

Class of 2002

Katie Lee, First Place

Spartanburg High School

Spartanburg, SC

Katie did a one-on-one mentoring program with Spartanburg High School Students and students from Houston Elementary School, where Spartanburg High students went to the elementary school on Wednesday mornings to help the children with their homework and form relationships. This program, known as "Helping Hands Mentoring Program" is still going and actually has expanded to another elementary school in the same district.

Ann Stanton Cannarella

Hartsville High School

Hartsville, SC

Ann Stanton created "Leisure Alley": a small grassy community area turned into a park for the Boys and Girls Club of Hartsville, SC. The patch of grass was not maintained between the gym and learning center, making it the perfect place for a small "park." She, along with volunteers from her high school painted the park, as well as collected donations for landscaping picnic trees, and the play area.

Nikasha Dicks

Williston-Elko High School

Williston, SC

Nikasha organized "Klub K.O.O.L: Spirit Day 2002," an all day event designed to help younger youth in the community and provide them with role models. Klub K.O.O.L. (Kids Outreach, Operation Learn) participants included varsity football players, cheerleaders, and teachers who held a miniature pep rally for the elementary school students and taught them about sportsmanship and dedication to working together as a team.

Monica Handa

Riverside High School

Greer, SC

Monica held a child mentoring program focused on getting children interested in reading. She went to a local daycare and read books to the children and reserved a special reading room at the library to read books to them. Monica also read to a first grade class at a local elementary school, which was the most successful part of her project.

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Dan Knott

Dutch Fork High School
Irmo, SC

Dan Knott used his AP Environmental Science class at Dutch Fork to explore the newly opened Saluda Shoals Park and generate environmental education in his community using the park. Dan and other classmates created a series of Field Guides about the park, designed for different interests and age levels. The guides highlight many resources of the park, as well as give historical and scientific information that will be useful for any visitors to the Park.

Taite Quinn

Christ Church Episcopal School
Greenville, SC

Taite worked with the City of Greenville government, in order to clean up the landscaping at the entrance of the Pleasant Valley Community area in Greenville, SC. With the approval of the City, Taite arranged to have students help with cleaning, planting, and maintaining the area, therefore promoting a positive appearance for the lower income neighborhood.

Claire Wilson

Wade Hampton High School
Greenville, SC

Clare focused on her school and community issue of racial diversity. Recognizing the large Hispanic population at Wade Hampton HS, Clare arranged to have students help her translate some of the PTA newsletters and community documents from the School Improvement Council from English into Spanish. Following these translations, she was also able to aide in the dispersal of this information throughout the school community.

Cindy Youssef

Southside High School Greenville, SC

Cindy organized a mentoring program between the International Baccalaureate students at Southside High School and Sara Collins Elementary. The program, known as S.T.A.R.S. (Students Teaching and Reaching Students) had the high school students tutor at risk IB students at Sara Collins each week before classes began. In addition, students engaged in a cultural enrichment program, in which mentors accompanied students on cultural programs throughout Greenville. Such excursions included trips to the museum, Carolina First's Festival of Trees presentation in downtown Greenville, and storytelling presentations sponsored by the Greenville Symphony Orchestra.

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Class of 2003

Eileen Chiaro, First Place

Hilton Head Preparatory School

Hilton Head Island, SC

Eilieen created the group “Girl Talk,” in which she recruited high school girls to work together with younger girls facing the critical middle school years to improve self-esteem, encourage independence and academic success and a healthy attitude and lifestyle.

Kristen Kennedy, Second Place

Trinity Collegiate

Darlington, SC

Kristen founded R.E.A.D. (Reading Encouragement and Development), who main objective was to encourage children’s participation at the library. Kristen and students from her high school met with elementary students in Darlington County each week and read books to the children, as well as designing activities for the children to complete that coincided with the theme of the book.

Anna Ready, Second Place

Emerald High School Greenwood, SC

Anna created “November’s Newest,” a voter registration drive at Emerald HS. She worked with other students to get more than 80% of her senior class registered to vote for the 2004 presidential election. Within the drive, Anna and other students showed registered voters how to register to vote, how to operate voting machines, and how to vote absentee.

Heather Beasley, Third Place

Euclid High School

Euclid, OH

Heather worked with students in her high school to create voter awareness thorough a “meet the candidates” campaign. In addition to registering students to vote, Heather held an evening event, in which she invited local candidates to meet students at the school and have students ask candidates questions prior to voting.

Miguel Cavazos, Third Place

Prepa Tec, Santa Catarina

Nuevo León, Mexico

Miguel gathered students from his high school to mentor younger elementary and middle school students in a youth activity program. Along with helping students with schoolwork,

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Miguel's volunteers participated in several public events with the students and encouraged them to get involved in activities and leadership programs in their city.

Kirsten Coleman

Southside High School Greenville, SC

Kirsten worked with students at Southside to create a recycling program for YMCA children to learn about the recycling process and how to practice those skills at home. Using the YMCA Judson Community Center, Kirsten held four classes for the students and had volunteers help her with many projects related to recycling.

Kasey Creswell

*Hillcrest High School
Simpsonville, SC*

Kasey's project objective was to make the students at her school, in South Carolina, and in the nation more aware of the importance of voting and participating in the democratic process. In addition to helping register voters for the election, Kasey spoke at several youth conventions and promoted the national young voters group, Freedom's Answer.

Susanna Ratsavong

*Garfield High School
Akron, OH*

Susanna donated the project money she received from EPL to Garfield HS and helped to fund a computer exchange/rental program for low income students who could not afford technology at home, which she set up with her English teacher.

Mary Utsey

*Hillcrest High School
Simpsonville, SC*

Mary completed an English as a Second Language program for Hispanic individuals in her community.

Andrew Waters

*Christ Church Episcopal School
Greenville, SC*

Andy raised money for improvements to be made to the Patient Lounge at Shriner's Hospital, a facility of the Greenville Memorial Hospital. Andy and other students began a letter writing campaign for the improvements, which raised \$4,100 in donations.

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Class of 2004

Abby Elsener, First Place

Anderson High School Cincinnati, OH

Abby created a project called “Girls Gone Real,” a mentoring/leadership development program for high school girls. Along with volunteers from her high school, Abby traveled to a nearby middle school in Cincinnati and met with the girls on a weekly basis and taught them lessons on self-esteem, leadership skills, and provided the girls with mentors whom they admired and were able to confide in.

Achieng Adongo, Second Place

Hammond High School

Columbia, SC

Achieng’s project was to develop a reading program for Somali Bantu refugee children. Achieng also worked with the students to help with homework and visited them each week.

Jeremy Welch, Third Place

Emerald High School Greenwood, SC

Jeremy designed the South Main Street Community Soccer Clinic, a four part soccer clinic for area children who were interested in playing soccer but were unable to take part in all of the resources/practices required to play on a team. Using his high school soccer teammates and members from area high school soccer teams, Jeremy gathered students to the field and taught the children several drills and routines important for the game.

Will Alsfelder

Mariemont High School Cincinnati, OH

Will’s project addressed the needs of the military forces fighting in Iraq. With the help of area community members, Will collected much needed items for those soldiers fighting in Iraq, including clothing, blankets, games, and several toiletry items.

Justin Bagwell

Hillcrest High School

Simpsonville, SC

Justin organized a benefit drive for the Generations Group Home in Simpsonville and collected sporting goods for the boys to play with. In addition, he used volunteers to play with the young boys each week.

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William Baucom

Mayo High School

Darlington, SC

William worked with students from his high school to beautify an area of Mayo High's campus which faced an underprivileged nearby community. He was able to work with other students to clear the land and provide a more positive landscape that community members could enjoy.

John O'Dell Ferguson

Mauldin High School Mauldin, SC

John worked with the Phyllis Wheatley Center in Greenville to hold a leadership day for students in the community.

Davis Mersereau

Porter-Gaud

Charleston, SC

Moving his focus to an international scale, Davis decided to focus his project around the tsunami that took place in South East Asia. Using students from his high school, Davis organized a benefit concert called "WaveSave" for the victims in South East Asia.

Chase Neely

Spartanburg High School

Spartanburg, SC

Chase worked with students to provide a ministry to a Mountain View Nursing Home. They provided one event a week for the residents using several different churches in the area.

Kristin Olson

Terry Sanford High School

Fayetteville, NC

Kristin's project was to collect prom dresses for young girls who desired to go to the prom but did not have the adequate funding to afford dresses. In addition to collecting the dresses, Kristin also hosted sessions on self-esteem and professionalism for the young girls.

Class of 2005

Patrick Sellars, First Place

Dorman High School Roebuck, SC

Patrick's project created a children's book and matching coloring books that focused on teaching conservation to elementary school children. He incorporated unique factors, such as the mascots of each elementary school in the district as well as teachers from each school, and worked on distributing these books to each individual school in the district.

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Omi Naderi, Second Place

Charleston County School of the Arts
North Charleston, SC

Omi partnered with the Charleston School of the Arts to create a weekly after- school arts program for a Charleston middle school that did not offer an arts program to its students.

Shun Griffin, Second Place

Emerald High School Greenwood, SC

Shun's vision for a program involved mentoring students and designing a project to teach students about leadership. "Operation Impact," formed by Shun and other Emerald HS students, took middle school students for Saturday meetings, in which they taught the eighth graders leadership skills, methods for handling difficult situations, and ways to deal with peer pressure.

