



*The Faith-Justice Institute
Service-Learning Program
Student Perspectives*

“Taking a service-learning course was the best decision I made going into my freshman year. I have learned so much about myself through doing service and how important it is to be with and for others. I recommend any first-year students to enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course because it is an amazing way to learn in and out of the classroom while learning more about yourself at the same time. You form relationships with your service group, your classmates, your professor and your site in ways that don't happen if you exclusively do weekly service. Having it be part of your curriculum is very unique and overall an incredible experience.”

– Shea C. , 2020

“I believe that a Freshman Service-Learning course intertwines education and service in the best way possible. People learn better when seeing, hearing, feeling and doing. By immersing ourselves in a service experience, we begin to understand so much more than by just what we read. It has instilled in me- for the first time in my life- a profound sense of gratitude and responsibility. By taking a service-learning course freshman year, it helps students get involved in service early in their college career and helps to foster and create a love for service.”

- Molly W., 2020

“Most influential lesson I learned about in service-learning was undoubtedly about privilege. This service-learning class integrating our service experiences into every paper, assignment and discussion point...It is a tremendous opportunity to partake in a course that encapsulates everything SJU is about. Through service-learning you encounter our Jesuit values, serve in a productive fashion, build long lasting relationship with you professor, classmates and people at your service site while also growing in ways more than simply academically.”

-Brendan F., 2020

“...My service-learning course treats service as another text because we would talk about our experiences and share our stories daily throughout the semester. It was so nice to hear about everyone's experience and connections that they made or are currently making at their service site. Incoming first year students should enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course because it really does change your look at many things for the better It helps you experience things you may not always encounter throughout your life. By putting yourself out there and doing this course it will truly inspire you in so many ways and have an impact on you. The connections that you make will stay with you for life. This course has been one of the most influential parts of my freshman year and I'm so grateful to of had this

opportunity. The course helped me reflect daily on what I was learning and getting from my service site – I really appreciate the opportunity I was given my First year at Saint-Josephs University.”

– Kristen V., 2020

“Service-Learning was a great experience. It was a good way to get out of the classroom and take on a whole new learning experience. It is a year-long class so you become very close with your entire class, which is a good way to make friends coming in as a freshman.”

-Daniel M., 2020

“Incoming first year students should enroll in a Freshman Service- Learning course because it will change your freshman year! Service based learning will give you a better understanding of social justice issues that affect the Philadelphia neighborhood you are lucky enough to now call home. Being able to establish strong relationships with community members will open your heart. Leaving SJU campus for 3 hours and going to communities that are struggling will make you think and strive for a change. While taking the texts learned in class and applying them to service and taking what you learned at service and applying it to the texts creates a unique conversation in the classroom. I truly cannot imagine my freshman year without service, it has become such a major part of my life. I know I will carry the lessons learned from service-learning and the relationships I have establish with me for the rest of my life!”

-Eliza R., 2020

“Service-Learning is by far the greatest thing that I've done during my freshman year on Hawk Hill. I learned valuable lessons and broadened my horizons. I've realized the injustices that exist in our society and it has truly impacted my way of thinking. I am from a small town, a sheltered beach bubble. Service-Learning has changed how I see people and it puts a face to an issue. Freshman should enroll in a Service-Learning course because not only will they be helping the community, they'll be helping themselves.”

-Jeff H., 2020

“Incoming freshmen should absolutely take a service-learning class within their first year here at Saint Joe's. I highly advise it because it is fun to go to service to spend time with all different types of people and to get away from the responsibilities of college for a little while. But that certainly is not the only reason freshmen should take a course like this. Throughout the year, you learn more about yourself that you didn't know before and get to have unforgettable, life-changing experiences. Partaking in service also puts a face to the social issues and injustices that are frequently talked about but seldom experienced. It is very eye-opening and humbling to experience that everyone should be a part of at least once in their lives.”

-Brynn M., 2020

“Incoming first year students should enroll in a service-learning course because it is an opportunity for students to get out of their comfort zones and really experience all of what Philadelphia has to offer. For me this was a chance to make real connections with people through service while also growing personally and evolving my opinions and perceptions of the world.”

-Lauren T., 2020

“Freshman service-learning has allowed me to immerse myself in the community surrounding Saint Joseph's University...In my English service-learning course I have built great relationships with the children at the Gesu school in North Philly. These students have helped me recognize the privileges I have in my life. I am grateful for this experience and I think it is great that SJU provides courses like this.”

-Clare P., 2020

“The most influential lesson I have learned this year is that no matter what, you need to be appreciative of what you are given and to never take anything for granted. I felt that being able to learn in the classroom then go out and have real life experiences to come back to the classroom to talk about was remarkable. I highly recommend taking this course freshman year... I loved taking a service-learning class and it definitely made my freshman year of college one to remember!”

