Learning by Giving

Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project
Fall 2008 — Spring 2009 Academic Year Annual Report

with support from

Manuel D. & Rhoda Mayerson Foundation
Dear Friends,

As president of Northern Kentucky University, I find a lot of reasons to be proud of what's happening on our campus.

NKU is barely over 40 years old, and we are accustomed to building quickly and growing purposefully. Our faculty, our students and our staff love to innovate. Across disciplines, excellence and energy inspire an approach to education that defines NKU as a creative, engaged campus.

The Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project exemplifies the NKU way. There is nothing quite like it in the nation. That is, nothing that has lasted as long and accomplished as much in this special and important field of teaching students about nonprofits and then providing them the opportunity to be philanthropists and to learn by giving.

When an NKU student takes a Mayerson course, a light goes off. Something important is realized. If you don’t believe me, believe the students. Here’s what one told us: “I’ve learned that despite the depressed state of the world today, there are people dedicating their lives to making a difference. If they can make a change, why can’t I?”

Those are powerful words: “Why can’t I?” If, in the classroom, we can instill in NKU students a commitment to this simple principle, then we will have accomplished a great deal.

Already, we have accomplished measurable outcomes with this program. One reason is because we have stuck with it. The 2008-2009 academic year was our ninth with the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project, and we stand at the door of a decade of experience with this effective, classroom-based approach to teaching philanthropy.

We have enjoyed wonderful partners, beginning with the Mayerson family. They believed when this was only an idea. In fact, they helped imagine the idea and then invested in making it a reality. So a sincere and special thanks is in order to the Mayerson family and their foundation. This report will give you a deeper understanding of what I mean when I assure you of the wisdom of their investment. The evidence is clear:

• Our students are better educated and they are more dedicated to community because of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project.
• Our university is richer because engaged, active learning is the highest form of higher education. It’s learning that sticks with you.
• Our community is stronger because of it, as nonprofits receive the benefit of our students’ involvement and the benefit of funds for their programs and services.

So please join me in celebrating an NKU success story as it begins its tenth year.

What’s happening at NKU is not completely unique – nor do we want that. We want the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project to be copied. Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, and we’re flattered that other universities are imitating our program. We’ve even helped a few get started, and we’ll gladly help more.

Sincerely,

Dr. James C. Votruba, president
Measuring the impact

Through the direct giving model, NKU students have invested $438,412 in 207 local nonprofit organizations. Through the indirect giving model, NKU students have made funding recommendations to Citi’s Community Impact Board that have resulted in more than $30,000 in grants.

In general, evaluations of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project indicate that it has a positive impact on a large majority of students in terms of their beliefs, attitudes and intentions related to philanthropy, volunteering and other civic engagement activities.

The evaluations for the Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 semesters confirm a pattern of positive impact. About 85 percent of the students reported that their Mayerson class experience had a positive or very positive effect on their belief that they can make a difference in the world.

New in 2008-2009

MSPP has been integrated into a wide range of disciplines from communications to criminal justice, from English composition to public administration. In the 2008-2009 academic year, it continued to be incorporated into new disciplines, including undergraduate education courses and a music appreciation course.

NKU faculty are continuously expanding upon and improving their use of the Mayerson project in their classes. Students in Professor Mari Yorke’s College Writing (Women and War) class made YouTube videos for the nonprofit organizations that they identified through MSPP. Students in Professor Doris Shaw’s Marketing Management class developed marketing plans for the nonprofit organizations that they identified through the Mayerson project. These nonprofits have used both the marketing plans and YouTube videos for fundraising and other efforts that have longer-term benefits.

In 2008-2009, the Mayerson project expanded its funders from the Mayerson Foundation and Citi. New funders include the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./US Bank Foundation and the Scripps Howard Foundation.

In Fall 2008, the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement sponsored an online fund drive to support Mayerson classes. GET PIXELED invited NKU students, faculty and staff to pay $1 each to post an electronic image – or “pixel” – on a mosaic webpage, www.nku.edu/~getpixeled. The message was simple: You don’t have to be rich to be a philanthropist. To increase participation and promote civic engagement, the GET PIXELED website was linked to an online mock election for the 2008 presidential race. About 3,000 people voted and $500 was raised.

