

Arrupe Students Learn Life Values as They Volunteer Time at Walk MS

Early in the morning on May 7, a group of seven students from Arrupe Jesuit High School gathered with their Service Coordinator, Beth Brin, at Denver City Park. Their goal? To volunteer their time to cheer on the more than 8,000 Walk MS Denver participants as they walked to beat MS. This is the fourth year students from Arrupe Jesuit have volunteered time to be part of the Cheer Squad, an activity that is tied to the faith and service-oriented culture of their school.

"Arrupe Jesuit High School is a Catholic, Jesuit, college-preparatory school serving low-income students in northwest Denver. Each student works in a corporate, entry-level job one day a week, where they earn approximately three-fourths of their tuition. The work-study program makes a private education possible for our families, and provides the students with opportunities to gain real-world experience and the chance to learn about the futures that are possible for them," said Brin. Exposure to the world outside the school walls or the students' neighborhoods is also integral to the service program at Arrupe.

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"A guiding principle of Jesuit education is to nurture the whole person, which includes educating young men and women who are not only intelligent and academically prepared, but who are loving, open to growth and committed to justice. One way to encourage this type of growth is to provide opportunities for our students to learn about issues affecting our local and global communities, and to foster interactions with our neighbors. Our students learn about the needs of others and share their talents and love of neighbor by participating in a variety of service opportunities like Walk MS, working in soup kitchens, or visiting residents at



Photo courtesy Taryn Kapronica

Arrupe Walk MS Cheer Squad: Back Row: Laura Rodriguez, Brenda Ortiz, Afeyok Fien, Erik Diaz, Angela Esquibel, Diego Vargas. Front Row: Jocelyn Castillo, Luis Salas and Service Coordinator Beth Brin.

assisted living centers. These activities are an essential part of our students' high school experience," Brin added.

This is the third year junior Diego Vargas has participated at Walk MS. "I don't know anyone with MS, but I know what it is and how it affects people. When you cheer people on, you know you are part of supporting to help find a cure," he said.

Junior Angela Esquibel has volunteered to be part of the Arrupe's Walk MS Cheer Squad for two years and has a direct connection to this disease. "I have an aunt who was diagnosed with MS when I was little and didn't understand it," she said. "There are negatives and positives to her MS. It's negative because she always has to be very careful. But it's positive because we love her no matter what and don't let MS stop us," she emphasized.

Cheers are in order for these young individuals who are engaging in experiences that they will carry throughout their lives. Thank you Arrupe volunteers—you are making a difference!