Ellen Corman, Third Place

Escambia Academy-Alabama
Atmore, AL

Ellen worked to secure a \$75,000 grant from the US Department of Agriculture to replace trees destroyed by Hurricans Ivan and Dennis in her hometown of Atmore, Alabama. Ellen made these trees available to the community through an "Adopt a Tree" campaign, to raise awareness that trees were being planted in the area.

Will Lankford, Honorable Mention

York Comprehensive High School
York, SC

Will used the York Place Episcopal Church Home for Children to work with its children in his program "Cougar Connection." Throughout his senior year, Will and members of various school groups at York Comprehensive HS traveled to the home and held several gatherings between the home's children and the volunteers. Will's aim was to link the students at the home with high school students, by holding several beautification projects and holiday parties.

Jane Werrell, Honorable Mention

Ashley Hall High School
Charleston, SC

Jane organized the efforts of her classmates and together they worked through Habitat for Humanity to build a playground for children in a local Habitat neighborhood.

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Martha Bordogna

Spartanburg High School

Spartanburg, SC

Martha organized a volunteer drive for the Spartanburg Children Shelter in Spartanburg, SC. The shelter houses children from the time they are taken from their unfit homes until they are placed in foster homes.

Jonathan Cote

Fort Mill High School

Fort Mill, SC

Jonathan established a student liaison board that would attend School board meetings for his district and present news and events taking place at Fort Mill HS. Jonathan's aim was to provide the School board with input from students, as well as giving the students to report to their student body with events and decisions made during these meetings. The School Board unanimously voted to accept this student board.

Brandy Durham

Northwestern High School

Rock Hill, SC

Brandy organized a Teen Pregnancy Prevention Fair for the city of Rock Hill and surrounding communities. The all day event incorporated speaker presentations, question and answer sessions, fun and food for all ages.

Olivia Hightower

Midland Valley High School

Graniteville, SC

Olivia formed a Global Awareness Group at Midland Valley which focused on answering the question "Have you changed the world today?" Her project entailed getting students together to discuss several issues that have been in the news and that have a global focus, including the Darfur region, natural disasters, and political issues.

Quentin James

Mauldin High School Mauldin, SC

Quentin worked with several members of the South Carolina Youth in Government (YIG) group to create a program called "Get Involved." Quentin's goal was to provide central, easy, accessible/informative virtual community maps to area youth. These maps recognized services and organizations that promote youth involvement in the community. Together with YIG and many student groups, Quentin was able to get these booklets made and aide in their distribution around the community.

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Niti Parthasarathy

South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts Greenville, SC

Niti created the “Rockstars” mentoring program, in which she and many high school classmates worked with the Earle Street Baptist Church afterschool program for students from Stone Academy. Niti’s focus was to provide these elementary school students with role models and mentors in the community. She also helped out with a Martin Luther King, Jr. presentation at her school, and invited participants to take part in the “Rockstars” mentoring program following the MLK presentation.

Elizabeth Powell

Carvers Bay High School

Hemingway, SC

Elizabeth organized an awareness walk for Diabetes walk for the Diabetes CORE Program in Georgetown, SC. She used some students from my community and one or two from her high school to help out. Elizabeth worked with an organization that was already established called Diabetes CORE.

Jennifer Rahn

Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School

Bamberg, SC

Jennifer founded Project HOPE (Helping Others by Providing Enjoyment), a community service organization that basically provided recreational areas/activities to disadvantaged individuals in her community (ie. nursing home residents, special ed students.) Some of the projects completed were creating a huge garden and sitting area at the local nursing home, creating an educational planting garden for the special ed students at the local primary school, organizing bingo/reading/relaxation events at the nursing home, and beautifying the grounds of the local high school and middle school.

Emily Wilson

Hartsville High School

Hartsville, SC

Emily worked with middle school students (most in the sixth grade) who expressed an interest in leadership and career opportunities. Through the help of several community members, Emily brought many professionals to speak to a group of students from a Hartsville middle school. Each presenter spoke about his/her profession and leadership qualities necessary for the career.

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Adrian Zoller

Gilmour Academy

Gates Mills, OH

Adrian used the election year as a means of educating the community on several science topics that were in the news. She gave several presentations on topics such as stem cell research, as well as encouraging many youth to register to vote and learning more about the important election issues.

Class of 2006

Hakeem Jefferson, First Place

Crestwood High School

Gable, SC

Hakeem developed Maximizing Our Potential (MOP), an after-school mentoring program at Mayewood Middle School, designed to provide a series of thought-provoking discussions and hands-on activities addressing issues which Hakeem deems essential to success. This mentoring group aims to lower the number of student suspensions, referrals, and expulsions at the middle school.

Lorna Fink, First Place *East Forsyth*

High School

Kernersville, SC

Lorna created “No Bull! Be Noble!,” an anti-bullying coalition and worked with her school system to implement a no-tolerance policy towards bullying. She invited Tony Bartoli, a speaker against bullying from Orlando, FL, to be the guest speaker at her first event, an anti-bullying rally at her high school, which both high school and middle school students attended.

Stephanie Matson, Second Place

Thomas Worthington High School

Worthington, OH

Stephanie created Kids Pro-Health, an organization which educated fourth graders at the local elementary school about healthy lifestyles. Her project involved a series of five classes held at the elementary school to educate students about healthy food, healthy living and exercise.

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Sarah Meadows, Second Place

Barnwell High School

Blackville, SC

Sarah's project, Eating for the Hungry, raised \$5400 and encompassed a two-fold project vision. She first facilitated a coin war between local high schools to raise money to stock an area food pantry. Sarah also work with town leaders to host a benefit banquet, involving a formal dinner, which raised substantial funds to be donated to three local organizations that provide food to those who are hungry.

Cotrel Brooks, Honorable Mention

Lake Marion High School

Santee, SC

Cotrel partnered with local organizations to host a health fair at his high school in order to enlighten his peers about the health risks that affect both young adults. He brought representatives from the region to speak with students about healthy lifestyles, including healthy eating, diseases, and emotional disorders, among other topics. Approximately 1,000 students attended the event.

Danielle Brandon, Honorable Mention

Mid-Carolina High School

Newberry, SC

Danielle focused on promoting literacy among elementary students in order to prevent high school drop-outs. She held a book drive at her school to collect books for the local elementary school and, in May, will ask the elementary students to sign a contract saying "I promise to read five books this summer."

Utsav Bansal

Brighton High School

Rochester, NY

Utsav created "iVY: Initiatives for Vigilant Youth," an organization designed to better involve suburban youth in community initiatives and to help connect urban and suburban youth in the Rochester area. Through his partnership with Youth Voice, One Vision Council, Utsav is working to create iVY communities in every high school and to sponsor events, such as the All City Fashion Show and the building of a Habitat home.

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Sean Bear

Pinewood Preparatory School
Summerville, SC

Sean's program, Youth Encouraging Suffrage (YES), was created to educate the citizens of Dorchester and Charleston counties about voter registration, the voting process, and the political arena. To date his project has registered over 500 voters.

Rachael Bedosky

Bluffton High School
Bluffton, SC

Rachael's program, "Seniors Sign to Vote!" aimed to register eligible voters in her hometown of Bluffton. She worked with the League of Women Voters, Chamber of Commerce, and Representative Bill Herbkersman to achieve her goal. Rachael distributed flyers and voter registration forms throughout her community and worked with Representative Herbkersman to introduce a resolution to the state legislature to create an official statewide "Seniors Sign to Vote" Day.

James Beja

Strom Thurmond High School Johnston,
SC

James started a mentoring program at his high school in hopes of lowering the high school dropout rate in his community. He employed the help of his school's NJROTC Academic Team in order to create the program's team of mentors.

Ali Boyd

Hammond School
Columbia, SC

Ali Boyd created a reading program for Somali-Bantu children. This program raised money to donate books to these children and also organized groups of high school students to come and read to the children.

T.J. Brown

Lexington High School
Lexington, SC

With the help of an established musical group at his high school known as The Dog Patch Sympathy, TJ coordinated concerts at local retirement and assisted living homes in order to bring music and entertainment to residents. Through additional community concerts, TJ also worked to encourage youth to join orchestra groups.

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Anna Dearybury

Spartanburg High School
Spartanburg, SC

Through her project, "Write On Track," Anna established an after-school writing workshop where students could discuss reading assignments, receive help with editing and writing essays, and enjoy the benefits of mentoring. The workshops targeted at-risk students and took place xxx. Participants were mentored by volunteers from the Spartanburg High School Literary Club, along with other student volunteers.

Sarah Delap

Riverside High School
Riverside, SC

For her project, "Reach Out, Make a Difference, Volunteer!," Sarah developed a brochure and PowerPoint listing local organizations in need of volunteers in order to give teenagers an overview of opportunities available to them in the community. Copies of the brochure and PowerPoint were made available to local youth groups, high schools, and other youth organizations.

Brann Fowler

Thomas Heyward Academy
Ridgeland, SC

Brann worked with his high school's student government to develop Resolution Run, a locally-held 5K run and two-mile walk in January. Participants ranged widely in age and ability, and proceeds from the race went to the Jasper County Boys and Girls Club.

Shana Roach

Fairfield Central High School
Ridgeway, SC

Shana's project, Helping Hands, aimed to improve the quality of life for families staying at the local Ronald McDonald House. Volunteers from her JROTC Battalion, other student organizations, and area churches assisted in the effort. Among the donations that Helping Hands were able to provide for the Ronald McDonald House were two McMeals and "I Care Kits."

