

2015 Graduate Profile: Hagerstown graduate finds God's presence through service



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HAGERSTOWN - Meghan Lynch doesn't exaggerate when she says she was transformed into a "completely different person" after participating in the Hugh O'Brien Youth Leadership program in her sophomore year at St. Maria Goretti High School.

Inspired by the testimony of people who had overcome struggles in life, she said, Lynch threw herself into doing "anything and everything to help everyone."

"Service just became my passion," said Lynch, an 18-year-old parishioner of St. Mary in Hagerstown who graduated from St. Maria Goretti May 23. "It became second nature to my life. It helped me find the greater purpose in life."

Just one month after returning from the leadership program, Lynch volunteered on a mission trip to Dessalines, Haiti, through the Archdiocese of Baltimore's Haiti Solidarity Project. For a week, Lynch worked with approximately 100 children in the impoverished nation, teaching science and music.

In her junior year, Lynch visited freshmen in high schools throughout Washington County, encouraging young people to become involved in service through the Community Leadership Workshop, a program she co-founded. She helped organize a literacy campaign, through which area schools collected more than 300 books for children in need.

At her parish, Lynch plays the guitar and sings in the contemporary group at Mass. She's a member of the Archdiocesan Youth Advisory Council and has also been active in politics - serving as a page to the Maryland Senate for two weeks and lobbying lawmakers in Annapolis in support of the establishment of a business tax credit benefitting nonpublic schools.

"I hope to be the U.S. ambassador to Ireland someday," said Lynch, whose parents are immigrants from the Republic of Ireland.

Lynch, who was active in a wide range of high school activities (serving as president of the Rotary Interact, being involved in the National Honor Society, Students Against Destructive Decisions and much more), acknowledged that young people sometimes get a bad reputation for being so obsessed with technology and social media that they lose sight of what's important in life.

"There are a lot of people who aren't like that," said Lynch, who will study economics and international relations at UMBC in Catonsville. "There are a lot of great young people who do a lot of great things in love."

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