



# All Things Ignatian



## Freshman Leadership Program

*Ignatian tradition in a living/learning community from the Student Activities Office and Residence Life*

FLP is a living/learning community geared to instilling leadership principles from various leadership models into its participants. Through a year-long program, Ignatian tradition is infused via the following five program components: fall retreat, community activism, weekly service, seminar, and the portfolio.



*The 2013-14 class of the Freshman Leadership Program*

### Community Activism

One of the main ways FLP is active in the community is through hosting an annual Thanksgiving Dinner to benefit Precious Memories Daycare. Precious Memories is a local daycare whose goal is to provide a loving and safe childcare environment for as many children from low-income families as possible. Precious Memories has made it a goal to not turn away any child; therefore, it is able to help many families who are experiencing financial hardship or who are turned away by other daycare providers. Many children at Precious Memories suffer from developmental disabilities, including Down Syndrome, autism, and fetal alcohol syndrome.

Every year, the Freshman Leadership Program has raised enough money to help keep Precious Memories running. Members of the Freshman Leadership Program contribute to the success of the dinner in many facets. Committees include: ticket sales and marketing, setup and cleanup, cooking, and dinner serving. It is an excellent way for the freshmen to learn about their talents and how they can contribute as a member of

a large team. The Thanksgiving Dinner also teaches delegation and meticulousness to detail, all while helping a great cause.

With the help of donations from local businesses, this year's dinner raised approximately \$3500 for Precious Memories. This year's dinner was also the largest in its nine-year span; over 420 people filled the Harper Ballroom. Thanks to FLP, Precious Memories has enough funds to cover the costs not covered by grants. It means the world to know that our effort provides a source of continual love to children in need.

### Final Portfolio

Everything presented and experienced in FLP would mean nothing if such were not personal. As a requirement from the program, the freshmen complete a portfolio project come the end of each academic school year. The portfolio lives up to its name: it is each student's reflection, growth, realizations, and potentials bundled into a single, tangible space. Completion of the portfolio not only symbolizes completion of FLP, but it is a resource for each member to take and to use throughout the rest of their Creighton experience and beyond. The portfolio allows FLP, and all its memories, to last and resonate within each person beyond the scope of the program itself. In addition to compiling one's own portfolio, each freshman presents his or her portfolio to other freshmen, allowing for both self-growth and communal growth. Through the completion of this project, freshmen not only realize just how much the past year has impacted them, they realize just how powerful and how special of leaders they truly are.



*First course and ticket from the 2013 FLP Thanksgiving Dinner*

*Sponsored by the Creighton University Jesuit Community, in association with the Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality.*

### Fall Retreat

Each fall, the sixty freshmen and the eleven executives attend a weekend retreat at Creighton's retreat center in Griswold, Iowa. The Freshman Leadership Program emphasizes the importance of relationships, both with others and with self; after all, it is through thorough understanding and personal connections that optimize one's leadership potential. One cannot give of themselves if they have nothing to give. The retreat focuses on the needs of self and how one can receive themselves in the eyes of others. It is from there that personal talents and gifts arise, and it is from there where such talents begin to flourish the beauty of our community and our world. The retreat is a weekend of genuine emotion and it unifies seventy-one individuals into one FLP.

### Weekly Service

Freshmen in FLP attend one of eight service sites weekly around the Omaha-Metro area with their mentor group of five other freshmen, two sophomore mentors, and an FLP executive. Students predominately work with children in after-school or extended-care programs. These programs are located in ethnically and socio-economically diverse areas around the Omaha Metro area. Many children that FLP students work with at their service sites live below the poverty line. Oftentimes, the after-school, daycare, or extended-care programs that these children attend are safe, nurturing environments that are vital to a child's growth and development along with going to school.

When FLP students attend service, many have the opportunity to tutor and help students with homework. Other students lead group activities and play sports and other gym activities with the students; still other students do activities with mentally and physically handicapped students. FLP students form strong relationships with those they serve; many are considered to be active role models and sources of inspiration. The service sites that FLP students attend are: Precious Memories Daycare, Kids Can Community Center, South Omaha Boys & Girls Club, Completely Kids at Liberty Elementary, Jesuit Academy, Holy Name Elementary School S.T.A.R.S. Program, Children's Respite Care Center and Hope Center for Kids.



*FLPer Kevin Kelly and FLP Exec Anna Alexander before seminar*

### Seminar

Every Tuesday evening, FLP attends seminar. Seminar consists of a mixture of workshops and speakers from the Creighton and Omaha community. The Freshman Leadership Program focuses seminar around leadership theories and tangible skills that will help members grow as leaders.

Throughout the first semester of seminar, members will hear many speakers from the Creighton community, including some familiar faces to Creighton: Father Lannon, president; Dr. Robert Dornsife, professor of English; & Gerry Kuhlman, senior academic advisor. Other seminars featured Gary Rodkin, CEO of ConAgra Foods; Susan Jacques, former CEO and President of the Gemological Institute of America; and a tour of the Omaha World Herald Freedom Center.

Seminar is a fantastic tool that allows members of FLP to learn first-hand the advice and charisma of inspirational leaders. Speakers often stress the importance of discernment and the listening to one's own heart; it is often the journey of honing these simple, yet complex, Jesuit values that have allowed such individuals to become the people they are.