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### Abbie T. Daigle : Young Alumni Award

St. Norbert College

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# 2006 Young Alumni Award

## Abbie T. Daigle '02

Valedictorian of her class at Rice Lake (Wis.) High School, Summa Cum Laude graduate of St. Norbert College, and included in Who's Who Among Students in America, Abbie Daigle's resume is that of someone who we all would expect to continue in graduate school, medical or law school, or be in a high-powered job.

Well, "high-powered" describes Abbie's life, but perhaps the old civil rights motto, "All power to the people," best describes her post-graduate commitment to serving the needs of the most unfortunate among us – the poor, the homeless, the hungry, the sick, etc. Abbie's concern for others began, like the concern of so many St. Norbert students, while she was a student here.

On campus, Abbie was involved at Old St. Joseph Parish as a music minister, Eucharistic minister, minister of the altar and minister of the word. The Peace and Justice Center, in particular, helped her learn the difference between service and justice, and then apply what she had learned through retreats, voluntary activities on campus, and a trip to Cuernavaca, Mexico, where she took part in the Cuernavaca Center for Intercultural Dialogue on Development. Her experiences in Cuernavaca made her an even greater activist on campus and after graduation. As Abbie says, her experiences in class and through her campus involvement "shaped the person I am today and gave me the tools and confidence to live my life well."

Since leaving St. Norbert College, Abbie has worked as a volunteer with a number of service organizations. Currently, she is a full-time Franciscan volunteer minister at St. Francis Inn, Philadelphia. Here she runs a soup kitchen, thrift store and women's center; prepares and serves meals; plans prayers, masses and reflections; and daily attends to a myriad of physical and spiritual needs of hundreds of guests and volunteers. Her service to others has included working with women and children in transitional housing with life skills, after-school and summer programs, and providing support at a drop-in center for homeless and addicted women.

An earlier stint with the Diocese of Superior's Office of Religious Education and Youth Ministry involved talking with young people, training catechists, taking youth on retreats and finding creative ways to make religious education relevant for students in the diocese.

In her present position, Abbie tries to live simply, to make clear that life in an abandoned, forgotten place like inner city Philadelphia is dignified, that the people she ministers to are children of God, and that all people are interconnected. Her motto remains, "Love God through loving others."

Her life and work are embodied in her advice to current students, “Get involved. Look beyond yourself and see what’s going on in the world. Don’t be afraid to take risks; ask yourself, ‘Why not?’”

## St. Norbert College

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