

WLC students make a difference via the Kapco Charitable Challenge

By Eva McGillivray

The servant leadership mission of Wisconsin Lutheran College is visible throughout Milwaukee this winter. Five student groups from Wisconsin Lutheran competed against fellow WLC students and against teams from Concordia University Wisconsin and Marquette University in a Kapco Charitable Challenge event, sponsored by Kapco Metal Stamping's president Jim Kacmarcik (below).



Addicted to giving

The Kapco Charitable Challenge began in 2008 with students at Concordia and expanded to involve the three schools for 2010. This year, Kacmarcik gave \$1,000 to each of the 15 student groups, with the challenge to help others less fortunate with the money.

"We are pleased to have Marquette and Wisconsin Lutheran join us in the Challenge this year to involve more students and extend the reach even further into the community," said Kacmarcik, whose company is located in Grafton, Wisconsin.

Selected student groups from the three schools met at Milwaukee's Bradley Center on January 27, where they received instructions on the challenge from Kacmarcik, a self-proclaimed "giving addict." Leaders from each school, including WLC president Dr. Daniel Johnson, as well as Milwaukee Bucks general manager John Hammond, addressed the groups before the students enjoyed the Milwaukee Bucks game against the Philadelphia 76ers.

"Wisconsin Lutheran College prepares Christian leaders for lives of service to others, and the Kapco Charitable Challenge beautifully complements our mission," said Dr. Johnson. "Our students are so richly blessed, and via this program they will be a blessing to others."



20 days – \$25,000

The impact of the first round was astonishing to the judges. The five WLC student groups raised \$25,000 in cash and products via donations of money, food, personal care items, clothing, and books. The groups also spread the word of their community-oriented missions to an estimated 200,000 people.

"When you think about that – 20 days and over \$25,000 dollars – that's very special," Kacmarcik told the students following their final presentations. "It hits you right in the heart. You guys did an awesome job."

After 15-minute multi-media presentations by each group, Kacmarcik announced that Team Effect won the first round and would represent Wisconsin Lutheran College in the second round, during which it competed against a team from Concordia and one from Marquette.

"Don't ever underestimate what you can do," concluded Kacmarcik in his remarks to the Charitable Challenge participants at WLC. "It isn't always about financially giving back; it's about spending some time, energy, thoughts, and volunteering – making a difference in this world. You are an outstanding group of individuals who exemplify that."

Final round

Team Effect was able to enjoy winning the first round for just a few hours before being handed its next challenge. The 10-day second round kicked off on February 18, with each team receiving \$2,000 to continue its mission. Each team also was paired with a local child who is fighting cancer, mentored high school students about giving to the community and helping others, and completed random acts of kindness in the second round of competition.

The final three teams were scheduled to present their efforts March 4 in the Pilot Room at Discovery World, with a celebration of the teams' achievements to follow.

Five challenge team stories



Team Effect

MISSION: To effectively contribute our time and effort to make an impact on our future generations, while embracing cultural diversity. Don't underestimate what one person can do. The smallest acts make the biggest impacts.

MEMBERS: Anna Baxter, Hannah Behnke, Alex Blahnik, Derrick Bordeleau, Hillary Gardner, Lindsay Hintz, Elizabeth Kock, Amber Marshall, James Sather.

CAUSE: La Causa, a Milwaukee Public School Partner School that also serves as a daycare, Head Start, and Crisis Nursery; deals with home removals with Child Protective Services and Family Counseling; and has a food bank and clothing store.



SUCCESS STORY: During the first round of competition, the nine students in Team Effect collected clothes, food, and personal care products for La Causa's Crisis Nursery. The group also gathered nearly 3,800 books for a new library in La Causa's Early Education and Care Center. On the final day of the first round,

the students painted and furnished the library, filling the shelves with books.

Members of Team Effect used multiple media sources to get their mission out to the public. During the first round, they were on the air with Jeff Stone on The Big Dawg 97.7 in Door County and had a public service announcement read at Milwaukee Admirals games. The group's marquee media event came on February 26 when it appeared on Today's TMJ4's "The Morning Blend" talk show.

