

# SERVICE, Not Fame

*Reaching Out Through Community Service*

BY CYRIL MILLETT III • LADD DUNFIELD • SANDRA DUNHILL

**S**haena is one of 250 academy students at Kingsway College in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada. She enjoys serving others and sharing her faith in a simple, straightforward way. Shaena's story is just one of the many exciting witnessing experiences Kingsway College students have had in recent years.

In the fall of 1989, when plans were being laid for a student mission trip to Mexico, Shaena was really excited about the project. She worked hard to raise her share of the expenses and kept in touch with the organizer, Pastor Ladd Dunfield, to make sure that everything was going smoothly. Shaena was determined to go to Mexico and help expand an orphanage there.

If you speak to Shaena today she will tell you the 10-day mission trip was a wonderful experience. She learned a lot about Mexican culture and is glad to have had the opportunity to be of service to others. But the highlight of the mission outing for Shaena occurred in Tucson, Arizona, on her way back from Mexico.

While Shaena was looking around in a gift shop at a local hotel, the cashier struck up a conversation with her. Shaena excitedly told the woman about her mission adventure in northwestern Mexico.

"Why did you go?" the cashier asked.

Briefly stating that the aim of her school is "Service, not fame," Shaena told why she had wanted to be a part of a youth group that made a difference in other people's lives.

The cashier said she would be interested in a church that encouraged its young people to get involved in projects like the one Shaena had described. The young student seized the opportunity to exchange names and addresses with the woman.

And so began a friendship that continues to this day.

In her letters, Shaena told her friend about our beliefs. Soon the woman visited what she describes as "a friendly Seventh-day Adventist church" in Tucson. Not long after, she wrote to tell Shaena that she was going to be baptized.

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Like many students at other boarding academies, the pupils at Kingsway College have school days packed with studies and work. They cherish their free time. In order to help them catch the vision of service, most service projects are designed to be short-term, rewarding, and filled with fun and excitement.

Students take flowers to chronically ill patients at a local hospital during the Christmas season. A few of the young people help conduct a hospital worship service on Sunday mornings. Often a hospital chaplain welcomes a small group of mature students to visit with patients and put on a program.

Kingsway College also works closely with the college church and an area church where our Bible teacher is pastoring. Students have worked with a local bank manager to set up a food collection basket at a bank in the area.

Many of our young people brave the inclement weather of the Canadian fall to go Ingathering. Church members provide transportation and warm, delicious snacks when the students return. Students thus see teachers and other church members excited about service, supporting and encouraging them in their outreach ministry. Working side by side fosters unity in the school and church, and exhibits the character of Christ through service.

Students also work in conjunction with the Prison Ministries Department of the Ontario Conference. The students not

only mark Bible study lessons, but also write words of encouragement to the incarcerated men and women. To protect the anonymity of the students and ensure their safety, the lessons are directed through the conference prison ministries department to the inmates.

The Ontario Conference Prison Ministries chaplain, Bill Kelly, says that lives are being changed by our students' work. In addition to grading lessons, the students are encouraging inmates on their spiritual journeys.

The religious leaders at Kingsway seek to translate their class studies into Christian action. When teaching the provincially regulated curriculum for World Religions, they relate it to the church's global strategy. Students study people of other faiths and cultures in the light of our unique message and mission.

Another course, World Development, provides the framework for students to go on a mission trip to Mexico. In 1989-1990 15 of our students traveled to Villa Juarez, Mexico, with our Bible teacher, Ladd Dunfield. There they helped to build a cafeteria at an orphanage and conducted a Vacation Bible School in a nearby town.

This trip gave our students firsthand experience working in a developing nation. The students returned energized to share their faith openly and to encourage others to do the same. Programs like this one help students see the difficulties emerging nations are experiencing and lessen their tendency to gripe about their own lives. They are challenged to meet their problems head on. As they see people in impoverished circumstances witnessing for the Lord, they think, Surely we who have so much can also have a part in sharing the gospel.

The Kingsway administration also encourages the students to invite friends in the community to in-home Bible study

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groups and church services. These youth are inspired by their experience with the Word and worship. These creative Bible study groups and church services offer exciting, practical ideas for applying the principles of the gospel.

Paul, a ninth grader, seized the challenge of witnessing. He first invited a friend living in the community to church. She, in turn, invited her entire family.

Students also help the single parents at one of the area churches by taking care of their children so they can enjoy the service.

The Kingsway College Aerials, a gymnastics team under the direction of Pierre Chartier, have taken pies to older members of the community. The Aerials

have also visited a correctional institution for boys. There they sang, visited briefly with the boys, and performed gymnastic routines. The incarcerated youth received our young people enthusiastically and asked them to return soon.

Kingsway youth are also involved in health evangelism. Under the direction of our family studies teacher, Leona Alderson, the Adventist Youth for Better Living (AYBL) team reaches out to the neighborhood through classes in vegetarian cooking. The students help with preparations for the classes and clean-up afterwards. This takes some of the strain off the sponsor, and provides an opportunity for youth to witness about our health message.

The AYBL team staffs a booth at a local mall for three days each year. There they conduct computer health screening and encourage smokers to sign up for Breathe-Free stop-smoking clinics. Many people stop at the booth to have their health age computed by our young people. Members of the community express their pleasure that teenagers are helping with such a worthwhile project.

Throughout the school year, Kingsway College students strive to live up to the school motto, "Service, not fame." The staff works side by side with the students to translate book learning into faith action. Students quickly realize that community involvement and friendship building will lead to spiritual growth for others as well as for themselves.

At Kingsway College, service to others puts excitement into the lives of young Christians. ☺

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