

Spring 2014

"We, who acknowledge God's providence and fidelity to his people, especially those in poverty, do dedicate our efforts toward the support of those who are homeless. Our goal is to deliver to the homeless those basic human needs, care and compassion that is not usually received from other organizations."



NEWS

"Taking care and compassion to the homeless."

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A letter from our President



Dear Volunteers and Donors,
We made it! There were times this winter that I didn't know how our homeless friends were going to make it through the brutal cold. We are so happy to be able to pack away the winter clothes and move into more comfortable conditions.

For those of you that didn't see my letter posted on our website in March, I am going to repeat the year end information for you. We were blessed by every single donation last year, along with the 2,514 volunteers that gave 13,602 hours of their time making it possible for us to continue to reach out to the homeless of Kansas City. We were able to serve 23,214 people and we visited 5,340 camps.

Our numbers are very high for so early in the warm weather season. We are seeing more and more people in need of help, and thanks to your generosity, we will continue to be there for them.

We have been able to complete our kitchen upgrade, bringing our facility up to city code. We are very grateful to the William T. Kem-

per Foundation for their generous donation which helped make this possible. The new kitchen makes our work more efficient and much easier for our volunteers.

I continue to attend meetings pertaining to the proposed new city ordinance. The revised ordinance, along with how it will effect Uplift, is scheduled to be sent out very soon. I will post any new information on our website and on our Facebook page.

Thank you for your continued support. Without each one of you, we could not reach out to those who have nothing.

"I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do". -Edward Everett Hale

God Bless you all!
Kathy Dean

Urgent Needs

- As warm weather approaches our numbers dramatically increase. Cooks are needed to prepare meals for approximately 30 to 60 people. Meals are delivered to Uplift for distribution three times a week. Recipes and instructions provided on our website at www.Uplift.org. Call Margo Yerik at (816) 516-1304 for more information.
- With warmer weather approaching we are in need of Insect Repellent wipes, men's underwear, t-shirts, deodorant, men's jeans sizes 32, 34, 36 and candles.



Search for **Uplift Organization Inc.** page to stay current with Uplift happenings!

Testimonial

I was blessed with a wonderful experience working with Uplift over the weekend. I was amazed at the organization of the company and the amount of teamwork it took to do our job. We started by loading the trucks up with the goods we would be bringing to the homeless, then we saddled up and went out. I enjoyed getting to meet the exciting people I was working with, this husband and wife were good people who did this a lot. They took us to our first stop where I got to jump out and serve people hot chocolate. I got to meet a couple of guys around my age, which was really neat seeing how different upbringings can have such an effect on your life. Next, we continued making our stops. I was amazed by some of the people I met on the streets. Some seemed pretty down and depressed, but others had hope in their eyes and I could sense a joy in them and a great humility. They knew what life was about: relationships. After this experience, I now have a greater realization of the magnitude of need and the plight of the poor in bigger cities. There is no quick fix to this, but I think we can all do something to show more love to those who live around us. The more we include others as our brothers and sisters the less likely some of us will end up on the streets. I'm grateful for my time with Uplift and for what they do to serve people in the name of Christ.

-Nick Koeppel
Seminarian, Conception Seminary College

Special Thanks

William T. Kemper Foundation
Giving the Basics
Church of the Resurrection
Brian & Elaine Daly
William P. McGowan Foundation
Robert & Beth Orscheln
Triumph Construction Supply



Cleanup day

On Saturday, March 29, 2014, the Uplift Organization partnered with the Salvation Army, and an organization called Taking It to the Streets, in an effort to clean up the debris that accumulates where the homeless congregate.

More than a hundred volunteers gathered in high spirits. Uplift was well represented. We were 53 strong, supported by three trucks, several police officers, a dozen student nurses, some photographers, garden-type tools (rakes and shovels and gloves) and it seemed like thousands of trash bags.

The first site was under a bridge. Several pleasant men, wrapped in blankets and coats, greeted us as we put garbage ranging from big plastic refuse to small cigarette butts into about 40 or 50 trash bags along side the street. When we left, the place could pass a rather standard inspection.

The next site was more daunting. It was in a grove of trees near a ravine over which a bridge carried traffic. It was a huge task, the ditch was a dead end from a nearby creek and the debris was buried in shallow water. By the time we left several hours later, we left more than 100 bags of a wide variety of garbage which included basket balls, soccer balls, bowling balls, paint cans, car parts, along with about 150 tires, and more items than we can mention which was easy to see did not belong to the homeless.

But we left more than garbage. Let me just talk about one man, because Uplift treats these people personally. He was called, appropriately, "Whiskey." He had lost all ten toes to the winter's freezing temperature and he needed relief from the constant pain. He used whiskey. The



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student nurses brought some minor medicines and major comfort and the Uplift community brought an hour of compassion and conversation to him and his unfortunate friends. That may be a better understanding of "making someone's day."

