



# LEARNING VALUES THROUGH SERVICE

## HOW OUR LV EXPERIENCE GUIDES OUR PARENTING

PHIL & NIKKI SCHUMAKER, LV 02-05

Not a day goes by where I don't think about our time out in Browning, Montana, when we served as LVs at De La Salle Blackfeet School on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. Sometimes it is nostalgic. Other times, it happens when we see people struggling through life around us or just when a stranger's smile reminds us of someone we knew out there.



*Phil and Nikki Schumaker with their daughters.*

**In Browning, we both learned so much about ourselves, the world and how to treat people. It truly did change our lives for the better, in so many ways, and we are grateful to so many in the LV community.**

In Browning, we experienced being the minority. I believe the world would be a much better place if everyone could be the minority for a year of their lives. You learn to look at things in a different light and appreciate the importance of respect and love.

As parents now of Nora (12) and Abby (10), we lean on our time in Browning constantly. It has become a guide for us in how to teach them to show respect to everyone, something we feel is deeply needed in the world today. We are all different in so many ways—looks, culture, customs, speech, food, dress—but each one of us was created in the image of God and deserves to be loved and respected. With

girls who are working their way through their friend groups, this comes into play daily.

Our girls can be difficult at times and, like all parents, it drives us up the wall. But most of the time they are great and make us laugh and smile. There is no greater joy for me than when a teacher, parent or stranger tells us after the fact that one of our girls did something to help another or show love or respect to someone. Those moments wash away all the difficult times, sibling fights and negativity. Nikki and I look at each other and say, "Well, we did something right!"

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*Nikki and Phil served at the De La Salle Blackfeet School on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Montana 2002 to 2005. In the years since they have continued to volunteer in various capacities through their churches, kids' school and local communities. Nikki has taught in various capacities as a childbirth instructor, preschool teacher and director, and now runs a business in the health and wellness industry. Phil currently works for an emerging tech company, Qumulo, and is loving it. They have settled in the Kansas City area with their two beautiful and witty daughters, Nora and Abby.*

