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Arend D. Lubbers

Grand Valley State University

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I consider it a distinct privilege to address students in the Excellence in Leadership and Volunteer! GVSU programs through this newsletter. You represent the best of what college students across this land can aspire to, and I regard you as role models for every student at Grand Valley. Even the title of this publication names the quintessence of what you are about. People who lead most effectively—like an Abraham Lincoln or a Dwight Eisenhower—are the ones who understand that, first of all, they have been called to serve.

You are already proving yourselves as tomorrow’s leaders by acting on that principle of service today. Your outreach to Union High School freshmen is giving them the chance to do something they never would have dared without you. As Dream Makers, you are telling them they can change the world around them for the better. Your leadership is empowering them to make decisions and take steps to make their school a safer and more compassionate place in which to learn.

You have addressed the needs of the hungry and homeless. You are promoting the spirit of multiculturalism—the need for all of us to walk in each other’s moccasins. You run blood drives, put on talks about preserving the environment, and find big brothers and sisters to give companionship—and hope—to some youngsters who are in need of a solid adult friendship.

Familiar as you are with the concept of transformational leadership, you know that people don’t reach the top of their career ladders without recognizing their mission is not to boost themselves, but to serve others. Corporate CEOs, medical Chiefs of Staff, United States Senators, even presidents of public universities understand that being out in front does not mean putting ourselves first. We lead our employees, patients, citizens, and students. We lead by demonstrating through our actions that our commitment is to meet our obligations for the greater good.

In 1939 the world stared down the barrel of barbarism in a war for nothing less than the soul of the human race. One of this century’s greatest leaders, Winston Churchill, spoke for the free world, for leaders like you, for volunteerism on behalf of human decency, when he defined the word “duty.”

\[ \text{The destiny of mankind is not decided by material computation. When great causes are on the move in the world, we learn we are spirits, not animals, and that something is going on in space and time, which, whether we like it or not, spells duty.} \]

But as busy college students can you justify the time you spend doing your “duty?” In extending yourselves to others, do you cheat yourself out of learning opportunities during these crucial years of college? According to a recent University of Michigan study, the answer is unequivocal. Students taking a class that included a service component had better attendance at lectures and seminars, and higher grades than students not volunteering for “great causes.” Doing our duty by others makes us better students for ourselves.

Leadership and service are inextricably connected. Leading makes us better servants; serving makes us better leaders. As the president of this university, I am proud to have every member of Excellence in Leadership and Volunteer! GVSU on this campus. You are Grand Valley’s promise to the future.