

Rescue Mission News

San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission

CHANGING LIVES FOR GOOD IS OUR ONLY BUSINESS

What Moves You?

Why do people give their time? Consider this Scripture: *“A generous person will be enriched, and the one who provides water for others will himself be satisfied.”* (Proverbs 11:25) Volunteering is one way this principle is lived out. So, while motivations are nearly impossible to assess, the impact is abundantly clear. Nearly one third of our labor is completed by volunteers! This effort takes the form of serving meals, cleaning tables, picking up trash, providing much needed relational care, and ever so much more. In this edition, we hope what you see is some of the variety of ways you can help. Various ages, skills, and great ideas are all welcome here!

Volunteering for the Long Haul

A couple of days per week, our shelter residents are welcomed by a friendly face that is able to help them more than most. Morgan Allen, a senior psychology student at Cal State Northridge, is on hand to help residents with any case management issues they are facing. Whether it is housing, job, legal, or child care related, Morgan is armed with many local resources to make a big difference.

Morgan is able to help so regularly due to a generous scholarship program through AmeriCorps. She relates that through this opportunity, she is able to do what she has always wanted. Though she had prior notions about the needs of homeless people, her experiences have enlightened her as to what the real needs can be. For example, in one case a family was forced to leave their home because the landlord was pocketing the rent rather than paying the bills.

For Morgan, it is especially difficult to see the effects of homelessness on the children when this kind of thing happens. But thanks to her efforts, families don't have to stay down and out. Not long ago, a single dad with four boys found housing after working very hard on his situation. Morgan was so excited to see his efforts pay off and know that she played a role in his success.



Integrating Education and Service

Field trips can make for some wonderful educational memories. These outings can stimulate enthusiasm for learning in ways a textbook never could. Recently, Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School stopped at the San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission, as well as other local organizations, during their section on poverty and homelessness. Their seventh grade class came to our new building in Northridge with a willingness to help and learn. Heschel students were one of the first three volunteer groups to the property with a tour and introduction to our vision for the future. Their donations of gardening tools, brooms, and cleaning supplies provided a natural opportunity to care for the grounds and an excellent way to take education to the hands-on level. Volunteers are needed everyday, in lots of ways, to help carry out our mission to those we serve and we pray the experience makes a lasting impression in their lives and on their hearts.



Volunteering leads to Understanding

So Much More Than a Meal



Serving with Excellence

On a recent Sunday morning, a van from the Word of the Days Christian Center in Mission Hills, led by Pastor Ralph Govea, stopped by our shelter to pick up a few families interested in attending church. One particular

mom struggled to decide if she wanted to come. After some encouragement that everything would be alright, this mom turned out to be the most enthusiastic singer in the room. And after the message, she recounted that she had never heard God speak to her so directly before.

Pastor Ralph, as we call him, wishes that his church could serve in our shelter every week. What he loves most is the opportunity to interact with people on the verge of discovering God in their lives, for the first time. When Word of the Days comes to serve on Friday nights, residents know they will be treated to one

of the best meals they will have at the shelter, prior to hearing Pastor Ralph share in our Friday night worship service. And what is clear to all is that the message shared is underscored by the excellence with which they have just been served.

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