

## **Catholic University community performs 352,627 service hours**

*Jenna Johnson*

Last summer, Catholic University officials challenged students, staff and others to complete at least 125,000 hours of community service before the school's 125th birthday on April 10.

The original idea was to only open the challenge to students, but at the last minute, officials decided to also include alumni, faculty, staff and trustees — just in case the small student body of about 3,600 undergrads and 3,250 grad students couldn't complete that many service hours that quickly.

The goal of 125,000 hours was hit early this year, and by March students alone had logged more than 125,000 hours. As of 4 p.m., the grand total had grown to 352,627 hours.

That number was announced during "Founders Day" festivities Tuesday, which the university picked as its official 125th birthday. April 10, 1887 was the date on a letter that Pope Leo XIII sent to the archbishop of Baltimore granting approval for founding the university.



CU President John Garvey helps students paint at a D.C. elementary school on Martin Luther King Jr. Day in January.  
(Ed Pfueller - Catholic University)

Catholic isn't the first university to ask students to log their community service hours. In 2009, first lady Michelle Obama challenged George Washington University students to complete at least 100,000 hours of service in exchange for her speaking at graduation. When the first lady took the stage in May 2010, GWU's 25,000 students and other campus members had logged 163,980 hours.

At Catholic, the more than 350,000 hours were completed by 3,046 volunteers. Many of the hours were the result of long-standing university service traditions, such as serving food to the homeless or having law students offer free services at a legal clinic. But the challenge also inspired new initiatives, including the formation of a knitting and crocheting club that made winter clothing for the homeless and baby blankets and hats to donate to the Christ Child Society.

More than 127,000 of the hours were completed within the District. The rest of the service hours occurred in the Washington region, students' hometowns and during mission trips to places such as Arizona, Florida, Michigan, Costa Rica, Jamaica and Nicaragua.

**Fonte: The Washington Post, Washington, 10 Apr. 2012, International, On-line.**