups and assign each group a student story relating to service. You can access additional stories online at: [http://www.baylor.edu/development/scholarships/?_buref=1172-91940](http://www.baylor.edu/development/scholarships/?_buref=1172-91940). This will access the Scholarship Initiative Home page. Select one of the individual's pictures in which you are interested in learning more about and a brief description of the individual will come up. Select “More>>” in the far right-hand side of the page to access the full story.

Have each group discuss the following questions among themselves. Then bring the larger class back together to discuss collectively.

**Discussion Questions**

- How did each of these students serve the community?
- What gifts, strengths, or experiences shaped their involvement?
- How did they demonstrate leadership?
- How did they connect their service to their academic majors or professional goals?
- What parts of their stories resonate with you?
- What gifts, strengths, or experiences do you want to shape your involvement here?
- Do you see yourself more as a leader or a servant? How are these two views compatible with each other? How does one influence the other?
- What do you think it means to prepare to serve? What kind of preparation do you need? (Reference the Five Benchmarks of Meaningful Service)

Introduce the Active Citizen Continuum. (Reference attached handout.)

Here is further explanation of each step along the continuum and an example of how a student (Jasmine) might move through the continuum throughout their time at Baylor.
Member – characterized by high exploration and low commitment

Ways for students to explore service: Steppin’ Out Day of Service, discipline-specific service learning courses, Other Side of Waco Tours, Santa’s Workshop

Jasmine is a freshman at Baylor and is adjusting to college life. She plans to participate in Steppin’ Out this fall with her CL group but hasn’t yet found how she wants to get involved. She joins in with others doing service, but right now it is more as a way for her to meet more people. She hasn’t found something that fits with her interests & passions yet, so she hasn’t made any commitments.

Volunteer – characterized by commitment & participation, with low levels of larger context & issues; often there is some personal connection between the volunteer and the service they choose – in terms of giftedness, interests, personal experience.

Ways for students to commit to serve – Participate in long-term service through the semester or year through Office of Community Engagement & Service. Move from short-term experiences to long-term relationships. Some of our volunteer programs:

- Baylor Buddies Mentoring Program – one on one relationships w/ elementary or middle school children
- Campus Kitchen – food rescue, community gardens, & nutrition
- Agape Adopt a Grandparent Program - elderly
- Best Buddies Program – adults w/ special needs
- International Justice Mission – anti-human trafficking
- Wells Project – clean water access

Her second semester, though, Jasmine learns about Baylor Buddies, a mentoring program with children in local schools. She had a mentor when she was in middle school and remembers what a difference it made in her life. She commits to working one-on-one with a child throughout the rest of the semester and finds out that she can keep that relationship through the remaining years. She is excited and starts meeting weekly with her buddy.
Conscientious Citizen – characterized by commitment & context, identifying larger issues & assets affecting individuals, participating in intensive experiences that go deeper.

Ways students can go deeper – Go deeper with your involvement over your career at Baylor by taking advantage of additional opportunities:

- Leadership opportunities within organizations, e.g. service chair, student planning committees, conferences & trainings
- Poverty & social justice internships
- Mission trips and/or study abroad, e.g. Leadership in Ghana

As Jasmine continues to invest in her buddy, Jasmine starts to observe some of the larger issues at play in her child’s life – her relationship with her parents, her family's income level, educational resources & opportunities, tangible needs such as poverty or hunger, and begins to explore some of the assets that make a difference. She learns more about how to be an effective mentor, connects her buddy’s parents to the Parent Resource Center, and helps her buddy problem solve academic & personal issues. She also applies for an internship with Communities in School and works with the program manager to develop additional trainings and resources for other mentors.

Active Citizen – characterized by integrating service with personal & community values, not just an activity, but also a way of life; develops understanding of systemic issues and works to advocate on behalf of others.

Ways students can integrate service – Become involved with local agencies & policy makers addressing issues. Become a campus advocate to generate awareness & action among your peers. Serve on planning committees for campus-wide or community initiatives. Adapt academic & career plans to integrate service into your future as a professional. Incorporate your philosophy of leadership & service into your personal mission statement.

Jasmine’s relationship with her buddy has sparked a new awareness of issues surrounding education. Jasmine seeks to become a better advocate for children like her buddy and attends local school board meetings, schedules interest sessions on campus for other students to learn about the issues and get involved, sponsors a letter writing campaign to influence legislators. She is now considering applying for Teach for America and spending a couple of years teaching in an urban school district back home. She wants to work within education to make the system better for all involved.
Other Discussion Points
What are the major differences between a volunteer and an active citizen?

