

Blue Jay Volunteers



Office of Community Engagement & Service-Learning

Fall 2011 Newsletter

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Mission Statement

The Office of Community Engagement & Service-Learning will strive to prepare Westminster students to be thoughtful, concerned, and engaged citizens ready to lead not only in the local community, but also in the global community



Now on Facebook:

["Westminster College](#)

[\(MO\) Volunteers"](#)

to find out about upcoming community service projects, service-learning opportunities and social justice events.

Blue Jays Journey to Joplin



A team of eighteen students and staff member, Jill Olson, traveled to Joplin, Missouri for a weekend of disaster relief projects on September 23-25. It had been four months since the tragic night that the F-5 tornado hit the city of Joplin and Westminster volunteers were eager to lend a hand. The Restore Joplin organization helped arrange the group's lodging at the Joplin Nazarene Church as well as, volunteer opportunities with Joplin Family Worship Center and AmeriCorps. Projects over the weekend included cleaning up debris in pasture land and demolishing and removing a garage for a resident.

The volunteers were amazed at the destruction of the tornado and at how many families and businesses had been displaced by its force. The group was able to visit several sites that were completely ravaged, including the high school and hospital. However, the volunteers brought back hope from a variety of stories heard from other volunteers and how quickly the rebuilding is happening in Joplin.

The Office of Community Engagement & Service-Learning along with the Office of Spiritual Life are currently working with student organizations to send a Westminster volunteer group there again for an Alternative Spring Break trip in March. Contact Jill Olson or Jamie Haskins for more information about the upcoming trip!

HUNGER & POVERTY

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE | 2011-2012 CAMPUS SERVICE COMMITMENT

In the spring of 2011, the campus community voted and chose to have “Hunger and Poverty” as the campus service commitment during the 2011-12 academic year. We will focus our service on aiding organizations, services and causes surrounding poverty and hunger.

A Hunger and Homelessness Week will take place November 14th-18th. The week will include fasting from 8pm that Monday until 8pm Tuesday. There will be a meal to end the fast in which the participants will discuss hunger issues. Wednesday there will be an educational table at the International Week Children’s Fair from 1-3pm. Additionally on Wednesday from 6-8pm CIVICUS will be sponsoring a Buddy Packs collection and a letter writing campaign in JCI. Contact Westminster Poverty Initiative (WPI) by Westminster email for more information on the week’s events.

*There are a number of active partnerships already in the Fulton community
surrounding issues of Hunger & Poverty!*

Community Soup Kitchen	Central Missouri Community Action
Our House: Caring for Callaway's Homeless	Buddy Pack
SERVE Food Pantry	Callaway County United Way
	The Food Bank (Columbia)

Into the Streets 2011



The 10th Annual Into the Streets on October 15 was an excellent kickoff to the 2011 Westminster Homecoming Week. Over 200 students came out on the crisp October morning to perform service projects around the Fulton community. They gathered together in Hunter Activity Center’s Gym to grab breakfast and a t-shirt and then scattered all over Fulton for their service projects.

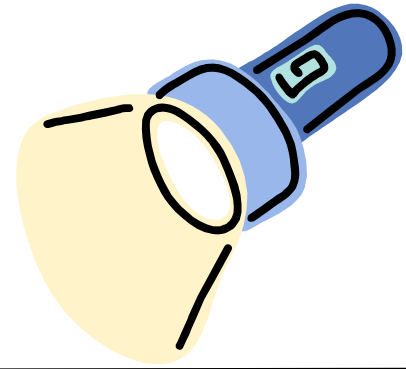
The Service Corps Co-Presidents, Sneha Bhandari and Sarah Whitman, organized the event, including booking 23 service projects for the volunteers! Sneha commented that most fulfilling aspect of Into the Streets was “seeing how everything fell into place on the day of”. Of the 23 service sites, projects ranged from raking leaves at neighboring residential houses to organizing clothes at “Yours, Mine and Ours” thrift store to a student led car wash at Auto Zone that raised \$140 for SERVE, Inc. agency. Thank you to the organizers, volunteers, sponsoring sites and sponsoring student organizations for a great day of Blue Jay service!



Spotlight A

Community Partner

Our House: Caring for Callaway's Homeless



“Our House: Caring for Callaway’s Homeless”, or some may have previously known the agency as Haven House/Wiley House or Ecumenical Ministries, is our spotlight community partner. This agency plays such an integral in our community by offering “shelter, education and advocacy” for those struggling with poverty and homelessness. Haven House currently provides temporary housing for families with children. Wiley House provides overnight shelter for individuals. The agency is also a Callaway County United Way sponsored agency. Reverend Brad Sheppard took over as Director this past summer after long time Director Linda Clemens’s retirement. Reverend Sheppard was previously the Chaplain at Westminster College.

This fall, Westminster volunteers through Westminster Poverty Initiative (WPI) and Sigma Chi Fraternity have taken an active volunteer role at Our House. Additionally, individual volunteers assist at Our House. The WPI started volunteering in an effort to meet some of the people who were struggling with poverty in our area and to make a personal connection with those community members. The WPI have been going over for a couple hours each Friday night for the past month now with anywhere from three to five students. Their goal is “to build relationships through sharing meals, stories, and struggles”. The Sigma Chi Fraternity volunteered at Our House for their Merlin Olsen Service Day back in September. CIVICUS members are currently working on a fundraiser or supply drive for the Our House agency as well.

Groups and individuals are welcome to volunteer at Our House. John Scott, a senior at Westminster, volunteers weekly at Our House helping to organize and maintain the buildings. He is also setting up an online account system that will allow Our House to record donations more easily. John got involved with Our House when as a mentor on the Freshman Service Day he participated in a service project there and was impressed by the program and inquired that day how to get more involved. John said, “It has been a real eye opening experience for me to get to work with Brad Sheppard and meet the people that use their services”. If you would like to get involved as a volunteer contact Jill Olson on Westminster email. The location is walking distance from campus and offers evening hours to meet a college student’s busy schedule.





Upcoming Service Opportunities

Contact Jill Olson on Westminster email to get involved in any of these opportunities

Hunger & Homelessness Week

Date: November 14-18

Look for email updates for the weeks details

American Red Cross Blood Drive

Date: November 30

Time: 1-6pm

Location: Mueller Student Center

Blood donors needed! Each donation is equal to one hour of service

Adopt A Family, Holiday Program

Date: December 9th, 12-16th

Time: 9am-5pm

Location: Mueller Student Center

Contact Jill Olson for details and to schedule a volunteer time

Ongoing Service Opportunities

Fulton Special Olympics Basketball Season

Date: ongoing, weekly on Tuesdays 6:30-8pm

Location: Fulton Middle School

Volunteer Duties: assist with practice, games and skill building

Background check is required of all volunteers before volunteering.

Growing Years Preschool

Walking or driving distance (approximately one mile from campus)

Date: ongoing

Time: between 7am-12pm/230-5pm, Monday through Friday

Volunteer Duties: read with children, present on your culture/hobby, lead a craft project or music session

Our House: Caring for Callaway's Homeless

Date: ongoing

Time: 6-8pm every night

Volunteer Duties: doing check in for nightly overnight guests at homeless shelter

Need pairs or groups but can pair up individuals with the interest

**Don't forget to
log your
Service Hours!**

go to [MyWC](#)
and click on the
"Service Hours"
tab to enter
your service
hours

[Projects for
Peace 2012](#)
student
proposals are
due to Jill
Olson by
January 13,
2012 at 5pm