



TARMAC

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Is There a Future Doctor in the House? *Yes, and 30 of Them Are Volunteering at Winthrop University Hospital*

by Christopher Leelum '13

Chaminade's men seem busier than ever these days. School work, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, athletics, and even part-time jobs call for the attention and dedication of these young men, day in and day out.

Yet with each passing year, a significant number of Chaminade students willingly give up their own time to volunteer their services through the Junior Volunteer Program at Winthrop University Hospital, located in Mineola, New York.

Typical students work once a week for about three hours. But for Flyers Christian Widmer '10 and Joel Thomas '11, their "typical work" was a combined 400 hours this year!

Christian's volunteer time was not just a simple act of kindness. His desire for a future occupation in the medical field lured him towards the hospital's volunteer program with great enthusiasm.

"It was a great launching pad," said Christian. "Volunteer time has influenced me to pursue other ways of involving myself in the medical field."

Christian dedicated 212 hours, splitting his time between helping nurses with medical equipment and providing patients with ample food and drink. His motive? Simply, the appreciation of the patients and the hospital staff.

"Even though I can only do a couple of things in the hospital, the patients always appreciate it," he said.

To recognize his 212 hours of service, Christian was invited to speak at the annual Junior Volunteer Program Awards Ceremony, held on April 25, 2010, becoming the first student in Chaminade history to do so.

Joel Thomas, on the other hand, was driven solely by his strong desire to help others. His services included answering hospital calls and fixing the TVs in the patients' rooms.

"It gave me the sense of really being able to appreciate hard work," said Joel, who also amassed about 200 hours of hospital service.

Mr. Robert Paul, who oversees Chaminade's hospital volunteers, was quite proud of the efforts of the students.

"They are using their personal time for others, and it helps to build interpersonal skills," he said. Mr. Paul also touched upon the optimistic and Christian attitudes the boys brought with them each day of service.

"Just do it," said both Christian and Joel, expressing their passion for the Junior Volunteer Program. Both stressed the flexibility of this program, particularly the ability to choose which area to volunteer in, based on one's preferences.

At the annual Junior Volunteer Program Ceremony, 30 Chaminade men received awards for their service to the patients of Winthrop, with thirteen Flyers receiving awards for 100 or more hours of service.

If this year is any indication, the Flyers in the Junior Volunteer Program will continue to reflect Winthrop's official slogan with great enthusiasm: "Care without compromise." ➤



After donating 212 hours of his time, Christian Widmer '10 gets his time in the spotlight.