-Peyton D., 2020

“The most influential lesson I learned this year was going out of my comfort zone and reaching out to my new community at college. I never thought that service-learning would change my life as much as it has this past year in and outside the classroom. It is amazing that I can learn the issues of our society in which I never have thought about before in the classroom and then get to fully experience it for myself at service. I highly recommend taking a service-learning course for your freshman year, it will change your perspective for the better.”

-Brittany C., 2020

“Prior to SJU, I was ignorant to the injustices that surrounded campus and had no idea what it meant to live greater. Throughout the year however, I was presented with so many visual representations of what the *Magis* is and what it means to work with and for others. I formed such special relationships with the children at my service site that will never be able to replicated. Truthfully, I have never met such driven, strong, and passionate children, and I have learned so many lessons from them. Next year, I am returning to my service site... I am excited to spend weekly afternoons with the smiling faces of the children. In the time in between, I will miss them more than they will ever know. I have never been so proud to have participated in a service-learning course and I truly recommend it to every student at Saint Joes.”

-McKenna T., 2020

“Immersing myself at a North Philadelphia settlement house arguably made my freshman year. The Service-Learning Program provided me a way to hop right into service during my first year at Saint Joseph's and gave me the opportunity to spend my Wednesday afternoons at Lutheran Settlement House. Doing service every week is so important to understanding key Jesuit values like being Men and Women for and with others and striving for the more. You understand social justice in an easier, more personal way, standing in solidarity with those who are marginalized.”

-Mike T., 2020

“One of the most important lessons I learned from service-learning is don't judge a book by its cover. This is especially true with the residents at the Inglis House. I use the lessons and ideas I learn at service and relate them to the rest of my life. The lessons at service help me understand novels, but they also help me understand and develop my relationships outside the classroom. I think freshman should take a service-learning course because it helps students learn things they never will in the classroom. People can talk about various experiences they've had, but if students don't experience them they will never fully understand.”

-James M., 2020

“The most influential lesson that I have learned this year through service-learning is the idea that we all grow from one another. No one is better than anyone and we all can make progress from one another. I loved service-learning and believe all students should experience it once in their four years at sju.”

-Hannah L., 2020

“Through my service-learning course, I have learned the importance of stepping out of my comfort zone in order to build relationships with people I would not have before. Now, this allows me to find the common ground between others and myself I would have never expected to find. These relationships have changed the lens I see the world through and I am forever grateful for these people and this entire experience.”

-Kourtney K., 2020

“Through my two service-learning classes I have learned many important and influential lessons about our society and myself. One lesson that stood out to me was the meaning of solidarity and how that relates to our service. Service-Learning courses go more in depth about the issues in our society that may go unnoticed and topics that we might not think about on a day to day basis. I believe all students should take at least one service-learning course during their time here at Saint Joes. This experience has been one of the most influential parts of my life and I would do it all over again in a heartbeat. The relationships and connections you make while out in service are irreplaceable and will last a life time.”

-Maria M., 2020

“Service-Learning is part of the existential SJU experience. I consider myself fortunate to have participated in the program and would highly recommend it to any incoming SJU student, you will not regret it!”

-Joe F., 2020

"I highly recommend taking a service-learning course your Freshman year. My service-learning course opened my eyes to social justice issues in the area as well as a new way to learn. I connected with so many great human beings as well as learned more about myself and future career paths. I had such a wonderful experience."

-Katherine M., 2020

"Freshman should enroll into service-learning because it is a great way to get involve with the community around you, especially if you are someone like me who isn't from the Philadelphia area. Through this program, I have developed relationships with so many new people at my service site as well as in my classmates in my group. Overall, it was a wonderful experience and I recommend to all to try it at least once at Saint Joseph's University."

-Jacklyn C., 2020

"I believe service-learning is one of the best courses. It allowed me to connect with the Philadelphia environment, while gaining diverse and impactful relationships."

-Aliana C., 2020

"...For me, service-learning was a chance for me to explore different ways of life. The encounters I made with such amazing people shape the way I live life today. Service-Learning was one of the most rewarding experiences and certainly gave me a new outlook on life!"

-Kayla C., 2020

"Lutheran Settlement House allows the students to grow in a safe environment. Since the beginning of the year, I have seen them flourish into insightful young adults. My service partners and I serve as teachers to students at Lutheran Settlement House. Their learning goes far beyond the classroom because they attend the Lutheran Settlement House every day after school. Here they learn to cook, draw, paint, write and illustrate their ideas in ways that they may have never thought possible. The Service-Learning program has given me a weekly reality check regarding the harsh world that we live in. At Saint Joe's, we, as students, are contained inside this social and economic bubble. This program allows students to further their education outside of the classroom and helps them grow as individuals."