Lindsay Wallace

Mauldin High School
Simpsonville, SC

Lindsey's project, Rescuing Unloved Furry Friends (RUFF), created an organization at her high school focused on improving the condition of the lives of animals in the community. Student volunteers raised thousands of dollars for the cause and donated time to local shelters, spay

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and neuter clinics, and fundraisers. The group also raised local awareness about issues related to animal welfare.

Denyse Walls

Beacon School

New York, NY

The Healum Inc. Poetry Project, Denyse's project, designed poetry workshops for at-risk students in New York City. She worked with an established organization, The Healum Inc, to provide youth with a forum for presenting poetry, in New York City schools, libraries, and other similar locations and to run teacher workshops in schools and universities.

Becca Wilson

Upper Arlington High School

Columbus, OH

Becca's project created "Shoe Angels," a program designed to facilitate the donation of lightly-used athletic shoes to her community's homeless population. She also created a website that shoes individuals how to start a Shoe Angels program in their own communities.

Melissa Youssef

Southside High School Greenville, SC

Melissa worked with her school's student council to establish the Tiffany Kager Green Foundation, whose aim is to raise awareness about lung cancer and give those who are diagnosed with the disease a chance to fight the illness. She involved local businesses and health professionals in her effort to share information about lung cancer in the Greenville area, and she also organized a race in the foundation's name.

Class of 2007

Drew Callaghan

Holy Ghost Preparatory School

Bensalem, PA

Drew implemented the Kids Helping Kids Food Pantry Collection. The aim of this project was to continue to raise awareness of hunger and homelessness in his community of Bucks County, PA by establishing supplemental funding through a state grant to the Bucks County Housing Group, and continuing collection drives by expanding to include local public schools.

Alana Dillon

Turpin High School Cincinnati, OH

Alana partnered with the Anderson Park District and the Turpin High School

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Key Club to encourage local students to give back to the community through cleaning up a local park. Alana and the others scheduled a work day in October to clean up Johnson Hills Park in order to ready it for the upcoming opening day.

Anna Lynn Doster *Camden High*

School

Camden, SC

Anna Lynn developed her Step It Up project because she recognized a problem with the high school drop out rate in both her school and state. She aimed to make a difference in her school's drop out rate by encouraging the formation of non-traditional clubs and organizations that would attract students who currently have no extracurricular activities or who are on the verge of dropping out. At Camden High School, she formed a step team, an animal awareness club, and an anime club, all of which included a majority of students with no prior extracurricular involvement.

Anna Eusebio

Grimsley High School Greensboro, NC

Anna's project, Bottled H₂O project connected water conservation with the environmental impacts of bottled water. She partnered with the Greensboro Water Department and presented to fourth graders at Canterbury School and Our Lady of Grace Catholic School.

Meredith Gill

Spring Valley High School

Columbia, SC

Meredith's Book Bonanza provided books for the underprivileged and inspired people of all ages to experience the comfort and opportunities provided through reading. She collected 7,200 books which were donated to various agencies in Columbia including The Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, Salvation Army, Children's Miracle Network Hospital, Ronald McDonald House and others.

Anna Gillespie

Greenwood High School Greenwood, SC

With her Every Vote Counts project, Anna endeavored to help students her age become politically active and aware by informing them of their eligibility to vote, holding a voter registration drive at her school and providing literature on voting. She exceeded her goal of registering 100 students (1/3 of her class) and ended up registering 185 students!

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Luis Gonzales

Greenville Senior High School
Greenville, SC

Luis partnered with Bridges To A Brighter Future and Greenville Tech Northwest Campus to sponsor the first Hispanic College Fair in the area. Hispanic students from the area attended and were able to hear about college admissions information and financial aid opportunities from Berea College, Bob Jones University, The Citadel, College of Charleston, Erskine, Furman, Greenville Tech, Morris College, SC State, USC Upstate, and representatives from FASFA.

Jay Ingles

Eastside High School Taylors, SC

Jay created the Shooting for Success program, which aimed to bring sports and character education to underprivileged youth. Jay partnered with the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club in Greenville, the Greenville Civitan Club and Eastside High School to develop a basketball clinic that would help students improve their skills. The clinic also involved a character education component that included a motivational speaker. The participants of the clinic were also invited to attend an Eastside High School basketball game later in the school year.

Caitlin Jebens

Strom Thurmond High School
Johnston, SC

Caitlin's Mock Debate project provided the public with an opportunity to learn more about the candidates running for the presidential election. Local students portrayed and presented platforms for Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, John Edwards, John McCain, Rudy Giuliani, Mitt Romney and Mike Huckabee. Local political leaders also served as moderators.

Lathrum Johnson Marlboro

Academy
Bennettsville, SC

Lathrum worked with the Bennettsville Downtown Development Association, Marlboro Academy, Marlboro High School, Bennettsville Chamber of Commerce and First United Methodist Church to accomplish his "Our Town" plan. They accomplished their goal of revitalizing and beautifying Bennettsville by restoring an outdoor amphitheatre in town. Lathrum and his partnering agencies cleaned up the grounds, replaced old structures, and added shrubbery, park benches and outdoor lighting.

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Athena Lao

Clarke Central High School Athens, GA

Athena partnered with students from 3 other high schools in her area to form Young Partners for a Prosperous Athens (YPPA). This organization set out to combat Athens' 31% poverty rate by promoting education, bridging together different cultures and facilitating service projects that included a day-long youth summit on poverty, Battle Against Poverty Festival in the community and a Summer Literacy Campaign.

Anh Lee

Socastee High School

Myrtle Beach, SC

Ahn's Powering Against Poverty project raised awareness about the growing problem of homelessness in the Myrtle Beach area in addition to collecting food and funding to help those in poverty. She partnered with The Helping Hands Organization and Habitat for Humanity.

Alyssa Richardson

Ridge View High School

Columbia, SC

Alyssa's RIDE(Ridge View's Interdependent Driving Experiment) project aimed to decrease traffic problems, cut down on pollution and promote unity throughout the community by encouraging carpooling and other forms of public transportation.

Hannah Shadrick

Girls Preparatory School

Chattanooga, TN

Hannah organized groups of students to assist at a local homeless shelter and soup kitchen and also worked with staff to institute an on-going program to provide residents of the homeless shelter with opportunities to explore the visual arts.

Mikaela Shaw

McAuley High School Cincinnati, OH

In an effort to unite high school students of diverse backgrounds while at the same time assisting the Churches Active in Northside (CAIN) food pantry, Mikaela formed a teen advisory board known as Teens Working Together As One. This advisory board of students from diverse backgrounds planned individual projects at their school, church or in their community in order to collect money or items for CAIN while at the same time volunteering at the food pantry.

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Miya Walker

*James F. Byrnes High School
Duncan, SC*

Miya's "We Love Senior Citizens Month" initiative provided volunteers, care packages and a fun-filled day of Bingo to the Midway Boarding Home. She partnered with Byrnes High School Junior Civitan Club and with the Middle Tyger Community Center in order to provide activities that would engage and entertain senior citizens in her community.

Mia Wrightson

Parlorview High School Lilburn, GA

With her Recycling and Environmental Awareness Program, Mia's goal was to begin school recycling education and increase recycling awareness in children and young adults by coordinating plastic and aluminum collection programs at her high school and a local elementary school, collaborating with a Special Education class to collect cans as a fundraiser, and teaching recycling lessons at a local elementary school.

Class of 2008

Jon Baddley

*Mauldin High School
Mauldin, SC*

Project: "Team One" – Jon combined the problems of child obesity with the lack of activity and productivity from our nations foster care children. His project used a sports camp to get the foster care children of his community involved in physical activity to improve their health and self-esteem while simultaneously providing a respite for their foster parents. The added attention from Team One as well as the physical activity had immeasurable positive effects on the foster children who participated in the activities.

Michael Bibo

*Fort Mill High School
Fort Mill, SC*

Project: "The Flyers Green" – Michael wanted to raise awareness of how poor our environment is and start changing that trend with today's youth. Through environmentally friendly activities and events that his project is sponsoring, Michael is teaching the leaders of tomorrow the need for conservation and environmental respect.

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Mallory Boyd

Hammond School
Columbia, SC

Project: "R.E.A.C.H" – Mallory wanted to help the homeless children of Columbia by providing for them a project that would build their self-esteem and combat the problems associated with a homeless lifestyle. By partnering with The Children's Garden Mallory served homeless children under the age of 5 by providing affection and attention through crafts and book reading to positively affect the children and their outlook on themselves.

Brittany Donnelly

Spring Valley High School
Columbia, SC

Project: "Bowling for Success"- Brittany put on a bowling fundraiser to raise money for purchasing business suits and other personal supplies for the women of the Killingsworth Home that assists them with job interviews and overall confidence.

Landy Fink

East Forsyth High School
Kernersville, NC

Project: "P.E.A.C.E" – Landy wanted to combat the rising violence her community, specifically in the halls of her high school. Through her project, Landy was able to plant a hand crafted monument dedicated to peace in her community that would serve as a reminder to everyone about the importance of peace. A subsequent peace pole will be planted in her town's sister city in the country of Japan.

