



MADONNA UNIVERSITY

# International Newsletter

## HAVING FUN AT THE PLAYGROUND



On Wednesday, October 3, the Office of Service-Learning teamed up with Neighborhood Centers, Inc. and KaBOOM! (a national nonprofit organization that envisions a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America) to build a playground in a neighborhood in Southwest Detroit. The majority of Madonna's volunteers were international students.



Seunghyuk Baek, a freshman pre nursing student explains why we all came together that day: "The purpose of project was to provide a playground for local children where they can play safely." When we arrived at the site, we saw huge piles of mulch and pieces of unassembled playground equipment placed all around the area. We became z by the sound loud,



exciting music being played by a DJ, and we helped ourselves to a feast of donated breakfast foods. We then divided up into groups and got started! We spent the entire day laying down mulch and assembling plastic playscape equipment. Even though the work was hard, the day went by fast, and everyone had a blast. This was in large part due to a group of about 50 enthusiastic volunteers who were members of a national service AmeriCorps program called City Year. At one point in the day, about 25 of the City Year folks stopped what they were doing, got into formation, and danced to a line-dance-shuffle song! The D.J. responded warmly with, "Great dancing everyone! Now get back to work!" Seunghyuk describes the uniqueness of the day: "I had done several volunteer projects in



my country and that time it was sacrificing my own time to work. However, this time when I built the playground I felt like it was party because of music, food and especially dancing. I never thought volunteer work could be as fun as this." On top of all the fun we had, we had a great sense of satisfaction knowing that we helped make a beautiful new playground that will surely be a treasure to the children in that community.

If you would like to get involved with activities like this, contact:

**Kevin West, Director of the Office of Service-Learning**  
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• *Written by Stephen Rahrig*

## EDUCATION IN IRELAND



*Queens University* Belfast, Ireland – Built in 1849, *Queens University* is set in picturesque south Belfast about 1 mile from the city centre. It has undergone huge investment recently due to the stable political situation in the North of Ireland. A new \$80 million library is due for completion in 2009.



As a student coming to study in the US from Ireland, the differences in the teaching, system and grading can be hard to adjust to. What first struck me

was the opportunity for students to study subjects completely separate from their major. For example, sometimes I ask American students, what their major is, they reply "business," and then I see they are in sign language class! In Ireland and the UK, subjects are dropped or narrowed down when the student is 16 years old and finally at degree level, usually only one subject is studied. As a 20 year old, when I say to people that I am in Law School, they are surprised, as Law is studied at undergraduate level in Ireland rather than in graduate law schools as in the US. That means that the average beginner lawyer in the US is in his/her late twenties, but in Ireland they could be as young as 23 or 24. College in the US also differs in its funding. In Ireland funding comes mainly from the government with students paying a small amount each year in comparison to their US counterparts. I have also found the teaching style to be very different from that in my home university. That is, in Madonna, assessment takes place regularly with final exams only making up a smaller proportion of the grade. In my university an average class consists of one or two large assignments and one final exam making up around 70 or 80 percent. Finally our grading system differs. Degree scores go from 1st (A), 2-1(B), 2-2 (C) and 3rd (pass). A 1st is usually above 69%, people rarely or ever get 90%! That is an introduction to the Irish college system.

• *Written by John McAlister*



## EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES



The Philippine education system has a number of similarities and differences with the US education system. The medium language of instruction in the Philippines is English with one or two subjects such as Filipino and Philippine History/Social Studies that were taught using the national dialect (Tagalog). Filipino children start schooling (nursery up to kindergarden) at age 3 or 4. Elementary school or primary education consists of 6 levels but some schools have 7 levels. High School or secondary education has 4 levels. The core or major subjects of the Philippine primary and secondary education are the same as most of the US schools. Colleges and Universities in the Philippines have their own entrance exams which the incoming college students must pass in order to attend the school of his/her choice. College programs can take up to 3-5 years depending on the student's choice of school and major. Graduate programs are also available in a number of schools. The Philippines also have private, public, and international schools. Many international students enroll in a Philippine school because of



cheaper tuition rates, having English as the medium language of instruction, and having a lot of similarities with the US education system. The schools in the Philippines not only do the schools in focus on academics but they also encourage student participation with school activities, clubs, and sports teams. Inter-school competitions are popular social activities and events in the Philippines. The school year starts in June and ends in March. Students have a 2-month summer break from April to May and a week of semestral break at the end of October.

• *Written by Regine Estrellas*

## The National Youth Day in the Republic of CAMEROON



The Republic of Cameroon is a small country of area 475,440 sq km, which is located in west-central Africa. Annually, National holidays are celebrated and one of the significant holidays is the National Youth Day, celebrated every

February 11. This day is dedicated to all youths of Cameroon and was first celebrated in February 11, 1966. The purpose of the day is to educate the youths to be good future leaders and enable them to participate in many social activities. First, the week prior to the National Youth day known as the National Youth week, consists of a lot of youth activities. There are sporting and singing competitions between schools; educational programs, and other youth leisure activities. Winners of the competitions are offered prizes. Furthermore, on the



youth day, all youths of all schools prepare for a "march past" in each stadium of Cameroon's 10 Provinces. The day begins with a band, singing the National Anthem, and a speech to the youths from the Governor of each province. Eventually, the march past begins following a hierarchy of nursery school kids first, followed by primary school pupils, then secondary, high school and university students. The school that performs best earns a prize at the end of the day. Finally, by the end of the day, the youths retire to their destinations happy and satisfied. Later at night, the President of the Republic, in the capital province, gives an official speech to all youths of Cameroon. This speech is read on TV to all the youths and crowns their successful day. This day is considered more as an experience and is the best day in every Cameroonian youth's life.

• *Written by Njabi Fombad*

## Happy Holidays!

### St. Andrew Kim Korean Catholic Church

Address: 21177 Halsted Road, Northville, MI 48167

- Confession in English (in preparation for Christmas) 12/9 & 12/16 (10 -11 AM, 11 - 12:30 PM)
- Confession in Korean (in preparation for Christmas) Sundays before Christmas (9 -10 AM, 1-2 PM)
- Christmas Eve *Talent Show* (children & adults are all welcome) 12/24 (7:30 PM)
- Christmas Eve Mass (in Korean) 12/24 (10 PM)
- Christmas Mass (in Korean) 12/25 (11 AM)

### Korean Presbyterian Church of Metro Detroit

Address: 27074 West 9 Mile Road, Southfield, MI48034

- Christmas Cantata 12/16
- Christmas Eve Service 12/24 (8 PM)
- Christmas Service 12/25 (11 AM)
- New Year Service 12/31 (11 PM)

### Ward Presbyterian Church

Address: 40000 6 Mile Road, Northville, MI 48168

- Live Nativity with animals in Knox Hall 12/1 (Noon-1 PM)
- Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols 12/2 (7 PM)
- Christmas Joy! Christmas Concert 12/8 & 12/9 (7 PM on the 8th and 5 PM on the 9th)
- Sing We Now of Christmas Concert 12/16 (4 - 5:30 PM, 7 - 11 PM)

## International Students Office

Your Success Is Our Greatest Achievement

### ISO EVENT CALENDER

- November 22 (Friday): **Community Service** 9:00 am - 2:00pm
- November 23 (Friday): **Movie Night with Highland Park Community** 1:00 pm - 4:00pm
- November (Friday): **Bowling Party** 12:45 pm-3:00pm

## Newsletter Members

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**Editor:** Njabi Fombad Stephen Rahrig

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*We always welcome new members!*