

PLNU ALUMNI CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COMMON GOOD
2012 and 2015 Alumni Survey Data – Themed Highlights
POINT LOMA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

Not surprisingly, a strong proportion of PLNU alumni feel their work is a service to God and make a connection between their lives and their careers. For instance, three-quarters of the 2015 respondents agree or strongly agree that their undergraduate experience had a positive impact on their commitment to Christ and their lives of service to society, with a slight increase in mean from the 2012 results.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

My undergraduate experience had a positive impact on...

	Year	Total Responses	N/A Responses	Reporting Responses	(5) Strongly agree	(4) Agree	(3) Neutral	(2) Disagree	(1) Strongly disagree	Mean
My commitment to Christ	2015	524	8	516	 43.6%	 32.8%	 12.2%	 6.4%	 5.0%	4.03
	2012	320	25	295	 32.5%	 35.9%	 22.4%	 4.1%	 5.1%	3.87
My life of service to Society	2015	524	4	520	 35.8%	 40.2%	 18.8%	 4.0%	 1.2%	4.05
	2012	320	15	305	 27.2%	 45.2%	 22.6%	 3.9%	 1.0%	3.94
My sensitivity toward and concern for others	2015	522	3	519	 40.7%	 43.2%	 12.9%	 1.9%	 1.3%	4.20
	2012	320	12	308	 29.5%	 49.4%	 15.9%	 3.6%	 1.6%	4.02
My understanding of people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds	2015	524	9	515	 24.5%	 36.3%	 24.7%	 9.5%	 5.0%	3.66
	2012	319	11	308	 20.8%	 37.0%	 31.2%	 8.1%	 2.9%	3.65
My affirmation of the equality of all people	2015	524	10	514	 31.5%	 39.1%	 20.2%	 6.0%	 3.1%	3.90
	2012	320	11	309	 28.8%	 38.2%	 24.9%	 6.1%	 1.9%	3.86
My willingness to wrestle with moral and ethical issues	2015	524	2	522	 41.0%	 46.2%	 10.0%	 1.7%	 1.1%	4.24
	2012	320	12	308	 35.1%	 47.4%	 13.6%	 2.3%	 1.6%	4.12

Note: Colored bars represent 2015 results.

On the topic of living out their faith as a mode of contribution to the common good, church engagement and faith activities have generally increased in frequency for PLNU alumni, although regular church attendance remains about the same (75%). Additionally, although church involvement has somewhat moved away from simple monetary giving to more time-invested service, more alumni are leading study groups, teaching Sunday school, or volunteering their time in other capacities. Note: The survey bias of a higher proportion of younger respondents may explain these findings.

If you volunteered your time in the past couple of years, where did you serve? (Mark all that apply)

	Year	Survey Respondents	Reporting Responses	Percent
Arts organizations	2015	544	39	7.2%
	2012	330	22	6.7%
Church related organizations	2015	544	333	61.2%
	2012	330	183	55.5%
Community and civic organizations	2015	544	179	32.9%
	2012	330	104	31.5%
Missions organizations	2015	544	128	23.5%
	2012	330	70	21.2%
Political organizations	2015	544	25	4.6%
	2012	330	15	4.5%
Schools and educational organizations	2015	544	229	42.1%
	2012	330	147	44.5%
Social service organizations	2015	544	102	18.8%
	2012	330	53	16.1%
Other	2015	544	30	5.5%
	2012	330	15	4.5%

Note: Colored bars represent 2015 results.

During the last couple of years, in which of the following activities have you been engaged? (Mark all that apply)

	Year	Survey Respondents	Reporting Responses	Percent
Given money for charitable work in the U.S.	2015	544	358	65.8%
	2012	330	214	64.8%
Given money to a Christian organization	2015	544	373	68.6%
	2012	330	237	71.8%
Given money for disaster relief	2015	544	143	26.3%
	2012	330	122	37.0%
Written letters to a political official or signed a political petition	2015	544	170	31.3%
	2012	330	109	33.0%
Volunteered time to help the poor	2015	544	271	49.8%
	2012	330	150	45.5%
Volunteered time to a Christian organization	2015	544	315	57.9%
	2012	330	168	50.9%
Taken part in a men's or women's support group	2015	544	160	29.4%
	2012	330	94	28.5%

Note: Colored bars represent 2015 results.

About how often do you engage in each of the following activities?

	Year	Reporting Responses	A few or more times a week		A few times a month	A few times a year	Rarely if ever	
			Daily	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	
Attend a local church that you consider your home congregation	2015	537	2.4%	16.6%	38.7%	16.8%	12.3%	13.2%
	2012	325	1.5%	12.6%	43.1%	11.7%	11.4%	19.7%
Attend a worship service	2015	537	0.6%	8.0%	49.2%	15.5%	13.8%	13.0%
	2012	326	0.9%	6.7%	49.7%	12.6%	13.5%	16.6%
Take part in a prayer or Christian study group	2015	537	1.5%	8.8%	29.1%	13.6%	13.6%	33.5%
	2012	326	0.6%	5.5%	26.4%	9.5%	16.6%	41.4%
Join in local evangelism	2015	534	1.5%	3.0%	5.1%	7.9%	24.2%	58.4%
	2012	324	1.2%	2.8%	4.0%	12.3%	34.9%	44.8%
Join in global missions work	2015	534	1.3%	0.9%	1.5%	3.4%	24.2%	68.7%
	2012	323	0.6%	0.3%	1.5%	3.7%	20.1%	73.7%
Read the Bible in your home	2015	535	19.3%	22.4%	12.0%	15.9%	12.3%	18.1%
	2012	326	20.2%	18.4%	9.5%	16.0%	12.6%	23.3%
Pray in your home	2015	536	56.3%	15.9%	10.1%	6.0%	3.7%	8.0%
	2012	326	58.0%	13.2%	8.3%	6.1%	2.8%	11.7%

Note: Colored bars represent 2015 results.

