

# Volunteer Ministries



**INSIDE THIS  
ISSUE:**

Summer Young Adult Service Communities and UCC Companion Communities: Young Adult Service Communities	1
National Gathering of volunteers in UCC Companion Communities network	2
Church World Service Ecumenical Build '10 Cedar Rapids, Iowa April 12- May 21	3
Along the Way... News from Volunteers The Greens Mission Adventure near Galveston, TX	4-5
Mission Moment "Resources"	6
Serve America Act Update—for Volunteers Age 55+	6
Welcome new "Partners in Service" volunteers	7
The Classifieds	7
Disaster Recovery T-shirts	7

*New ...*

**UCC YOUNG ADULT SERVICE COMMUNITIES**

**Year-Long, Summer**

**Apply Today!**

"It's good to live in community because there are others serving in different settings, but everyone is in the same basic life situation."  
Eva Foegeding, WVC

**Host Churches** provide intentional community settings

**Young Adult Members**

Serve in justice advocacy and direct social service. Participate in leadership development with local host church. Form intentional community with other volunteers. Reflect on your service and engage in faith conversations.

Housing, food stipend, and health insurance provided. Possibility of qualification for a half-time AmeriCorps Education grant during year-long program.

**APPLY NOW**—If YOU are between the ages of 19-30, apply for the Summer 2010 YASC by mid-February  
<http://www.ucc.org/volunteer/summer-young-adult-service.html>

**APPLY NOW** — If YOU are between the ages of 21-30, apply for the year-long Companion Communities YASC by mid-March  
<http://www.ucc.org/volunteer/companion-communities.html>

**EXPLORE** the possibilities of YOUR church as a Companion Communities Host Church. Contact Mary Schaller Blaufuss for more information.  
[blaufusm@ucc.org](mailto:blaufusm@ucc.org)

**UCC Companion Communities:  
Young Adult Service Communities**

Hosted by the Good Shepherd UCC of Sahuarita, Arizona  
Host of the 2009 first UCC Summer Young Adult Service Community

YASC of Church of the Beatitudes &  
WVC of Westmoreland Congregational UCC  
January 15-18, 2010

**First National Gathering - A SUCCESS!**



Members of Church of the Beatitudes YASC and Westmoreland Volunteer Corps who were present at the national gathering:  
Eva, Sarah, Elizabeth, Erin, Hannah, Emily, Laura, Jack



Time for Reflection Together:

Emily, Jack, Eva, Laura, Betty, Noel, Linda



Volunteers from the Westmoreland Volunteer Corps of Bethesda, MD which has hosted a young adult volunteer community for 25 years and the new Church of the Beatitudes' Young Adult Service Community (YASC) of Phoenix, AZ met each other, experienced people's struggles and ministries on the U.S.-Mexican border and reflected together on their own settings of service.

A pilot program of UCC Volunteer Ministries seeks to multiply the number of UCC churches hosting Young Adult Service Communities within the UCC Companion Communities network.

Young adults are encouraged in their leadership in the church and world by experiencing cultures of mission while serving with local agencies engaged in justice advocacy and direct service with vulnerable populations and by creating friendships to last a lifetime and shape a church and world.



Desert Search with the Samaritans: Judy



Maria helping us make El Salvadoran Papushas for dinner



Saturday Border Issues Fair  
Randy Mayer, Good Shepherd UCC  
and David Carrasco, Harvard University



Stories from the desert  
—told and untold



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

*By Matt Hackworth/CWS*  
[www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org)

## Iowa 'ecu-build' modeled on success in New Orleans

Church World Service will bring volunteers and resources from across the U.S. and Canada to **Cedar Rapids, Iowa**, April 12 through May 21, 2010. Dubbed "**Neighborhood: Cedar Rapids**," the rebuilding effort brings together at least 10 agencies to replicate CWS's Neighborhood: New Orleans" ecumenical rebuilding project--or ecu-build--which returned a dozen families home after lengthy displacement following Hurricane Katrina.

