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CUW *Student Action*
PUBLICATION



HUNGER
TASK FORCE



Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of the CUW Students Against Hunger - Make A Change Newsletter. In this newsletter, you will be able to experience first hand the dedication of the Students Against Hunger while working with hunger organizations to combat this daunting epidemic. You will hear of the dire circumstances of so many people in Wisconsin and the relief they are given by the many generous volunteers with whom we stand side by side. You will read about stories of hope through the eyes of those many volunteers.

This newsletter is a call to action, for we are called to be servants as Christ was a servant for us. As Christ said in Matthew 25:40, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." As Christ was a servant, he calls us to be servants.

The students in the SW205 - Intro to Social Welfare, and GD460 and GD461 Graphic Outlook (Art Department Portfolio building class) learned the many rewards that Christ bestows upon us when we answer the call of service.

One student wrote that, "God has revealed to me that it is not of our own merit that we are the social class which we live in, but by sheer grace that we were born into families, let alone societies, that have made it possible for us to be healthy college students capable of holding a job and obtaining higher education. We are no better nor more refined individuals than those who cannot make their own living: they simply lack the tools that we were given." It is indeed through the grace of God that we are so blessed and we are called to use our gifts to help others. Without serving those who are hungry, we cannot ever really come close to knowing how they feel and, as one student said, "Even

though I was hungry, I knew that I could never imagine how hungry some of these families might be."

When we serve others, "The thankfulness and the sense that someone else is looking out for them made all the difference in these people's lives." The Make A Change Newsletter is here to teach you a little about the hunger epidemic and perhaps prepare you to serve those around you who need our help and assistance. Remember, it is by grace that we have food and are able to take care of ourselves and, conversely, that could change for us at any moment.

Now is the time to serve.
In Christ,

Karis Mapes

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Volunteer Testimonials



Through many life experiences I've lived through during the last year, God has revealed to me that it is not of our own merit that we are the social class which we live in, but by sheer grace that we were born into families and societies that have made it possible for us to be healthy college students capable of holding a job and pursuing higher education.

“We are no better nor more refined individuals than those who cannot make their own living: they simply lack the tools that we were given.”

My experiences in helping provide a means for those who can't provide for themselves have largely found me, rather than me seeking them out. The most formal and most recent of these experiences was the day I first met my girlfriend's father. The first few hours we spent together were spent delivering packages of food for those who were in need in their community, along with age and gender specific gifts to their children. The thankfulness and the sense that someone else is looking out for them made all the difference in these people's lives.

Volunteer Testimonials (cont.)

The most interesting part of this service learning opportunity was working with other people and talking to them about why they were there. I was surprised that only a few of us were there because we "had" to be there. Most people were there because they wanted to give back and help out. I will be doing another packing/sorting project for them, and I will definitely continue to help out after I've completed my 10 hours. I would still like to find another organization to work with, possibly something smaller, where I can learn more about how they encourage donations and the process of it all.

I was also able to get a volunteer spot at St. Benedicts the More Community Meal. This was an opportunity which really opened my eyes to the poverty in Milwaukee. I went on Tuesday, February 14, 2012 and we served 260 meals, which is a slow night for them. On average, they serve 360 meals a night. The people that came through were mostly men but there were also women and children there. Overall I learned a lot from volunteering at St. Bens and I can't wait to go back. I was told that a lot more people come through at the end of the month and many people run out of money. I look forward to seeing the differences between this next opportunity and my previous one.

As I finished the task of bagging snacks for the students, I moved on to one of the many tables that were set up in a large square around the edges of the gymnasium. A fellow Graphic Outlook student and I ended up stationed at the first table, giving tortillas and loaves of bread to the families that would come through. At first, the stream of families who came through seemed to amount to nothing more than a trickle, but after only a short while, the line was constant. **F**ew words were spoken among myself and the families who came for the food. However, after sharing smile after smile with these families, I experienced their appreciation and thanks for our service. Though the people we served were not homeless, they were in need of food. I learned from this experience that the old saying "you can't judge a book by its cover" really applies in life.

“Even though these families looked like you and me, their need for food is more than most of us could ever imagine.”

