



Loyola University student Bill Harrington of Drexel Hill Pa., centers, sings for seniors gathered in New Community's Adult Medical Day Care Program during karaoke hour. With him are Cynthia Tucker, a guest soloist, and Myron Lyles, a program volunteer.

Loyola Students Spend Spring Break At NCC

“We can do no great things, only small things with great love.”

They left behind conveniences like ipods and televisions, even spending the week sleeping on cots and getting by on a \$55 food stamp budget that afforded them nothing more than cereal for

breakfast. But 12 students from Loyola University in Maryland said they wouldn't trade their week-long stay with New Community Corporation for anything, as it allowed them to lead a much simpler life while also giving of their time and energy to help others.

“It has been our pleasure to have such an eye-opening experience in this city,” the students wrote in a journal entry summarizing their visit. “To spend the week here has not only given us a chance to reach out to the people that NCC services, but has also given us a call to action to seek social justice and work for a better tomorrow for Newark.”

They spoke of the passion that NCC employees have for their work, saying it was easy to see that it was not just a job.

“I really admire the whole organization,” said Loyola student Nicole Perone of Bridgewater.

Hailing from all areas of the East Coast, the students admitted they came to Newark carrying with them images of a city plagued by violence and poverty. One of the main objectives of the Spring Break Outreach, however, was to get them to form a new image of the city based on their own interactions and observations.

“I grew up in Newark's Ironbound section, but wanted to do service in Newark and experience it in a different way,” said Richard Rodrigues, a Loyola senior who spent his last spring break outreach in Biloxi, Miss.

During the week, the students had an opportunity to volunteer in many NCC programs that had them working with senior citizens, students and children who reside in the Harmony House transitional living facility. NCC Associates, a 15-story senior high-rise development on South Orange Avenue, is where the students slept, with the corporation dividing the students up into two apartments by gender. They even pitched in and helped management at the site by painting a vacant apartment before their departure.

Their activities throughout the week included visiting NCC's Workforce Development Center, tutoring and playing games with children during after-school programs, assisting in the Adult Medical Day Care Program and helping staff in the Hispanic Development Corporation as they worked with students seeking to improve their literacy skills.

“It's cool how all facets of NCC work together,” said Bill Harrington, a biology major from Drexel, Hill, Pa., who was among a group of Loyola students who had an opportunity to meet and pose for a picture with Newark Mayor Cory Booker.

Rebecca Dulka of Fairfield, Ct. was extremely impressed by NCC's Family Resource Center, a one-stop center that provides assistance with everything from emergency food assistance to help with paying utility bills.

“NCC covers practically everything and if they don't have it they know where to send people,” said Dulka, who helped enter information on new clients into an NCC data base.

The students also visited St. Benedict's Prep School in Newark and engaged in fun activities such as putting on talent shows for NCC seniors, going bowling and taking in an evening of Jazz at NCC's Priory Restaurant. They dined with Monsignor William J. Linder, NCC's founder and CEO, who told them their visit with NCC “was great for their education.”

“It doesn't matter what field you are going into,” he said, explaining that the week-long learning experience would be invaluable.

They also enjoyed sampling the food prepared by students from NCC's School of Culinary Arts.

“Spanish rice. That was my favorite part,” said Loyal student Anne Corey, a sophomore from Long Island, NY, who likened the quality of the food at the NCC Culinary Café to what she would order in a restaurant.

A quote from Mother Teresa seemed to best capture the sentiment of the students as they looked back on their week at NCC, Corey said.

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