-Olivia S., 2020

"My Freshman Service-Learning Experience was more than I could have imagined. I made my best friends on campus and had my eyes opened to communities and social problems that I didn't know existed. If anything, this experience taught me the importance of being for and with others and how important it is that we venture off of Hawk Hill - there are so many people and communities to help, and smiles to put on others faces. This course will help you create relationships that will last you a lifetime, and give you experiences that will resonate with you forever."

-Gianna G., 2020

“Being in a service-learning class taught me the importance of responsibility. Taking three hours out of my week, on top of having work and an extremely demanding course-load, is not easy, but knowing that those hours were going to be spent giving back to the Philadelphian community made it worthwhile. Participating in the service-learning experience also helped me develop values such as empathy, patience, and justice. I definitely recommend service-learning to all incoming freshmen, since it definitely helps you grow as an individual.”

-Carolina G., 2020

“I absolutely loved my Service-Learning Experience! It was truly such a phenomenal way to connect myself with my new home and city! Service-Learning is so special and allows you the opportunity to see your world through someone else's eyes!”

-Paige K., 2020

“I truly can't say enough good things about this class. This whole service-learning experience has opened my eyes to the extreme injustices in this world. Not everyone is as fortunate as I am, and I want to help out where I can. The kids at my site put a name and face to the horrific statistics in the world. It made the injustices of the world seem real to me. You should enroll in a service-learning class if you want to make a difference in people's lives. One thing I learned is that just simply caring and listening to these kids will have a huge effect on them. Three hours has changed my life.”

-Mackenzie G., 2019

“The service-learning program is a great program for your freshman year. It's allows you to meet new people and make connections. I love the connections we made to our in class discussions with the material and our service site. Project HOME's St. Columba allowed me to see and experience people who live a completely different life than myself. It also made me consider the social issues that we have, and the government implemented issues that are also there. I have gained so much knowledge and I would recommend to anyone in any major.”

- Erin R, 2019

“At the begin of this journey, I was unsure how I would be able to handle leaving for roughly 4 hours a week when I had a ton of schoolwork. However, as the weeks went on, service began to grow as my favorite part of the week. It was my favorite out-of-the-classroom learning experience...I learned so much from service- more than I ever thought I would. I learned to disregard my initial judgments of people, and quiet the stereotypes that I came in with. I learned that it's not what people look like or how much money they have, it's how they treat and support one another. Service taught me to look at the person inside, because it's not what you have that defines you.”

- Haley P. 2019

“Service-Learning connects the classroom to outside experiences. It's one thing to read about injustices, but it is another to see and interact with those who experience it. Service-Learning makes it more personal and real.”

- Lauren H., 2019

“The most influential lesson I learned is to be grateful for the life you are given. The people at my service site were all in wheelchairs, so they faced the hardship of not being able to do the typical everyday things for themselves. After being at service for the year it makes me thankful for all the basic things I am able to do. Incoming first year students should enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course because it gives you a different way to get involved. It also helps you to be able to see the community you are living in, in a different way.”

– Sophie T., 2019

“The most influential lesson I learned at service-learning was how important it is to connect with people... For service we have discussions we must write, describing what we did at service each time we go. Incoming first year students should enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course because from personal experience it has made me more aware of what some people in the world are going through. It is a great learning experience and...it is worth it to see that you are able to help people while being at service. I highly recommend it and I have learned so much from it.”

– Casey S., 2019

“I think that service-learning has helped me become more outgoing. It has helped me to step out of my comfortable zone because I forced myself to go and start conversations with complete strangers. Due to the nature of Covenant House, that is the rotation of different residents, I wasn't able to just get comfortable with a few residents and talk to them the whole year. While I did get closer to certain residents over others, there was always different people coming and leaving from Covenant House, therefore every few weeks, I got to meet new people. Service has helped me learn that you can always find things in common with someone, no matter how different they seem from you. I was able to find something I had in common with everyone I talked to at Covenant House. This is an idea that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.”

– Katie B., 2019

“Service-Learning has been one of if not the best experience I have had at SJU thus far. Not only did it give me the opportunity to explore the area around our school a little bit more but also grow closer to the students in my service group and at my service site. It helped me make friendships to last a lifetime and memories that I would never have made at any other school.”

– Anne M., 2019

“The most influential lesson I learned is how important it is to listen to the people you are volunteering for at service. Not only listen, but understand what they mean and respond with as much positivity as possible. It is crucial for the volunteers to do this so they can become as close to the residents as they possibly can. Incoming freshman should enroll in service-learning because of the lessons we gain and people we meet. Some of the people we meet end up becoming incredible friends that we will cherish for the rest of our lives. I highly recommend this program.”

– Ryan B., 2019

“Service-Learning taught me how to connect with people of completely different backgrounds from my own. I learned about many of the systemic flaws in American society, especially the education system. It was one of the most worthwhile experiences of my life and I'm very grateful having been given this opportunity.”

