

# ARCHBISHOP MAY SERVICE AWARD WINNERS – *Where Are They Now?*

## DAN AMIRI – 2005 awardee

1. Was there a key influence at Duchesne that prompted you to be so interested and involved in service? Please give specifics if possible.

I had a lot of influences at Duchesne High School. Most of my service was related to the time I spent with the Duchesne Key Club, which I served as Secretary and President for my Junior and Senior years. My involvement in Key Club was definitely encouraged by a number of people though most notably I want to point out the work of Matt Lamb, Nick Stahlschmidt, Marc Rothermich and several others who were in leadership positions at the time. Service for them was an extension of the joy they had for life and their gratitude for the St. Charles community, and how is it possible to not be inspired by that?

It goes without saying too that Mr. Kjar was inspiring in his own way. His no-nonsense approach reminded me that the work of service, while a work rooted in joy, is a grave responsibility and is not something to be taken lightly. His commitment to Key Club and to its enduring success was, for me, a reminder of how ministry can flourish when people are united in purpose and vision (and sometimes a kick in the pants).

2. Have you continued to be involved in service in your life after Duchesne? Please give a few examples, if possible.

After Duchesne, I continued to be involved in service in various ways. At the University of Notre Dame, I continued on with Kiwanis organizations and joined Circle K. One of the most rewarding experiences I had was a ministry to the local juvenile detention center where we tutored young men who were trying to catch up in school or were preparing to take a test for their GED. These young men had made mistakes in their life but it was encouraging to see the efforts of those who worked hard be rewarded.

After college, I have been a part of various organizations. I got married young and moved about six times in the last 10 years and have just settled down in the last couple of years (it seems) in Wildwood, Mo. Today, I am a member of Parish Council at St. Alban Roe and coach my oldest's soccer team. Ultimately, my primary service is to my family and my children (ages: 6,3,1) which I do every single day of my life. I feel like the same attitudes (e.g., generosity, gratitude, selflessness, humility, etc.) that were instilled in me during high school by Key Club, my peers, and those I served, have helped me to be a joyful father and faithful servant to my family.



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3. We know you've done a lot for others; what do you feel you've gained in the time you've spent in the service of others? What have you taken away from the experience(s)?

I firmly believe that for us Christians, "service" is not merely something we do but rather is an extension of the joy we have found in our Savior, Christ Jesus. Or in the words of John, "We love because he first loved us." By this love, we are transformed and we go out into the world to bring the Good News to the poor. I have found that the acts of service I perform confirm and strengthen my relationship with God and help to "make him real" in my own life.

Service has also taken on new meaning for me in light of the "Theology of the Body" which was an influential text for me during my time in college. It seems clear to me now that the words spoken by Jesus at the end of Matthew 25, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me" are not just an explanation for how we get to heaven, but rather a profound truth of our connection to God through our service to other people. When we clothe another person or give them food, we "participate" in the Kingdom of God.

