



Lou Miller &lt;miller37@gmail.com&gt;

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**Feb. Nassced letter**

1 message

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**Michelle McGrath** <michelle@wasc.org>

Mon, Feb 6, 2012 at 3:13 PM

To: Lou Miller &lt;webmaster@nassced.org&gt;, Les Anderson &lt;les.anderson@sendit.nodak.edu&gt;, Gary Clark &lt;gclark51@yahoo.com&gt;

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**From:** Michelle McGrath [mailto:michelle@wasc.org]**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2012 10:50 AM**To:** 'Michelle Mcgrath'**Subject:** nassced

Dear Esteemed Advisors, Administrators, Students, and WASC Supporters,

***“Sometimes you gotta go beyond the pavement.***

***You got to go deep. Way on Back.”***

***Rascal Flatts, Banjo***

<http://www.rascalflatts.com/video/discography/banjo-audio>

Welcome to the month of February dedicated to service. When I think of service, I immediately think of character, what makes up a person from the inside out and what inspires people to give so generously of their time without putting a “quota” on them from their school and/or business, true servant leaders.

When you Google the word character or servant leadership, oodles of hits pop up. Anything from well known philosophers defining it to organizations claiming they can teach character or servant leadership.

One thing remains constant, character development and the ability to give “unselfishly” is a journey.

When I heard this recent song from Rascal Flatts, *Banjo*, I was reminded about my own journey.

I grew up in a 2 bedroom pink, yes I said PINK, house on a small farm in Sigel, WI. Google has yet to find it! College was not part of the equation for my family. Life was about working hard, typically till dark, and fun meant the neighbors might come over, only to have our Dad’s take out their guitars and “banjos” and play old school country music. Where was the Madonna & Bon Jovi I wanted to hear? I remember wishing if I only lived in the fancy subdivisions my friends lived in...gone to the expensive schools. I wanted more! Now the older, much wiser Michelle says I wanted “different”, however, I clearly stated MORE back then.

Well I did leave and went on to do exactly what I said I would do. However, when I look back at the character I developed or how my passion to give back to others developed, it had nothing to do with my years of schooling or the places I’ve lived. It had everything to do with the experiences I had at the end of that gravel road, in that pink house in Sigel, WI. And if I ever find myself getting a little frazzled in life,

you can find me back at the pink house, around the fire with my family, remembering back to the journey. This time it's my daughter pulling out the guitar - the one Grandpa almost wore out. Character development and becoming a true servant leader is a journey- "you got to go deep and way on back". I'm sure you all have your own "pink house" story to share.

It is my hope that you take some time in February to reflect on your own journey- all the twists and turns, lovely and lonely moments. I also hope you take a chance to remember the influence you have on the young people you work with each day - whether they are your own kids or other people's kids. You are very much a part of their character development journey! What you do, the choices you make, they all matter. And one day, years from now, when those young people "go way on back", it will be you they toast.

I would like to welcome our National Experts this month as they share amazing service projects and initiatives going on in their states:

### ***Kyle Gordon - Illinois***

#### State Service Projects:

In Illinois we adopted the "Teens for Jeans" project created by the folks at Aeropostale. Students around the state will collect their old jeans and then take them to the nearest Aeropostale store for recycling but more importantly, Aeropostale will donate the jeans to teens in need across the United States. Aeropostale has a great program at the following link <http://www.dosomething.org/teensforjeans-old/home>. We turn this into a state wide competition and the top "jean gathering" schools will be honored at the state convention.

In the past five years we have also collected soda tabs by the tens of thousands for the Ronald McDonald house, have done blood drives for the American Red Cross, and created bear buddies for kids in need with the Build A Bear company.

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### ***Amy Kassel - Wyoming***

The Wyoming Association of Student Councils state charity is the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Wyoming. Through the Kids for Wish Kids program, WASC member councils have raised over \$770,000 since 1999. During the 2010-2011 school year, student leaders across the state raised \$147,000 for Wyoming's wish kids! During our state convention, held in the fall of 2011, we invited wish kid, Ian-Conner, and his mother to speak about the "power of a wish".

Twelve year old Ian-Conner loves Star Wars and his favorite restaurant is Red Lobster. He loves playing soccer and is just like most twelve year old boys you know, except that he has a life-threatening illness. Ian-Conner has Cystic Fibrosis, but he doesn't let it slow him down! He is a very active twelve year old with a passion for animals.

When Make-A-Wish volunteers visited Ian-Conner, they asked him, "If you could have one wish, what would it be?" Ian-Conner explained that he wanted to be a zoo keeper at the country's best zoo in Ohio.

Ian-Conner and his family flew to Ohio for his wish come true, but he didn't just get the normal tour of the zoo that most people do, he got far more! Ian-Conner went behind the scenes of the zoo, petting the animals and helping other zoo keepers feed them. He even got to help clean out some of the pens.

"Thank you so much for granting my wish! I couldn't believe what I got to do. I had the greatest time ever! I will never forget this," said Ian-Conner.

The numerous activities our member councils host fosters the value of community service by providing them with hands-on experience in helping to grant wishes through the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Wyoming. It also provides a mechanism for building school spirit and creating an additional partnership between teens and teachers outside of the classroom.

Wyoming student councils have utilized a number of creative fundraising events to raise money for the Make-A-Wish Foundation of Wyoming. Dodgeball tournaments, "Buff Puff" volleyball games, talent shows, dances, roof sits, spaghetti dinners, pancake breakfasts, competitions and cooperation between schools are just a small sampling of fundraising activities. Several schools hold a "Wish Week" where every day boasts a different fundraising event for Make-A-Wish. Many of these weeks lead off with a visit from a Wish child from their community, who often times may be the beneficiary of these students fundraising efforts.

Our student council members learn valuable leadership skills in planning and hosting fundraising events and they contribute quality time for the service of others. In the end, our student council members love helping grant the wishes of our Wish Kids in Wyoming.

**Mark Your Calendars!!**

**NASSCED Board Meeting** - February 19-20, 2012, Phoenix, Arizona

**NASC Conference** - June 23-25, 2012, Oklahoma City, OK

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