-William A., 2019

“This year at service-learning, my eyes were opened to my structural and social inequalities that exist right in our backyard. By visiting an all-male homeless shelter in Center City, Philadelphia I learned first-hand the issues and discrimination the men face. My eyes were opened in ways I never would have imagined without service-learning. I would suggest everyone to open themselves up to an experience that will truly change your time here at SJU and allow you to experience The *Magis* first hand!”

- Cecily D., 2019

“Service-Learning is more than just a class and a few hours of helping another... It provides the opportunity for one to discover who he or she really is, while enriching the lives of others. During my time at the Inglis House's Adult Day Program, I have come to understand that being a volunteer of Inglis is not about ‘helping those in need’, but rather being with one another and forming relationships that a bidirectional. Inglis House is constantly working to better improve the opportunities for independence on behalf of the residents. It is truly an institution that strives for the future.”

-Julia D., 2019

“...Through service-learning you will find yourself learning more and more about not only the people at your service site but also yourself and the society that we are all a part of. These lessons go beyond the classroom and serve as a text that you will be able to reflect on, write about, and converse about within and outside of the classroom. If you enjoy to write, reflect, and learn, then service-learning is definately for you. You will learn a multitude of things that no standard classroom environment can teach you. With the information or lessons you are taught you will want to reflect on your past and your current being. In writing your thoughts you can bring service-learning beyond a single year course and look back at your thoughts that you applied to paper and relive this enlightening experience. Service-Learning can also serve as a break from the daily class, homework, and library sessions. I was able to take this break and rejuvenate myself and return to my daily school life...”

-Matthew B., 2019

“Everyone should enroll in a Service-Learning course because it helped me learn a lot about myself. In high school my biggest worry was not having the newest designer thing. With the help of service-learning I now realize that there are kids who aren't even getting a proper education system. It completely changed my perspective towards life.”

-Geina B., 2019

"I have learned a lot from service-learning and being empathic toward another person. I first learned about empathy in class during one of the discussions on injustices at our service site. It means reaching out to the person and bringing yourself to their level. In other words it refers to a person trying to better a person by living in solidarity with them. Definitely through my experiences at Lutheran Settlement House, I have learned so much from a diverse set of students that has made me a better person and a better informed individual of the injustices that are found in the Philadelphia area. I would never trade my experiences from this year for anything else and I can't thank SJU enough for the opportunity to both improve myself and improve the lives of the students I work with."

-Matt G., 2019

"The most influential lesson I learned through service-learning is to not judge a book by its cover. The course I take requires a lot of reflection. Just the same as you would reflect on a book and how it makes you feel, we reflect on every aspect of service-learning from education to homelessness. In reflecting we find issues that we have never been aware of before. Incoming first year students should enroll in a Freshman service-learning course because it will open their eyes to the reality of Philadelphia and how they can make a difference."

- Kristen M., 2019

"I think the most influential lesson I learned this year was we cannot judge a book by its cover...Service-Learning allows you to expand your writing and learn a whole new part of the world that you wouldn't learn in another English class. It allows you to learn about your surrounding community and is a big reason I am who I am. The way you spend your first year in college can shape you to who you become as a person as a whole. Service-Learning can help you in becoming an all-around educated and caring person. I strongly recommend taking a service-learning course!"

-Patrick L., 2019

"I would highly encourage incoming first year students to enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course because it brings to life our motto of the *Magis*. Serving with and for the greater good of others is essential in grasping the purpose of a Jesuit education and this course takes students beyond campus to experience it."

-Lauren F., 2019

"Through service-learning, I have learned to have more of an open mind and to not judge others. I have learned so much about who I am and what I can do to make a difference in the world. I have become a much stronger person and I am not afraid to go outside of my comfort zone. I have formed relationships that I will cherish for a lifetime and service-learning has inspired me to continue helping others for the rest of my life. Service-Learning is a great way to understand the city of Philadelphia and meet some great people. I have become so close with my service-learning class and the people in my class. It is an experience that I will never forget and will cherish forever."

-Carly C., 2019

“Through Service-Learning, I have been able to work with different populations in Philadelphia. I have learned about the some of the inequalities that affect people in our community. It has been one of the best experiences I've had at Saint Joe's.”

– Keira M., 2019

“I would recommend a service-learning class to anyone that comes to Saint Joseph's University. I believe it is a very rewarding experience. This is a very unique program that SJU offers. It is a fantastic way for students to understand the social problems in modern society. Incoming freshman should most definitely enroll in a Service-Learning course.”

- Brianna C., 2019

“I think it's been crucial to understand the humanity of people of different backgrounds and to be able to connect with on different levels. It's important to enroll in a service-learning because it will be so eye-opening and personally rewarding in our understandings of ourselves and the society we are a part of.”

