

OPINION

STUDENTS SERVE IN CINCINNATI

by Cheryl Worley
Staff Writer

Christmas holidays are a time during which most college students relax at home and enjoy a break from the pressures of school.

But a group of students from Mars Hill College is an exception. They spend part of their vacation working in the inner-city of Cincinnati, Ohio. The students travel to Cincinnati a week after Christmas for a two-week stay, under the direction of Thomas Plaut, professor of sociology.

The students experience life in a community very different from Mars Hill or their hometowns. In the inner-city, where the population is about 70% black, foreigners come into the city through places called port of entries. There, they live in low income housing till they get jobs and can move to a better place.

The community's reaction to the students was at first very cynical. "They're just a bunch of middle-class kids coming to stare at poor folks," one person said. But that type of reaction did not stop the students. They proved by their hard work that they wanted to serve and help the people there. The community soon accepted them and even welcomed the different groups that have come each year.

Suffering takes on new meaning for many of these students. Rather than being concerned with getting the latest style in shoes, people in the inner-city are concerned with having shoes at all, or having food and a place to sleep on freezing nights.

Each student works in an agency that gives aid to people of the inner-city. The agencies are funded by private individuals and church groups. For example, Tim Storey and Alan Kromer worked at the Sign of the Cross Housing. And Neil Routh and Kris Kramer worked at a street-oriented Franciscan friary and The Free Store, a work-site provider for the poor.

Skip Wood, a senior, went to Cincinnati two years ago and worked in the St. Francis Catholic Worker's House, a soup kitchen in the home of Jim Mullen. Every day Mullen would serve 20 gallons of soup.

"Serving the people as in a restaurant, rather than in a cafeteria, made them feel more respected," Wood said.

While working there, Wood met a mentally retarded man named Arthur, who could enter his apartment only by walking up a fire escape and climbing through a window. His only source of heat was a gas stove, but he didn't know how to light the pilot light.

After befriending Arthur, Wood gave him his Mars Hill address and phone number so that he could keep in touch.

Several months later, Arthur called Wood unexpectedly and showed up at the door of Wood's dormitory room. "My experience with Arthur was the closest thing to having my own child, because Arthur became so dependent on me," Wood said.

At the end of each day, the students came back and cooked their own meal. After dinner, they had a reflection prayer-time led by Plaut. Students kept journals and shared their experiences each day.

"Students go through a process of experience and reflection," Plaut said. "They share things that shock them or express feelings about what they see."

"That trip really opened my eyes to the world and made me think," Wood said. "It makes you very thankful and is definitely worth the effort to go."

Since going to Cincinnati, two students have graduated and returned there full time. Another is planning work there for a term after his senior year.

"I really appreciate what it meant to preach, not just to speak words, but to reach out and care for other people," said a student majoring in religion.

CURRICULUM

During the 1987-1988 academic year, Mars Hill College will commence its new general education curriculum. During that school year we will be operating under two curricula: one for students who will have entered the college before June, 1987, and another for those who enter after June, 1987. The General Education Transition Committee is trying to make the transition as easy as possible for both students and faculty. To this end the Committee has decided the following:

1. Next semester will be the last semester that most of the courses designed to meet requirements under the old curriculum will be offered. As advisors you should encourage your advisees to meet their general requirements under the old curriculum as soon as possible. However, if students do not finish their requirements by June, 1987, this committee will find substitute courses in the new curriculum for these requirements.

2. Information about the transition and a list of the equivalent courses will be sent to you and the students before the pre-registration for the fall semester, 1987. If you have any questions about the transition you can address them to Mr. Chapman.

SCHOLARS RETREAT

by Vickie Millis
Staff Writer

When the top freshmen scholars arrived on the Mars Hill College campus this semester, they were in for a rude awakening. They probably had the idea they would study books and have discussions during the fall retreat because they were sent a book during this summer and told to be prepared to discuss it.

Instead, the 45 freshmen, and eight upper level scholars, worked four days for the forest service, digging fire trenches and clearing off the Appalachian Trail.

This is not unusual. Last year's beginning scholars laid railroad ties around campsites. The year before, the newcomers repaired the Appalachian Trail where it had washed out.

The first morning out the students found out why they were told to bring grubbie clothes and work gloves. This year, each scholar was handed a

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TO THE EDITORS

Students,

We know that you are aware of the APO has had its charter suspended and why. The brothers feel that and the student body are entitled to an explanation.

The brothers wanted to communicate their enthusiasm toward the change in a letter to our Alumni. In our abundance we acted without thinking.

We neglected to take into account the diversity of our membership. It meant the contents of the letter were viewed in a joking and narrow text. Unfortunately, it was received in a distasteful and stereotypical manner. We would like to apologize for any personal anguish this may have caused.

Mars Hill College is an excellent institution, and we would never purposely do anything to blemish the reputation of the college or its ideas.

We realize that we cannot undo what has been done; however, we are eager to work to improve APO.

Understand that the service projects are any other constructive act done as a group of students and as an organization. This will benefit Mars Hill College and the community. We hope that this is a minor setback and we are looking forward to a productive and bright future.

Sincerely,

Tom Sheffield
President, Alpha Phi Omega

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