

Alumni Profile

"I see the world as one with promise...but the promise and hope lie in the people who are willing to make change."



Sixteen-year-old Grace Park (CLI 2004) is about to graduate high school and take on the world. With interests as varied as one could imagine, she nevertheless has a pointed goal for the years down the road: equip herself to make an impact on her community through public service.

At her home in Pasadena, California, Grace maintains a full calendar. A varsity swimmer and water polo player since ninth grade, she plans to begin lifeguarding or teaching swimming lessons this semester. This winter, she ended a term as president of La Canada High School's Science Club; she sings in the school Concert Choir as well and serves her church youth group as the lead singer and guitarist for its music team.

Somewhere between her balance of arts, academics, and athletics, Grace finds time to lend a hand at the Variety Boys' and Girls' Club of Los Angeles, helping with office work, arts and crafts, and an annual Christmas party for hundreds of children whose parents cannot afford gifts at the holidays. This sort of volunteer work, Grace says, has become far more to her than simply something to put on a resume. "Painting a mural on the wall of a transitional housing center might not seem like much at first," she stated, "but it means a ton when you realize that the mural is a

constant reminder to the residents that someone cares and hopes for their well-being."

After graduation, Grace will head east to Columbia University as an Urban Studies major; she plans to earn a law degree afterwards and pursue a job in the public service arena. She is specifically interested in community development and housing.

"One person or a group of people can make a huge impact when they work toward a common goal," Grace asserted. "It is my responsibility and joy to make change in this world, just one small act at a time."

Grace Park

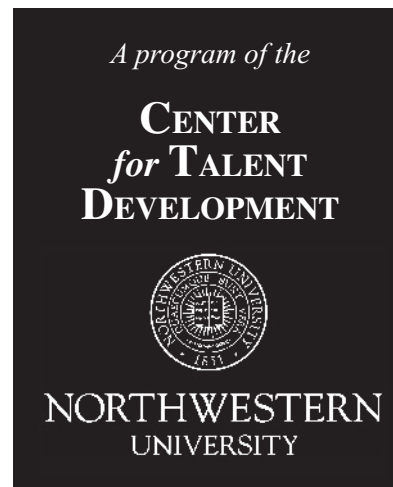
"CLI may change the course of your life."

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During CLI Baltimore 2004, Kayvan Farchadi paints at Project PLASE, an organization serving the homeless. Students created a mural and helped with other indoor repairs.



THE CIVIC EDUCATION PROJECT

Catalyst

CEP's Alumni Newsletter • March 2005

Wave of Need

Donations pile high after a tragedy, but what's the most effective way to keep giving when need isn't featured on the evening news?

A day after the wave hit Southeast Asia, news cameras captured the beach chairs floating on the ocean, the collapsed vendors' stalls, and the funeral pyres for the 210,000 or more dead. Then came coverage of the damage, relief work, and concerns about disease among the survivors.

This disaster garnered particular attention because of its international reach. Rarely does a natural disaster hit more than one nation at a time; after the tsunami, more than 50 nations reported citizens dead, and more than 2,500 tourists in Thailand were missing.

The challenge to civic leaders lies in keeping people engaged in the recovery efforts after pictures of the devastation stop appearing in the newspaper and on television. The American Red Cross raised \$400 million for tsunami relief in the month after the disaster. But when need is immediate, it's even better to have that money ready.

The Red Cross stresses giving monetary donations for a number of reasons. One of the problems, recipients report, is that people don't understand what to donate. There are winter coats sent to the Sri Lankan tropics, or money wasted on postage for a box of shoes that could have

been purchased locally. The money can be spent in the location of the disaster, being used for things people really need, decreasing the cost of transporting goods, and stimulating the local economy.

The Red Cross seeks local donations so that it will have money ready for future disasters. Its "Heroes of the American Red Cross" program looks for donations on a smaller scale, like \$1000, to put toward local programming. Local Red Cross efforts include helping families after a fire or flooding in their home. The Red Cross also helps teach disaster preparedness, like distributing winter storm emergency supply kits to people throughout the Chicago area.

"We had twice as many fires at the end of last year as we did the year before — 200 families," explained the Chicago Red Cross' Kate Monkus. "The Red Cross is there to provide them with blankets, shelter, and the basics."

The Red Cross can send speakers to local fund-raising events to help potential donors understand who and how their money can help. It can also offer guidance on events. For more information, visit the "Get Involved" link on www.chicagoredcross.org.

