

Jennifer Story

▼ Florida Gulf Coast University ▼ 3.51 GPA
▼ Junior in Communications

No matter what you do, there's always a way to serve others," says Jennifer Story, whose "service attitude" is the catalyst behind her many accomplishments. At FGCU, Story has been the founding president of many organizations including the American Sign Language Club. "People within the deaf community have a lot to contribute to our community, yet so many of us are unable to experience their friendships because of the language barrier," Story says.

In 1998, Story resigned as president of ASL to give others the opportunity to lead. "I give others a chance to lead and prove themselves so that they're prepared for the future," says Story, 20. "If we hog all the opportunities, then we will fail to train our future leaders." Story's legacy of leadership continued on when she also became the founding president of several other campus organizations including the Outdoor Adventurers Club, the FGCU Choir, and Phi Eta Sigma honor society. "Starting organizations has been something that I love to do," Story says. "But it's watching new leaders blossom and take over, and watching my



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university family and my community family merge together that I take pride in the most."

Even though she's established many student organizations, Story says her greatest achievement has been her involvement in Challenger Baseball—an organization that gives children with handicaps the opportunity to play. Story started going to the games when her younger brother, who has Down's Syndrome, joined the league. "Ever since then, I have been a volunteer and worked with these children," Story says. The team's

slogan, "Challenged, not defeated," reminds Story never to give up. "When problems arise, they are a challenge and should not stop us, but motivate us to beat the obstacles." Since becoming a "Buddy" for the Challenger Baseball Team, she also has motivated a dozen other FGCU students to become involved.

Along with volunteering for the league, Story serves as the current president of the Student Government Association, historian for The Crest student ambassador organization, and secretary for Golden Key honor society. Story says she balances her daily schedule by prioritizing. "The order that I stick to is: family, God, academics, and extracurricular activities," she says.

If you asked Story who her greatest influences are, she would give you three answers: "my parents, my first boss, and Jesus." "My parents taught me that there's more to life than what you accomplish and that family comes first," Story says. "My first boss taught me that a good employee is one who works diligently without someone hanging over their shoulder, and Jesus teaches me how to treat others." Although her role models have made a tremendous impact on her life, Story has begun to shape her own legacy. "I want to be remembered as someone who treated others with respect and listened to the needs of the students," she says. "God's gift to us is our talents, and our gift to him is what we do with them." ■