

2008 CAS Service Scholarship Award

Marina Kucic

Marina's Community Service is probably best summed up by her supervisor at The Children's Hospital Transplant Center, who said about Marina, "Marina served as an invaluable volunteer...she rolled with the punches and filled the needs where they existed. She rolled up her sleeves and dove in".

Marina spent the last two years as both a junior volunteer at the Kidney Center of Children's Hospital and as a summer Counselor at Kidney Camp at Camp Chief Ouray. Marina actually created her position as a volunteer liaison between Camp Chief Ouray and the Vacation Kidney Center. Marina was familiar with Camp Chief Ouray where she had attended as a camper several times and when she discovered that The Children's Hospital was the referral source for children attending Kidney Camp she approached the camp coordinator about creating a volunteer position. She spent 3 days a week at the Kidney Center at The Children's Hospital getting to know the kids so that they would have a relationship and feel comfortable with each other when they went to camp. She spent a full week at camp helping the campers get to their dialysis sessions, participating in camp activities with them and comforting them when they were homesick. The week long camp was both challenging and rewarding and Marina decided to continue in her role at the Kidney Center and attended camp again for a second summer in 2007.

Marina stayed so involved with the Kidney Center that she even felt compelled to donate the money she had earned from her Girl Scout Magazine Drive to help out several of the families over the Holidays.

Marina's willingness to go above and beyond simply filling CAS requirements and volunteering so whole heartedly as she helped to make a difference in peoples' lives makes her truly worthy of this award.

Jared Downing

Jared's community service was somewhat further a field as he did his volunteering this past summer in a small village called Noh Bo on the Thai-Burmese border. After going on an overseas Mission trip to Thailand the summer before, Jared wanted to do something he felt would be more helpful. He did some networking and came across an Australian who was working in this small village in Southeast Asia. Jared independently arranged and funded his trip. He then spent six weeks teaching basic computer skills, English and western culture to some refugees from a small tribe in Burma known as the Karen. Jared said that as he taught the students he realized how fortunate he was to have the educational opportunities he does and how precious his own education is to him.

His supervisor wrote about Jared's willingness to take on additional classes and going beyond what was asked of him. The people of Noh Bo are hoping he will come back.

Jared's determination in finding and following through on his service project is what the Spirit of CAS is all about.