

# ASBulletin

Vanderbilt University  
Alternative Spring Break  
Newsletter



February 13, 2012

## Attention 2k12 Participants!

- March 3-11 Spring Break
- March 14 ASBoard Applications are available
- March 25 ASBenefit ASBoard Applications due

*During the week, each of us will get a glimpse of an issue that affects our country and our world...*

*Together, we will contribute around 18,000 hours of service to communities throughout the U.S. and abroad...*

## Get the ASBackstory Behind the Logo!

Have you ever wondered what exactly the geometrical ASB logo signifies or where it came from? Well, we contacted Erin Martin, one of the Public Relations Co-Chairs during the 2009-2010 school year, who decided to make this meaningful symbol for ASB. Little did she know that it would become an identifiable logo for ASB that so many people now recognize around campus.

Because ASB is such a hallmark of the spring semester, Erin chose a flower motif and spring colors as a base for the design. The geometric flower design is comprised of triangle-shaped petals to remind everyone of the three corners of the ASB triangle – service, education, and reflection. One petal is separating from

What will you make of ASB 2k12?

Check out this year's inspirational video on the ASB website – [vandyasb.wordpress.com](http://vandyasb.wordpress.com)

scenes filmed in various locations across campus and the city of Nashville, it doesn't disappoint.

the rest and is “breaking free,” which symbolizes the alternative nature of ASB. So the next time you see someone sporting the ASB sweatshirt around campus, you

will understand the meaning behind the logo and hopefully have an even greater appreciation for the long history and respectable mission of ASB.

## ***Participant Spotlight: Get Up, Stand Up!***

***Sophomore Nell Koneczny talks about what she learned and the challenges she faced on ASB 2k11 in St. Paul, Minnesota***

Within my first few weeks at Vandy, many people had told me at least one thing: “You must try ASB.” Thank goodness I did, too! As soon as I learned about ASB, I knew it would be the perfect fit for my spring break. I love to volunteer, and with the large variety of sites, how could I not find a place I wanted to volunteer at? I was fortunate in that I was assigned my first choice site: Get Up, Stand Up, all the way in St. Paul, Minnesota!

You see, I have this thing for cultures. I love them. I love seeing the differences and similarities in people’s lifestyles. That’s exactly what GUSU was about too. I was excited to spend an entire week working with the second largest Tibetan community in the United States. Going into the site, I knew nothing about the situation, but when I left the site, I realized just how many problems culture groups still endure through political pressures.

It was amazing to spend a week surrounded by a community that tried to ensure its cultural continuation. So many immigrants ignore their heritage, yet these people strived to understand their heritage

and more importantly, to share it with people. Everyone was willing to sit down and explain to us the traditions. I learned something new every day, and new traditions surrounded me. It made my anthropological gears turn. However, it also hit a very personal nerve for me. I am a first generation American as well, and I try my hardest to embrace my culture. To see a community so large successfully gathering for their common cause, to fight for their home, well... It was encouraging. Especially considering that this was a cross-generational fight.

Without ASB, I would likely have not known about the Tibetan situation; I also would not have learned more about myself. ASB provided another perspective to look at my life and my surroundings. It made me consider how else I can keep changing the world. It made me want to become far more involved in understanding what is happening to people around the world. It encouraged me because I saw that even when you go into a situation with minimal knowledge, you can leave it a new person with a new purpose or goal.



## Each site does a Day of Service in Nashville

As everyone gets ready for spring break 2k12, many ASBers have gotten to know their fellow group members while giving back to the Nashville community during their days of service. Each site pairs up with a local organization. Some groups that will be working with similar issues during the week of spring break worked together for their days of service – those from *That's Why God Made Mexico*, *A Day in the Life*, *Talkin' 'Bout a Revolution*, and *Walking on Sunshine* all worked with the YMCA Latino Achievers program to host an ACT/SAT preparation session.

Members of *Cowboy, Take Me Away* went to Percy Warner Park and worked to remove invasive Honeysuckle from an area along one side of the main

hiking trails. An employee of the park showed them how to use a variety of weeding tools to remove the invasive species, skills they can put towards removing invasive Tamarisk in the Grand Canyon.

Possibly one of the most unique days of service planned this year was a trip to Play Dance Bar. There, members of the site *Man in the Mirror* handed out free condoms and encouraged Play patrons to sign up for HIV/AIDS testing. Over spring break, they will work in Los Angeles with needle exchange programs and will deliver food to those homebound by HIV or AIDS.

Though most sites have a separate, unique day of service, each offers a special opportunity for the

group. For some members, it offers them a snapshot of what kinds of issues they will be working with and what problems they may face over spring break. For others, it offers the chance to develop closer bonds with fellow group members. Finally, these days of service open the door for future partnerships between Vanderbilt students and Nashville organizations that are in need of volunteers. This is the second year that ASB has had each site participate in a day of service that is specific to their site issue. For most groups, this new format has been a huge success and has facilitated a better overall ASB experience.



