

Mass Meeting Bulletin

September 15, 2003



Welcome to Circle K!



By Payal Patel

You're probably wondering what you have stumbled upon. Well, first and foremost, let me welcome you to one of the best decisions I made of my college career: Circle K. University of Michigan's Circle K belongs to the world's largest international collegiate service organization. We have one of the largest Circle K clubs in the world, and I am honored to serve as this year's club president.

I joined Circle K because I believed in what they were trying to accomplish. Not only does the club offer a plethora of service opportunities, but, more importantly, it's an opportunity to learn and give back to the community in ways you would have never imagined. Our goal is to foster a life-long commitment to service; not only do we wish to give you opportunities to serve the community, but also to take from it what it has to offer. Many of our alumni have taken service and have embraced it as a part of their lives.

In addition to its service opportunities, Circle K is an amazing leadership training organization; it has the ability to allow

individuals to take their ideas and turn them into reality. Many of our past members have said that Circle K has taught them things about leadership that no class at this university ever could. We offer numerous levels of leadership that cater to each individual's needs and wants. As a freshman I joined the Children's Service Committee not having any idea of what I wanted to do or what I was interested in. I never dreamed then that I would one day serve as the organization's president, that the journey I began my freshman year had just begun.

The real bait that has kept me in Circle K is the people. I do not think I have ever met a finer bunch of people in my life. These are people that take time out of their college life to give back to the community. I have met my best friends in this organization.

The three tenets of Circle K, service, friendship, & leadership, are more than just tenets; they come together in something you can feel at every project, club meeting and social event. This truly is an amazing organization.

Take One: Freshman Year in Circle K

By Stephanie Watson

Walking into the Union Ballroom last September was, not kidding, one of the scariest things I have ever done. Over three hundred people were seated in neat little rows, nearly filling one of the biggest rooms in the Union. Three hundred people and I did not know a single person. I am not even sure what made me go as all of my new friends were rushing sororities and writing for the daily or simply spending their time on schoolwork. All I knew was that I wanted to get involved and braving ginormous mass meetings was the first step to doing it.

I remember leaving the meeting discouraged. I, being relatively shy, did not talk to anyone and made my way back to Bursley with the heavy knowledge that I was in my second week of school and very much alone. Never fear though! I decided Circle K was worth a try and signed up for Hunger Coalition.

I attended the project determined to be friendly and

outgoing. It worked. One of the more senior and more involved members convinced me to join a committee. It felt very odd to be making such a move, but I decided to do it anyway.

Becoming part of a committee was the greatest thing I could have done. It gave me a lot of insight into the workings of Circle K and urged me to get more and more involved. Soon I was signing up for a project or more a week, as well as running a few of my own. Circle K also gave me connections to other great service groups like Dance Marathon and The Detroit Project.

Thus, through my involvement, I met some of my best friends as well as found my niche at U of M. I love every aspect of the service we do and the people we work with. I have found myself moved, inspired and simply contented by serving others. So, moral of the story is: take a chance, it's good for you.

"The Greatest Service To Yourself Is Service To Others"

More About Circle K

Circle K Structure

By Lisa Slominski

One of the many things that make the University of Michigan Circle K unique is its complex (and sometimes a little bit hard to understand!) structure. To make things somewhat easier, I will go through the basics of Circle K club structure, and tell you a little bit about what each part does.

First of all, U of M Circle K is part of an international organization. That means that there are Circle K clubs at universities all around the world, and an international board with international trustees to oversee everything. There are also international conventions every year where clubs from all over the world get together to have fun with other Circle K'ers. To break up all of these clubs even further, the clubs are divided into separate districts. For example, the University of Michigan Circle K is in the Michigan district, which also includes other clubs from Michigan. We have district conventions every year at different universities, and this year the district convention will be at U of M!

Circle K clubs are also part of a much larger organization: the Kiwanis family. Kiwanis Clubs are organizations for adult business professionals who are active in their communities. Kiwanis Clubs were around first, and then they decided to start up and sponsor service organizations at different age levels. Circle K is the college level branch of the Kiwanis family, Key Club is the high school branch, Builder's Club is the middle school branch, K-Kids is the elementary school branch, and Aktion Clubs are for people with disabilities. All of these different clubs are devoted to community service, and they all get help from the other branches of Kiwanis when they need it. For example, U of M Circle K currently co-sponsors a K-Kids Club for elementary school students in Detroit, and will soon co-sponsor a Builder's Club for middle school students in Ypsilanti. Our club is sponsored by a Kiwanis Club, and we often work together with Kiwanis Clubs and Key Clubs on different projects and fundraisers.

