

Adviseries commit minds to service through NUSH

Advisery service projects prove valuable to students

by Hannah Young

Alongside the much-anticipated reappearance of holiday music and Christmas lights comes altruism. Once again, advisories are planning and organizing collaborative service projects.

Many adviseries signed up to be involved in the NUSH (Northwestern University Settlement House) program, also known as Adopt-A-Family. In this program, the advisories are assigned a family and each family member's wish list. Groups fundraise or collect money to purchase gifts for the family.

Advisor Kristen Torkelson said, "It has a personal touch to it. You have a list of family members...their specific wish lists. It gives it more of a focused purpose."

While many work with NUSH, each advisery has a different manner

in which they carry out the project.

Adviser Mark Colegrove pushes his students to do the project every year, and to be invested in it.

"We don't fundraise. I want them to take it out of their own pockets and not ask mom and dad so that they take some ownership in it. My push is for them to do it. Not for someone else go out and buy the gifts but for them to do it," Colegrove said. In agreement, Torkelson said, "When [the students] own it, they get a lot out of the project."

Adviser Maria Barraza finds importance in teaching students that service isn't about just writing a check. "It's more about dedicating the time and truly wanting to do it from the compassion. It's really important for them to see that it's not just giving money. It's not just monetary," Barraza said.

Senior and Barraza advisee Therese Cooney said, "It really shows you that even with just a small group and even though we are just in high school, we can still make a difference and we can still help someone out and make someone's holiday great for them and spread that joy."



NUSH partnership provides families with essentials for the holidays | NUSH

"Also, the whole idea of empathy. Putting yourself in someone else's shoes and I think if you can help out people who are less fortunate, that's really important," senior Nicki Bukovac said.

Some advisories decided against participating in the project. Adviser Julie Novak did not want to introduce a new project as "it would've been too much for [her advisees] to take on. Plus, we are already, as a senior class, working on Habitat for Humanity. I want them to focus their efforts on

that."

Students and advisers tend to do service simply as part of a checklist imprinted in them. "Service work is important. We should give back to the community and live our school motto. However, it's really easy to do too many," Novak said. "It doesn't become meaningful and it's like checking off a checklist. The important thing is to understand the work you are doing and the impact of it. That's why I think Habitat will be great for advisory. We are doing

so much throughout the year to understand more about it that it's not just throwing money at a problem," Novak said.

Colegrove said, "If you're just doing service to do service, they don't necessarily learn a lot about it and it doesn't motivate them to do more service. If it's meaningful and impactful to them, they are going to go out and do it on their own."

In addition to teaching students about service, it also becomes a bonding experience. "One of the best things about our advisory is that we are all really close but we also have a lot of girls who really want to make a difference in the world," Bukovac said. "It just brings us together to do something outside of school."

According to the faculty, service is beneficial when it's presented and carried out in the appropriate manner. Torkelson believes that it impacts students overall by making them "more aware of the world around them. What we might take for granted other people don't. Being aware of that and always thinking of others is a great life skill. It's a good reminder."

Overcrowded bike racks force students to lock bikes elsewhere

Students worry about bike security due to construction congestion

by David Heiman and Mack Guthrie

In a new age of environmental and health awareness, bikes overcrowd the racks and students are forced to park creatively to trees fences, even other bikes.

Any student entering the building from the front or getting off the bus at the corner of Winnetka and Woodland can see the large number of bikes occupying every available inch of the bike racks.

"They are totally overcrowded, there is usually no space for me to lock my bike" said New Trier Student and regular bike rider Tyler Janszak, who has on occasion resorted to locking to a tree when there is no place else available.

It's not difficult to see this issue as bikes regularly cover the railings of the amphitheater, or the steps of the Gaffney. As students become more aware of the health and environmental benefits of biking, ridership has increased and the school has yet to accommodate this rising tide.

A 2009 study from the U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that 11.9 percent of all trips in this country are done by walking or bicycling, a significant increase from just 9.5 percent in 2001.

In response to this wave of bike riders, New Trier Junior Casey Crowe said "There should be more bike racks to accommodate the bikers."

Many students have alleged that bike racks were removed during the construction process.

However, Steve Linke Physical Plant Services Manager explained that of the twelve bike racks at Winnetka, some had been moved, but none removed.

In their various complaints about the bike parking situation, several students suggested that the bike racks at New Trier were not secure. Janszak said he felt his bike was "not really" secure while at school.

New Trier uses a grid style bike rack, which Dero, a popular

manufacturer of bike parking options, says is one of its least secure models. In a publication from the company, the company says "Racks that cradle only the front wheel of the bike should be avoided" particularly for long term parking, such as would be required for a school day.

