

Students Today, Leaders Forever

Operation: Pay It Forward Tour



*"Do not follow where the path may lead;
instead make your own path and leave a trail"*
-Ralph Waldo Emerson

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To whom it may concern:

We are Students Today Leaders Forever: a brand new, college student based community service organization, determined to make a difference. This spring break, from Friday March 12th to Saturday March 20th, we will take a community service road trip, "Operation: Pay it Forward Tour," from Minneapolis to Washington DC and back. We will be stopping at major cities along the way with the sole purpose of ministering wherever and to whomever we can. We will have scheduled stops at Chicago, South Bend, Cleveland, Canton, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Washington, Indianapolis, and back to Minneapolis.

Starting in Minneapolis, we plan to have a large "kick-off" event, uniting the U of M campus, as well as involving the community and the cities. After this, we will combine the cities we stop at, doing projects aimed at an array of people. We hope to play with kids at an orphanage, help the elderly, feed the homeless, and physically clean and build up the community.

Through this tour, we anticipate unifying the nation, as well as exposing the different facets of people, while breaking stereotypes and serving the people. The objective of this tour is simply to serve others, while simultaneously conveying the fact that genuine, sincere, good-hearted people still exist in this world—proving that not all kids are hoodlums, not all businessmen are greedy, not all politicians are liars.

We, Students Today Leaders Forever, are simply asking for your support in this movement. We are open and welcome to any involvement or cooperation you are willing to provide, although we are not demanding any. From financial assistance to spreading the message of what we are doing, anything can help.

Please feel free to contact us at any time for any reason. If you would like more detailed information, or if you would like to meet with us, please do not hesitate to contact us. We thank you so much for your time. Take care and again, *thank you*.

Sincerely,

Students Today Leaders Forever

Students Today, Leaders Forever

Operation: Pay it Forward Tour

Mission Statement

Our ultimate goal is to simply make an impact—to leave an everlasting mark, proving that we can change the world... one person at a time.

Vision

Four college kids up at 3am, talking and eating Top Ramen and Easy MAC—a typical night in the dorms, one might say. However, what sets this group apart is a life-changing, far-fetched idea that is so crazy, that it just might work.

It started as a vision: a vision to change people's lives, to change the college stereotype of Cancun spring breaks, to change the world. Some may call it insane, others see it as naïve. We see it as faith—faith in God, in mankind, and ultimately, faith in the idea that no dream is too big, that nothing is impossible, and that one person can make a difference.

As materialistic views continuously increase, our world continuously becomes more impersonal and more vicious. It seems as though every person and occupation possesses some type of negative connotation. However, we still believe in goodness and we believe in exposing others to this goodness. We strive toward breaking not only the stereotype for college students, but for all people across the nation—from the lying politician, to the money-grubbing businessman, to the insensitive teen.

We aim to serve these poorly represented people, especially those who proudly represent us: the politicians. Often the point of ridicule and the people to blame, we take our politicians for granted. It is our vision to positively acknowledge these people and to serve them with the appreciation and gratitude they deserve.

As college freshmen, 17 to 19 years of age, we have a dream of changing the world, a dream of making a difference—one person at a time. We are not building an empire; we are simply emphasizing the importance of the everyday tasks, proving that the little things matter too, whether it be building a house or making a kid smile. The love is there and we hope that people will soon follow, and that our love will endlessly spread.

It's a risk, yes we know; but the greater the risk, the sweeter the fruit. We are willing to give our all: our hearts, our dreams, our devotion to help leave a

positive influence on the people around us. We desire to lead, to serve, to be an example; we will help the overlooked and support the abandoned.

We strive for servant leadership—an idea that we not only lead by example, but by first showing the path, and then stepping back to help others on their paths. We are not looking to be first in line; we merely want to start and finish this project in the eyes of God. We want to illustrate active roles of leadership by boldly stepping down and showing others their talents and bringing out the best in them. We will use our gifts to their fullest potentials, while forever aspiring to be the vessel of God's will, with His guidance every step of the way.

Yes, we are college kids. Yes, this is crazy. Yes, we are 17 to 19 year olds. And yes, we can make a difference...we can change the world. For we are ***Students Today, Leaders Forever.***

Background

The vision for this project was inspired in a number of ways. The idea and thought behind paying it forward comes from Catherine Hyde's book, *Pay It Forward* which was turned into a movie by Warner Brothers. The Tour was inspired by a group of Australians that have made the tour happen in their country. The final inspiration has come from within those serving on the leadership team. These people were searching for a way to put their leadership skills to the test.

Logistics

A time to retreat, a time on the road, a time to serve others as God serves us. Spring Break 2004, OPERATION: PAY IT FORWARD TOUR will commence. We are Students Today, Leaders Forever, and this Spring Break we hope to revolutionize stereotypes, mindsets, and ultimately, people's lives. We are taking a road trip out to our nation's capital, Washington DC, while ministering to EVERYONE, from the poor to the politicians. Our long drives and community ministry will strengthen our bonds with each other, with the community, and most importantly, with God. We are combining the best parts of camp, road trips, and retreats to form this community service tour that will hopefully make a positive, life-lasting impression on the world.