- Discuss inclusive language – moving from us/then to we
- Discuss partnerships versus projects – shifting from fix them mentality to working alongside the community.
- Discuss mutual reciprocity – creating win-wins, personal benefits & transformation as well as community benefits & transformation

What would it take for you to see yourself as an active citizen of Baylor and an active citizen of the Waco community?

For more information and for help getting involved on any level with service, please contact:
Office of Community Engagement & Service
Martin House, next to Collins Residence Hall
254-710-3106, www.baylor.edu/engage
Playing For Something Bigger

From the time she picked up soccer as a young girl to the day she finished her stellar collegiate soccer career, having led the Baylor Bears to the postseason for the first time since 1999, Staz Salinas excelled in a sport that requires precision, skill and fancy footwork to overcome opponents.

A continent away, Staz's experiences at Baylor University led her to a different kind of footwork, one that left a lasting impact on her life.

"We washed the feet of people who had chigger infestations," Staz remembered. "They had little bugs living underneath the skin. It was a huge eye-opener."

During her time as a student-athlete, Staz (BS '12) participated in two Baylor Athletics mission trips to Kenya. Before that, her summers were focused on her studies and preparing for upcoming seasons. It took an invitation from Athletics Chaplain and trip leader Wes Yeary to convince her to step out of her comfort zone.

In Kenya, Staz and many of her teammates were immersed in a different world, ministering to the homeless at 4 a.m., sharing the Gospel with strangers and playing soccer and other games with the Kenyan children. Through it all, she built relationships and took part in a whole new kind of teamwork with fellow student-athletes in an environment far away from the field, gym or classroom.

Remembering the needs of the Kenyan people transported Staz back to the dusty grounds where she followed the Biblical example of foot-washing.

"We used an ointment to kill the bugs in their feet and applied Vaseline to help them heal," she said. "There were little kids, maybe two years old, and they had it...very hard to see."

For a player who came to Baylor with only soccer on her mind, it was a transformational experience—and others took notice.

"She grew spiritually," Head Soccer Coach Marci Jobson said. "She seemed to have more of a peace about herself. She was more patient and understanding. The trip had a really positive impact on our team as a whole."

"You come back on sort of a high, but that only lasts so long," Staz noted. "So we would re-group, talk about how great our God is and look for other ways to help back here."

Staz Salinas did not come to Baylor seeking to participate in missions. But when presented with that opportunity, she found herself emboldened, her faith strengthened and her perspective altered.

"The whole experience changed my life," Staz said. "My soccer girls and friends from the other sports, we're all bonded. We're playing for something bigger now."
An Overcoming Faith

"You can't wait for people to knock on your door and give you help," Toyin said. "If you want something, then you go and get it."

Toyin Akindona comes from a long line of go-getters. Her parents Immigrated to America on a scholarship for higher education--a promise that was thwarted by corruption within the Nigerian government. But even that circumstance couldn't break their will to succeed.

They were determined: Their six children, including Toyin, would receive college degrees, even though their own education had been deterred.

As Toyin applied for colleges, the words of her parents rang in her ears, "God is going to provide a way for you to go to the university you're supposed to attend. It doesn't matter how impossible it may seem."

After researching business programs across America, Toyin settled on two universities that would offer opportunities for real world experience and innovation. Both were out of her price range.

In the midst of numerous financial challenges, Toyin's dreams appeared to be a distant mirage, but her faith in God carried her where finances couldn't. Toyin recalled the promise of God--that she would attend a private university--and took action. She contacted the financial aid offices of both universities in desperation. The first showed her no compassion. Baylor, however, embraced Toyin's hopes and began the search for scholarships.

Immediately, Toyin began to wonder, "If the financial aid office is this compassionate, then how are the professors and staff and everyone on campus?" And that sealed the deal. Still lacking finances, Toyin decided that becoming a part of the Baylor family was worth the risk.

Only a week after classes began, her prayers were answered. Endowed scholarships were added to her financial aid package, further confirming that Baylor was the place for Toyin to grow. An avid Baylor Bear, Toyin studies diligently and serves relentlessly. Through Baylor's Youth Ministry Teams and Mission Waco, Toyin ministers to local youth and helps them identify their goals, so they, too, can reach their full potential.

"Every time I get to pour into youth, every time I hear a funny story or give advice to a friend, every time I laugh while at Baylor, I owe it to my donors," Toyin said. "By giving to Baylor, they're not just building academic futures for us; they're building our very lives in all the experiences we have."
Breaking the Barrier

A Baylor Student Brings the Sounds of Music to Life for the Hearing-Impaired Community

How can one communicate the moving magic of music to someone who's never—in his or her entire lifetime—had the privilege of hearing a single song? It’s not a question most of us ponder on a regular basis. But as a Baylor freshman, on behalf of her deaf childhood friend, Allyson Townsend desperately wanted to find an answer.