When I left for the night, I felt good knowing that we had helped distribute food to hundreds of needy people who cannot always access food as easily as you and me. Even though I was hungry, I knew that I could never imagine how hungry some of these families might be.



Volunteer Testimonials (cont.)

For my initial hunger organization volunteering effort, I went to Feeding America (formerly Second Harvest of Wisconsin). I volunteered on February 18th, from 9 a.m. until noon, arriving at around 8:30 or 8:45 and leaving at about 12:30 after a tour of the facility. During the tour, we were given some basic information about Feeding America's mission.

Feeding America is the largest food distribution center for non-profit hunger organizations in eastern Wisconsin. They cover the entire eastern half of the state; if one were to split Madison in half down the middle with a north to south line, everything from that line east, up and down, is covered by Feeding America.

Feeding America serves approximately 330,000 hungry families a year, sadly including many children, through its approved non-profit organizations. This number is significantly greater than it has been in the past due to the recession. Because the need they fill keeps increasing, Feeding America is rebuilding a bigger and more economical warehouse in the Green Bay area so that they can better help feed the hungry children and families of Wisconsin.

photos for this page by: Charles Madison, Skyline Photography



Volunteer Testimonials (cont.)

I also was inspired by the good works of Despensa de la Paz. There were 71 families that came through the door, totaling over 200 people, getting food for the next 3-5 days.

“Just the sheer number of people that got food is astounding to me but also gives me hope that there are people who really care; that helping a little bit and putting in a little bit of time and money can really have a positive influence on those being helped.”

Through them, volunteers can become an agent of change for people who are going through hard times.

At the end of the day, we saw 72 people, and gave them food; however, in total, we were feeding over 200 individuals! It felt so

good to know that we were giving people healthy meals for about 3-5 days. All the individuals that were volunteering with us were so nice and compassionate, making all of us newcomers feel very welcomed and worthwhile. At the end of the day, before we left, we had a prayer, and just reflected on our morning and what we liked and heard, and how some of us became involved with the food pantry. I can't wait to go back and volunteer again at Despensa de la Paz.

My first observation upon arriving at the pantry (prior to the actual opening hours) was that there were already about twelve people sitting in the waiting room waiting for service. I didn't realize there were so many elderly residents living in my community requiring hunger assistance.

“I have heard about the hard times that the economy is causing families on the news, but it really opens your eyes to the magnitude of the situation when you actually witness it firsthand.”

The volunteers who run the food pantry and the patrons who use it were very friendly. The patrons were very appreciative of the food they received. I am glad that we were given this assignment and I plan on volunteering even after my required hours are finished. It's a good feeling to help others in need.

My experience with Feeding America was certainly an eye opening experience. Quite often we can get so caught up in our every-

day lives that we don't think about what it would be like without many of the blessings we have. Food is one of the many things that people take for granted. There are people who even stay up all night worrying about whether they will be able to put food on the table.

When we gave out food at the Forest Home Elementary School, children's eyes were filled with joy when they were handed their own bag of snacks or even just a loaf of bread. Families were incredibly grateful when receiving their food and were more than willing to share a quick thanks with us for helping out. By the time the families made it through the whole line, they had enough food to last them a month. Through the amazing service of Feeding America, they were able to feel confident about feeding their families: something no one should ever take for granted.



WHO ARE THE HUNGRY?

Among the key findings in the 2010 comprehensive research study "Hunger in America 2010" by Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin and Feeding America:

54% of adults have missed or cut back on meals in the past year due to lack of funds.

10% of clients relying on Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin are senior citizens 65 or older.

41% of households had to choose between paying for their heat or utilities and buying food.

37% of households have at least one working adult.

65% of households with school age children participate in the federal school lunch program.

41% of households receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

taken from: http://www.fondyfoodpantry.org/hunger_stats.html





Together, let's change these statistics:

Over **573,800**

Wisconsinites live in household that lack the food they need.

That is **8.9%**

of Wisconsin's households

and **37%**

are children under the age of 18.



Students Against Hunger

INTRO. TO SOCIAL WORK: SOCIAL WORK 205 | GRAPHIC OUTLOOK: GRAPHIC DESIGN 460

Servant Week:
April 16-20



All proceeds go to Hunger Task Force

Donate to the Quarter Drive by the Library Stairwell