Around noon we climbed into the Uplift trucks and returned to the parking lot where Salvation Army trucks delivered warm food and drink to some newly formed friends who had brought a different kind of warmth to some people who need it most.

Reflections of Uplift written by Steve, a homeless friend

Uplift is more than charity to me, certainly the warm food, cold or hot drink and other supplies they gift us homeless with is certainly appreciated and often needed, but the most beneficial thing is the idea that people care about us. It isn't patronization or sympathy that Uplift brings, it's the person to person care they show, the true empathy conveyed. It feels like an extension of family, or what one hopes family to be, that comes on the Uplift trucks. That is Uplift's most valuable commodity. We feel like any other human being when the Uplift vehicle arrives, not cast offs or misfits that no one wants. If I were to have any criticism for Uplift it would just be a thirst to have even more extended time with the individuals involved in it so they could witness even more of the homeless folks humanity. Everyone is damaged in some way or another and despite the condition of homelessness, we are neither more or less damaged than anyone else. I feel in my heart that Uplift is aware of this. So much of the "world" views the homeless as a burden on society, undesirable, not to be seen, and pitied from a distance. Society alleviates their guilt by a can donation here or there and curses the homeless for their unwillingness to help themselves. "Get a job, you bum", is often heard shouted from a car window. More scarring still- the deprecating mugs of the drivers who with merely an expression- can make you feel like a cockroach. Uplift brings none of that. We are humanized and given dignity by the manner they treat us.



If it is an insult to society that the homeless seem as parasites or dependent, it is even greater an insult to dehumanize and scorn those not participating in that society. Uplift is a reminder that a few citizens can see us as human beings. Uplift reveals that there are men and women that still grasp the message of self-sacrificing service to and for other human beings that defines the grace and love of God and that is Uplift's TRUE contribution.

Uplift's Person of the Quarter!

This quarter we could not choose just one person, we chose an entire congregation and a baseball franchise.

On Sunday, May 4th, after church services, Anita and Dan Shearman, members of Redemption Church located at 515 S. Ridgeview Rd., Olathe, Kansas, presented 40 people with tickets to the Royals game. Bart Farmer and Jim and Jennifer Schmidt loaded their homeless friends into their Uplift vans and were off for a day of fun. When they arrived at the stadium, they were greeted by Tom McKenzie, Assistant Supervisor of Guest Ambassadors, and every person was given a ticket upgrade. The seats were amazing, the food was wonderful, and a great time was had by all.

It is such an amazing experience to see how Redemption Church has not only opened their doors to the homeless, but they treat them with such respect and love. They all work together to help Jim and Jennifer Schmidt not only keep them alive, but the entire congregation works very hard to give them a life.

Thank you Redemption Church and the KC Royals!

2014 First Quarter Stats

757
number of volunteers

3,785
number of volunteer hours

4,759
number of homeless served

1,309
number of camps visited



When making your United Way contribution, please be aware that you may designate Uplift as the recipient of your gift through the donor choice program. This program is another way you can help us to help others.



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1516 Prospect
Kansas City, Missouri 64127-0175
www.uplift.org

Important Upcoming Dates

Saturday, June 14, 2014
9:00 AM Warehouse Sort Day

Saturday, June 28, 2014
8:00 AM Camp Cleanup

Stay Connected...

Uplift Volunteers & Donors can now:

- Visit our website at www.uplift.org
- Sign up to receive our newsletter and blog updates via email – go to our website and click on Blog to subscribe
- We hope you enjoy the new look of our newsletter. If you have articles or comments, please send them to the editor:
Pat Thomson, pthomson43@gmail.com.
- Changes of address should be sent to Jennie Wheeling at jen3x9@hotmail.com

Volunteer Opportunities

Outreach

Help deliver meals to the homeless. Uplift trucks “roll out” at 6 pm on Mondays and Wednesdays. 5pm Saturdays. The average route takes 2-3 hours. Please call in advance to schedule your participation. Contact: Jo Bustamante at (816) 524-0024

Prepare Meals

As warm weather approaches our numbers dramatically increase. Cooks are needed to prepare meals for approximately 30 to 60 people. Meals are delivered to Uplift for distribution three times a week. Recipes and instructions provided on our website at www.Uplift.org. Call Margo Yerk at (816) 516-1304

Warehouse Sort Day

9:00-11:00 am. The second Saturday of every month we sort donations, stock our shelves, fold clothes, and have a good old time doing it. If you are planning on bringing a large group please contact us first. (816) 241-0060 or Email: upliftorg@att.net