

## What is volunteering? What does it entail? Does it really make a difference?

Individuals define volunteerism in many different ways. However, at Central Methodist University we define it very simply.

**Volunteering is giving any amount of your time and talents to help this institution be the best it can be for our students, alumni, friends, faculty and staff.**

This can simply be assisting in writing thank you notes, volunteering for an hour greeting guests at an event, or even speaking to classes about your profession. All of these contributions are key in ensuring we continue to strive for excellence through service and leadership.

If someone were to try to place a dollar amount on the value of volunteerism at Central Methodist University, it would not be possible. Volunteering is rich and diverse. Volunteering is not just about organizing hundreds or thousands of volunteers for large events like the Olympics. It is spontaneous acts of kindness like helping a neighbor shovel their walk, picking up trash on a college campus, making food baskets for those in

need, and so much more. These large and small acts, given freely, are what bind communities together. It's what will continue to nurture and bind Central Methodist University together. Volunteering is helping, not hiring; giving, not taking; contributing, not counting.

With the introduction of a few new volunteer opportunities in Spring 2016, our alumni have stepped up and embraced volunteerism at Central Methodist. Living Lives of Service & Leadership is not only part of Central Methodist University's creed, but it represents what our outstanding alumni volunteers have been exhibiting over the past six months. Events such as Founder's Weekend and Graduates of the Last Decade (GOLD) engagement activities were more successful than ever. Service Projects across the nation have been accomplished, crafting events, an athletic auction, faculty, staff, and student picnics, and much more have been nothing but successful in 2016. We owe this large amount of success to you, our alumni volunteers! Thank you.

# VOLUNTEERISM

IS THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE PUT INTO ACTION.

THESE ACTIONS SHAPE AND MOLD  
THE PRESENT INTO A FUTURE  
OF WHICH WE CAN ALL BE PROUD.

-HELEN DYER

**Have questions about  
Volunteering? Contact:**

**Meagan Davis**  
Assistant Director of Special  
Projects  
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# Central Serves 2016

We challenged our alumni and friends this summer to participate in the first global day of service specifically designed for alumni and friends to give back on behalf of Central Methodist University and show the world what it really means to live a life of service and leadership.

The warm day in June didn't stop our alumni and friends from serving in 15 locations across the nation, one of those being internationally in Belgium!

Alumni & Friends put in over 200 hours of work in their own communities and accomplished more than imaginable!

Projects completed included:

- Cleaned outdoor signage and furniture on campus
- Weeded gardens at local church
- Assisted in planning international fair for visiting students in Belgium
- Cleaned facilities and did minor repairs at historical jail museum
- Served at tractor pull concession stand to raise funds for local youth activities

- Hauled and sorted donations for non-profit organization
- Washed buses and cleaned trophy cases at a high school
- Assisted Meals on Wheels with food packaging
- Helped build a home with Habitat for Humanity
- Wrote thank you notes to CMU donors
- Cleaned facilities, completed yard work, and visited with residents at Veterans home
- Created outdoor garden area for a nursing home
- Cut down trees at a local church
- Packaged food at a food bank
- Cleaned up playground at children's learning center

On behalf of Central Methodist University we can't say thank you enough to all of our site hosts and every single person who participated in Central Serves 2016. We look forward to hosting the event for years to come.



# Volunteer Spotlight

We have many wonderful alumni and friends who are dedicated to the ultimate wellbeing of this institution. With that said, each edition of our volunteer newsletter will feature a volunteer spotlight. You can nominate someone by simply emailing Meagan Davis at [mndavis@centralmethodist.edu](mailto:mndavis@centralmethodist.edu). Share a little bit about the nominee and why they go above and beyond through volunteerism to CMU.



## Samantha S. Ward, J.D.

Central Methodist University, BA in Political Science & Spanish - 1996  
Attorney and International Speaker  
Huntsville, Texas

**As a Central Methodist University Alumni, what made you decide to start volunteering?**

Volunteering has always been a part of my life. In college, I was a member of Sigma Pi Alpha sorority, and we

always supported charities on and off-campus. I worked with the Central Missouri Food Bank when I lived in Columbia. I contributed to food drives, and did hands-on volunteering through my Missouri United Methodist Church Sunday School group. I joined the Huntsville Junior Service League in 2015. It is a great organization, and they are involved in many local and national charities like Meals on Wheels, the Houston Food Bank, and Special Olympics. I am also a volunteer and member of the United Methodist Women's Mary Magdalene Circle in Huntsville, Texas.

