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Remarks, delivered for the Michigan College Compact on May 14, 1997

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MICHIGAN COLLEGE COMPACT

MAY 14, 1997

What has the affiliation with Michigan College Compact accomplished on the campuses of the member colleges and universities? Here is some testimony from four of those campuses. More than 150,000 students on 25 campuses have volunteered their service since 1987.

From Central Michigan University: A student returned from a Michigan College Compact meeting. There he learned of the Alternative Spring Break Program. Instead of basking in the sun on a Florida beach, students spent the week in service to others. Through his initiative, 14 students from CMU went to a site in Kentucky. They returned invigorated by their experience and within two years students from Central helped in 11 sites in the United States, and the Spring Break service trips became a permanent part of campus life.

At Western Michigan University, Michigan College Compact inspired an “Into the Streets” program. A “plunge” into the streets was planned to clean up the community of Kalamazoo. Students reacted positively. Soon instead of one plunge into the streets, there were three each year. At last count, over 1,000 student participated.
To demonstrate how pervasive service learning can become, listen to this testimony from Olivet College. "At Olivet College, encouragement and support from the Michigan College Compact contributed to the faculty's resolve to make service learning a graduation requirement for all students and sparked the idea to make community service the cornerstone of Olivet's entire scholarship program."

On Grand Valley's campus, while I was preparing to leave after an evening event. I noticed activity on the roof of the Campus Center. Upon inquiring I learned that the Dean of Students, the Director of Housing, and our Michigan College Compact Coordinator had promised to spend the night on the roof if the number of student volunteers for community service work and service internships doubled in a year. The next year they were on the roof again.

Here this word from President Mel Vulgamore. "I am retiring after 14 years at Albion. The Michigan College Compact has been the most satisfying extra campus development of my tenure. One cannot attend an annual recognition program and not be moved by the parade of teams and individuals dedicated to service across the state. Seeing these young people
emerge and imagining the multitude of lives beyond them which have been
touched is the most tangible feedback from a single idea I have ever
experienced.”

Today we have a senior from Albion College and a recent graduate from
Alma College to tell you about their experiences in service to the community.
They can share with you the inspiration that President Vulgamore attested to.
They can demonstrate best of all what the Michigan College Compact
represents, and why students, faculty and staff at Michigan’s colleges and
universities participate in it and support it. I present to you first Monique
Averill from Alma who will be followed by Bill Sweeney from Albion.