What’s Next: 2009-2010

The effort to raise funds from students to support the Mayerson project is continuing and evolving. GET PIXELED has been reborn as GIVE-A-BUCK.

Also, MSPP is being tied for the first time to the Book Connections Program, in which NKU freshmen read a common book as part of their classes. This year’s book is “Thirteen Women Strong: The Making of a Team,” which is about the path of the NKU women’s basketball team to a national championship. It’s a story of team-building, leadership and overcoming adversity – themes important in the nonprofit world.

“It was very interesting to get to work with a real live organization, and I believe that it made the learning process far more effective and tangible.”

-NKU student, whose marketing class included student philanthropy
IMPACTS ON STUDENTS

QUANTITATIVE DATA

Since the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project’s inception, NKU has surveyed students to examine the impact of the classes. In the project’s first year, for example, 73.4% of the students enrolled reported that the philanthropic experience had a positive or very positive effect on their “belief that you can make a difference in the world.” In the 2009 spring semester, 91.8% reported positive or very positive effect.

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your belief that you have a responsibility to help others in need.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

90.82% 9.18% 2.67%

80% 17.33%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your belief that you can make a difference in the world.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

91.84% 7.14% 3.06%

85.33% 13.33%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your awareness of societal problems/needs.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

86.73% 13.27% 1.33%

81.34% 17.33%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your intention to do volunteer work.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

73.47% 24.49% 1.33%

81.33% 16%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your intention to work on behalf of social justice.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

62.24% 33.67% 3.06%

70.4% 29.59%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your intention to give money to charity.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

61.22% 32.65% 5%

69.33% 30.67%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your belief that you have a responsibility to help others in need.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

75.51% 22.45% 1.02%

74.66% 24%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your sense of personal responsibility to the community in which you live.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

74% 24%

72.45% 24.49% 3.06%

70.4% 29.59%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your attitude toward “experimental” programs like this one.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

74.94% 21.43% 3.06%

76% 4%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your academic skills or knowledge.

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

61.22% 36.73% 1.03%

68% 29.33%

THE MAYERSON PROJECT’S EFFECT ON
Your functional life skills (communication, assertiveness, problem solving).

Positive Negative No response No effect

Spring 2009

Fall 2008

72.45% 24.49% 3.06%

70.4% 29.59%

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Positive Negative No response No effect

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Impact on Students

Learning by Giving

FALL 2008 - SPRING 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

IMPACTIONS ON STUDENTS

QUALITATIVE DATA

Each semester, students, faculty and representatives of the nonprofits who are involved with the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project complete surveys about their experience. This is a sample of students’ responses to open-ended questions on the Fall 2008 and Spring 2009 surveys.

Awareness of needs & nonprofits

“My eyes were completely wide open in this class about how much the community needs help.”

“I learned that there are many nonprofit organizations in our community dedicated to helping those in need and we need to take advantage of those to help the students in our schools.”

“The nonprofit sector is so much more diverse and encompassing than I ever realized. There is a wide variety of job opportunities in this sector.”

“I plan to increase my volunteer service at the location where I volunteer.”

“I will incorporate service learning into my classroom and teach my students the importance of volunteering.”

Interest & learning

“I appreciate that the work we did was not ‘pretend; it was a real grant process with monetary benefits to nonprofits.”

“I appreciated the opportunity to do something real. This is an experience that will augment interviews and give me the confidence to succeed later in the real world.”

“I learned just how large the nonprofit sector is. Also, I discovered different aspects like the role of foundations, specific funds, and the components of the grant process.”

“Working with this nonprofit has reaffirmed my independence and drive to succeed. I’ve become more proactive and responsible as a student as a result of representing NKU to the community. I thank you for this opportunity to grow and learn about the issues facing nonprofits in the Northern Kentucky area.”

Beliefs & intentions

“This project made me realize that no matter how little you may donate or do, every bit counts for those in need.”

“We can make a difference, if we try.”

“This class helped me realize how nonprofit organizations work and increased my interest in supporting and helping these organizations tangibly and through volunteerism.”

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T he Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project has generated positive feedback from NKU students consistently across the project’s nine years.