The group also partnered with companies such as Clear Medical Agency, which donated money for

each person who became a fan of its Facebook page through Team Effect's efforts, and Bohl and Race Orthodontics, which provided 450 toothbrushes and 100 tubes of toothpaste.

Project Ripples

MISSION: Cause a two-fold ripple in the community. First, we aim to directly affect those around us. Secondly, we aim to inspire anyone we affect to help those they can. We embrace change for the better in Milwaukee. It only takes one person to drop the pebble. We're here to make a wave of a change in our community. Let's start the ripple effect.

MEMBERS Jenny Hammond, Abby Hintz, Jake Jaehnke, Jimmy Pautz, Matt Pautz, Jessica Riege, Joel Schwartz, Diana Spiegelberg, Ryan Timm, Ashley Zautner.

CAUSE: Safe Harbor Men's Shelter offers homeless men comprehensive services to help rebuild their lives, including food, shelter, long- and short-term help, and assistance for recovery from substance abuse.

SUCCESS STORY: Organized a "Stuff the Bus" drive at Pick 'N Save where more than \$500 was raised and enough food and toiletries were donated to fill every seat of a Lamers school bus.



Five challenge team stories *continued*



Greater than Us: 1000 dollars, 1000 ways

MISSION: 1000 dollars, 1000 ways. Ten people committed to one cause to impact humanity. The mission is to your community, to my community, to OUR community. Connected in one cause and 20 days, we are determined to influence as many people as possible through both your efforts and our efforts. Using at least \$1000 and other donations, we challenge you to join and give in your own way so that this ambition becomes a reality. We've been given one opportunity; let's turn it into endless possibilities.

MEMBERS: Dani Ashman, Sara Boldt, Billy Denzer, Emily Foster, Steve Hetzner, Briana Lazzaroni, Lyndsey Pyle, Hannah Ricke, Nate Rosenberg, Ana Stern.

CAUSE: Local family of seven (plus one on the way) whose father lost his job and their house burned down in the past year.

SUCCESS STORY: The group paid the family's heating bill, repaired kitchen cabinets and bathroom plumbing, and purchased items such as curtains, a crib, school supplies, new clothes, and shoes. The team is also assisting at the Children's Service Society of Wisconsin run/walk event in May.

Catalyst

MISSION: A catalyst is something that starts or causes an important process. We want to be a catalyst of inspiration – inspiring others to reach out and better the lives of those in need.

MEMBERS: Alicia Arlen, Leah Bilitz, Alison Green, Mike Huempfer, Brianna Kapitz, Nicole Livigne, Stephanie Nommensen, Paul Roever, Andrew Westphal, Janae Wrobel.



CAUSE: Lighthouse Youth Center, a central location where students can gather safely after school for recreational activities, receive assistance on their academic assignments, enjoy the positive influence of adult Christian mentors, and have opportunities to study and discuss the truths of Scripture.

SUCCESS STORY: Hosted fundraiser at the Miramar Theatre that included performances by WLC's Single Windsor along with Keep This Quiet, Sam Rodewald, and Matt Appelt.

Love to Live. Live to Give

MISSION: Following in His footsteps of service. We'll strive to live a life of purpose. Living with the goal of making a difference; Loving to live and living to give while challenging others to do the same. Asking ... How many servings have you given?



MEMBERS: Peter Buschkopf, Stanley Chan, Shalome Cox, Jon Fricke, Connor Hinrichs, Jessica Howard, Selciya Lamech, Kristin Plessinger, Katie Schleicher, Jake Zautner.

CAUSE: Above the Clouds, a Milwaukee non-profit organization that provides lessons in the creative arts to children ages 5-17 who otherwise would not be given the opportunity.

SUCCESS STORY: Members coordinated musical fundraisers at Jordan Lutheran Church and Pick 'N Save, playing the piano and collecting donations from guests. The team also observed a stomp dance class at Above the Clouds and raised money for new ballet bars at the center.



For more information, please visit wlc.edu/charitablechallenge