We will be driving out east of Minneapolis, hitting major cities like Chicago, Pittsburgh, and DC, to name a few. At each place, we will have a time to minister while serving others, a time to relax while serving ourselves, and a time to bond, while serving each other. Our community service activities will vary, sometimes big, sometimes low key—regardless of the size, the importance does not waver. We are open to ideas and we are flexible to meet our goals; nothing is set in stone (except for the fact that this tour is going to happen☺). We know of a project where people visited in mates in Chicago jails, and so this is a definite possibility. We would like to sleep and serve a homeless shelter, and at some point, play with the kids at a foster home or an orphanage. Maybe a politician is supporting natural preservation—we will help clean and restore the projects the politicians are behind. Repainting low income areas or fixing inadequate housing.

Wherever we are needed, we will be there—we are willing to work, to get dirty, and to love.

Now, don't get us mixed up. We are not perfect (in fact, we are FAR from it), and we are not these "GREAT" almighty kids. Simply some young people who just want to make a difference. We are not here to glorify ourselves, but rather to glorify God and all HE is. We are not saying its "wrong" to go to Cancun on Spring Break or to have fun...we simply desire to expose another side of kids and college students—a side that has always prominently existed, but is often overlooked.

City List

1. **Minneapolis (Thursday, March 11)**
 - a. **Campus Wide Kickoff**
 - i. **Catherine Hyde speaks (Author of *Pay it Forward*)**
 - ii. **City official speaks**
2. **Chicago (Friday Night, Saturday march 13)**
 - a. **Morning service project**
 - b. **Leave to South Bend (late lunch?)–1.5 hours.**
3. **South Bend (Saturday march 13)**
 - a. **Hang out (more fun and relaxation).**
 - b. **Visit Notre Dame possibly.**
 - c. **Leave for Cleveland in afternoon (5-ish?)–4 hours.**
4. **Cleveland (Saturday Night, Sunday march 14)**
 - a. **Morning Service Project.**
 - b. **Sabbath–possible worship service (optional)**
 - c. **Leave for Canton in afternoon, to make it by supper–1 hour.**
5. **Canton (Sunday march 14)**
 - a. **Hang out, Eat Football Hall of Fame.**
 - b. **Leave for Pittsburgh evening/night–two hours.**
6. **Pittsburgh (Sunday night, Monday march 15)**
 - a. **Morning Service Project**
 - i. **one of the larger projects**
 - ii. **work with Greensboro Central Catholic School**
 - b. **Leave for Philadelphia in afternoon–5 hours.**
7. **Philadelphia (Monday Night, Tuesday march 16)**
 - a. **Evening Service Project with The Simple Way**
 - b. **Tentatively staying with Simple Way in homeless areas**
 - c. **Leave afternoon/evening for DC–2 hours.**
8. **Washington DC (Tuesday Night, Wednesday march 17)**
 - a. **Nice Hotel**
 - b. **Midnight Monument Tour**
 - c. **Grand Celebration, Government officials**
9. **Indianapolis (Late Thursday night, Friday March 19)**
 - a. **Final Fun Night**
 - b. **Serve the people working on the trip**
 - c. **Leave Friday Midday–9.5 hours.**
10. **Minneapolis, 10 hours from Indianapolis.**
 - a. **Time to Rest and Recover**

What about you???

Now, this is what we are about. Do you feel like us? Did any of this hit you? Do you want to help out? How can you see yourself fitting in? I mean, whether you do a project in conjunction with ours, or if you meet us out there. Whatever you can offer, we will gladly work with; even if it is simple feedback, or moral support through prayer. If this is not for you right now, it's okay. We are just extending the offer.

The Following are resources to spark ideas.
Please feel free to use any/none of the ideas.

- Fill a bus with students and meet us in Washington, D. C.
- Plan a community service project in your community, spending the day in some of the rougher neighborhoods in your community
- Tell students from your high school and challenge them to be part of the movement

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 - a. Hang out (more fun and relaxation).
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 - c. Leave for Cleveland in afternoon (5-ish?)–4 hours.
14. Cleveland (Saturday Night, Sunday march 14)
 - a. Morning Service Project.
 - b. Sabbath–possible worship service (optional)
 - c. Leave for Canton in afternoon, to make it by supper–1 hour.
15. Canton (Sunday march 14)
 - a. Hang out, Eat Football Hall of Fame.
 - b. Leave for Pittsburgh evening/night–two hours.
16. Pittsburgh (Sunday night, Monday march 15)
 - a. Morning Service Project
 - i. one of the larger projects
 - ii. work with Greensboro Central Catholic School
 - b. Leave for Philadelphia in afternoon–5 hours.
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 - a. Evening Service Project with The Simple Way
 - b. Tentatively staying with Simple Way in homeless areas
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18. Washington DC (Tuesday Night, Wednesday march 17)
 - a. Nice Hotel
 - b. Midnight Monument Tour
 - c. Grand Celebration, Government officials
19. Indianapolis (Late Thursday night, Friday March 19)
 - a. Final Fun Night
 - b. Serve the people working on the trip
 - c. Leave Friday Midday–9.5 hours.
20. Minneapolis, 10 hours from Indianapolis.
 - a. Time to Rest and Recover

Contact Information

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"We must be the change we wish to be in the world."
-Mahatma Gandhi