And in preliminary longitudinal surveys (to query students at least two years after they have taken a Mayerson class), the positive impacts hold up – that is, students leave a Mayerson class with an immediate strengthening of their commitment to nonprofits, and those bonds remain strong after leaving NKU.

Generally speaking, when the data on key questions about student impacts are reported with “positive” and “very positive” answered combined, the percentage of students with a not positive reaction approaches or exceeds 75 percent.

Qualitative surveys consistently capture the same benefits, as students repeatedly testify that their Mayerson classes awakened them to community needs and a personal responsibility to be part of addressing those needs.

Cumulative data from 2000 to the present*

Because the questions asked and the reporting methods used change somewhat in the annual reports, a full apples-to-apples comparison can’t be shown. However, here is a sample comparison on two key questions drawn from years with like-reported data:

Question: The philanthropic experience had a positive or very positive effect on the participating student’s “belief that you can make a difference in the world.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
<td>93.4%</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>80.9%</td>
<td>91.8%</td>
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Question: The philanthropic experience had a positive or very positive effect on the students’ “sense of personal responsibility to the community in which they live.”

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>2000</th>
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<th>2008</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>65.6%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>81.5%</td>
<td>79.7%</td>
<td>86.1%</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>73.1%</td>
<td>75.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* This table reflects comparisons from available reports; 2001 and 2002 data are an exact match because there was a four-semester report for that period; NA indicates data were not available for the survey item in that semester.

** Figures in 2005 and 2009 include data only from the Spring semester.
Mission

It's not an accident that community outreach and service are emphasized at NKU. The university's mission statement calls on the faculty and administration to fulfill these roles. NKU's full mission statement is available at http://www.nku.edu/about/mission.php. It reads in part: “The university grades itself on its learner focus, entrepreneurial spirit, global perspective, innovative programs, small classes, technology-enhanced academic programs, co-curricular learning opportunities, and emphasis on active learning, including student research, internships, co-op programs and service learning.”

Volunteering

A culture of volunteering exists at NKU with students, faculty and staff often organizing efforts to help community nonprofits. This spring, for example, about 40 people from the NKU community spent a Sunday afternoon framing walls for a Habitat for Humanity home. And hundreds of volunteers participated in two Service on Saturday events during the 2010-2011 academic year. For Service on Saturday, volunteers rally on campus, then go to a variety of nonprofits to tackle such chores as painting a volunteer's center, planting trees at a park, cleaning up walking trails and playing bingo with senior citizens. NKU also helps maintain a community website, www.nkuhelps.org, where nonprofits can post volunteer opportunities.

Service learning

In a service learning class, students learn the fundamentals of a subject in the usual way (lectures, texts, etc.). It’s what happens next that amplifies the classroom experience. They apply their learning on behalf of a nonprofit. A web design class, for example, might learn the basics of web design, then develop a site for a nonprofit. An anthropology class might excavate for one museum while an English class might write display boards for another. The Mayerson class are an example of service learning. During the 2008-2009 academic year, NKU had over 110 service learning classes, ranging across nearly every discipline.

INC and nonprofits

Another aspect of NKU’s outreach to the community is the Institute for Nonprofit Capacity (INC). Launched in August 2008, INC’s mission is to leverage the resources of the university for the Greater Cincinnati nonprofit community. Part of that role is fulfilled by matching NKU classes with nonprofits for service learning. But INC’s catalogue goes beyond that. The Institute hosts monthly Breakthrough Breakfasts for nonprofits. These are 90-minute workshops on capacity-building topics, open to all nonprofits in Greater Cincinnati. INC also offers access to computer and IT services, provides classes to train board officers and partners with other agencies in our region to deliver high-end training around collaboration and effectiveness.

The story of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project has been told over the past year in academic journals, in general circulation newsletters and magazines, at academic conferences and in workshops.