Within the club, U of M Circle K also has its own structure. The core of our club is composed of our 165 members, who participate in service projects and make our club as great as it is every year. Our club also has 12 different committees that take care of different areas of the club, such as fundraising or setting up service projects. In charge of the committees and other important aspects of our club are 15 chairs, and keeping track of the entire club are 5 executive board members. All of these parts work together constantly throughout the year, and make our club as amazing as it is.

This whole structure thing is kind of confusing, right? Well, don't worry-it definitely gets easier to understand later on! Once you start becoming involved with different aspects of our structure, say, after joining a committee, attending District Convention, or hanging out with our K-Kids, everything starts falling into place, and what was once really hard to understand simply becomes another great aspect of our club.



Circle K'ers Having Fun

Service, Service, Service

By Lisa Slominski

One of the best parts of Circle K is the wide variety of service opportunities that it offers to its members. In Circle K, we work with people across the life span, from infants and toddlers at a daycare for homeless children, to the elderly in nursing homes. We work with hospitals, elementary schools, community centers, homeless shelters, and dozens of other places that allow us the chance to work with and learn from a variety of different people in a variety of different circumstances. We also do projects with animals and the environment, and do service in Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti, and Detroit, among other places. The structures of the service projects in Circle K also vary, and there are projects to fit every schedule and every interest. Each week there are numerous one-time projects, such as playing with toddlers at a science center or cleaning up the river, that people can sign up for and go to on a one-time basis. There are also many ongoing projects in Circle K. For these projects, the same groups of people attend the same projects each week, some examples of which are working with teens at group homes and volunteering at homeless shelters. Circle K also has opportunities for participating in mentorship programs, with everything from hanging out with an elementary school pal once a week, to writing letters to the elderly. Even if you are interested in a service project that our club does not currently do, U of M Circle K makes an effort to provide members with the opportunities to put their ideas into action, and to help make our club even better. With tons of different service projects offered each week, there are always opportunities for members to get involved in whatever type of community service that they are most interested in, and maybe discover new ways of serving their community in the process.

What is your favorite Circle K Project?

A Project for Every Interest

By Lynne Strickler

There are an incredibly ridiculous number of community service groups on this campus. This is not a criticism, as I am pleased to think that so many students are interested in serving the community, however it makes the task of finding the "right" one rather daunting. I recall walking through Festifall my freshman year and being incredibly overwhelmed. I knew that I wanted to do service, but with whom? I began to sample a lot of different clubs and amongst this buffet of service groups, I found Circle K. Circle K intrigued me, so I went to a meeting and another meeting...for 4 years.

Finding the right student group is a personal choice, since we all came to this university with different goals and different expectations, so I can only impose upon you my own reasons for being a loyal member of Circle K. Namely, Circle K gave me the opportunity to combine my interest in service along with my other interests in life. This pairing of interests has made certain projects into my favorite projects. I love to cook, I feel that cooking allows one to be



creative, but also provides others with a basic need. Thus, preparing dinner at Ronald McDonald House and Hunger Coalition rate among my two favorite projects. At both of these projects not only do I get to indulge my love of cooking, but I also have the chance to provide a meal for those who need it, although for very different reasons. At Ronald McDonald House I feel good knowing that with a team of Circle Kers cooking, parents can focus more of their attention on the needs of their ailing children. And at Hunger Coalition, I can directly see how my time and efforts in the kitchen are directly contributing to the health and wellbeing of those who visit.

Every project that Circle K does directly helps the community and those in it, but the ability to find the projects that are especially meaningful and important to the members is what makes Circle K so amazing. There are a myriad of other reasons to join a club, including fun socials, leadership opportunities, and the wonderful people you will meet, and luckily, you can find that all right here in Circle K!

Four Years of Projects, Four Years of Favorites

By Kabir Seth

Picking my favorite project after 4 years in Circle K is pretty much impossible. While part of project's enjoyment certainly comes from the volunteer work, the project's fun truly comes from who you are working with. I can honestly say the greatest people I have ever met in college were in Circle K. They believed in what they were doing, dedicated themselves, and had a fantastic time doing it. To give you an idea of all the terrific projects Circle K has to offer, I have decided to choose my favorite project(s) from freshman through senior year.

While I was involved in Circle K as a committee member my freshman year, I did not go to that many projects. However, my favorite was easily **Tiny Tots at Leslie Science Center**. This is a project where parents can bring their young children to learn a little more about science, go on a nature hike, and eat the all-important snack. Our job is to basically facilitate the activities and play with the kids. Who doesn't enjoy playing with kids? The project is still a favorite of mine and is a great way to "get your feet wet" if you are new to Circle K.