Tori James

Forestview High School
Gastonia, NC

Project: "Girls Helping Girls" – Tori's project identified the need for positive female role models for the young women of her community. Knowing that girls entering high school are at their most impressionable stages, Tori provided positive role models for the girls in a safe environment to discuss problems and put them on a path to success

Zacharias Kennedy

Fairfield Central High School
Winnsboro, SC

Project: "Knowledge For Life" – Zacharias wanted to help his classmates and their families with the economic burden of applying to colleges. His project helped identify what

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scholarships were, where students could apply for them and what credit means to a future college student. He was able to empower a large number of his classmates think about education after high school now that financial restrictions were not such a problem.

Amber Locklear

Pinewood Preparatory School
Summerville, SC

Project: “Lauerne C. Williams Library” – Amber wanted to provide her town with an essential service that was lacking, a library. Through subsequent book drives and donations, Amber was able to, and is still collecting, books for her newly established library. Now her small town has the opportunity to conveniently expand their knowledge through books which provides for the betterment of the youth and the community as a whole.

Stephen Miller

James Island Christian School
Charleston, SC

Project: “Students Serving Seniors” – Stephen wanted to serve his community through active involvement with the senior citizens. His project was designed to regularly serve 9 senior citizens of his community everyday. Stephen was not only able to help the seniors of his community; he was also able to simultaneously increase community service among students of his high school.

Tierney O'Rourke *Jesuit High*
School

Portland, OR

Project: “Unidos en el Saber” – Tierney’s project was aimed at the migrant worker communities of the surrounding Portland region. Her project was aimed at providing basic school necessities as well as free tutoring services to the migrant families of Camp Azul. She hoped to create better opportunities and a brighter future for the children of Camp Azul as they struggled to receive even the most basic education with their migrant lifestyles.

Neha Parthasarathy

S.C. Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities
Greenville, SC

Project: “Speak Your Mind” – Neha addressed the problem of public speaking in today’s youth. Through her experiences in debate and applying for colleges, she saw how important it was to be able to confidently speak to strangers and large crowds. Her project was a series of speaking seminars and conferences that helped those who participated in overcoming their anxiety of public speaking and enabling them to address others with confidence.

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Sean Robins

Strom Thurmond High School
Johnston, SC

Project: "The Extra Things" – Sean designed his project to help save the extracurricular activities program at his school. Recent budget cuts would have done away with many of the activities that students enjoy outside of the classroom, but Sean's project raised money to keep these activities in the budget through an all day carnival.

Ben Saul

Emerald High School
Greenwood, SC

Project: "Help Us Create A Greener Greenwood" – Ben wanted to raise awareness in school for the crucial need to recycle. His project was designed to provide his high school with recycling receptacles and also engage the surrounding community by encouraging them to recycle as well. Through his efforts Ben was able to set up a system that will be permanently applied at his school and also raise awareness about the importance of recycling.

Benton Wise

West Florence High School
Florence, SC

Project: "Opening the Doors to Better Education" – Benton put together an awareness conference to bring to light the problems of South Carolina public education, specifically along the corridor of shame. He based his project off the recent Bud Ferillo documentary "Corridor of Shame: The Neglect of South Carolina's Rural Schools," and he helped in getting over 40,000 names on a petition to force the government of South Carolina to recognize the problem in SC public schools and do something to change it.

Class of 2009

Farrah Bui

Fort Mill High School
Fort Mill, SC

Project: "Notes of Hope: Saving Our Youth Note by Note"- Farrah used music to motivate and inspire underprivileged and/or at-risk children to succeed and find a positive outlet by providing them with musical supplies including instruments and instructors.

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Graham Bichell

Greenville High School

Greenville, SC

Project: “Keeping the Change”- Graham wanted the good feelings and positivity established at Greenville High School’s Challenge Day to remain long after the event’s conclusion.

Together with a team of like-minded students, Graham has organized a pizza dinner, created a Change Committee and designed t-shirts aimed at rekindling the enthusiasm from the original event.

Kayley Seawright

Westside High School

Anderson, SC

Project: “Leos to Lions”- In the hope of encouraging and increasing volunteerism at her high school, Kayley created a student-led community service club where any student could join and participate in various service activities around the Anderson community. Because the Leo Club is sponsored by the Lions Club, there is no cost to join and students are given the option to become part of that organization upon graduation.

Alex Watford

Orangeburg Preparatory School

Orangeburg, SC

Project: “Orangeburg County Youth Council”- Alex’s project was designed to target youth leadership in order to educate them about conditions in his hometown of Orangeburg. By developing student leaders, he hopes that parents, peers and adult leadership will take notice and make necessary changes to the community in hopes of increasing the economic appeal of Orangeburg to the surrounding communities.

Anthony Traina

Roncalli High School

Indianapolis, IN

Project: “Christmas Store Book Collection”:- Anthony wanted to increase awareness of poverty in the community by organizing a book drive during the Christmas season to benefit needy families in downtown Indianapolis. In addition to brightening up a few Christmas mornings, Anthony wanted to ensure that his gift of these books would promote reading and create good educational habits.

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Hakeem Bennett

Scott's Branch High School

Summerton, SC

Project: "US: Unite Summerton"- Hakeem's project focused on bringing students from his town's two high schools together for fun and fellowship in a way that would benefit their community. Together, the students from Scott's Branch High School and Clarendon Hall High School joined together to beautify the local park; together with City Year, this diverse group of students worked together to re-paint aging playground equipment, baseball courts.

Julianne Welch

Emerald High School

Greenwood, SC

Project: "Los Amigos"- Julianne worked with students from her high school to provide positive role models for the high school and middle school students at La Puerta, a non-profit organization that offers free English classes to inhabitants of Greenwood's predominantly Hispanic area. By establishing relationships between two different ethnic groups, she impacted the language barrier of the two communities and assisted in giving interested students reinforcement in setting positive long-term goals.

Alexandra Nazeree

Riverside High School

Greer, SC

Project: "Closing the Divide: Global Awareness Pen Pal Program"- Alexandra wanted to use her project to increase global awareness through communications between different people. To help facilitate this, she started a pen pal program between the students in her high school and elementary and middle school students in the Kabul Province in Afghanistan.

Akshay Kumar

Southside High School

Greenville, SC

Project: "Upperclassmentors"- Akshay saw his high school's low graduation rate, as well as the functional segregation of IB and non-IB students and wanted to create a program to initiate change and enhance the high school experience. To do so, he paired academically at-risk freshmen by pairing them with older student mentors, where they organized and executed a mentoring scheduled along with several service learning projects outside of school.

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Soorya Avali

Spring Valley High School
Columbia, SC

Project: "One Step Closer"- Soorya wanted to help underperforming middle school students in his area continue their journey to graduation by providing them with mentoring and tutoring support from honors-level high school students. To do this, he used the Boys and Girls Club Center in a local middle school as the interface mechanism and recruited honors students from his own high school to serve as tutors.

Class of 2010

Kenan Sakarcn, 1st place *Spring Valley*

High School
Columbia, SC

Kenan started "Got Warmth?" a service project to collect quality used and new sleeping bags to protect his area's homeless from exposure. Kenan worked with a diverse spectrum of community members to collect 234 sleeping bags that he personally distributed to Columbia's homeless.

Emily Cinquemani, 2nd place

St. Joseph's High School
Greenville, SC

Emily created "Readers Rock!" a service project to motivate elementary school students to value and enjoy reading by increasing the availability of reading materials to underprivileged children. Emily worked with publishing companies to secure book donations and then distributed them to need-based organizations around her area.

Hannah Keefer, 3rd place

Pinewood Preparatory School
Summerville, SC

Hannah created an International Club at her school. The club's purpose is to support and plan activities for international students from around the world that attend her school as part of a study-away program. The activities occur quarterly and have included beach trips and dinners downtown.

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Stephanny Jimenez, Honorable Mention

Greenville High School

Greenville, SC

Stephanny wanted to decrease the amount of environmental waste by starting a student-led composting system at her high school. Stephanny installed a small composting system on school grounds that contained yard debris collected by student volunteers. Other EPL Participants:

Amit Bilgi

Southside High School

Greenville, SC

Amit led an environmental awareness initiative within his community. He put together kits filled with various pamphlets and sustainable items, such as “green” light bulbs and trash bags and distributed them to various community organizations like churches and after-school programs. He hopes to expand his project by holding an environmental awareness conference in 2012.

Sarah Katherine DeVenny

Lancaster High School

Lancaster, SC

Sarah Katherine decided to address her area’s poor literacy rate and low test scores by partnering with numerous community organizations to encourage young children and their parents to read. She organized a “Family Read-in Night” at an early childhood center. The event included a special presentation by a local library representative followed by the opportunity for each child to choose a book to take home.

Max Kayton

St. James High School

Myrtle Beach, SC

Noticing that individuals ages 18 to 29 were the least enthusiastic group of registered voters, Max decided to raise awareness about political issues and encourage more people from his generation to get out and vote. Max did this by creating a publicity video about registering to vote and distributed pre-stamped envelopes for voter registration forms to his fellow students.

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Benjamin Ramsey

Riverside High School
Greer, SC

While volunteering at a soup kitchen, Ben began to think about bicycles as being the sole means of transportation for many of his area's homeless population and their need for bike repair and locks. For his service project he worked with a local bike repair shop to offer free repair as needed and has contacted other community organizations to donate racks and locks to be installed outside of local need-based organizations.

