

News Release

U of M Crookston Students Travel the Nation on "Pay It Forward Tour" Learning Leadership through Action; Nine-day Tour begins Friday, March 12, 2010

By Itollefs on Wednesday, February 17, 2010

The University of Minnesota Crookston will send about thirty students on the upcoming Students Today Leaders Forever Pay It Forward Tour which begins on Friday, March 12, 2010. Over a nine day period, the students will travel by bus visiting six cities ending in Washington, D.C. The team of students will volunteer in the cities they visit and learn about area cultures and social issues.



The U of M Crookston has sent a group of students on this Pay It Forward Tour for the last four years. Advisor Lisa Samuelson, director of student activities, complimented her student chairs explaining that they organize everything from choosing the sites and locating lodging to shopping for food and setting up evening activities.

Student leader and Senior Kate Bentley, a communication major from St. Paul, Minn., shared her inspiration, "As a participant, I have had a lot of fun. You're helping a lot of people that need it. It's something that doesn't take a lot of time but makes a big impact." Other student leaders include Senior Nik Jiran, an aviation major from Hayden, Idaho; Sophomore Joe Harren, an agronomy major from Eagle Bend, Minn.; and Junior Steffane Prestidge, a hotel, restaurant, and institutional management major from Buffalo, Minn.

Cities the students will be visiting include Duluth, Minn.; Kenosha, Wis.; Sandusky, Ohio; Rochester, N.Y.; New Haven, Conn.; and finally Washington, D.C. To learn more about the Crookston campus' Pay It Forward tour.

The Pay It Forward Tour is a multi-day, multi-city experience engages students in service and leadership, travel to and service in a new city each day, learning about social issues, building lasting relationships, and making a commitment to continued action when they return home. All College Pay It Forward Tours travel to six cities across the country over the course of nine days. Each tour consists of up to 40 students. Every Tour is open to students from any school. There is also a Pay It Forward program for high school and middle school students.

The Pay It Forward Program is a program provided through Students Today Leaders Forever (STLF). STLF was founded in 2003 by Irene Fernando, Nick Lindberg, Greg Tehven, and Brian Peterson, son of Bill Peterson U of M Crookston professor in the Math, Science, and Technology Department. These four students were college freshmen who dreamed of a way to make a difference. Their mission is to reveal leadership through service, relationships, and action. There are two main components of STLF: Pay It Forward Tours (for middle school through college students) and High School Leadership Camps. To learn more about STLF and the Pay It Forward Tours, visit www.stlf.net.

Today the University of Minnesota Crookston delivers more than 25 bachelor's degree programs and 50 concentrations, including several online degrees, in agriculture and natural resources; arts, humanities and social sciences; business; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of about 1,300 undergraduates, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

In the photo: Thirty students boarded the bus for the Students Today Leaders Forever "Pay It Forward Tour" on Friday, March 12, 2010. Over a nine day period, the students will travel by bus visiting six cities ending in the celebration city, Washington, D.C. While in D.C., the UMC bus will be meeting up with different colleges to do one final service project. The team of students will volunteer by doing service projects in the cities they visit and learn about area cultures and social issues.

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