Sophomore year was a time I became much more active in Circle K, taking on a bigger leadership position as chair of the Campus Relations committee. My favorite projects became the large-scale events the club set up and continue to this day. **CK Service Day, Trick-**

or-Can, and Bowl-a-thon were just some of events we did, **all started my members just like you**. After this year, I truly believed Circle K was capable of accomplishing anything.

After two years in the club, I had done nearly all the project Circle K had to offer, from **weekly elementary school mentoring to playing Bingo at Riverview Nursing Home**. However, I had never attended the **men's homeless shelter**. This is an overnight project, and to be honest, scared me a little. However, I knew it was important for me to "get out of my comfort zone" so to speak. Circle K sent volunteers every night one week, and I signed up. While certainly perturbed, I managed to get through the night and even went back another night. The project put human faces to homelessness and pushed me to learn more about the subject.

As I enter my senior year, I have not chosen a favorite project as yet. Teaching computers to the elderly at Sequoia Place is a lot of fun, but I think I am still undecided. Circle K has been a fantastic experience for me, allowing me to meet extraordinary people, and make this big college a lot smaller. Some of my happiest moments from my college career are with the people in this club, and I encourage all of you to make an effort to get involved. Four years goes by fast...make it worth it.

"Four years goes by fast... make it worth it."
-Kabir Seth

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Circle K

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Circle K Socials!

By Matt Kochanek

I LOVE CIRCLE K SOCIALS. Socials are the most amazing time you will have. After doing hours and hours of community service with people, finding out what they are like “after hours” is a great time. Ice cream, Frisbee, Laser Tag, Tiger’s Baseball Games, Weekend Ski Trips... I’ve done them all with Circle K. Sure, Circle K is a service group, but without them socials, it simply would not be the same club. I know that I certainly look forward to unwinding after our weekly Thursday meetings with my friends from Circle K.



So now that I’ve gone into all these details about socials, you probably find yourself asking, “How do all these wild and crazy things happen?”. Well, I’m here to help!

One of the cool things about U of M Circle K is that it has a bunch of committees, and one of these committees is dedicated to coming up with fun things for the club to do! They have a lot of exciting things planned so far this year, but to find out what they are, you are just going to have to come to more meetings, and more socials! See you all around 8pm!

U of M Circle K Wins 1st Place!

By Amy Grude

Wouldn’t it be cool to take a vacation every year with your student organization? To visit a different city, stay in a nice hotel, spend quality time with friends (new and old), and dance the night away? I think it sounds like a blast, and that’s why I have attended the Circle K International Convention for two years in a row.

International Convention (ICON) is held every summer in July or August and is a time for Circle K’ers from all over the world to come together and celebrate a year of service. This year ICON was held in Indianapolis. Other recent conventions have been held in the great vacation spots of Orlando, San Diego, and Jamaica. Next year, we will be in St. Louis.

After a mad rush to get everything together on time and a 4-hour road trip with plenty of walkie-talkie action, we arrived at the gorgeous Omni hotel in downtown Indy. After check-in and a quick dinner, it was time for the opening session that officially kicks off convention. Following opening session was a dance.

Day two of ICON was by far my favorite. It started out early (as usual) with workshops. After the initial round of workshops there were some more workshops, which we promptly skipped in order to have a leisurely lunch at the mall. (All the fun of ditching school, but without the calls to your parents!) The rest of the afternoon consisted of caucusing, which is the process of candidates running for International Office telling us what they want to see happen in Circle K and why we should vote for them. While caucusing isn’t the most exciting thing in the world, Michigan makes it fun with our crazy sense of humor.

In the evening the whole district went out to a nice dinner and then got all dressed up for the awards ceremony. We were thrilled to win 1st place in the scrapbook competition and ecstatic to win the 1st place club achievement award in the large club division. That is the highest honor any individual club can receive, and it means the University of Michigan Circle K is the most accomplished Circle K club in the world. It was several hours before my heart stopped pounding due to all the nerves, tension, and anticipation followed by a great thrill. After the awards ceremony a hypnotist worked his magic on some members of the audience. I’m sure they hope not too many of their friends got pictures.

The next two days were filled with a mix of official business and fun. The international officers were elected and decisions affecting all of Circle K International were voted on by the governing body. (Each club is represented by 2 delegates who take part in all voting). While not the highlight for many, the House of Delegates is always interesting and gives a lot of insight into what Circle K is like on an international level.

We ended with closing session, which was followed by a dance. Many of us missed this dance, however, because we were out causing a little trouble Michigan-style. (If you want to know, you will just have to ask!)

Needless to say, ICON is always packed with activity and adventure. It’s a time to meet new people, see friends from around the country, and get to know both your club and district better. I will be there next year, and I hope you will too.

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