Sanjana Rao

Jesuit High School
Portland, OR

For her service project, Sanjana worked with the Portland After School Tennis and Education, a program that offers year-round one-on-one tutoring for students as well as free tennis instruction. Sanjana recruited high school and adult volunteers to assist with the program, promoted the organization at major tennis events and within the Indian community and raised over \$500 by fundraising.

Trenton Smith

North Myrtle Beach High School
Myrtle Beach, SC

Aware that abundant public access and high tourism rates were affecting the quality of his area's beaches, Trenton partnered with his school's Biology Club and the town's administration to organize a "beach sweep", a one-day event where he and his peers cleaned up a designated beach access and the surrounding area. Trenton plans to work with the Adpot-a-Landing program to provide long-term care and upkeep.

Ryan Stevens

Belton-Honea Path High School Belton,
SC

Ryan worked with his school's student council to donate desserts to be served at a local homeless shelter's annual Thanksgiving meal. He worked with the student council and school administrators to facilitate a field trip for volunteers to present the donations personally.

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Joni Ware

Broome High School
Spartanburg, SC

Noticing a high rate of teen pregnancy and STIs at her high school, Joni decided to center her service project on abstinence-awareness. She worked with her school's student government and administration to organize a speaker program encouraging young men and women to remain abstinent.

Class of 2011

Katie Ryan, 1st place (tied)

Bluffton High School
Bluffton, SC

Katie started a mentoring program called "Whatever It Takes" hoping to give high school students the opportunity to serve the community, help elementary school students learn, and give the elementary school students a proper and consistent role model.

Taylor Gardiner, 1st place (tied)

Broome High School
Spartanburg, SC

Taylor implemented a reading mentor partnership between his high school and all Spartanburg District 3 elementary schools in the hopes of influencing children to have a more productive life geared more toward athletics and focusing on academics. "Centurion Mentors" had close to 40 students fill 70 mentor roles; approximately 1360 students were read to by student-athletes from Broome High School.

Aryana Derakhshan, 2nd place

Wilson High School
Wilson, SC

Hoping to raise awareness of the impact of hunger in her community, Aryana instituted a "Peanut Butter and Jelly Drive" at her school to benefit the Harvest Hope Food Bank and Five Loaves Ministry. She exceeded her goals by collecting over 6,073 nonperishable food items, weighing over 7,000 pounds.

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Austin Ambrose, 3rd place *Aynor High*

School

Aynor, SC

Austin project created an effective and lasting recycling program at his school. His project “Horry County Recycles” educated young people about the importance of recycling and environmental sustainability. Austin create awareness on various social media sites and even educated several locate businesses on potential ways to encourage recycling.

Krystle Ballatore, Honorable Mention

St. James High School

Myrtle Beach, SC

Krystle’s project “Got Clean Hands?” endeavored to educate restaurants in her community about ways to prevent the spread of germs. Krystle met with several restaurants in her community and encouraged them to place hand sanitizers in strategic locations within their restaurants.

Other EPL Participants:

Hollis Carrouth

Cardinal Newman High School

Columbia, SC

Hollis worked with community leaders to create a packet on gardening and eco- friendly behavior to be presented at a local middle school’s Earth Day fair.

Nina Contis

Christ Church Episcopal School

Greenville, SC

Nina created a nonprofit organization called “Teens for Tomorrow” to collect money for Greenville County Schools. She worked with a local artist to create a calendar containing public and private school holidays and football schedules. Through the calendar sales, private donations, and a fundraising event, Nina raised over \$4,000 for the school district.

Ana Gibson

Riverside High School

Greer, SC

Ana’s project, “IDK: Turing ‘I Don’t Know!’ into Inspiration, Knowledge, Dedication,” addressed the issue of youth education, awareness, and participation in volunteer organizations and community service projects in the Greenville area. She held an informational “fair” in the hope of establishing, at an early age, not only an awareness of local

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charities and the services they provide, but also a life-long commitment to community service.

Xzavier Killings

Dorman High School

Spartanburg, SC

Xzavier established a program to help minority and under-represented students get free instruction and preparation for standardized tests such as the SAT. Xzavier solicited support from the community and his school to create his program, "Palmetto STEP (Scholastic Testing and Education Preparation).

Class of 2012

Olivia Baddley, First Place

Mauldin High School

Simpsonville, SC

Olivia started a program called "Beyond the Mountaintop," a camp specifically for foster children, in an effort to build their self-esteem and expose them to an active lifestyle outdoors. Olivia implemented her program for foster children and their foster parents in November 2012, providing opportunities for the children to get outdoors as well as educational sessions for the parents. Olivia was named the top high school youth volunteer in South Carolina for her project and hopes to implement her program in other areas in the future.

Nandita Karambelkar, Second Place

SC Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities

Goose Creek, SC

Nandita had a desire to inculcate a love of reading in children in her community and established the "Bright Smiles Reading Program" to achieve this goal. She collected donations of books and set up book centers for children in several communities while also coordinating volunteers to read with children in the Greenville and Charleston communities. Nandita also expanded her program to students at Sanwad School in Lonavala, India.

Ellie Fowler, Third Place

Marlboro Academy

Bennettsville, SC

Ellie coordinated a program, "Love a Pet," for high school volunteers to spend their time assisting local animal shelters. She also held a supply drive with her Interact Club to take

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donations for the animal shelters. Ellie and her team of volunteers contributed 68 service hours to these shelters in the 5 months of her program.

Joey Baldwin

*North Augusta High School North
Augusta, SC*

With an interest in preserving the history of his town, Joey worked with the Arts and Heritage Center of North Augusta on the “North Augusta Legacy Project” to educate students about film techniques that would then be applied to interviews of citizens in the community. Joey facilitated a film seminar for students and was able to record oral histories of 11 citizens, and he hopes to continue training students and completing interviews to contribute to his project.

Karthik Chandrasekar *Southside High
School
Simpsonville, SC*

Karthik worked with the organization “Generous Gardens,” an organization that seeks to fight hunger in South Carolina by providing locally grown produce to charities. Karthik is currently working with Generous Gardens to raise awareness for the project and he has plans to hold an event that will contribute to publicity for the project and for the issue of hunger in South Carolina.

Alex Garland

*Aynor High School Scholars Academy
Galivants Ferry, SC*

Alex saw that a number of students in his high school were struggling with their normal coursework, and saw an opportunity to provide after-school tutoring by working with his fellow students and his school’s chapter of the National Honors Society. Alex worked with both students and teachers to provide assistance to students at least once a week for some of the most difficult courses at his high school.

Ken Krupa

*Hammond High School
Elgin, SC*

Ken started a club at his school, “Ken’s Club for Kids,” and partnered with the Columbia City Kids Marathon to raise awareness about childhood obesity in his high school and community. Along with other volunteers from his school, Ken assisted with the marathon and also taught participants about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and provided them with educational materials.

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Punam Mulji

Dorman High School

Spartanburg, SC

Punam's project, the District Six Tutoring Enrichment Program, aimed to provide out-of-class tutoring opportunities to students in local elementary schools. She was able to work with a team of high school volunteers to provide after-school tutoring to these students, and she has passed the program down to a new team of leaders to be continued after her graduation.

Class of 2014

Jo Baslot

Wilson High School

Florence, SC

Jo created a Science Fair entitled "Science Around the World" for students at Florence District One. Students learned about various science projects and countries. Projects were led by fellow students.

Nikhalia Cheepurupalli

Spring Valley High School

Columbia, SC

Nikhalia created a program called Infinity and Beyond at Spring Valley High School. She involved various high school math groups to tutor Dent Middle School students. The focus was to help students who struggle in math and do not have the solid math foundation needed to perform complex problems.

Natrone Davis

Scott's Branch High School

Summerton, SC

Natrone created a mentoring program called "Saving Eaglets" for males in 3rd – 5th grade. The program matched elementary school aged children with a male between the ages of 16-21 who served as a positive influence on the child. The program fostered community involvement by having local leaders and ministers involved. Students who participated in the program were rewarded with a weeklong basketball camp led by Natrone and his fellow high school teammates.

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Luke De Mott

Mauldin High School
Greenville, SC

To help poverty stricken children in Greenville, Luke created a mentorship/tutoring program that would showed low income Elementary school aged children “the value of a good education” and how it can help them accomplish their goals. This mentorship program encouraged high school students to visit elementary schools once a week to encourage students to do well in school and assist them with reading. Donations from community members were collected in order to provide prizes for those students who participated and showed progress.

Mary Beth Grant

Greenwood High School
Greenwood, SC

Mary Beth wanted to address the issue of literacy in Greenwood. She is organized a book drive called “Reading Round-up” at her high school and local churches and distributed these books to the United Way of Greenwood, Healthy Learners, Bowers Rodgers, The Children’s Center, and Laurens Safe Home. The project collected over 500 books total.

Westin Hardesty

Travelers Rest High School
Travelers Rest, SC

Westin created a program called “Puppet Outreach Program” that assisted children at the Frazee Dream Center to make their own puppets. These puppets were then used to act out difficult scenarios in these childrens’ lives.

Brittany Joyce

Hartsville High School
Hartsville, SC

Selected officers within the City of Hartsville Police Department distributed gift certificates of less than \$5.00 in value to students in Thornwell Elementary, Hartsville Middle, and Hartsville High School when they “catch” a student doing a good deed or making a good decision. Local businesses who donated were McDonald’s, Markette, Sonic, Wendy’s, Subway, and members of St. Luke UMC.

