

The Elusive First Step on the Path of Serving Others

Max Musicant and Mary Hess



Westminster's endowment is supported by generous members who create Legacy Gifts as expressions of their deeply-held values and love for the church's mission. How does the endowment further the church's mission? It is an important source of revenue for many programs, including the Meisel Scholarship Program. On January 2, 2011, Max Musicant spoke to the congregation about the scholarship's impact on his life:

"As a life-long member of Westminster, it's an honor to speak about my experiences as a Donald M. and Eleanor Meisel Scholar Grant recipient. The program is part of the Westminster Endowment that supports the church's young adults as they pursue faith-based professional, scholarly, or service activities. The rationale is that college-age students should be encouraged to partake in activities that the church values, regardless of financial considerations.

In these turbulent economic times, offering a free summer intern to a faith-based, mission-driven organization increases its capacity to do good. Further, the student's experience can serve as the launching pad into a career in the service of God's community. For me, receiving the Meisel Scholar-Grant the summer after my freshman year of college enabled me to work at the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA). During my tenure there I was able to meaningfully contribute to a number of advocacy campaigns, and strengthen my knowledge of and passion for revitalizing inner cities.

This internship gave me the experience and credibility I needed to fully pursue my new-found calling. Subsequent internships with a Hennepin County Commissioner and at a public affairs firm built upon my time with MICAHA and allowed me to scale up my impact on the issues that I cared most about. These experiences led to employment at a non-profit doing economic development in Jamaica, Queens, New York City and eventual admission to the Yale School of Management where I am currently finishing up my MBA.

While not all of my success can be credited to the Meisel Scholarship, it has undoubtedly served as that all-too-important and elusive first step on a long journey serving communities in need. My experience with the Meisel Scholar Grant is not unique and serves as proof of the power of Westminster's positive intervention in its young adults at a critical point in their development.

I would like to thank the Westminster community - once again - for their support and hope that my story would inspire continued involvement in this church's young adults' lives."*

The Meisel Scholar-Grant Program exists to influence young lives towards positive service to others. If you would like to learn more, contact Jacqui DeVries (devries@augsborg.edu). If you'd like to support the program with a Legacy Gift, contact Mary Hess (mhess@wpc-mpls.org).

*To hear Max speak, go to www.ewestminster.org for worship audio from January 2.