



*Celebrating the Outstanding Work of our Students*

**“Community Service”  
by Murray Rosenbaum  
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I have joined my family when we've done various community services over the years, but this is the first time I've been asked to perform community service myself. I did not even know I what wanted to do. My brother volunteered at the All Angels soup kitchen in our Upper Westside neighborhood, not only for his own Bar Mitzvah, but he continued all through High School - and he even made friends with a lot of the homeless people in our neighborhood. They used to tell him: “Max we're watching out for you out there, we've got your back!” That's the first time I realized that volunteering is a two way street – you give, and you get.

My school, St. Hilda's and St. Hugh's, also does a lot of community service and they get the whole school involved. We raise money for our companion school in India, and our February Clothing drive this year benefitted MADRE which is an international women's human rights organization. We collected shoes to send to Haiti and we also had a book Drive to benefit Project Cicero, which benefits New York City Public Schools. One of my favorite St. Hilda's community services takes place every Thanksgiving. We collect food that we pile up into a mountain, and then we make a human chain up to the top of the block where there is a soup kitchen. It starts with the pre-kindergartners who hand food to the Kindergartners who hand to the 1<sup>st</sup> graders, and so on. The chain ends in the basement of the church where the soup kitchen is, with the 8<sup>th</sup> graders passing the food to the soup kitchen volunteers. I started in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade when I came to St. Hilda's, next year I will be one of the 8<sup>th</sup> graders – I've made it to the end of the chain!

So in regards to my own community service, my first opportunity to volunteer came up right away. My family had reconnected with a trumpet player, Bill, who is also an activist. He has a band that marches to support various causes around peace. Bill heard that I was playing my trumpet and he invited me to join the group.

So for my first community service on May 2, 2010, I marched from 42<sup>nd</sup> St. in Times Square to the United Nations as part of the “ International Day Of Action/Peace And Human Needs: Nuclear Disarmament Now!” with a small marching band called ‘New York Path To Peace’. The band was comprised of a trombone, trumpet, tuba, drums, myself (also on trumpet), and whoever else tagged along! We marched to the UN to support nuclear disarmament.

There were also a lot of people from Hiroshima and Nagasaki marching that day. I met some survivors from the explosions during World War II. During the march, many people came up to me while I was playing my trumpet and decorated my hat, shoulders, and arms with origami that they had made. I learned a lot about the effect the bombings had on real people and used my instrument to call for peace. Seeing their faces, and understanding how grateful they were to see others marching for the same goal as they were made me realize that war and bombs affect ordinary people even if they are half a world away. The march will be a memory of mine forever because I don't want to forget what war and bombs do to people. And I hope I was able to help bring the message of Peace to others.

Since the march was a one-time opportunity, I looked for some community service I could do on a regular basis in my own neighborhood. I found JASA's PETS Project Volunteer Program. JASA stands for the Jewish Association for Services for the Aged. They help older people stay as independent as possible, for as long as possible, including being able to keep their pets. I love dogs and can't imagine how it would feel if I were not able to keep my dog, so I now volunteer weekly for them. Every Thursday night and Saturday morning I'm a dog walker. I get to walk an energetic puppy named Gigi; she's a 1-year-old German shepherd mix. She loves the snow, playing with other dogs, and chasing squirrels. Every now and then we take my dog, Louie, with Gigi in the mornings. I've also been teaching Gigi some things like heeling and listening for her name to come back to me when she's off leash. I really enjoy my time with her and will continue to volunteer to do this in the future.

I believe that community service is important because if the only people we ever helped were ourselves, then we couldn't get to meet other people in our community. I've learned that community service is not just about helping others but it can also help you grow as a person, develop character, become a better human being, and help you understand what you have in your life that's important - like love and support from your family, the people who share their knowledge and teach you. The purpose of community service is to find a balance between yourself and others that helps make the world a better place.

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