This program is a collaboration between the City of Hartsville, the Hartsville Police Department, the Community Foundation for a Better Hartsville, local businesses, and residents. The goal of the program is that, as police recognize good behavior and distribute the certificates, they begin to build positive and strong relationships with the children and teens in the community and encourage them to make good decisions. For more information or to make a donation, please contact the Community Foundation for a Better Hartsville.

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Mani King

St. Joseph's High School
Greenville, SC

Mani wanted to raise awareness of the problem of drug abuse in Greenville. To do so, her program created social media pages to advertise the issue and make it well known. Student mentors from high school were assigned to middle school students to discuss the dangers of drugs and peer pressure.

Kenny Nguyen

Greenwood Christian
Greenwood, SC

Kenny believed that the promotion of education in Greenwood is essential to the community's continuing growth. He created "Stellar Kids: Start Young, Start Smart, Start Here" a mentor program in which high school students tutored and assisted elementary students twice a month. At the end of the program, an evaluation was sent to the students' parents to inform them of their child's progress.

Lucas Paquette

Johnsonville High School
Johnsonville, SC

The program's objective was to entertain senior citizens in Johnsonville and show them that their community cares about them. The closest form of entertainment for senior citizens in Johnsonville is over an hour away and most senior citizens do not participate due to the distance. The Senior Prom has given the senior citizens and the students in the Johnsonville community a chance to enjoy entertainment and to involve high school students in service projects close to home. On April 4, 2015, with assistance from local businesses, Johnsonville will hold its first Senior Prom at the Periwinkle Pavilion. Johnsonville High School and Prosser Law Firm have graciously provided the venue and decorations. Additional sponsors include Industrial Contractors, CMA Clearing and Excavating, The Tackle Box, Scotts' BBQ, Anderson Brothers Bank, Haselden Brothers, and Piggly Wiggly. The Florence County Senior Citizen's Association has provided the invitations and postage. At press time, 62 senior citizens plan to attend.

Susannah Pazdan

Christ Church Episcopal School
Greenville, SC

Susannah addressed the problem of homelessness in Greenville by creating a student photography show. The profits from the show supported the Triune Mercy Center in Greenville.

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Tre' Dessa Smalls

Hartsville High School

Myrtle Beach, SC

3Es is a project geared toward middle school aged African American girls to teach them about self-worth and to let them know that they are more than a statistic. The project was led by Smalls and fellow high school females and featured speakers who were high ranking African American female leaders from Horry and surrounding counties. Topics included goal setting; light skin vs. dark skin debate; mind, body and soul; protecting yourself; being black in America; my right as a woman; our generation: babies having babies; and peer pressure. Local businesses and organizations who supported this program include the Burgess Community Center. Plans are underway to host a 3E summer camp at the Burgess community center in 2015, please contact Smalls at tredessasmalls@gmail.com for more information or to register.

James Wiley

Riverside High School/Fine Arts Center

Greer, SC

James was concerned about the statistic showing that only 34% of developmentally/intellectually disabled people are employed. He produced a documentary film explaining the issues faced by young adults with developmental/intellectual disabilities as they look for meaningful work after high school. He said "As a filmmaker, I'm enthused about the genre of documentary film and its capacity to enlighten the audience about problematic issues as well as to showcase solutions. It's all about awareness and empowerment." This documentary includes the valuable perspective of a parent, a business owner, and educators. The project was a collaboration with community leaders and business owners who employ people with special needs to inspire other businesses to give the disabled a chance in the workplace. Opportunity Village in Nevada is highlighted as a model of success. The documentary also examined legislative initiatives which encourage the hiring of disabled individuals. Local businesses and organizations which supported this project include Indexx Printing, The Chandler School, and Greenville County School District Administration. James plans to submit 66 Percent to various film festivals to increase awareness of the issue. The film may be viewed on its Facebook page: 66 Percent. It's also available on YouTube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v4J4wnY1RdY>

Class of 2015

First Place Winners

Jeremiah Drummond – PAFT "Picture a Family Together"

A student at Paul Dorman High School in Spartanburg, Jeremiah combined his passion for photography with his passion to give back to society. He spent two days using a corner of the dining room at the Spartanburg soup kitchen as a temporary studio and took holiday portraits

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for people who otherwise might not be able to buy a photo for the holidays. His story appeared in the following:

Savannah Morning News, Aiken Standard, Bluffton Today, SCNow, Washington Times, Deseret News, News 13, Daily Reporter, The Republic, Daily Journal, and The Greenville News.

Kehler Bryant – Healthy Tips for Happy Kids

A student at Blue Ridge High School in Greer, Kehler implemented a healthy lifestyle initiative at Skyland Elementary School. She recorded public service announcements that play on the school's morning news program (SETV) of local athletes giving "healthy tips." She also started the Skyland Sprinters Club with over 60 students who practice running once a week after school. Her project will culminate in the first annual Skyland Elementary Color Run on April 30 where the entire school will take part in exercise and fitness.

Second Place Winners

Brianna Brunson – Summerton Service Seniors “SSS”

A student at Scott’s Branch High School in Summerton, Brianna recognized a need in her community to acknowledge and give back to the senior citizens who paved the way for the younger generation. She organized volunteers at Scott’s Branch to visit nursing homes, spend time with seniors during the holidays, collect personal hygiene items that lower income seniors need, and spend time with seniors who are in the hospital.

Emma Gross – Project Hope

A student at St. Joseph’s High School in Greenville, Emma worked with the Greenville Area Interfaith Hospitality Network (GAIHN) to collect books, backpacks and school supplies for students in need. She also involved students in the National Honor Society at St. Joseph’s to assist with packing the bags and distributing them.

Kaitlyn Sain – Clover Smiles

A student at Clover High School in Clover, Kaitlyn recognized that dental health is directly related to general health. She provided dental hygiene products to lower income families. She collected dental hygiene items to add to the Pack the Back bags at Bethany Elementary. She held a dental hygiene collection back in October on a Friday night at one of our home football games where over 60 tooth brushes and dental supplies were donated along with over 70 dollars.

Honorable Mention

Celine Crum – The Mauldin Mural Project

A student at Mauldin High School, on December 5, 2015, Celine, along with members of the National Arts Honors Society at the fine arts center and at Mauldin High, painted a mural on

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the outdoor wall of the Mauldin Cultural Center. Celine raised over \$200 on GoFundMe.com and has received national recognition for this project. Celine's project encourages youth to appreciate and get involved with the arts.

Mira Carroll – Sharing Our Stories “S.O.S”

A student at Southside High School, Mira documented the personal stories of the homeless population at Project Host. She helped prepare and cook the meals, then sat down with the veterans whose pictures were on the walls and spoke with them at length to learn more about their life stories. The stories may be features in “Unseen Greenville” by the Greenville News.

Rhett Baker

St. Joseph's High School
Greenville, SC

Rhett started a program called “Frazee Friends”. He organized students from St. Joseph's to visit the preschool children at Frazee Dream Center once a week during our study hall. They played with them, read with them, and made crafts. In December, they made a special Christmas craft and had other holiday crafts throughout the year.

Desmond Brown

Scott's Branch High School
Summerton, SC

Desmond helped create a library for Summerton. Summerton has three schools in the district. There is the Summerton Early Childhood Center which houses grades pre-k-second, there is St. Paul Elementary which houses grades third-sixth and there is Scott's Branch Middle/High which houses grades seventh-twelfth. Each school competed by grade level. Each student and teacher was asked to donate slightly used books. At the early childhood and elementary schools, students were asked to bring donations to their homeroom teachers and a student from each class kept track of their class's donations. At the high school there was a student liaison at each grade level that will track the donations of their grade-level. There was also be a teacher advisor at each school that kept track of the teacher donations. The schools donated the entire month of September because that is National Literacy month. The donations were made to the community center on September 30th. The teacher who donated the most books at each school received a \$25 gift card. Each class that donated the most books at each school received a pizza party.

Drew Davis

Orangeburg Wilkinson High School
Orangeburg, SC

Drew created Project Ember. The goal was to create a spark in students to become not only great, but productive citizens. He created a program at his high school (Orangeburg Wilkinson) that partnered seniors with freshman, to help them tackle the academic and social aspects of

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high school. While being a "big brother/sister", the pairs performed community service projects together, in order to create productive citizens. They accomplished various community service projects, such as: Healing Species, tutoring students, visiting convalescence homes, donating to Toys for Tots, and adopt-a-highway.

Khalil Gamble

James F. Byrnes High School
Moore, SC

Khalil created Spartan Productions. He gathered a group of student actors from his school whose goal was to connect the elderly population with high school students. This comedy troupe visited various nursing homes in Spartanburg to spread joy and laughter.

Andrew James

Greenville High School
Greenville, SC

Andrew called Roots Serves and which was a team of students from different schools who performed service projects once a month. In October, Roots Serves packaged toiletries and water for the homeless in the wake of the big storm that swept through our state. Our second event was a Thanksgiving meal for the residents at the Summit. We packaged 90 meals and distributed them to the individuals in the lobby. Each event had around 20 volunteers representing numerous local high schools.

Elizabeth Marron

Greenville High School
Greenville, SC

Elizabeth wanted to help the children at the Frazee Dream Center. She distributed donated supplies from League Academy in Greenville and took it to the Frazee Center last month. Students at her high school volunteered and gathered needed supplies and brought them to the center.

