



# ***DC to D.C.*** *Learning to help the Homeless*

Twenty DC students spent part of their winter holiday break learning about hunger and homelessness in the nation's capital. As members of the college's Service Leadership Program, they traveled to Washington, D.C., where they worked in five different locations in partnership with Amizade: Global Service Learning.

Participating were: Seniors Abby Taylor, Carmel, Ind.; Mike Vanderkolk, Bluffton, Ind.; Ian Fasnacht, Strongsville; Aubrey Kemerer, Hicksville; juniors George Roth, Defiance; Susie Stoepfel, McComb; Katie Haydett, Saint Clair Shores, Mich.; Amanda Foose, Bellevue; Jessie Bell, West Salem; Beth Pienoski, Sheffield Lake; Amber Moomey, Graytown; Cormack Lazarus, Jamaica; and freshmen Kande Manson, Paulding; Taylor Gillig, Tiffin; Kassie Memmer, Bowling Green; Mackenzie Combs, Milford Center; Adam Swisher, Lambertville, Mich.; Jared Feffer, Grand Rapids, Ohio; Kristin Aslanian, Trenton, Mich; and Emily Denhard, Troy, Mich.

They were accompanied by Jordan Heiliger, coordinator of the McMaster Service Leadership Program, and DC staff members Matt Gehring and Vickie Rhodes.

At DC Central Kitchen, the students worked alongside chefs to learn cooking skills and helped to make meals in bulk. DC Central Kitchen's primary purpose is to prepare food for shelters and other organizations. DCCK prepares more than 5,000 meals daily. It has a culinary arts program for homeless individuals to learn the art of cooking in preparation for employment in restaurants.

During one day at DCCK, the Defiance College group prepared 800 pounds of turkey meatloaf and 300 pounds of coleslaw.

Students assisted at Thrive DC, a traditional soup kitchen served by DCCK. Thrive DC also provides showers and personal hygiene items for homeless individuals.

At Central Union Mission, students made beds, sorted and folded bedding, and checked in homeless men for the all-men's shelter that also acts as an education center.

Students sorted donations at SOME (So Others Might Eat), a soup kitchen that conducts food drives and fundraising. The DC students sorted more than 200 boxes of donations received from a "shoe box drive" in which people packed shoe boxes with necessities such as underwear, socks, hats and gloves.

The group also worked at A Wider Circle, an organization designed to help people who are transitioning out of homelessness. The center provides professional development as well as furniture, clothing, food, beds and other items to those just coming out of homelessness. It also offers assistance with interview skills and job skills and professional clothing for job interviews.

In addition to their service projects, the DC students heard from two individuals from the National Coalition of the Homeless who shared their personal stories of how they came to be homeless and what they are doing now.

During their visit to the capital, they also took time to visit some of the city's historic sites including the Holocaust Museum, World War II Memorial, Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial, and the Smithsonian.

The Service Leadership Program at Defiance College is a scholarship program designed for students who were involved in service and volunteerism in high school and who hope to continue in college. Service Leaders gain experience in planning, organizing and implementing in-depth service learning projects and have opportunities to complete personal development, professional development, and leadership workshops. As a result, they gain a better understanding of the world around them and their place in it as active global citizens.



*Kande Manson and Emily Denhard prepare meals at Central Kitchen.*