– Jack P., 2019

“In addition to being an incredible learning experience, service-learning has transformed me in so many ways. The phenomenal faculty combined with what is essentially a cultural experience in the Philadelphia community has allowed me to start to grasp what is important for me when defining success and achievement in my own life. I have seen so many new walks of life that I have never been exposed to, all while being forced to look critically at my own life. Everyone at SJU, especially freshman, should participate in service-learning simply because it will define your journey here at Saint Joe's and for the entirety of your life. The lessons, people and connections in the classroom and on site are nothing less than priceless.”

– Dan S., 2018

“Incoming first year students should enroll in the service-learning program to become a more, well rounded individual. Sure, you have volunteered before, but, relationship-based service is so much more than that. Being able to find things in common with a variety of people, is something that really changes your outlook on everything around you.” – K.S., 2018

“My experience with Service-Learning has been truly amazing! Service never felt like a burden to me; it became something that I loved to do every week and looked forward to. Prior to signing up for service, I knew I was going to love whatever service I was placed in. However, I never expected to form the bonds and relationships I did while I was there. The two second grade girls that I work with were not only my students but I considered them to be like little sisters. Each week they came running up to me with huge smiles on their faces eager to work and learn! Their desire to learn and positive attitudes made the environment so special and helped all three of us grow!

As the semester progressed, I can honestly say I learned not only a lot about myself but I learned so much about my girls as well. Each day we would start off with what they liked about school and I loved being able to connect with them and hearing about their families. After attending service I saw a change in myself. I was more patient, open to new

experiences and recognized the importance of solidarity. Service became like an extra text for the class and something that I loved to do.

As a first year student it exposed me to so many opportunities and opened my eyes to so many educational inequalities in our local city. I would recommend all freshmen sign up because you become friends with other SJU students at your service site and you also learn about the local community that you will be living in for the next four years!"

-Jackie F., 2018

"What I have learned from service-learning cannot be fully explained. To fully understand service you must participate. Service was not always easy nor was it always fun but it was an experience I would not give up. I learned that my view on the world was a small one and by entering a new part of the world it opened my eyes..." – J.H., 2018

"This year at service, I learned an incredible amount that I couldn't have learned in the classroom alone. Most importantly, I learned that even though some people are in a tough time of their life, they are still just as important in our society as anyone else. We referenced our service experience in class like we would any other text. I would say that students should engage in service-learning because it's an experience they won't be able to find in many other places. It's a completely unique thing that really changed the way I thought about social justice and systemic issues." -A.S., 2018

"The most influential lesson I learned in service-learning was the definition of words such as justice, solidarity, etc.. and how I can use those ideas in my own life to help others.

Instead of just discussing about the books or the essays we write in class day to day, we also discussed our time at service and how what we are doing is important to the big picture and how we can apply it to our everyday lives." –EricT., 2018

"The most influential lesson I learned during my service-learning volunteer work this year has been to make the most out of every opportunity that I am presented with. The men at my site explained how they did not do this and missed out on things that they now regret. Incoming freshmen should enroll in the service-learning course because it allows them to get involved right away and make an impact on the surrounding community." – M.K., 2018

"The most influential lesson I learned this year in service-learning is to treat everyone with human dignity. It is so important to look at people as human beings and not defined by their situation (i.e. poor, homeless, etc.). I think that first year students should enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course, because it teaches you about life, yourself, and so many prevalent issues in the world that our generation will have to deal with. I have truly learned so much about myself and have grown more during this year than any other year. Do it! You will not regret it!" -Jess, 2018

"This year I've learned to adjust. Adjusting is needed at service because every week that we go, there's something different to do or something new that's happening. Whether it's helping a new resident get adjusted or adjusting dinner plans when we need to. Now that service is over, I now know that service-learning is one of the best ways to learn. Doing service is

already great within itself, but when you can talk about what you did and what you feel during class, it gives you a new perspective. Freshmen year students should 100% do Service-Learning because you not only get experience in the community...but knowledge of how other people struggle in daily life." – Taryn, 2018

"Some of the service-learning experiences that have influenced me the most were the interactions with the kid at my service site. It was great building relationships with them and them learning about my life too. Some of the experiences I've had I will never forget...We talk about service in class and use our experiences to learn in that given class. First year students should enroll because it is a great experience." – Joe M., 2018

"I came into service-learning with no idea or expectations for what I was getting myself into. I was a bundle of nerves, and with that I tried to go in with an open-mind to my service site. What I feared was being judged by others at my site; others who grew up so differently than I had. But, after just a few hours of being exposed to the site and meeting dozens of new people, I learned that no one was judging. In fact from service I got to take away that despite the stereotypes placed on the homeless, you cannot judge anyone until you get to know them. I met people from all different backgrounds, with different beliefs, different goals and big dreams for the future; despite their circumstances. From service I can now take away stories and experiences that I can hold with me for the rest of my life."
– L.D., 2018

"Service-Learning might be one of my favorite parts of my Freshman year academics. While my service partners have become some of my best friends, the Program has also allowed me to get to know Philadelphia and the people that comprise it on a much deeper basis. My site, as well as all the others for my course, fit perfectly into what we're discussing in class, which makes service-learning a beautiful way to learn about the class material and then being able to use real examples that we've witnessed at service to enrich my learning experience. I think that it perfectly embodies a balanced learning method between academics and experience.