Alexis Wright

Greenville High School
Greenville, SC

Alexis' project focused on empowering girls with different humanitarian backgrounds. She worked with local female leaders and role models to speak to high school girls to empower them.

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Class of 2016

First Place Winners

Travis Dias
Wilson High School
Florence, SC

Travis developed a mentoring program called “Tiger Tutors” in which students teach students. He sent invitations to become a tutor to members from the National Honor Society, Academic Challenge Team, and Math Team at Wilson High School. He partnered with Girls University and the East Florence Mission to provide tutors for at-risk students. He continued to recruit additional members throughout the year and formed a partnership with Florence School District One to provide tutors to the local intermediate students. He focused on the 5th-8th grade in STEM based subjects. Overall, over 100 students were tutored.

Caroline Farrell
James Island Charter School
Charleston, SC

Caroline created *New Links*, which is a program where senior citizens are taught how to operate their own technology. The classes were run by high school students and addressed the individual needs of each participant. For example, one was learning how to use social networks on a desk top and another was learning how to take a picture on their smart phone. The classes were not only intended to help them use the technology that surrounds them every day, but also to create new links and relationships between senior citizens and teenagers.

Second Place Winner

Elizabeth Armstrong
St. Joseph’s High School
Greenville, SC

Elizabeth enhanced the charity she started over five years ago called The Love of Giving. She worked to help children in two of her local hospitals (Shriner’s Hospital for Children and Greenville Children’s Hospital) by making monthly donations of stuffed animals, handmade blankets and books to help ease the stress of being in the hospital. As of today, The Love of Giving has helped change the lives of over 1,700 pediatric patients in the Greenville area. Going forward Elizabeth plans to branch out and work with other pediatric hospitals (while continuing to support the two other hospitals in Greenville) as she starts Wofford College this coming fall.

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Third Place Winner

Elizabeth Dunn
JL Mann High School
Greenville, SC

Elizabeth created the Christmas Book Project at the Frazee Dream Center. Over the course of four weeks during December, she worked with the first through third grade girls class at Frazee in Friday sessions lasting for an hour and a half. During the sessions, each girl was paired with a volunteer from JL Mann's National Honors Society or other friends/family. These volunteers mentored the girls on their reading and writing skills in order to strengthen their skill sets in English, while each girl made their own short story. The short stories were based on the girls' favorite memories with their family. The stories were then converted into books that were wrapped and given to their families for Christmas. The goal of the project was for the girls to have more confidence in their reading and writing skills, which will help them in furthering their education and other life goals.

Honorable Mention

Olivia McGuirt
Mauldin High School
Mauldin, SC

Olivia held a book drive the last two weeks in March. All of the books collected were donated to Title 1 schools in South Carolina. This goal of this project was to promote literacy across South Carolina. Any type of book (gently used or new) was accepted. Olivia collected books in a number of ways. Mauldin High School had a book tree, where students could take a book title off of the tree and purchase that book. Mauldin High School, the University Center of Greenville, Hillcrest High School and Mauldin Middle School were all designated locations where books were collected. Chick-fil-A on Woodruff Road also handed out flyers about the book drive and was a donation location. Furman students from the Heller Service Corps. also contributed books and implemented drop off stations around Furman. Overall, Olivia collected

In alphabetical order

Abby Askins
A.C. Flora High School
Columbia, SC

The Brockman Mural Project involved the painting of a mural promoting gender equality at a Columbia elementary school, Brockman Montessori. The mural was made up of words the students came up with as part of a group-led exercise to discuss their thoughts on gender relations. The students were involved in both the inspiration for and creation of the mural.

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The project not only encouraged discussion and thought on gender equality with the students and teachers, but promoted creativity, community involvement, and a sense of school pride.

Daniel Bacheschi
Southside High School
Greer, SC

"Story Threader" is an initiative launched by Southside High School Senior Daniel Bacheschi to highlight and share the stories of those touched by HIV and AIDS in an endeavor to demonstrate to the youth and population of Greenville the humanity of these victims, and that their intrinsic worth is not in any form diminished by their condition. He will interview HIV/AIDS patients to collect their stories and give a voice to a population hidden just under the cover of an expanding city culture. Daniel plans to publicize these stories on social media platforms in an attempt to reach a wider audience."

LaDeja Bell
Fairfield Central High School
Winnsboro, SC

LaDeja created Reading Tots, which is a program focused on instilling a love for reading in kids at a young age. The program provided each child entering kindergarten in Fairfield County with a free book. She contacted local businesses for support and encouraged the students to visit the local libraries in their towns. The Reading Tots program believes that if we can help young kids in our county find their love for reading, it will help our community in the long run.

Tazaya Caesar
Kingstree Senior High School
Kingstree, SC

Tazaya has combined her two passions, dancing and reading, to create her project called *Dancing In the Books*. She created a dance camp that low income students attended during the summer of 2017. The camp's proceeds were donated to her school's library. In addition to the camp, Tazaya organized a performance utilizing the camp attendees. Tazaya is passionate about improving her school's library and also plans to hold a book drive and solicit sponsors for donations for books.

Jessica Cole
Chapin High School
Chapin, SC

In response to a local county's 19% adult illiteracy rate, Jessica created a preventative program to distribute books to impoverished elementary students. Based on previous research which found that children with easy access to books perse higher education, regardless of

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economic state or parent education, Jessica focused her program on elementary school students. To address the literacy deficiency within her community, Jessica has a created and implemented book drive known as Booked for Success. Through partnering with the local community, her organization has distributed over 1100 the books to children at a local elementary school in Newberry county.

LeAnne Davison
Wren High School
Piedmont, SC

The Outreach Program for Soccer (TOPSoccer) is a program that builds social and developmental skills in special needs children while simultaneously connecting them with the community--all by teaching them how to play soccer. Local high school and college students will be able to volunteer to help teach the children how to play soccer. These volunteers are called "buddies"; each athlete will choose their buddy at each session. LeAnne's project is to start a TOPSoccer Program in Powdersville, a central location for the surrounding Greenville, Anderson, and Pickens Counties.

Mary DeVenny
Lancaster High School
Lancaster, SC

Cooking to Connect is a community based project in which locals of the Lancaster community shared their favorite recipes to create a cookbook. The cookbook included a collection of recipes from various cultures in the community and spotlighted the cook and the traditions related to the dish. After creating the cookbook, Mary hosted a community luncheon showcasing some of the featured dishes as well as selling the cookbooks to raise money for The Lancaster area Coalition for the homeless. Her hope is that the cookbook and luncheon will allow the Lancaster community to break cultural boundaries and connect with one another while enjoying something as simple as a meal.

Varsha Gopal
Southside High School
Greenville, SC

Varsha assisted the 51 children at A Child's Haven. She gathered volunteers to help make crafts and books that the children could use. She also raised had a large scale food drives at her school and other schools. She encouraged middle school students at Langston to volunteer and get involved.

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Stephanie Gonzalez
Riverside High School
Greer, SC

Stephanie has organized a program she is calling *Emerging Bilinguals Aid (EBA)*. This program will assist incoming students learn English and prevent them from failing and/or dropping out of high school. The program will identify new students to the US and pair them with an EBA volunteer tutor. They will meet, determine which classes the student needs the most help on from their tutors, and prepare for exams. They will also learn English at the same time. This program will bring together people from different cultural backgrounds for a great cause.

Jennifer Griggs
Hartsville High School
Hartsville, SC

Jennifer has developed a program called "Caring Bears and Bingo". She planned a Valentine's Days Bingo tournament for the residents of Morningside Nursing Home, while also collecting teddy bears to donate to all of the residents at the Thad E. Saleeby Center. She collected teddy bears and socks at her high school to distribute to the residents at the Thad E. Saleeby Center on Valentine's Day. The goal of the project was to bring the community together for an event to show the residents at the Saleeby Center that the community cares and has not forgotten about them. The delivery of the bears and the tournament boosted the morale of disabled residents that were not able to "go out" and celebrate Valentine's Day. The project incorporated both the disabled and the elderly community in an event with the community.

Emma Grover
Christ Church Episcopal
Greenville, SC

Emma supported and assisted a medical organization focusing on mental health care in Greenville, SC. She spent time raising funds and awareness for this program. Her hope is that her contributions, and those of others who become involved, will greatly improve the ability of these clinics to reach and assist the homeless population. The main goal is to provide the health care that is desperately needed by people who normally would not be able to visit a mental health professional.

Brandon Jackson
Spring Valley High School
Columbia, SC

Brandon taught middle schoolers a little more about their voice, impact, and role in their local community. Through his Boys & Girls Club, he wanted middle schoolers to have a dialogue with Law Enforcement, so they know that their voices & opinions really matter. Brandon organized a panel of different law enforcement departments in the local Columbia area such as Richland County Sheriffs Dept., Columbia Police Dept., and Forest Acres Police Dept. The

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project took place on a day where the majority of the school districts in Columbia were out of school, so that Brandon's project had an impact on the most amount of middle schoolers in his Boys & Girls Club. Brandon had his middle schoolers create questions to ask before the event happened, and question were answered on site.

Bhumika Jakkaraddi
Southside High School
Greenville, SC

Bhumika's project assisted homeless students. She established volunteer based aid groups in high schools. These groups established personal connections with these individuals and provided a support group. Her project is aimed at helping the homeless families specifically at Southside High School. She will be using National Beta Club Members as volunteers for creating care packages and fundraising additional money to aid these students and their families.