Peer-Reviewed Publications

“INDIRECT GIVING TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: AN EMERGING APPROACH TO STUDENT PHILANTHROPY”
Journal of Public Affairs Education (forthcoming)
Author: Julie Cencula Olberding

“The PATH OF STUDENT PHILANTHROPY”
Scrivens Howard Center for Civic Engagement newsletter (2008)
Author: Vaasila Delakas

“My Journey”
Scrivens Howard Center for Civic Engagement newsletter (2008)
Author: Julie Cencula Olberding

“CAN STUDENT PHILANTHROPY HELP TO ADDRESS THE CURRENT NONPROFIT IDENTITY CRISIS? A CASE STUDY OF A MULTIDISCIPLINARY PROJECT AT NORTHERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY”
Author: Shamima Ahmed and Julie Olberding

Presentations at Academic Conferences

“LEARNING BY GIVING: USING STUDENT PHILANTHROPY TO ENHANCE ENGAGEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM AND IN THE COMMUNITY”
International Conference on Social Sciences in Honolulu, Hawaii (June 2008)
Presenter: Julie Cencula Olberding

“DRESSES, DREAMS AND DONATIONS”
NKU Community Connections newsletter (2008)
Author: Brianna Rodine

“SERVICE LEARNING AND THE MAYERSON STUDENT PHILANTHROPY PROJECT”
Journal of Public Affairs Education (forthcoming)
Author: Julie Cencula Olberding

“INDIRECT GIVING TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: AN EMERGING APPROACH TO STUDENT PHILANTHROPY”
Teaching Public Administration Conference in Frankfurt, Kentucky (May 2009)
Presenter: Julie Cencula Olberding

“STUDENT PHILANTHROPY: ENGAGING STUDENTS IN A REAL GRANT MAKING PROCESS”
Annual Meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences in Cincinnati, Ohio (March 2008)
Presenter: Julie Cencula Olberding

“MYSCHOLARSHIP”
Scrivens Howard Center for Civic Engagement newsletter (2008)
Author: Julie Cencula Olberding

“My Journey”
Scrivens Howard Center for Civic Engagement newsletter (2008)
Author: Kelly Jerk

Presentations at Academic Conferences

“CONNECTING CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY”
Grants Resource Center/ American Association of State Colleges and Universities, Washington, D.C. (February 2009)
Presenter: Mark Nedick

“CREATING THE INSTITUTE FOR NONPROFIT CAPACITY”
American Democracy Project Conference in Baltimore, Maryland (June 2008)
Presenter: Mark Nedick

“DIRECT GIVING TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS: AN EMERGING APPROACH TO STUDENT PHILANTHROPY”
Teaching Public Administration Conference in Frankfurt, Kentucky (May 2009)
Presenter: Julie Cencula Olberding

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Teaching Public Administration Conference in Frankfurt, Kentucky (May 2009)
Presenter: Julie Cencula Olberding

“STUDENT PHILANTHROPY”
Collaboration Seminar sponsored by NKU’s Institute for Nonprofit Capacity (August 2008)
Speakers: Rebecca Bailey, Jonathan Cullick and Julie Olberding

“SERVICE LEARNING”
Collaboration Seminar sponsored by NKU’s Institute for Nonprofit Capacity (August 2008)
Speakers: Matthew Albritton, Gayle Hilleke and Julie Olberding

“SERVICE LEARNING FROM THE TRENCHES”
Workshop for the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement, NKU (March 2008)
Speakers: Sean Foley, Jonathan Cullick, Jimma McKinney, Julie Olberding, Julie Raines and Christopher Wilkey

“STUDENT PHILANTHROPY”
Workshop for the Campus Connects Student Philanthropy Project, Northern Kentucky University, Cincinnati, Ohio (February 2008)
Speakers: Julie Olberding, Molly Blank and John Cullick
For the Fall 2008 semester, the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project included six classes in four disciplines. Students awarded $1,000 each to 13 different nonprofits. The nonprofits received their checks during a ceremony at the new NKU Student Union on Dec. 11.