Incoming first year students should enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course because it is an incredible way to start off the college experience. Experience should be a key part of college, indeed, and I can't think of a better way than by serving the community at the same time. It's a great way to learn about Philadelphia, meet wonderful new people, and most importantly, enhance what would otherwise be a normal classroom setting. With Freshman Service-Learning, your year-long class won't be limited to the walls of the classroom, but will extend into the service sites you go to and the people you meet."
-Julian Z., 2018

"My Freshman Service-Learning Experience helped me to understand the difference between helping or fixing and serving. I have learned more about myself and my interests, and how by using both, I can make a difference. After taking a service-learning course, I have come to the conclusion that there is no better way to learn."
– Jessica C., 2018

“I would recommend the Service-Learning Program whole heartedly. I enjoyed working in the community, while forming relationships with those who we were serving. This experience really helped teach me how much poverty and struggle is right around us and I gained so much insight into what we can do to help. The course really treated service as another text to the class by using examples and our stories to help support what we were learning about.” – Allison G., 2018

“I looked forward to going to service every Thursday morning because I loved the school I worked at (Pantoja) and with the teacher I was put with. This year, I learned that every student is unique and different in their own way, and that everyone deserves a chance to learn and succeed in school no matter who they are. I learned about equity, respect, and how important it is to serve others in need. Incoming first year students should enroll in Service-Learning because it is a great experience and it teaches you how to become a better person and how to be thankful and grateful for everything you have.”

– Madison S., 2018

“I very much enjoyed the service-learning experience because the service was linked with a class, which made both the service and the material we studied very relevant and relatable.”

–Tracy R., 2018

“As an education major, I went to an elementary charter school for my service. While I was there, I learned and experienced so much about children in urban school districts and the daily struggles they face. I grew as a person so much my freshman year from service learning simply by being in the classroom and helping in any way I could. The children's faces would light up when I walked in the classroom and would bombard me with questions like "Ms. Maggie, can you teach a lesson this week?" "Can you come back tomorrow?" "When's the next time you're coming back?" These questions made me so happy to see that my presence was making a difference in their lives.

Future freshmen should all experience service-learning to see what a difference they can make just by doing a few hours of service a week. You not only make amazing friends, but you meet people you never would have if you didn't sign up. There is not better reward than someone looking at you and genuinely saying "thank you", and that's all the payment I need from my service.”

– Maggie, 2018

“Incoming first year students should enroll in a Freshman Service-Learning course because it opens your eyes to things that go on in the nearby communities. It makes you appreciate your opportunities at Saint Joseph's University so much more. It also gives you an advantage over freshman who do not enroll because you meet so many amazing people and come to SJU already being involved.”

–Kathryn M., 2018

“Going to service each week made me see the world around me in a different light every time. I learned so much about the people I worked with and about myself through the year. It was an amazing experience and I would do it again in a heartbeat. I definitely gained more than I gave.”

-Anjni P., 2017

“Service-Learning here at Saint Joe's has been one of the most important and unforgettable experiences of my life. Having the opportunity to be part of the community at E3 has taught me many things that not only help me learn how to help others, but have also taught me

how to become a better person. It is amazing to see the progress and change both students and tutors go through by working together, and it is inspiring to know that you are a small part of the reason why they were able to succeed. I am thankful for being able to have this opportunity, and being able to see how my tutees are moving on and achieving great things in such a short period of time. It is an experience that I wouldn't change for anything."

-Karen M., 2017

"I was trepidations to begin service because I was originally unsure of what I was getting into; but going to service proved to be the highlight of my week--every single week. Through this, I found compassion in the people, brilliance in my professors, and something inside of me that decided not to turn a blind eye to social issues of the world. Participating in Service-Learning is the Saint Joseph's University experience that I signed up for."

-Marlena B., 2017

"Working with the men at Our Brother's Place since September has played an integral part in my growth and in my enjoyment of freshman year. My service partners and I have created beautiful relationships with each of the men we have encountered, able to call many of them by name. Service-Learning has given me the chance to connect with people who I ordinarily never would have met, and to form friendships with men who come from very different backgrounds than me. I have been given the chance to put faces and names to the people affected by societal issues discussed in my classes. Any good we have put into the lives of the men, I know that we have received twofold. Service learning is an excellent program that has allowed me to learn outside of the classroom environment, but still relate it to what we are studying in class."