## ASBers join together to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

To celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, ASB, along with several other service organizations on campus, offered students the opportunity to give back around the city of Nashville. Students participated in over 30 service projects from January 13<sup>th</sup> to the 16<sup>th</sup>. The ASB Site and Service Development Co-chairs arranged for ASB to spend two afternoons working at Second Harvest Food Bank.

Close to 40 students, including ASBoard members, Site Leaders, and participants volunteered their time to sort canned goods and create emergency food boxes that are given to low-income Americans in need of short-term hunger relief. These boxes are distributed during natural disasters or when a family's primary wage earner is laid off and the family has no other way to obtain food.

At the end of each shift, everyone left with a feeling of satisfaction and a greater knowledge of the Second Harvest mission. Over the past few years, ASB has developed a relationship with Second Harvest, so if you are interested in volunteering, visit <http://secondharvestmidtn.org> or look out for future opportunities with ASB!



# Orientation 2k12

2k12 Participants are welcomed back to campus to get prepared and pumped up for spring break

On Sunday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, Alternative Spring Break held its annual Orientation, a time to prepare all site leaders and participants for what to expect during their upcoming trips. Whether it's someone's first time on ASB or lifer's fourth time around the block, Orientation is a great opportunity to learn what makes ASB such a unique and meaningful experience.

The wonderful Education Co-chairs, Becca and Brian, introduced those unfamiliar to "The Triangle." "The Triangle" represents the three core values of ASB; namely, service, education, and reflection. Given the nature of ASB as "alternative," Becca and Brian discussed ASB's zero tolerance policy on drug and alcohol use during the trip. While such a policy may seem peculiar, numerous site leaders spoke out on how alcohol consumption undermines ASB's mission and leaves some

participants feeling left out. The Co-chairs, Sarah and Andrew, took care of some housekeeping items, including reminders for participants to become driver certified, while the Treasurers, Hannah and Mike, pointed out that while ASB is awesome, it isn't entirely free, so deposits were needed as soon as possible.

A slideshow was shown to put into perspective the magnitude of issues ASB 2K12 is set to tackle and inspire the nearly 450 participants to become active citizens. From homelessness to environmental degradation to denied healthcare, ASB is an opportunity to directly take part in addressing some of contemporary society's biggest concerns. While the plight of these communities may be disheartening, ASB succeeds year-in and year-out by being, above all else, a truly fun and life changing experience.



## A Special Announcement for ASB Alumni...



Hello past ASBers,

We had a terrific response from alumni following the release of the Fall ASBulletin. We would like to recognize some of the contributions these ASBlasts from the past made. Between volunteers who replied to the Bulletin and those associated with their local alumni chapters, 21 of our 38 sites are going to work with, share a meal, or meet up in some other special way with alumni on site. An ASB big thank you to the alumni who are helping in the following sites:

A Day in the Life - San Juan, TX  
 Beautiful Soul - Green Cove Springs, FL  
 Brand New Day - Detroit, MI  
 Don't Stop Believin' - Washington, D.C.  
 Feelin' Alright - St. Louis, MO  
 Get Up, Stand Up - St. Paul, MN  
 Hakuna Matata - Seguin, TX  
 Hangin' Around - Kyle, SD  
 Help! - Washington, D.C.  
 How to Save a Life - Boston, MA  
 Jungle Gym - Kansas City, MO  
 Light Up My Life - New Orleans, LA  
 Man in the Mirror - Los Angeles, CA  
 Save Me, San Francisco - San Francisco, CA  
 Somebody to Love - Evanston, IL  
 Teenage Dream - Denver, CO  
 That's Why God Made Mexico - Brownsville, TX  
 Welcome to Atlanta - Atlanta, GA  
 Welcome, This Is a Farmhouse - Wellington, CO  
 Work It Out - Atlanta, GA  
 You've Got a Friend - Dallas, TX

If you're interested in volunteering or sharing a meal with current ASBers the week of Spring Break (March 3-10), check out the full list of cities and towns we're travelling to on our website:

<http://vandyasb.wordpress.com/sites/>.

In addition to a great response of on-site volunteers, several of our alumni chose to make a financial contribution to ASB. After the release of the Fall Bulletin, we received over \$1000 from alumni! These donations help ensure that ASB remains affordable for all Vanderbilt students. If you're interested in making a donation to ASB, please visit the Giving to Vanderbilt website (<https://webapp.mis.vanderbilt.edu/olga/?appealCode=Z09A1>), select "Other" from the drop down box of the area you would like to support, and type "Alternative Spring Break" in the text box that appears.

Sincerely,

ASBoard