Here are the classes and how they chose to invest their Mayerson funds:

**MKT 625-001**  
MARKETING MANAGEMENT  
Taught by Professor Doris Shaw  
- Humedove International: $1,000

**HNR 302-002**  
INVEST IN THE COMMUNITY  
Taught by Professor Becky Sisson  
- Campbell County Senior Center: $1,000  
- ProKids: $1,000  
- Springer School: $1,000

**EDU 312-001, 312-002 AND 312-003**  
TEACHING SOCIAL STUDIES IN THE EARLY GRADES  
Taught by Professor Kevin Besnoy and Brandelyn Tosolt  
- Ballet Theatre Midwest: $1,000  
- Boys and Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati: $1,000  
- The Campbell County 4-H: $1,000  
- The Carnegie Visual and Performing Arts Center: $1,000  
- Crayons to Computers: $1,000  
- Kids Count: $1,000

**ENG 101-004**  
COLLEGE WRITING – WOMEN AND WAR  
Taught by Professor Professor Mari York  
- Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center: $1,000  
- Thank You Foundation: $1,000  
- Yellow Ribbon Support Center: $1,000

For the Spring 2009 semester, the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project included five classes in five disciplines (a sixth class participated but elected to make no award). Students awarded a total of $13,000 to 12 different nonprofits. The nonprofits received their checks during a ceremony at the Student Union on April 23.

Here are the classes and how they chose to invest their Mayerson funds:

**MUS 100-007**  
MUSIC APPRECIATION  
Taught by Professor Gary Johnston  
- Intercommunity Justice and Peace Center: $1,000

**CMST 101-H001**  
HONORS PRINCIPLES OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION  
Taught by Professor Allison Goddell  
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cincinnati: $1,000  
- Birthright of Cincinnati: $1,000  
- Health Resource Center of Cincinnati: $1,000

**EDU 310-003**  
TEACHING LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE EARLY GRADES  
Taught by Professor Brandelyn Tosolt  
- Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington: $1,000  
- Child Focus: $1,000  
- Children, Inc.: $1,000

**CMST 394-002**  
RELATIONSHIPS  
Taught by Professor Jermie Manning  
- Know Theatre Tribe: $2,000  
- Shoulder To Shoulder: $1,000

**MK 625-001**  
MARKETING MANAGEMENT  
Taught by Professor Doris Shaw  
- Chicks and Chuckies: $1,000  
- North Southern Bakery: $1,000  
- Pink Ribbon Girls: $1,000

Administrative costs for the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project for the 2008-2009 academic year were generously provided by the Manuel D. & Rhoda Mayerson Foundation.

The funds invested in the nonprofits by the students participating in the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project during the 2008-2009 academic year were generously provided by three benefactors: Citi, the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile Jr. US Bank Foundation and the Scripps Howard Foundation.

Northern Kentucky University and the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement are grateful for this funding support.
WHAT'S NEXT?

I
n the coming year, with support from The Manuel D. and Rhoda Mayerson Foundation and the Corporation for National and Community Service’s Learn and Serve America, Northern Kentucky University’s Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement will be collecting information in order to develop workbooks that higher education institutions around the country can reference in starting their own student philanthropy programs.

In preparation for this, the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement conducted a survey of existing student philanthropy programs nationally and found that a need for a national resource center or clearinghouse exists. Respondents indicated that they wanted sample syllabi, student philanthropy course program overviews and text examples of Requests for Funding Proposals. Evaluation tools, sample letters to nonprofits and information on funding sources also appear to be in demand, according to the survey.

Because NKU’s program is among the nation’s most established programs, it has frequently been the source of the materials already, the survey found. Indeed, a spring 2009 issue of the Journal of Civic Commitment reports that those established programs nationally and found that a need for a national resource center or clearinghouse exists. Respondents indicated that they wanted sample syllabi, student philanthropy course program overviews and text examples of Requests for Funding Proposals. Evaluation tools, sample letters to nonprofits and information on funding sources also appear to be in demand, according to the survey.

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The Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project is coordinated through the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement at Northern Kentucky University. The Center is designed to connect campus and community and to encourage the fulfillment of NKU’s mission, which reads in part, "The university supports multi-dimensional excellence across the full breadth of its work: teaching and learning, research and creative activity, and outreach and public engagement. The university embraces its regional stewardship role as reflected in its significant contribution to the intellectual, social, economic, cultural and civic vitality of the region and the Commonwealth.”

Among other things, the Scripps Howard Center plays a central role in supporting and expanding service learning at NKU. Service learning connects classes to nonprofits for mutually beneficial partnerships: students learn by doing. For example, the photographs of nonprofits in this report were taken by students in a documentary photography class. The nonprofits, in turn, can use the photographs for their brochures, websites and other needs. Service learning is a structured, academic approach to engaged, active teaching. In the 2008-2009 academic year, we invested more in MSPP – with their dollars and encouragement – than the members of the Mayerson family and their team.

