

First-Ever Change Day Has Huge Community Impact

Between 1,500 and 1,600 Andrews students, staff and faculty participated

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Students, faculty and staff worked at dozens of different project sites to improve their community on Change Day, September 14 (Photo by Submitted by Rebecca May, IMC)

By: Brandon Shin, IMC student writer

Andrews University held its first-ever “Change Day” on September 14, 2017. With a large portion of the student population involved in a hands-on effort to actively change the community around them, a very wide breadth of service projects received attention.

For example, some students applied themselves to packing backpacks for refugees, an effort promoted by Campus Ministries, while others, recruited by the biology department, were involved in the removal of invasive species from Jean Klock Park. Other groups branched out to perform services such as painting murals or cleaning up beaches.

Yasmine Siagian, a sophomore studying behavioral neuroscience, was one of a small group of students tasked with cleaning up the beach at Rocky Gap County Park. “It was surprising how much trash there was,” she said with a sad tone, “but it was also really rewarding to see the direct effects of our work when we were done.”

Sharyl Cubero, a sophomore biology major, stated, "As a student at Andrews University, for a really long time I have been looking for a way to go and give back to my community. As part of the mission of Andrews, Change Day falls perfectly into accordance with what we believe in. As a student, I hope this is something that gets repeated again, and that next time more and more people get involved in changing our world."

I believe that Change Day 2017 created an incredible impact on not only those served, but also on those serving. We witnessed firsthand the amount of work required to keep buildings, parks and communities functioning, and it was quite humbling.

I worked with the Rocky Gap clean-up team, and the amount of trash scattered across the shore was disheartening; however, within a solid two hours' time, the team swept the beach, creating a cleaner and more appealing environment than what we initially found. I would wholeheartedly recommend that Change Day continues in the upcoming years. It provided a fantastic avenue for students to become involved in service. The work done will be a testament to the impact that even a small group of people can make.

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