

University of Central Florida

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High Impact Practices Student Showcase Fall  
2024

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Fall 2024

## A Gift for Teaching

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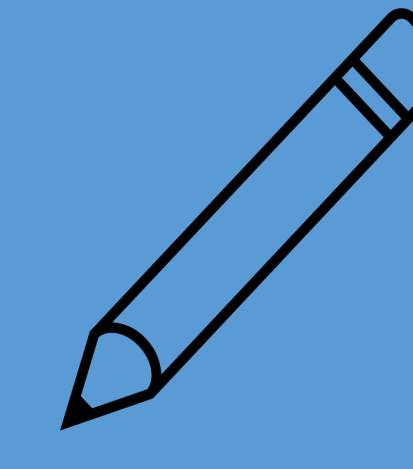
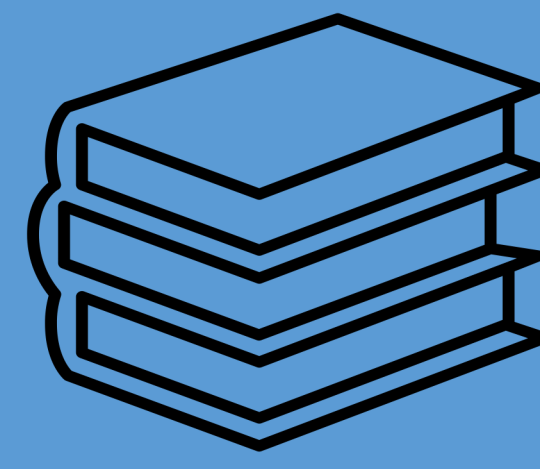
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## Abstract

Our service-learning project involved volunteering at A Gift for Teaching in Orlando, Florida. A Gift for Teaching is a nonprofit organization with the goal of providing free school supplies to underfunded schools and teachers. We assisted in sorting through donated supplies, such as pencils, notebooks, art materials, and other resources, and preparing them for distribution to local teachers and schools. By working with this organization, we were able to support teachers and students within our community, helping to provide students with the learning experience they deserve.

OUR REPORT CARD SINCE 1998	
Pencils Taken to Classrooms	15.2 million
Books Taken to Classrooms	2.3 million
Teacher Shopping Visits	385,300+
Value of Each Shopping Visit	\$625
Value of Daily Distribution	\$70,000
Volunteer Hours Donated	767,300+
A Gift for Music Students	10,000+
More than <b>\$169.7 MILLION</b> in Supplies Distributed	



*A Gift for Teaching statistics*

*Ella, Renata, and Ranica  
volunteering at AGFT*

## Course Connection

Our group's time volunteering with A Gift for Teaching has been a meaningful and impactful part of our spiritual leadership experience. Over the course of completing 25 hours of service, we worked every Thursday repackaging donated items for the organization's free store, which directly supports teachers and students in need. This hands-on work allowed us to put into practice the leadership principles we've been discussing in class, such as serving others and contributing to a larger community without expecting anything in return. We chose to volunteer with A Gift for Teaching because of its mission to provide equal access to educational resources. The organization ensures that teachers don't have to spend their own money on classroom supplies, and students have the materials they need to succeed. This aligns with our understanding of leadership as empowering others and removing obstacles to success.

Throughout our time there, we were impressed by the dedication of the staff and the gratitude expressed by teachers who benefited from the store. Seeing firsthand how essential these supplies are to both educators and students made us realize how small acts of service can create a significant impact. This experience not only met our class's service requirement but also gave us a deeper understanding of leadership through community involvement.

## Community Impact

Founded in 1998 by Gary Landwirth, A Gift for Teaching is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting public education in Central Florida by providing free resources to teachers. Their mission is to "empower teachers to inspire future leaders," and they believe that education is the foundation for personal and community success. Through core values of kindness, collaboration, and sustainability, the organization has had a profound impact on students, teachers, and the community.

A Gift for Teaching has distributed over \$169.7 million in supplies, facilitated more than 385,300 teacher shopping visits, and received over 767,300 volunteer hours. With a small team of 15 staff members, including three who work remotely, the organization has made significant strides in bridging gaps in education. Their work not only benefits the Central Florida region but also inspires other nonprofits across the state to adopt similar models.

By fostering compassionate relationships, encouraging collaboration, and promoting innovation, A Gift for Teaching ensures that every student has the tools they need to succeed. Their efforts continue to transform classrooms, strengthen communities, and inspire others to contribute to positive change in education.

## Reflection

Volunteering with A Gift for Teaching has been transformative, showing us how our contributions directly support students and educators in need. Our time here has reinforced our belief that every student, regardless of their background, deserves the resources to succeed. Witnessing the impact of our efforts on students' educational journeys has been both inspiring and humbling.

We repackaged donated supplies for distribution in the organization's thoughtfully designed store, which serves as a vital resource for teachers facing limited school budgets. A Gift for Teaching removes barriers by providing these materials at no cost, ensuring that students have access to essential tools for learning. The app the organization developed allows teachers to easily track their supplies, and the curbside pickup service reflects a deep commitment to making this process as convenient as possible for educators who are often short on time. Knowing that teachers can access everything they need to inspire their students, free of charge, shows us the tangible difference community support can make.

Interacting with teachers showed us the profound impact these supplies have on their classrooms and students. Many teachers expressed how much it means to have a reliable source of high-quality supplies to create a positive learning environment. This experience has deepened our appreciation for the vital role teachers play and the difference organizations like A Gift for Teaching make. The gratitude from the staff and the welcoming, passionate atmosphere made us feel like a valued part of the mission, reminding us of the power of collective action and the importance of supporting education.

## Civic Responsibility

As students in the Leadership Scholars Academy, we have the opportunity to engage in projects and services that actively benefit our community. By volunteering, working with local organizations, and participating in leadership programs, we are learning how to take responsibility for the well-being of others. Our experiences, such as volunteering with A Gift of Teaching, help us develop the skills to make a meaningful impact while building connections that strengthen our community. Being a part of the academy encourages us to think about how we can contribute to a better society and empowers us to take action, both now and in the future



*Warehouse located in the  
back of the store, storing  
all the supplies and  
donated items*

## Acknowledgements

We'd like to sincerely thank Teege Braun, the Store Manager, and Amanda Cooper, the Program Manager, for their amazing support throughout this project. Their guidance, enthusiasm, and dedication played a huge role in making this experience both impactful and rewarding. Teege always gave us a warm welcome at the start of each volunteer session, providing us with the full rundown and making sure we felt involved.

We loved his optimism and fun energy, which made the experience even more enjoyable. We truly appreciate the time and effort they put into helping us contribute to the organization and its mission.



*Terry and Teege welcoming  
teachers into the store*

## References

<https://www.agiftforteaching.org/>

