

## **UR frosh earn A-pluses in 'Volunteerism 101'**

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Staff writer

A few raindrops Saturday didn't keep University of Rochester freshman Eshin Jolly from turning over a flower bed and pulling weed after weed outside School 45.

Jolly, 18, of Manhasset, Nassau County, was one of more than 1,000 freshmen volunteering at nonprofit organizations, agencies and public schools as part of the university's 18th annual Wilson Day.

"We're going to be living here in Rochester for four years and a lot of us are not native to the area," Jolly said. "It's a good way to get to know your surroundings. Plus, we're helping others and getting some exercise at the same time."

Jolly was one of 50 students landscaping, sorting textbooks and creating hallway displays at School 45.

Other UR freshmen touched bases at more than a dozen city schools and agencies, such as the Mt. Hope Family Center, Net Office and Mercy Outreach Center.

Wilson Day — a major component of UR's freshman orientation — calls for students to connect with the community and each other, and to gain a sense of the importance of community service, said UR President Joel Seligman.

Freshmen Johnny Chen, 18, of Portland, Ore., and Min Suk, 20, of Seoul, South Korea, used markers and paints to create banners to welcome students and staff back to school.

Suk said he signed on because he wanted to learn more about Rochester and his classmates. Chen said he liked the concept, and was glad to have the chance because students don't always seek out volunteer opportunities on their own.

Event coordinator Mollie Foust said she hopes students will continue to volunteer — even for several hours each month — throughout the school year.

School Principal Vicki Gouveia said the students' contribution has been outstanding.

"They're doing things that we typically would not get to," she said. "It's a real service. I really hope the students ... come back and work with the students."

Riley O'Neil, 18, a freshman biology student from Phelps, Ontario County, said he loved the idea of reaching out to children in the community by cleaning up flowerbeds outside of their school.

"It's also a great way to get to know each other and to understand that we're part of a community — on campus and in Rochester," he said.