-Becky M., 2017

"Service-Learning played a key role in my growth as a servant leader and individual. Going to Hopeworks in Camden, NJ, provided me a new perspective of my hometown. I went to Camden every Wednesday not as a citizen but as a service volunteer, and my eyes were truly opened to the injustice that exists in the world. Service-Learning presented me the opportunity to give back to both the human and my home communities."

-Luigi N., 2017

"Service-Learning has helped me to grow as person in order to truly see and respect the dignity in every person. No matter what forms of poverty someone lives under, they also are filled with their own privileges. None of us have it all and each person has something to offer both to other individuals and to the greater community. Instead of looking upon the 'less fortunate' with pity, I now see them as someone with whom there is a possibility of mutual helping and sharing of experiences."

-Krista B., 2017

"The service-learning program provides students with first-hand experience of the social issues studied in the classroom. Students have the unique opportunity to build valuable relationships in which they not only help, but also learn about the lives of others and their struggles. This opportunity to reach out to the community exposes students to needs, both local and worldwide, and the positive differences that they can make through social justice."

-Maggie S., 2017

"Service isn't about changing the lives of the people that you serve. It's about opening yourself up and letting them completely change yours for the better."

-Abbie L., 2017

"Service-Learning defined my freshman year. It gave me an opportunity to work inside a classroom with students who do not have as many resources as I did. It opened my eyes to a whole new world of social problems. I had no idea that education in America was a social, political, and economic issue and not only did I learn about it but I experienced it with service-learning. I was able to be in solidarity with students who are facing the effects of educational inequality. The experience brought me so much joy, laughter, and love for the students I was working with. Because I was able to see the same students every week, I really got to know them, which is a service experience I've never experienced elsewhere. Watching the students grow and develop was so inspiring and part of why I looked forward to my Tuesday trip to service. I made close bonds with the students and teacher I was working with at my placement, but I also made the best friendships with my peers in my service-learning class. Service-Learning is an amazing opportunity to immerse yourself in someone else's life and truly live out the Jesuit ideal of being 'men and women with and for others.'"

-Cheryl R., 2016

"After meeting only a few times, my service-learning class quickly became one of my favorite parts of the week. Nothing was more exciting than the relevant, crucial issues we talked about in class and the people I saw at service every Wednesday. Everyone has an opinion on the issues we were dealing with, and I not only got to express my thoughts, but I also took an active role in understanding and solving some of the concerns. Service-Learning, both inside and outside the classroom, has challenged me to do more in every aspect of my life and has opened my eyes to parts of society that people are often hesitant to take part in changing."

-Sarah F., 2016

"When I was sent an information packet about service-learning over the summer before my freshman year, I signed up, figuring, "why not?" I wasn't involved in anything yet at Saint Joe's since I hadn't even moved in yet, and I thought this would be a good place to start. I had no idea then what a major impact it would have on my life. Teaching ESL to adults at IHM Center for Literacy was, without a doubt, the best experience of my entire life. It inspired me to declare as an English major so that I can continue this work after graduation, and the people I worked with changed my entire worldview. Service-Learning was the best part of my freshman year experience, and has impacted my life forever."

-Sarah S., 2016

"My Service-Learning class has allowed me to look deeper and understand the injustices that certain populations experience on a daily basis. I have learned how to be fully present and form

deep relationships with members in the community that I would have never met before. The class truly has had the biggest impact on my freshman year at Saint Joe's."

-Katie R., 2016

"Walking into a service-learning class on your first day of school at Saint Joe's is walking into a new community of friendship. Class discussions relate our experiences at service to the themes of English literature, and they have provided me with the opportunity to reflect upon the recurring themes, challenges, and success I have faced at my service site. Not only are we given the blessing of forming new relationships within our classroom environment, but we are also challenged to form relationships at our service sites. Each week at Hopeworks N' Camden, my service partner and I work on literacy with young adults in Camden. Working to achieve social justice through this relationship-based service, I have taken from service-learning an understanding of similarity. It is meaningful to me when I am able to walk into my service site without holding judgment, and therefore learn from the youth of Camden, from our casual conversation, and from our personal stories."

-Lindsey S., 2016

"Coming to SJU, I had no idea what awaited me. I knew I would be exposed to "the real world" more than ever have before, but I never imagined I would learn and grow so much from the exposure. My service-learning experience, both in and outside of the classroom, has brought my understanding the community, and world around me to an unexpected height. Reading about the social problems and solutions in class is one thing, but physically seeing the problems and then creating positive change is an experience in itself. This experience will stay with me forever because service-learning has truly changed my life."