Summer of Service

Top: AT CLI Baltimore, Eric Chang works on a beautification project outside the Salvation Army building.

Middle: Pamela Escobar prepares her final project on youth literacy during classes at CLI in Baltimore.

Bottom: Jackie Valentine adds finishing touches to a giant turtle as part of the Hubbard Street Mural Project in Chicago. These murals, painted in the 70s and 80s but damaged by railroad repairs, have been under restoration for several years.

Comparing statistics:

Tsunami, Dec. 26, 2004
An 9.0 earthquake sends a 500 m.p.h. wave into southeast Asia and Africa.

Death toll: more than 210,000
Recovery cost: Insurers estimate \$10 billion.

Terrorist attacks, Sept. 11, 2001
Four hijacked planes crash, one into the Pentagon, and two into the World Trade Centers.

Death toll: 3,030
Recovery cost: Estimates range from \$25 billion to \$90 billion for rebuilding, helping affected families, and litigation.

Hurricane Andrew, late August 1992
The storm and tornados whip through the southeastern U.S. at up to 150 m.p.h.

Death toll: 65
Recovery cost: More than \$25 billion. It destroyed 25,524 homes and damaged 101,241.

Don't miss out!

Our summer programs are filling up... Apply today!

SUMMER '05

CIVIC LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE (10th-12th)

Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
June 26 - July 15
Applications due April 2, 2005

Northwestern University, Chicago, IL
July 24 - August 12
Applications due May 15, 2005

YOUTH AND SOCIETY (7th-9th)

Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD
Applications due April 2, 2005

Northwestern University, Evanston, IL
Applications due May 15, 2005

Session 1: June 26-July 15
Session 2: July 17-August 5

To download an application or request
one by mail, please visit
www.ctd.northwestern.edu/cep

Put it in Perspective

Natural disasters may often seem like distant threats. Overshadowed most of the time by ongoing concerns like homelessness, the HIV/AIDS crisis, or youth violence, disasters don't get much attention on a constant basis. Mobilizing trained volunteers when they do occur, then, may be doubly challenging; few plan ahead to acquire the formal skills many organizations require in order to aid victims of disaster. And although some disasters receive little attention from the media for most of the year, they strike the United States more frequently than you might expect.

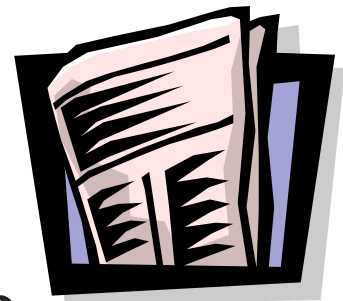
- The number of tornadoes in the US reached a record high in 2004, with 1,717 storms sweeping across the nation in the span of 12 months. This surpassed the previous record by 300 storms.
- Tropical Storm Bonnie and 5 hurricanes (Charley, Frances, Gaston, Ivan, and Jeanne) pounded the coasts of the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic states in August and September alone. 117 died, and damage costs topped \$22 billion.
- Severe flooding rendered 28 states major disaster areas. Four of those states suffered landslides or mudslides as a result.
- Six states declared federal emergencies — and one a federal disaster — due to severe snow.

Because each of these situations has unique and often chaotic circumstances, it is vital to have trained volunteers ready to respond. Planning ahead and going through relief training is a fantastic way to meet a need that is easily forgotten when out of the press, and as illustrated above, a need that is more prevalent here in America than you may have imagined.

The American Red Cross is an excellent place to start. Although the nature of some training demands that volunteers be of adult age, this information makes an excellent to-do list for the near future when you will be of age, and there are plenty of disaster relief opportunities (such as CPR certification) available for all ages.

Disaster relief training is conducted at local chapters and includes a series of courses, all free of charge. Topics include everything from setting up shelters to dealing with hostile reporters to learning effective family-tracing methods in the event of international disaster.

The Red Cross web site, www.redcross.org, provides more information on training options, as well as contact information for your own local chapter. Don't wait until disaster demands volunteers to prepare yourself to lend a hand — check out opportunities now so you'll be ready when you're needed!



Become a:

Persuasive letter writer

Imagine opening the newspaper one morning and seeing your name in print. Better yet, imagine seeing your letter promoting something you believe in strongly.