**YOU can be part of this CWS 'ecu-build'**

Register at [www.ucc.org/volunteer/disaster-recovery-volunteers/disaster-recovery-mission.html](http://www.ucc.org/volunteer/disaster-recovery-volunteers/disaster-recovery-mission.html)

Beside a gentle bend in the Cedar River, across the broad water from a stand of silos topped by a neon QUAKER OATS sign, sits one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, named Time Check. Sidewalks guarded by ancient oaks and poplars are lined by stoic homes with porches, a perfect perch for parents to watch children play. Yet few are here. Most of the homes have been gutted, their rough-sawn bones laid bare to daylight after the Cedar pushed past its banks -- and a 20-foot sand-bag wall -- to wreck lives in this and dozens of other communities, June 14, 2008.

Even though 5,390 Cedar Rapids homes were destroyed, it is as if this disaster, and a spate of violent tornadoes that preceded it, has been all but forgotten. "The disasters here in

Iowa have fallen off the radar screen for many people but the needs are still great," said Rev. Michael

Stadie, disaster response manager for Lutheran Services in Iowa. "The economic crisis and other disasters have drawn attention elsewhere."

As enormous needs have eclipsed attention, Church World Service will bring volunteers and resources from across the U.S. and Canada to Cedar Rapids April 12 through May 21, 2010. "With damage estimates at anywhere between \$8 billion and \$10 billion, a faith response is critical," said Bonnie Vollmering, CWS associate director for domestic emergency response. "We will need to work together if the needs of those having the hardest time recovering will be met."



Dubbed "Neighborhood: Cedar Rapids," the rebuilding effort brings together at least 10 agencies to replicate CWS's "Neighborhood: New Orleans" ecumenical rebuilding project -- or ecu-build, which returned a dozen families home after lengthy displacement following Hurricane Katrina.

"We are 18 months out from the flood events, and people told us it would be 3 to 5 to 10 years for recovery," said Stephen Schmitz, the executive director of the Linn Area Long Term Recovery Coalition. "People, for the most part, come in to our recovery center with hope of recovery mixed with frustration of process. We focus on the hope and work to relieve the frustration."

As frost finds purchase on unrepaired, bare walls and roofs for a second winter, frustration is understandable. With the sheer number of

homes damaged in the flood, Schmitz said families are coping as best they can -- living with relatives, in undamaged parts of their homes or in the dwindling supply of rental housing available. "There was a significant affordable housing issue that reached crisis proportions because of the flood," Cedar Valley Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Jeff Capps said. The lower-middle class houses in Time Check reflect an older neighborhood, healthy before the flood. The streets have the feel of a Midwest working community, where families raise children and retirees don't leave. Some of those families haven't returned, leaving boarded-up homes bordered by yellow CAUTION tape flickering in the wind. Others are determined to make a comeback, putting federal and non-profit assistance into rebuilding what they had.



## ALONG THE WAY... NEWS FROM VOLUNTEERS

Read more stories of volunteer experiences and reflections at [www.ucc.org/volunteer](http://www.ucc.org/volunteer) under "Resources."

As seen in the newsletter "Sparks" of the Summit Congregational United Church of Christ, Dubuque, IA  
By Merlin Green  
[Merlin & Jo Green served as "Partners in Service" volunteers in Texas City/Galveston Oct. 2009]

### The Greens Mission Adventure in the Galveston Area

We returned to Dubuque a week ahead of schedule, tired, glowing, and thankful for the support and prayers of our friends at Summit and elsewhere. It is impossible to tell you in a few words what we did and all that happened. It really is a case of "you had to be there" to begin to understand the experience, but I will try to give a flavor of it all.

First the why and how (it really has been a "journey"):

- Three years ago, I went to Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, MS with the work campers from the 4 Dubuque area UCC congregations (Sherrill, Summit, First, and Immanuel).
- Then last year I spent four weeks (2 weeks at a time) at Back Bay working as a "Site Construction Manager". The basic definition of the job is to guide the work campers at their worksite, teaching and showing them what to do, and get the required materials.
- Earlier this year I made application with the National UCC Volunteer Ministries to become a "Partner in Service". I also spent a week in June with the Dubuque group as a Work camper in New Orleans.

