

## STUDENT JOURNALS

The following are just 2 examples of the wonderful work the young adults do with their community service. More importantly, they realize the positive impact that they can have on other people and the community around them.

### Halloween for the Children Project

#### Sophomore @ CHS

This activity was very fun. What we did was donate candy to the children in different hospitals in the area. We were each given bags to decorate, which I must admit wasn't too easy but it was all worth it. I was also present at the meeting at the high school, which was when people came to donate candies for the bags. When the time came we all went to Massachusetts General Hospital with some of the bags. This experience was very touching. Hearing many of the children crying in their rooms made me very sad. To see all the sick children and their smiles when they got our candy bags made me happy. It made me feel like I made a difference. It was a very good feeling. I must admit though it made me sad too see how many children were sick and had to spend their Halloween in the hospital. I enjoyed doing this very much. It was a great experience. It taught me how we all complain about our lives because we don't get this or that or we're having a bad hair day and yet these children are in the hospital for many different reasons and how much worse they have it. I think ever since we went to the hospital I've changed my complaining. I find myself complaining a lot less. Just thinking of those kids makes me sad and wish I could do more for them. I would love to do this everyday even if it didn't count as community service hours. This made me appreciate what I have and how even if I think I have a bad life it's actually a very good life compared to those children. I wish I could give each of the children in the hospital a life like mine or at least close. Overall, it was very fun and touching. I would do it anytime and I think everyone should think about these poor children before they complain about not having anything to wear to school etc. I think everyone should take a little time out of their busy schedules to visit these children.

#### Sophomore @ CHS

I must admit this is probably one of the most rewarding experiences I've had in my 14 years of life. When I first signed up to participate in this service, I expected it to be a fun and casual event. I figured I'd decorate a couple of bags, meet a few children, perhaps explain how adorable they were and go home feeling good about myself.

The first night I met my friends at the high school to collect candy. I enjoyed that part since I could chat with my friends and have a good time.

The next day, I received my bags. I was quite eager because at the risk of sounding conceited, I wanted to show off my artistic talent. However a good work of art takes work and I had about 16 works (bags) to create. It took me about three hours to finish for I labored over each bag to make every single one unique. I didn't want one child to receive a bag not as good as another so I took my time. Although it was difficult to think of new ideas for each one, I really liked decorating the bags.

After devoting so much time on the bags, I had a new respect for this project. Nonetheless it was when we arrived at Massachusetts General Hospital that I had a completely new outlook. There was an understood silence among us and suddenly I knew there would be no small children to gush all over. I concede I was quite unprepared as I entered the first room for I didn't know what to expect.

As I went into each room I got a few different reactions, but most of them were extremely kind and smiled and thanked us. To my surprise, most of the "children" were closer to my age, maybe younger by a year and could be considered "pre-teens." I wanted so much to make everything better for them, so they could experience the so-called "normal" life of a teenager. We should all have the chance to undergo this thing called life with its ups and downs.

The pre-teens undoubtedly gave me a far better gift than I had to offer. The candy was almost insignificant in comparison to their fortitude and acceptance. I learned not to take my life for granted and to live it the best to my ability. I shouldn't let small things upset me and I should learn to forgive the bigger issues. Life is so short to be lived as an angry person and I guess I should be ashamed that these kids have learned all this before and they are younger. So even though this wasn't what I expected, I'm glad it wasn't because although everyone's demeanor was placid, which was somewhat different for me, I gained a little more wisdom where I could not have learned otherwise.