



University of Portland senior Elle Hoxworth with children in Kenya where she started a business to help women.

Serving Women and Children in Kenya

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UP Student starts business as volunteer

Elle Hoxworth, a senior majoring in sociology and political science at the University of Portland, is the first recipient of the Molly Hightower Endowed Scholarship, given annually to a junior or senior with a strong devotion to faith and commitment to service.

Hoxworth, of Pasadena, Calif., recently returned from Kakamega, Kenya, where she started a business as a volunteer with the Western Education Advocacy and Empowerment Program. The program works with women and their families in western Kenya through a variety of programs. It also was her second trip as part of the university's new East Africa Initiative.

"It's a different kind of education -- doing the work you love and not sitting in a classroom," Hoxworth said of her summer internship. "It's working with people, implementing programs, working on the fly."

The advocacy program offers vocational training in sewing skills for women as a core part of its programs in Kenya, and Hoxworth saw an opportunity to bring a fair income to these vulnerable women in the community. The women made placemats, napkins, pot holders, purses and bags out of African Kitenge material that are sold locally and abroad.

Hoxworth said she decided

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