- A couple of months ago I got a call from the Volunteer Ministries Coordinator (Rev. Mary Schaller Blaufuss) in Cleveland asking if I could work for the month of October in Galveston, TX on Hurricane Ike relief efforts. *For the first time, Jo and I were officially working for the UCC church in a mission capacity.*

So what did we do in Texas? The first week was spent getting organized and orientated. Much of it was also spent wondering what was going to happen next because the job had changed from what I had anticipated and included much more than I was expecting. I also reached out to other organizations in the area to explore "partnerships" in doing the needed work. That is a political area that I won't expound on here. The second week we had 6 workers (3 men, 3 women) from Tulsa. We rebuilt a fence that had been destroyed, replaced the ceiling, lights, and vent fan in 2 of the church's restrooms, and remodeled the front of a church in Galveston to make the entire facility handicap accessible. The last item is worthy of note because it is a wonderful example of the Lord providing what is needed at the right time and place. We were working on the Second Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).



By the way ... our small stipend was paid for by YOUR contributions to the *One Great Hour of Sharing* fund. That money really DOES get used in productive ways!



## The Greens Mission Adventure continues

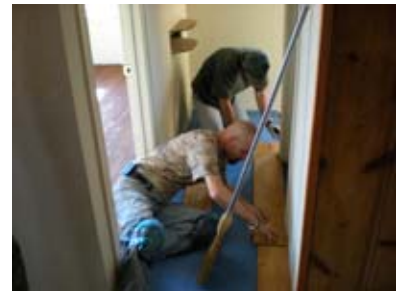
from page 4

That church is a poor church serving a black population and had no insurance. It is a frame building that had a fellowship hall added behind the sanctuary with an access door on the right side. The building had been completely gutted and is in the process of reconstruction. At the front of the church is a "stage" just like ours with 2 steps up and extending across the entire front of the sanctuary (again with the door on the right side). They had already built a ramp outside to make the sanctuary entrance handicap accessible, and had added a handicap accessible restroom in the fellowship hall ... but had no way to get back there without navigating the stairs up and down from the stage. Here comes the Divine inspiration ... *one of our workers just happened to be an architectural engineer.* He looked at the situation and immediately spotted the access discrepancy. Before I knew what was going on, he had crawled under the church to look at the understructure and determined that the stage could be cut off 4 feet from the right side and it would be a level run from the sanctuary to the fellowship hall. This change was NOT in the plans at all, but they volunteered to pay for the materials and work all Friday night if required to get the job done. It was Thursday afternoon when this all transpired! I called my "leader" and got permission to do the job ... it was completed by 3 PM Friday afternoon. The Holy Spirit works in mysterious ways!

The next week was just as exciting and had the potential of being overwhelming. We had 10 people (UCC) from Milwaukee, WI and 9 people (Disciples) from Rowlett, TX scheduled. I was frightened because that is more people than I felt I could handle because I really needed to be running 3 work groups. But once again the Holy Spirit intervened!

About noon on Sunday I got a call from the pastor at Rowlett telling me that they were cancelling because of illness. (Whew!) Then about 4 in the afternoon I got a call from one of the members from Rowlett saying that 3 of them still felt "called" to come and asking if they could still come. As it turned out, one of the members from Milwaukee had cancelled because of illness, so we had a total of 12 workers ... *a very manageable number!*

The major project that we "had to get done before the week ended" was the scraping and repainting of a home in Texas City. Part of the work was to complete the work left undone by a contractor. But we discovered some serious rotting of the soffit that included some electrical issues. It's Holy Spirit time again ... *one of the workers from Rowlett was an excellent handyman!* I could easily turn the whole project over to him and break the group into 2 crews. The larger group worked on the house, the other crew came to Galveston with me to continue work on the Second Christian Church where we removed all of the battered plastic siding and added Tyvec on the exterior, finished the insulation of the sanctuary, and started installation of the dry-wall.



>> Crofton, KY Disciples work group, working on restoring home from hurricane Ike, Galveston.



<< Working on restoring First Christian Church, Texas City, TX as a mission station.

During one of the devotions in the first week, the leader asked the question "did you see God move today?" My answer is a most emphatic "YES!" and that is why I enjoy this kind of mission so much. It is such a joy to see people doing things they would never do otherwise and realizing they CAN make a difference in other people's lives. We all have gifts and abilities that God can use. And God has a strange way of putting us into situations where those abilities are useful if we are just open to God's voice.

**Prayer Requests—Stories — Videos — Audio Recordings**



**Looking for a Mission Moment to Share in Worship?**

Visit [www.ucc.org/volunteer/resources-for-volunteers.html](http://www.ucc.org/volunteer/resources-for-volunteers.html)

**Up-Date on Serve America Act and possibilities for UCC Partners in Service Volunteers in the future.**

**Volunteers age 55 +**

You may soon be able to gift an AmeriCorps Education Grant received for volunteer service to your children or grandchildren.