"My friend would ask me, 'How do you know which words to sing at which point, and how do you know how long to say the word?' and other questions like that," Ally said.

And so, beginning with the song "Kiss Me" by Sixpence None the Richer, Ally began making "music videos" using American Sign Language and posting them on a YouTube channel she created for that purpose, Ally ASL.

Little did she know that her effort to bless her friend with the gift of song would explode into a widely viewed and highly sought after phenomenon by the deaf and hearing-impaired community. Over the last four years, Ally’s online videos have gained a following of more than 15,000 thankful viewers and have incurred more than 1 million hits.

In January of 2011, Ally was named ABC News' Person of the Week. But despite all the attention, Ally remains focused on one goal: bridging the gap for persons surrounded by the sound of silence into the rhythm of the hearing world around them.

After graduating with a degree in deaf education from Baylor in 2010, Ally began teaching deaf and hard of hearing second graders in Mesquite, Texas, a role she finds incredibly gratifying. "Yesterday, I gave a reading test and one of my students had moved up six levels from where he was at the beginning of the year," Ally related. "That makes me feel like I’ve accomplished something. It’s an extremely rewarding experience."
Determined to Make a Difference

At age 11, Brandon Wold was doing everything he could to help others.

Forced to become the man of the house at an early age, Brandon began developing his creative skills for problem solving by fixing things around the house.

"I had to switch from fixing toy models to fixing everything else that broke," Brandon recalls.

Despite these obstacles, he was a bright, successful student. Working with his hands turned out to be one of his strong suits, and once he was old enough, he decided to turn it—and his interest in medicine—into a career.

With his sights set on making a meaningful impact on humanity, Brandon applied for an Immunology research internship at the University of Colorado while he was in high school. It was the perfect fit, since his family and fiancé were living in Colorado.

Not only was he using his intuition for problem solving, but he also was able to engage in direct patient care. There was a clear connection between the test tubes in the lab and the warm hands he felt in the hospital.

He fell in love with what he was doing. "In biomedical research, I get to engage my body, mind and creativity for the betterment of mankind," Brandon affirmed.

He took this passion with him to Baylor and began conducting independent research projects while completing his bachelor's degree in neuroscience.

As was the case when he was 11, Brandon was still doing everything he could to help others.

He is no stranger to service and enjoys giving back to the community in a big way. As president of two honor societies at Baylor, he has helped create career services for his fellow students, as well as a civic engagement project at an elementary school in a poverty-stricken neighborhood.

Some might compare his achievements to climbing Mount Everest! Well, he does that too. Although Brandon hasn't seen the peak of Everest, he has climbed 14,000 foot peaks in Colorado. Brandon's daring climbing, along with marathon running and participation in intramural sports, keep him as physically fit as Baylor keeps him mentally fit.

"True daring is taking a stand, meeting obstacles head on and never losing sight of the ultimate object."
A Statue, a Promise and a Ram in a Bush

Nine-years-old. That was Phyllus Flowers' age when she took her first job, became the bookkeeper for her 10-member family and promised herself that one day she would graduate from Baylor University.

Born in a little house just three blocks from campus, Phyllus grew up regularly visiting the Armstrong Browning Library and playing on the Judge Baylor statue.

"One day I looked up at Judge Baylor's imposing figure and said, 'I am going to graduate from this school some day. Just you watch and see!'" Phyllus said.

It was a big promise, especially in a time when many institutions remained segregated.

At age 18, Phyllus dropped out of college at the University of North Texas in order to work full-time to put her husband through college. For the next several years, life was a constant wrestle between working, supporting three small children and squeezing in community college classes. But, though Phyllus' dream to receive a Baylor education sometimes seemed dim and distant, she fought to keep alive.

When faced with seemingly hopeless circumstances, Phyllus drew strength to persevere from her mother's constant Biblical reminder of God's provision to Abraham In his greatest moment of need. "My mother told me 'God always brings the ram in the bush and sometimes you may be that ram,'" Phyllus said. "So I prayed that I would live to make a difference for my people, my family."

When the time finally came for Phyllus to step on that familiar campus as a Baylor student, her two sons were among her fellow classmates. "All those years I had worked to accomplish this goal, this deal between me and God and Judge Baylor," Phyllus said. "And as I was leaving my first day of religion class, I went by the statue and said 'I'm here.' And I just stood there and cried."

She had made it, at last. With minimal finances and children in college along with her, however, it was far from clear how Phyllus would be able to persist to graduation. Her "ram" came just in time...in the form of a Student Foundation scholarship.

"I felt like I was somebody when I received that scholarship," Phyllus said. "I knew somebody else cared about my success and that meant a lot to me."

On December 17, 1994, Phyllus won that 33-year long bet. Earning a bachelor's degree in business administration at age 42, she became the first person in her immediate family to receive a four-year degree.