Service projects and political action are most successful when they draw from a large audience, and writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper or magazine can help you reach that audience. And in keeping with our theme of maintaining awareness and aid for issues that have lost their place in the news, a letter to the editor is an excellent way to keep attention stirred up for a need that many have forgotten.

Some of the letters you might write are:

- 1. Call to action.** If you're just starting a service project, tell readers why they should help and how they can get involved.
- 2. Thank you.** For example, you could write to a local paper to tell exactly how much money your tsunami relief drive raised and visit www.redcross.org/tsunamirelief/donationsatwork to find out what the Red Cross can buy with those donations. Provide the address where readers may drop off donations if they still want to donate.
- 3. Political or persuasive.** If you don't agree with something said in an editorial or column, or you think a story in the paper is biased, write about it! First, recap the original argument in a sentence or two. Then, cite your own evidence and argument. Focus on one issue, and don't attack people personally.

Things to remember:

- 1. Know the rules.** Every newspaper has a set of requirements for letters to the editor. Most require that you include your name, signature, address, and telephone number so that the paper can call you to verify that you wrote the letter. Check the letters to the editor section of the paper to find out what a specific paper requires, and be sure to address the letter to the right person.
- 2. Be timely.** You don't want to read last week's news, and publications don't want to print letters about it. Write to the paper as soon as possible, ideally within two days.
- 3. Keep it short and clear.** The Chicago Tribune says, "The more concise the letter, the better the chances for publication," and newspapers like letters that get to the point quickly. Limit yourself to 200 words. You'd rather edit your own letter than have someone else cut it.
- 4. Use evidence.** When you're making an argument, using numbers and experts' analysis will help much more than personal opinion. Do some research and back up your assertions.
- 5. Proofread.** Editors are much more likely to print letters when they don't have to edit them extensively. Have a friend or a parent proofread your letter, or reread it after sleeping on it.
- 6. Not all letters will be published.** Editors love letters written by prominent people and have limited space. They often receive 10 letters about the same subject and only run the one that gets to the point most efficiently. But letters often dictate coverage, and newspapers often end up writing about something they received a letter about weeks or months later, so don't be disappointed if yours isn't published. Try, and try again. You never know what effect it may have.

THANK YOU!

We would like to thank the following individuals for their recent gifts in support of the Civic Education Project:

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Vict & Jennifer Ying

MISSION

The Civic Education Project (CEP) combines traditional education and community service to promote civic responsibility among young people, giving them the knowledge, experience, and leadership skills they need to make a positive impact on society.

The Civic Education Project is made possible thanks to the ongoing support of:

The Harris Bank Foundation
The Malone Family Foundation
The Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation

Spotlight on

Service

Doctors Without Borders cares for millions across the globe

In areas ravaged by war, natural disasters, or epidemic, the health and safety of the victims quickly becomes the most immediate priority in relief efforts. Doctors Without Borders (abbreviated MSF for its original French name, Médecins Sans Frontières) tackles this need on a massive scale with an international team of volunteer doctors, nurses, and other medical workers, as well as water and sanitation engineers and logistics experts.

Mobilizing rapidly to travel anywhere in the world to relieve crisis in a matter of hours or days, teams of 4 to 12 volunteers join local staff members, bringing with them kits specialized for a myriad of climates, geographic

conditions, and field situations. Some kits contain all the supplies necessary for surgeries. Work begins immediately to treat the specific needs of victims of a crisis.

Deeply committed to the belief that all people, regardless of race, religion, or political affiliation, have a right to medical care which supersedes respect for national borders, MSF volunteers provide emergency health care; perform surgery; rebuild damaged and destructed clinics; launch nutrition, vaccination, and sanitation programs; and train local medical workers to take over with confidence.

Just as crucial as the organization's aid to people in dire need is its unique and passionate commitment to speaking for victims to an international audience. To treat those in pain does little good if the underlying causes of their suffering are never confronted, and MSF — often the only international witness to the abuse of the people for whom they care — takes protest of human mistreatment to the United Nations, governments throughout the world, and the media. In addition, MSF runs public education programs to raise awareness of the plight of refugees, the malnourished, and war victims. This commitment to fighting for those who have no voice, rather than simply treating them, sets Doctors Without Borders apart from countless aid organizations.

"We hope that by arousing awareness and a desire to understand, we will also stir up indignation and stimulate action," states former president Rony Brauman, MD, on MSF's web site, www.doctorswithoutborders.org. "We are by nature an organization that is unable to tolerate indifference."