

## Reflections of the Class of 2006

By Amanda J. Rocco & Erin K. Murphy

*“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”*

We chose to start off with this quote not only because it is credited to Benjamin Franklin and very true of how we learn, but because it is a good reflection of our time at Franklin & Marshall. This tiny college nestled between a city in transition and a county steeped in history forced us to get involved – in our studies, with our passions, and with the community. We often don't realize how we're bound to one another until big events happen (think patriotism after 9/11 or your favorite sports team winning a championship), and in the moments from convocation to graduation, we were not without our share of happenings, least of all the devastating hurricane that struck in 2005. Hurricane Katrina left behind incomprehensible damage, and we reacted – as individuals, as a country, and as a college.

We remember being in Lancaster during those last days of August as the news unfolded. We were all so busy – moving into new apartments, returning from semesters abroad and summers at home, and preparing for our senior year – but we were all riveted to our televisions, watching the horrific events in the Gulf and wanting to do something to help. Suddenly what had been most important to all of us – our senior year at F&M – seemed not so important at all.

In the days and weeks following Katrina, the F&M community took action. There were independent donors, students who traveled to the devastated areas to provide aid, and the formation of the Catastrophic Relief Alliance, a program that to this day continues to provide relief where needed. Two of our classmates, Kamissa and Jonathan Mort, had a truly innovative idea. They imprinted t-shirts with “Ben Franklin is My Homeboy” and donated the proceeds to Hurricane Relief. The shirts were soon seen everywhere on campus, and each time we saw one, we were so proud of our class's efforts to help this important cause.

This is just one example of how the college involved us and taught us to engage the community and world around us, but this one devastating hurricane and the individual and group contributions that followed showed us that even the smallest of communities can have the biggest impact when an environment of connectivity is fostered.