Living by her mother's admonition to show gratitude by "paying your blessings forward," Phyllus has made it a personal practice to give what she can to the Student Foundation scholarship fund each year.

"I am not rich by anyone's standards," Phyllus said. "However, I make sure to give that small amount to scholarships every year since I graduated because someone reached out to me in my time of need. I give to scholarships because when my time comes, I want to hear the Lord say 'well done.' That's all I live for."
Adventures of a Scientist

While running through the neighbor's field and hiking up hills to avoid the pressures of the third grade and a shaky home life, Austin Cook-Lindsay had no idea he would be putting his explorer skills to use at Baylor.

Growing up in a family of educators in San Angelo, Texas, Austin was mortified by his stutter as a child. Little did he know, he would soon dominate the written word, and Baylor would give him the opportunity to experience many other languages all over the world.

The summer after his freshman year as an environmental science major, Austin embarked on his first study abroad trip to a tropical coast in the Dominican Republic. He joined fellow Baylor students in studying water management by seeing how the global climate change was affecting the Caribbean. This was his chance to get his hands dirty.

"For two weeks, the country's mountains became our classrooms; its streams, our labs," Austin recalled. "I saw my studies at Baylor in the sciences and humanities intersecting. If not for Baylor, I would not have a unique perspective on my role in the wider world," Austin said.

Austin may work hard, but he plays hard too. When he wasn't knee deep in an underwater world, he was white water rafting through rapids and playing basketball with local youth in Santo Domingo.

Bolstered by the experience from trips abroad, where he crisscrossed the eastern half of Hispaniola and studied the longest river in Germany, he was able to land the fellowship of a lifetime at the United States Environmental Protection Agency.

"Throughout the past four years, this science background has consistently complemented my commitment to serving others through education and the development of sustainable environmental policies," Austin said.

When Austin wasn't exploring the globe, he was reaching out to underprivileged children in the community by giving them tractor rides at the organic farm he worked at or by simply being a much-needed friend. During his final year at Baylor, Austin found himself preparing to realize his goals of being a scientist and working with youth. So, he applied for a position as an English Teaching Assistant in Kyrgyzstan through the Fulbright Program.

Once a boy with a stutter and an affinity for adventure, Austin is now a soon-to-be Baylor graduate, ready to put his international experiences to use and pursue a calling beyond American borders as an advocate for environmental sustainability and education. "If not for Baylor, my passion for serving both people and the environment would have never crystallized."
## Five Benchmarks of Meaningful Service

### Impact
- What impact are we having on the community? How do we know?
- What difference are we making?
- How are we supporting the efforts of others in the community?

### Quality
- How well are we serving? Communicating? Planning?
- How are the logistics going? Is the project or partnership well organized?
- What is our personal investment in the work that we are doing? Is this our best effort?

### Relationship
- How are we fostering relationships with fellow student volunteers?
- How are we fostering relationships with those we are serving?
- How are we fostering relationships with staff at our partnering agency?

### Context
- What are we doing to understand the larger issues involved, possibly the root causes or the complexities?
- What does this kind of work look like on a state, national, or global level?
- How does the role we are playing fit into the larger context of the agency we serve?
- How can we better seek to understand others, deepen our sense of empathy, and value diverse experiences & perspectives?

### Learning
- What are we doing to promote reflection and to debrief service experiences?
- How do we allow volunteers to share & process with each other? How do we guide them through this process?
- How do we connect work in the community to other efforts & activities of our organization? To individual student coursework or other co-curricular experiences?
- What are we learning about ourselves through this experience?
- How has this experience challenged or reaffirmed thoughts, beliefs, values, or convictions?
- How has this experience expressed or shaped who we want to be as individuals and professionals? What implications do these realizations have for individual’s majors or career paths?
The Active Citizen Continuum

Pre-Break Transformation
Prepare students for on-site experience and provide basic education about site-specific social issues.
- Education, Orientation and Training
- Pre-break service projects
- Icebreakers and groupbuilding activities
- Preflection: Goals and Expectations

On-Break Transformation
Encourage participants to look critically at the root causes of social issues and challenge participants to evaluate the role that they can play in the community.
- Strong Direct service
- Ongoing education
- Community involvement
- Daily reflection linked to service activities and education

Post-Break Transformation
Help participants find avenues for continued community involvement and support participants’ efforts to take the next “action steps.”
- Reorientation
- Continued education
- Reflection about reentry process
- Post-break service project
- Challenge to make changes in life choices to benefit the community

Not concerned with her/his role in social problems.
Well-intentioned but not well-educated about social issues.
Concerned with discovering root causes; asks why?
Community becomes a priority in values and life choices.

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