Tyrese Lawson
Scott's Branch High School
Summerton, SC

Tyrese lives in Summerville, which recently lost its only grocery store. The residents, especially the elderly, do not have the transportation to travel the extra 20 minutes to the closest store. His project called *Harvest Hunger* focused on a community wide food drive. He asked three area schools to participate along with local churches. He also included the school PTO meetings, alumni association, athletic games, and other community programs. He assisted the elderly and many residents affected by the flood or unemployment.

Litzel Martinez-Garcia
Spring Valley High School
Columbia, SC

Litzel wanted to help educate Hispanic students at her school. She held a session once a month at her school's library with new students in ESOL. The volunteers assisted new students with their school work and spend more time on material they are struggling with. Parents were invited to attend these meetings as well to learn about how the school system works. High school students received information about credits, careers, scholarships, and colleges.

Catherine O'Leary
Chapin High School
Chapin, SC

The Violence Policy Center has repeatedly ranked South Carolina number one in rate of women killed by men, and lack of awareness and education on both dating violence and

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domestic violence helps to perpetuate this cycle. Catherine has created *Chapin Cares*, a project that will focus on helping women who are victims of domestic violence, as well as educating youth at Chapin High School on the issues of dating violence and domestic violence. The program will host two drives, collecting items such as toiletries, non-perishables, and cleaning supplies. These items will be donated to a local women's shelter in Columbia, Sister Care. In conjunction with the weeks of these two drives, flyers will be posted around the school showing statistics on Dating Violence in high school youth as well as statistics on domestic violence in South Carolina. *Chapin Cares* will both support the victims of domestic violence in Chapin Community and work to prevent future intimate partner violence of Chapin High School Students.

Dipali Patel
Colleton County High School
Walterboro, SC

Dipali's project helped children in foster care by making cuddle kits. The cuddle kits included different things they may need when they go to foster homes. She had a very detailed outline of items needed, how to organize them, and distribute them to the local South Carolina Department of Social Services.

Dennis Patterson
Spring Valley High School
Columbia, SC

Dennis' project focused on teens with autism. Normally, teens have to go through adolescence throughout their high school life, and the teens that he worked with are also undergoing autism, which is another challenge for their high school years. He partnered with Spring Valley High School's Circle of Friends organization to help plan a Special Education Prom for these kids who might not seem comfortable in the school environment.

Caroline Warren
Lowcountry Preparatory
Pawleys Island, SC

Caroline will assist the Georgetown County ESL and focused on reaching out to adults. The program offers free child care so that parents can improve their English. With a firmer grasp of these skills, students can better their lives and the lives of their families, whether it be in the form of applying for a job or being able to assist their children with their homework. She utilized the professional presentation board to promote the program and encouraged families to participate in these classes and take advantage of these services. She frequented the Georgetown Middle School to promote her project, and is also reached out to students at the Howard Adult Center.

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**Lauren Xu
Governor's School
Clemson, SC**

Lauren completed a project called "Better River" through her newly founded Environmental Club at SCGSAH. She organized groups of students to clean up the polluted waterfall that located right behind the backyard of the Governor's School. All of the work was done by students on campus, some of them involved in the "connecting arts through service" club that environmental club is partnering with.

Class of 2017

First Place Winner

**Jennie Allen
Union County High School
Union, SC**

Jennie created teacher and parent/student packets on medical homebound instruction along with a professional development presentation for faculty members at Union County High School. The purpose of the professional development presentation was to give the faculty ways to improve homebound for both the student and teacher and to expose those who had no experience with homebound instruction to this method of learning. The parent/student packet is available in the UCHS attendance office to make information readily available for those requiring medical homebound instruction.

Second Place Winner

**Duncan Winburn
Westwood High School
Blythewood, SC**

Duncan created a special event called "Star Day". For the entire day, arts students taught special education students how to dance, sing, sculpt, improv, and make and perform puppetry. The fun day took months of planning and logistics, but in the end, Star Day had over 100 participants. The school's integrated arts board has voted to make Star Day an annual event.

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Third Place Winner

Mary Laurel Patrick
Greenville Senior High Academy
Greenville, SC

Over the course of her senior year, Mary Laurel helped create the Juanita Butler Garden. Her goal was to have neighbors working together to maintain a sustainable garden. From the beginning, volunteers, friends, family, and some very curious neighborhood children worked together to build raised garden beds. Soon after the winter harvest was over she was approached about starting a gardening club at the Juanita Butler Center. She now meets once a week with neighborhood children teaching them about gardening, composting, and the benefits of fresh produce. Together they have begun building their own compost bin and clearing the gardens for spring planting. Thankfully this project is far from over; the garden has become an important part of the Juanita Butler Center and the Greater Sullivan Neighborhood as a whole. With the enthusiastic Gardening Club and excited parents and supervisors, the future of the Juanita Butler Garden is extremely promising.

Honorable Mentions

Farehaa Hussain
Riverside High School
Greer, SC

Farehaa organized a dialogue event modeled after the TED organization at Riverside High School. She advertised the public speaking opportunity, auditioned speakers, and ultimately selected ones that were most engaging, informative, entertaining, and relevant. After the auditions, she communicated with her speakers to revise their speeches and she coached them in public speaking. On the day of the event, over 125 students attended to listen to the speeches and students were encouraged to talk with the speakers during the breaks about the topics discussed. The speakers were able to develop essential communication and critical thinking skills while the audience was able to broaden and shift their perspectives. This program will be continued at Riverside High School.

Manning Snyder
Porter Gaud
Charleston, SC

Manning's EPL project was two-fold. His first project was a school book sale which had many layers. Books were donated from and purchased by the school community of Porter Gaud. The leftover books were collected and stored for delivery to Title 1 Schools in the fall. Over \$1,000 was raised for the Charleston Freedom School, an organization that helps combat the literacy issue in Charleston. His second project involved the Charleston Area Justice Ministry (CAJM). The CAJM is a group of 28 different congregations that come together to fight injustice. The focus for the most recent meeting was "housing for all". Manning attended their final meeting

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of the year and was inspired by the efficiency of the organization and the extensive research conducted by the group which exposed the housing crisis in Charleston. Additionally, he has created a club in his school and inspired his classmates to attend next year's meetings and to become involved in the community.

Erica Daly
Fort Mill High School
Tega Cay, SC

Erica organized and moderated a panel discussion titled "Mentoring Future Women Leaders" with women serving in public office locally within my community. The leadership positions included town mayor, chair of the local school board, city mayor pro tempore, and county government council member.

The discussion was open to the public and advertised to high school students and the general public in newspapers, posters, and social media. The goal of this event was to spark interest and lay the groundwork for a pipeline of future women candidates who are needed to serve at all levels of government. South Carolina places within the bottom ten for women in elected office in the country. On a personal level, she has been interested in studying law and politics in high school and had not found many opportunities within the community to learn what it's like to run for office, what the day to day job is like, or what skills were needed to be successful in office. She decided to organize something herself to give teens in high school as well as women of all ages and opportunity to gain knowledge about leadership roles.

In Alphabetical Order

Jackson Bingham
Dorman High School
Spartanburg, SC

Jackson partnered with the group United Sound, an organization that promotes meaningful music education and performance for special needs students through peer mentoring, to bring their program to Dorman High School, where he is a senior.

Vinita Cheepurupalli
Spring Valley High School
Columbia, SC

Vinita collected old, used, and new eyeglasses and donate them to the SC Lions Charitable Services. This organization repurposes these eyeglasses so that SC residents who cannot afford glasses can use them.

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Kirsten Fisher
Wilson Hall
Sumter, SC

Kirsten created the “Thanks Living Organization” that raised money to allow needy children the opportunity to buy themselves and their families Christmas presents.

Karamitros, Vivian
Clover High School
Clover, SC

Vivian created "Paving Path to College" for Latino Clover HS students. She also developed a manual that teaches how to collect, summarize, and organize information about potential colleges.

Mahoney, Avi
Strom Thurmond High School
Johnson, SC

Avi created “Students Helping Students”, a student mentoring that pairs seniors with freshman to help them navigate 1st year of high school.

Malde, Ronak
Southside High School
Greenville, SC

Ronak began the implementation process of creating a pedestrian crosswalk and school speed zone behind Southside High School and Thomas E. Kerns Elementary School.

McNeil, Ellery
Carolina High School
Greenville, SC

Ellery created a Saturday program for low income children (grade 3 -5) that included field trips, art classes, healthy living.

Moorehead, Melody
Hannah-Pamplico High School
Pamplico, SC

Melody created the “Reading Raider Program”(k-4) where high school students tutored and helped twice a week. High school students were trained on how to work with students to motivate them to read and take reading risks.

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Nelli, Olivia

JL Mann High School

Greenville, SC

Olivia created a program called LOVING LUGGAGE to aid foster children. She provided new and gently-used donated suitcases and bags that included a book, school supplies, and a blanket or lovey to the Department of Social Services for foster children to use when they are moved from home to home.

Patel, Tejas

Cougar New Tech

Walterboro, SC

Tejas joined with fellow high school students to bring awareness to and honor local veterans. Students visited the veterans, planned activities for them such as virtual photos, and thanked them for their service.

Trapp, Queen

Ridge View High School

Columbia, SC

Queen created an all-day mental health art and gallery exhibit to create awareness of mental health issues. Everything will be created by teens for teens. She explored questions like “What does mental health look like in the community?” and “What does mental health look like to you?”