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Kimberly Lopas Sullivan : Young Alumni Award

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2005 Young Alumni Award

Kimberly Lopas Sullivan '95

If you're looking for a "starter-upper" for your organization or favorite cause, look no further. Kimberly Sullivan's whole life since she was a freshman at St. Norbert College has been one of volunteering to help others, to create, design, promote, and work very diligently to meet people's needs. Perhaps more than anything else, she is a real "hands-on" person who constantly asks herself, "What can we do to help make the lives of those around us better?"

During her sophomore year, Kimberly participated in a poverty immersion trip to Mexico. When she returned to campus, she founded a new campus organization, A.G.U.A. (Americans Growing to Understand Americanos-Latinos), a student group concerned with Latin-American issues. As its President through her senior year, she led the group in presenting speakers and cultural events to promote awareness on campus, helped three Guatemalan villages through fundraising and collecting needed items, corresponded with children in El Salvador, and presented slide shows and lectures about Mexico to SNC, local schools, and churches.

This experience (and her work as a Resident Assistant, as a Peer Counselor, and as President of Psi Chi Psychology Club) was complemented by her volunteer activities that included tutoring 5th grade at-risk students; helping adults with developmental disabilities utilizing progressive relaxation techniques with patients at Bellin Psychiatric Center; working the crisis phone line and facilitating activities with children at a shelter for abused women and children; tutoring Mexican children in the English language; and visiting lonely elderly persons at a nursing home. In her senior year, she convinced two SNC professors to add a community service component to their courses. All of these activities led to her decision to become a social worker. After earning a Masters in Social Work from the U. of Minnesota, Kimberly worked as a social worker until...

She became a full-time Mom to Logan (3) and Laura (6 months), who have become her "biggest life-challenge and greatest reward." Her wish for her children is that they "grow into adults who continually look to understand the situations of others and work towards making a difference in the world."

This devoted Mom continues to make a difference. As a member and Community Outreach Chair of "Mothers & More", she coordinates all community volunteer activities for approximately 100 women. This includes organizing a used toy and book drive for the Salvation Army; coordinating an intergenerational playgroup at an assisted living facility; implementing a cooking program for teen mothers at Marion House collecting school supplies for the Back to

School Store; and helping build a house for Habitat for Humanity's WomenBuild.

Based on her own joy in helping others, Kimberly would advise current SNC students to "Get involved. Get in there and get your hands dirty. Learn from what you experience and share that knowledge with others."

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