Please describe the frequency of your church involvement within the last couple of years:

	Year	Reporting Responses	Weekly	A few times a month	A few times a year	Rarely if ever
			Weekly	Weekly	Weekly	Weekly
Gave money	2015	535	19.1%	35.0%	23.6%	22.4%
	2012	325	23.4%	33.8%	21.5%	21.2%
Led a Christian study group or taught Sunday School	2015	534	14.8%	10.5%	14.6%	60.1%
	2012	325	12.3%	8.9%	14.2%	64.6%
Led corporate worship	2015	535	6.0%	4.5%	5.4%	84.1%
	2012	323	4.0%	6.5%	3.1%	86.4%
Used my professional skills to assist the church	2015	536	11.0%	10.8%	22.8%	55.4%
	2012	324	9.3%	7.7%	22.8%	60.2%
Served on the church "board" (elected leadership) or other committee	2015	534	5.6%	5.8%	5.6%	83.0%
	2012	324	4.6%	5.9%	4.6%	84.9%
Served in compassionate ministry	2015	533	6.4%	10.3%	26.8%	56.5%
	2012	323	5.0%	8.7%	27.9%	58.5%

Note: Colored bars represent 2015 results.

With regard to values and ethics relative to the common good, PLNU alumni place the most importance on raising a family and helping others who are in difficulty. These are rated far more important than

individualistic or materialistic goals like professional advancement or amassing financial wealth. Although social justice activities like promoting racial understanding and serving as a community leader are not rated as high as raising a family and helping others who are in difficulty, slight increases in those categories are evident.

How important are the following areas to you personally?

	Year	Reporting Responses	(4) Essential	(3) Very important	(2) Somewhat important	(1) Not important	Mean
For everyone I work with to get along	2015	524	24.6%	46.9%	26.0%	2.5%	2.94
	2012	318	25.8%	50.6%	22.3%	1.3%	3.01
Becoming an authority in my field	2015	523	21.8%	36.7%	31.4%	10.1%	2.70
	2012	318	20.8%	41.5%	28.3%	9.4%	2.74
Being very well off financially	2015	523	12.4%	31.4%	41.9%	14.3%	2.42
	2012	318	9.4%	27.0%	50.0%	13.5%	2.32
Raising a family	2015	522	56.7%	24.5%	13.4%	5.4%	3.33
	2012	319	51.7%	27.6%	12.5%	8.2%	3.23
Helping others who are in difficulty	2015	524	39.9%	46.8%	13.4%	0.0%	3.27
	2012	317	36.6%	50.2%	12.6%	0.6%	3.23
Becoming involved in programs to clean up the environment	2015	524	7.8%	20.8%	49.0%	22.3%	2.14
	2012	317	5.7%	21.1%	52.4%	20.8%	2.12
Helping to promote racial understanding	2015	523	14.0%	32.7%	40.3%	13.0%	2.48
	2012	317	12.9%	30.0%	39.7%	17.4%	2.38
Keeping up-to-date on global current events	2015	524	17.6%	38.9%	38.4%	5.2%	2.69
	2012	318	17.9%	38.4%	34.0%	9.7%	2.65
Keeping up-to-date on domestic current events	2015	524	17.0%	44.1%	34.4%	4.6%	2.73
	2012	318	18.6%	35.2%	38.7%	7.5%	2.64
Becoming a community leader	2015	523	11.7%	29.1%	37.3%	22.0%	2.30
	2012	318	11.0%	27.0%	38.1%	23.9%	2.25

Note: Colored bars represent 2015 results.

In summary, PLNU alumni feel a strong connection between their lives of service and their faith, and attribute these values to their undergraduate experience. They value raising their families, active involvement in their churches, and their service to God. Overall, their contributions to the common good are oriented towards the faith-based arena rather than direct community mobilization or financial giving.

Although they are more inclined to lead corporate worship or a Bible study rather than serve in a compassionate ministry, local evangelism, or global missions, they place a strong emphasis on the awareness of global and current domestic events, and prefer to express their altruism through church-related activities rather than organized community activism.

However, their strong preference for church-related contributions to the common good by no means implies that PLNU alumni are not aware of the social world outside the church, or that they perceive their alma mater as exerting little to no influence on shaping their social outlook or developing their

character. Rather, they believe PLNU had a positive impact on their affirmation of the equality of all people and their willingness to wrestle with moral and ethical issues.

Harmonizing with PLNU's missional ethos of service as an expression of faith, and reflecting PLNU's emphasis on faith-integrated calling and vocation, these results are not wholly surprising. Areas for future monitoring could include the frequency of financial giving and the continued development of intercultural competencies like racial awareness and understanding.

As adjustments are made to diversity-related academic and co-curricular areas, in tandem with an increase in the diversity of PLNU faculty, diversity-related scholarly expertise, and PLNU's underrepresented student populations, improvements in these survey items may be evident in the new version of the survey distributed earlier this summer to one-year and five-year PLNU alumni.