-Rosanna D. 2015

"Going into St Martin's I would have never imagined that I would have been impacted the way I have. It is beyond a school. It is an opportunity for kids that may have never had an opportunity to reach where they deserve and take hold of a better life. Education of intellect, spirit, and heart take place here. This is not just a service site for me. I sometimes don't want to wake up in the morning but I do because I want to see their faces more than I want sleep. The kids in Ms. Brown's 4th grade class have impacted me. I now understand how lucky I am. They made me through action and simple conversation examine my life style and realize what hard work is. Many have a hard background and many also have loving support systems at home. The thing about every single kid in my class is that they greet me with a warm hello Ms. Kate every Tuesday morning and it makes my heart glow. They love unconditionally and give trust to those who treat them well. Most try hard in the classroom and although some days you love them and some days you don't it is all centers around one thing... your desire for them to succeed.

At St. Martin's every single staff member and teacher that I have met or seen desire this success for their kids more than anyone. The love and courage of this amazing team is why this school runs the way it does. I could not have been luckier to work with this tremendous group of people. These kids that I will always hold dearly to my heart are given this success and opportunity

through the hard work of the staff and teachers. No one cares about these kids more than they do. They should be everyone's role models of compassionate loving hard workers."

- Katherine W., 2015

"Participating in Service-Learning was the best decision I have made since I first decided to become a Hawk. The program allowed me to step outside of the classroom and utilize what we learned in the real world. I joined because I wanted to help people in the community but I think I got even more out of this than they did. I am only a freshman, yet I learned so much about myself through my experiences at service. I also made some of the best friends I have ever had through this program. Best choice I ever made."

-Jessica H., 2014

"I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." In three sentences, this proverb sums up the profound effect Service-Learning has had on me this year. Prior to participating in Service-Learning, I had heard statistics, facts, and personal stories regarding poverty, but those were only words to me. Prior to Service-Learning, I had seen videos, pictures, and even real people on the street that left only a haunting memory. By "doing" Service-Learning, I understand that poverty is a brutal reality and I am left with the conviction to change it."

-Rachel S., 2014

"Participating in a service-learning class has allowed me to fully grasp the concept of service. For me, it was more than just learning something in the classroom; I would read about a particular injustice in a textbook and then witness firsthand its effects on a larger community. Through service I have realized that there are actual individuals suffering daily from injustice in my own community. Working for justice requires working against injustice, and my service-learning class has taught me how to get involved and work to make a difference on both micro and macro levels while serving the needs of others."

-Carlo C., 2014

"To me, community service at DePaul was important for many reasons. One is the gratification that we all receive by helping others, seeing joy on children's faces. The other important factor is to remember that these children are not like us in appearance yet we have much in common. The majority of the students at Saint Joseph's, including myself, have probably not experienced the struggles encountered by the students of DePaul and the community of Germantown. It is obvious that Germantown is a "rough" area yet one with character. The drive there is eye opening to say the least.

While there, all predetermined notions of how the students would be or how they would respond to you, all of that goes out the window. In my experience at least, the students opened up by the end of the first session and were happier to see us arrive every time. This is a heartwarming feeling, being alone at a new college in a different city but having a friend who actually is excited to see you every week.

What I've come to find is that you can't push them to work. The kids are happy to do their homework but at their own pace and in their own order. This strengthens my belief that they are all different, as I would work with one student who virtually needed no help compared to another student who needed more attention. It was challenging, but a challenge I certainly enjoyed. I hope to do more service through Saint Joseph's in the future."

-Nick S., 2014

"This past year I have volunteered at St. Francis Inn in the Kensington section of Philadelphia (as part of my service-learning class). Each week, I would perform a different job from serving food to washing dishes. One of the most impactful nights was when I was handing out frozen meat to our guests. When one woman said no thank you, I was curious and asked why. She told me that she had nowhere to cook it. I knew that many of the guests were without a home but something hit me when that woman said that. It has stuck with me the entire time along with all of the great relationships I have formed with many of the guests."

-Trevor W., 2014

"Service-Learning at Saint Joseph's University has been such a blessing for me this year. I have met such amazing people from Saint Joe's and from Philadelphia. I have been inspired by stories of courage, perseverance, love, and faith. My Service-Learning course was one class where I could actually connect the topics from class with names and faces that might be affected by the issues we were discussing. I have grown as a person through Service-Learning because I look at the world and individual people differently. We all have a story and learning other's stories and perspectives while expanding the classroom has had such a profound effect on my life."

-Cassandra T., 2014

"Many things surprised me about the whole service-learning experience... I am glad I signed up for it and gave it a chance. I was surprised when my learner told me that she will never give up on me and that she is here to succeed for her son. This was the most touching experience ever because I never had to deal with anything she has....I have learned not to judge people by what they know or how they have done so far in their lives. I have learned that with every person there comes a story behind him or her."

-Ben L., 2012