Teacher Colby Vargas felt differently. When asked if he felt his bike was secure while at school he said "Has been for the last twenty plus years." Vargas's claims are reinforced by Winnetka's low crime rate, and the relative safety of the neighborhood.

Nonetheless, a perception of poor security could be enough to deter many students from biking to school.

A study by NACTO, the National Organization of City Transportation Officials, found that high quality bike infrastructure including but not limited to secure bike parking, is key to increasing bike ridership.

Linke says that PPS is well aware of the issue saying "We will be adding some bike racks on the north side of the school as part of the new addition" but that "At this time we are short on space because of the construction."

With an increased understanding of the dangers of air pollution from cars, it is no surprise students are more eager than ever to bike to school.

Junior Ayanna Guillen summed up her experience biking to school saying "At the end of the day, people can barely get to their bikes." This is an issue that affects students everyday, and in writing this article, there was no shortage of students who wished to lament their issues at the bike racks.

Whether it was that their bike has been locked to another persons by mistake, or that their bike was simply unretrievable due to the other bikes surrounding it, it is clear that there is a significant thirst for change in how New Trier treats its student, and teacher, bikers.

In a plea for bike riders to be made a priority Guillen said "It would be nice to have better bike racks because if New Trier can spend so much money on new big things, they should fix the simple things first."

Outdated restrooms too cramped for use

Width of girls' stalls creates challenge for students

by Mia Sherin

The girls' bathroom on the second floor of the north building is causing problems because of the small size of its stalls, making it difficult to get into the stall, especially with a backpack.

Students who have complained about this issue say that if they choose to bring their backpack into the stall, they have to play a game of twister just to fiddle their way in. However, if they leave it outside the stall, they run the risk of getting items stolen.

Junior Serena Braun struggles with the choice of taking or leaving her backpack because the stalls are "really small." She said, "I think it's really annoying that you can't bring your backpack in the stall. If you do, it's really hard to get in. You basically have to take it off, turn around, and back into it."

Sophomore Miriam Rovin has been at this campus for less than two months, and she has already faced issues surrounding this bathroom.

Rovin expressed this problem and also brought up another issue: "Typically, if I use one of those bathrooms I just leave my backpack outside by the mirrors in the common area, which is fine, but 90% of the girls at this school have a black North Face backpack, so it's very difficult to make sure you get the right one."

Juniors Kelly Olvany and Julia Damen have a different perspective on the issue. Neither feel that this is a problem at our campus, and don't feel strongly that this needs to be fixed.

Damen explained, "I haven't had any problems with any bathrooms at New Trier. Now that you're bringing it up, maybe I've noticed, but it's not something that I feel is urgent or necessary to be taken care of." Bringing up a similar point, Olvany said, "I have never noticed an issue with it. I don't frequently use those bathrooms, but when I do I've never had a problem."

Looking at first and third floor



Newer bathrooms have wider stalls than older bathrooms | Young

bathrooms, the width of the stalls are 31 inches and 33 inches, and although there was a tin for bathroom products, it did not cause any problems entering the stalls.

The bathroom stalls on the second floor of the north building have an actual width of 31 inches, but when entering in sideways (which is necessary when trying to get in), a person actually only has a mere 22 inches.

This is because the opened door and the bathroom products tin allow for a much narrower space because of their placement.

Given such a narrow space to enter, how much space would a student's backpack take up in this stall? The measurements of the average length from a student's shoulders to the end of their backpack is 20 inches. This only leaves 2 inches to get into the stall.

Student Alliance member Ilana Nazari acknowledged the issue and said, "I do know how impossible it is to get in, especially since my backpack is super wide because it has textbooks and binders in it."

This wasn't the first time she had heard from a student about a problem similar to this: "We have gotten some requests from other

students in Student Alliance about bathrooms. Not those specifically but bathrooms in general, and we have been working with PPS to try to fix some of those. I totally see where this is coming from."

Nazari explained that in Student Alliance, they bring the problems from the students to the people who are best suited to solve it. In this case, they can suggest the problem to PPS. Steve Linke, the Facilities Manager, explained what is being done on the administration level. He said that this particular bathroom is still original and was built in the 30s.

Linke explained, "that is why the doorways aren't quite as wide as the newer ones. Anything that we renovate, we bring up to modern standards, so the doorways are wider."

Though this restroom is not in the plan to be renovated in the next four years, Linke said, "We have been doing restroom work. We have just not gotten around to some of those in the north building. Restrooms that have not been renovated are on our radar."