Each year UCC Volunteer Ministries qualifies as the conduit for a limited number of AmeriCorps Education Grants. Members of the year-long UCC Companion Communities: Young Adult Service Communities may qualify to receive half-time grants. Currently, a couple of "Partners in Service" volunteers each year also qualify.

With the passage of the National Service Act in 2009, the U.S. Congress has now authorized volunteers age 55 and older to gift those education grants to their children or grandchildren. We now waiting on the funding allocation to make this possibility a reality.

**Stay tuned here for future up-dates.**

Continued from page 3

The decision to rebuild or not is out of many family's hands. A pending decision from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about where to build a proposed levee is anticipated in the coming months, which could change the layout of where this city of 128,000 lives. Even if the proposed levee splits neighborhoods in the



And than the work begins ...

interests of flood control, needs will not change. "The biggest need is housing," Stadie said. "Those affected by the flooding need emotional support, a promise for the future."

# WELCOME

## New & Returning 'Partners in Service' Volunteers

**Kim Cartwright**, CT at Manual School, Albuquerque, NM  
**Pat Cartwright**, CT at Manual School, Albuquerque, NM  
**Marilyn DeTizio**, VT at Back Bay Mission, Biloxi, MS  
**Joan Erickson**, MT at South Central Conference Disaster Recovery, New Orleans, LA  
**Kirth Erickson**, MT at South Central Conference Disaster Recovery, New Orleans, LA  
**Patricia Lincoln**, NC at Abernethy Laurels, Newton, NC  
**William Lincoln**, NC at Abernethy Laurels, Newton, NC  
**William Matten**, PA at Back Bay Mission, Biloxi, MS  
**Ellen Matten**, PA at Back Bay Mission, Biloxi, MS  
**Peter Olsen**, TX at Texas City/Galveston Disaster Recovery, TX  
**Betty Mae Shear**, OH at Abernethy Laurels, Newton, NC  
**George Siddall**, OH at Texas City/Galveston Disaster Recovery, TX  
**Jean Siddall**, OH at Texas City/Galveston Disaster Recovery, TX  
**Robert Waidman**, TN at Heifer Ranch, Perryville, AR  
**Connie Waidman**, TN at Heifer Ranch, Perryville, AR  
**Andrew Wicks**, CT at South Central Conference Disaster Recovery, New Orleans, LA  
**Charles Whiston**, ME at Back Bay Mission, Biloxi, MS (Sabbatical Placement)

### NEW YEAR—NEW OPPORTUNITIES

YOU ARE NEEDED

#### **Silver Lake Camp and Conference Center - Connecticut—2 positions**

Guest Services Assistant and Assistant to Site Manager  
March—June, 2010 OR September –December, 2010

#### **Disaster Recovery Construction Site Coordinator— New Orleans, LA**

Summer 2010



**Planning a disaster recovery mission trip? T-Shirt** now available to help identify your group and build awareness. Order from United Church of Christ Resources 1-800-537-3394 or [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org) under "Buy it" Cost of T-shirt: \$7.00 + Shipping & Handling.

---

# UCC VOLUNTEER

Office of Volunteer Ministries  
United Church of Christ  
700 Prospect Ave.  
Cleveland, OH 44115-1100

Mary Schaller Blaufuss  
Executive for Volunteer Ministries  
blaufusm@ucc.org  
216-736-3214  
Toll free: 866-822-8224 ext. 3214

Tonya Pettigrew  
Administrative Assistant for Program  
pettigrewt@ucc.org  
216-736-3216  
Toll free: 866-822-8224 ext. 3216

*For over 50 years, Volunteer Ministries has provided opportunities for people to share their gifts of service and witness to others. Through the act of foot washing, Jesus makes clear God's call to serve others. We are invited to ministries of service that reflect God's love by responding to the needs of the world and involving ourselves in efforts to challenge injustices. The logo of the towel and basin remind us of God's call to serve.*



New Postings on the website!  
<http://www.ucc.org/volunteer>

---

*MISSION TRIPS  
PARTNERS IN SERVICE  
UCC COMPANION COMMUNITIES  
SERVICE DAYS*