

IMPACT's Impact

By: Ellen King

Marian Wright Edelman said, "Service is the rent we pay for being. It is the very purpose of life, and not something you do in your spare time." I came across this quote the week before our trip to Boston, and I have been thinking about it ever since. Before the conference, I never considered myself an activist and I thought it would be presumptuous to call myself a leader, but I did strive to succeed in the area of student service. The four years we typically spend in college are often believed to be the most self-indulgent times of our lives; I believe, however, that at least some of this spare time can be spent doing good within our community.

Before the IMPACT conference, I gave little thought to how I will continue to serve the community when I am no longer a student. My first session, however, was a three-hour forum dealing with graduate schools and managing non-profit organizations. While listening to the other students attending the forum, I was completely overwhelmed by their focus and what they had accomplished so far. These students were only a couple of years older than me, but all of them seemed to be on the fast-track to saving the world.

The first forum made me seriously evaluate where I want to be in five years. I have always thought that I was headed straight for the business world which our facilitators (half-jokingly) called "soul-sucking," but after the forum I felt that my ultimate goal of becoming financially successful may not serve a greater purpose. Over the course of the conference, however, I decided that my future did not have to be decided by the end of spring break. Instead, I focused on attending sessions that would benefit what I'm working on over the next year.

At IMPACT, I was able to talk with other students and teachers and share ideas about how we can encourage other students (and ourselves) find out what we "can" do better. Our trip to Boston helped me get to know other Rollins students who are interested in service and I look forward to using what I learned here at Rollins.