**What are some of your most rewarding moments as a volunteer?** My most rewarding moments are always when serving in the community and making personal connections. With the Junior Service League, we have a Houston Food Bank truck that comes every quarter to Huntsville. We serve people in need of food on those days. We have the distribution set up like a farmer's market. I love helping people fill their carts, and shop for what they need.

This month we have not one, but two, amazing women who are worthy of this spotlight. Each eagerly hosted out of state sites for our Central Serves project this past summer and are looking forward to volunteering in the future.

**Why do you feel it is important to volunteer and give back?**

I have been so blessed to receive such a great education from Central Methodist and from the University of Missouri. I have also been blessed professionally as an attorney, professor, and professional speaker. I feel like this is one way to show my gratitude for all that I have been given. I also want to set an example for my son. I want to show him that giving back is a normal part of our lives.

**What are some of your favorite ways to give back?**

Some of my favorite ways to give back are to donate legal services to charity auctions to help raise money. I like to give pro bono advocacy, mediation and legal services to those who might not be able to afford my regular fees. In addition, I love working for Meals on Wheels, Say Yes to the Dress, the Houston Food Bank, SAAFE House, the Special Olympics, and others in our community.

**Do you have any advice for someone who is looking to volunteer or get involved with Central Methodist as an alum?**

My best advice is to get involved where you are right now in your community. Connect with the alumni office so you can find other enthusiastic alums. There is such an overwhelming need right now across our communities, the country, and globally, that you just have to pick an organization or activity that you are passionate about and give it your best.



## Samantha Chott

Central Methodist University, BA in Religion - 2011  
Assistant Property Manager, Cushman & Wakefield  
Pasadena, California

### **As a Central Methodist University Alumni, what made you decide to start volunteering?**

From the moment I found out about the volunteer opportunity with Central Serves I was excited to be a part of it. It brought

back so many great memories of Service Day experiences from the years I attended CMU.

**What are some of your most rewarding moments as a volunteer?** The most rewarding part of being a volunteer is that feeling at the end of the day where you wipe your brow and realize, you didn't just "push paper" today, you did something real and tangible that helped someone.

**Why do you feel it is important to volunteer and give back?** The importance of giving back and volunteering is not just because it gives you warm fuzzies, but you also make a difference in your community. You get to

meet people who have different life experiences and come together for a greater good. We have so much divisiveness in the world today, it is nice to do some good, and etch away at the walls we build dividing people and rebuild community whether it be physically or in the abstract.

### **What are some of your favorite ways to give back?**

My time at CMU gave me more than just a degree and some student debt. My senior year was very tough due to a couple of significant losses in my family. The faculty and staff took the time to surround me with their positive energy and compassion during that struggle. That's not something you get at every college, it's an understanding and involvement you only get at CMU. I'll never be able to repay the people who were there for me, I can only pay it forward.

**Do you have any advice for someone who is looking to volunteer or get involved with Central Methodist as an alum?** Reach out to Meagan Davis or anyone on the CMU campus. There are as many ways to give back as there are alumni out in the world.

## What's Next?

So many new and exciting things are happening at Central and we want to make sure our alumni and friends are informed and involved!

Currently the Advancement and Alumni Relations department is in the middle of a complete website redesign which will feature a page specifically for volunteerism. It will showcase all of the opportunities available for you have to get involved with Central and feature a special volunteer opportunity each month!

Be sure to check our webpage often for the exciting new addition coming later this fall!

Central has also hired Meagan Davis as the Assistant Director of Special Projects to invigorate volunteer initiatives as well as student and parent engagement with the alumni office at CMU. If you have any questions feel free to contact her at [mndavis@centralmethodist.edu](mailto:mndavis@centralmethodist.edu) or 660-248-6278. She would love to get to know you!