Gifts from Citi, the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation and the Scripps Howard Foundation have been key as well.

The money distributed by NKU students comes from the community. So we appreciate your support. If you are interested in supporting a Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project class at NKU, the cost is $3,000 per class. Your gift is tax deductible.

How to give to the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project at NKU

The success of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project begins with the generous support of our donors. No one has invested more in MSPP – with their dollars and encouragement – than the members of the Mayerson family and their team. Gifts from Citi, the Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation and the Scripps Howard Foundation have been key as well.

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To give, contact:

DANIEL EMSICKE, MAJOR GIFT OFFICER
University Development
AC 221
Northern Kentucky University
Highland Heights, KY 41099
859-572-9628 emsicked1@nku.edu

Also, small gifts (as little as a dollar) can be collected through our new Give-A-Buck initiative. You can mail those gifts to:

SCRIPPS HOWARD CENTER FOR CIVIC ENGAGEMENT
Attention: MSPP
FH 536 Nunn Drive
Northern Kentucky University
Highland Heights, KY 41099

Our Staff

MARK NEIKIRK
executive director, Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement

Mr. Neikirk oversees an array of programming at Northern Kentucky University focused on two key aspects of citizenship: one, public policy and current events; and two, community stewardship. A graduate of the University of Kentucky in history, Mr. Neikirk is former reporter, columnist and managing editor at The Kentucky Post and The Cincinnati Post. He is the president of the University Press of Kentucky’s Thomas D. Clark Foundation, a board member of Kids Voting Northern Kentucky, a board member of the Northern Kentucky Forum, a steering committee member of Leadership Cincinnati, a board member of Leadership Kentucky and the former president of the Kentucky Associated Press Editors’ Association.

JULIE CENCULA OLBERDING
faculty director of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project

Dr. Olberding is an assistant professor in the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program and Nonprofit Management certificate program. She teaches MPA courses such as Foundations of Public Administration, Resource Acquisition and Management, Volunteer Management, and Nonprofit Program Evaluation. Dr. Olberding has incorporated student philanthropy and service learning into many of her classes. In addition, she has studied student philanthropy as pedagogy, and her research has been published in the Journal of Public Affairs Education and presented at a number of academic conferences and workshops for faculty members and nonprofit representatives. Another stream of her research has focused on regional partnerships for economic development in U.S. metropolitan areas. It has been published in Public Administration Review, Economic Development Quarterly and the International Journal of Public Administration. Prior to her work at NKU, Dr. Olberding served as executive director of a nonprofit organization in Cincinnati, Ohio, and as a program manager at the Council of State Governments in Lexington, Kentucky. She has a bachelor’s degree from the E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University and an MPA and Ph.D. from the Martin School of Public Policy and Administration at the University of Kentucky.

AARON CASKEY
Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement intern

Mr. Caskey is a junior at Northern Kentucky University and is a student intern at the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement, working primarily on the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project. He assists with the execution of the program as well as the collection of data at the conclusion of each of the courses by administering surveys. Mr. Caskey is a native of Tolsenboro, Ky., and graduated valedictorian from Lewis County High School. He is currently working on obtaining his Bachelors Degree in History and Political Science with a minor in Legal Studies from Northern Kentucky University. Aaron hopes to further his education by attending law school and becoming a corporate attorney. As well as being heavily involved with the Scripps Howard Center, Mr. Caskey volunteers at various organizations in his hometown. He frequently donates his time and energy to the Meals on Wheels Program and Tolstosho Food Bank. Prior to working at the Scripps Howard Center, Mr. Caskey was an intern at the Office of the Governor of Kentucky. In his spare time, he enjoys attending sporting events, visiting various historical sites and reading.
Since the inception of the Mayerson Student Philanthropy Project at Northern Kentucky University, students in a wide range of classes—from marketing to music appreciation—have been given the opportunity to learn the value of investing in the Greater Cincinnati nonprofit community. This fall, a history class will participate for the first time and other new participants will be signed up for the spring, as NKU and Mayerson celebrate a decade of student philanthropy classes.