

Hamilton students 'Make a Difference' at Children's Museum

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By Jessica Ryen Doyle, Observer-Dispatch

UTICA — A few hundred Hamilton College students and staff volunteered their time Saturday afternoon for the college's annual "Make a Difference Day" at various non-profit organizations.

Students gathered at seven locations to help out at places such as the Abraham House, the Children's Museum and the Underground Café.

About 36 students cleaned at the Children's Museum, said museum Executive Director Marlene Brown, who was deeply appreciative of the students' hard work.

"Think of all the things they could be doing and they chose to give up their time," Brown said. "It's so nice to see young kids care about their community."

Casey Bloomquist, 18, of Seattle, said he was helping out because he was attending Hamilton on a scholarship.

"I wouldn't be able to go here unless I had one," he said, "so this is my way of giving back."

Bloomquist spent the afternoon vacuuming and polishing the museum's staircase with his roommate, Max Wall.

"There are all these incredible opportunities in college, especially the college I am going to," said Wall, 18, of Vermont, "and most of the world doesn't have these opportunities. This is just a way I can say thanks and help (others) become a step closer to those opportunities."

"Make a Difference Day" is sponsored by the President's Office and the Hamilton Action Volunteer Coalition.

The group participates in several volunteer-themed activities throughout the year. This event was done in conjunction with the Rotary eClub NY1, whose "earthly headquarters" is The Children's Museum.

Leide Cabral, 18, a freshman from Boston, said she was having so much fun at the museum that she planned on becoming a permanent member of the coalition.