



Americorps Monthly Report

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Organization Name: Boaz and Ruth, Inc.

Program Name:

Name & Title of Reportee: Veronica Kerns, Site Administrator

Reporting Period: December, 2008

Date this report completed: January 12, 2009 at 4:51 PM

Approved By: Steve Whitman

Outputs: Briefly describe activities during the reporting period relative to your program's Performance Measures. Clearly state how and/or why the particular activity relates to the performance measure.

Needs and Services: During the month of December, 2008 AmeriCorps members constructed and installed kitchen cabinets for the 3019 First Avenue property acquired by Boaz & Ruth. In addition members installed insulation and mounted new sheet rock in the kitchen. Through out the house old floors were removed and members were instructed on how to put in new floors and sand paper the wooden surfaces. Once the sanding was done AmeriCorps members were trained on how to stain the wood and varnish it. Instructor James Brown stated that when tearing down the old walls they discovered electrical wiring that was old and would have to be replaced. AmeriCorps members will be trained in the area of electrical wire removal and installation.

The service work being done by the apprentices contributes to the rebuilding of the Highland Park community and provides members with skills that can be used to obtain jobs.

Member Development: AmeriCorps members participated in a workshop: (FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT). Members were presented with Policies and Procedures pertaining to Sexual harassment when they first became AmeriCorps members. The workshop provided time and space to reiterate and discuss the policies in detail. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Members were given examples of how Sexual Harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including but not limited to the following:

The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex.

The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a co-worker, or a non-employee.

The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.

Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim.

The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome.

The dialog that followed communicated /indicated that some members may have felt sexually harassed and the other person may not be aware of it. It is helpful for the victim to directly inform the harasser that the conduct is

unwelcome and must stop. The victim should use any employer complaint mechanism or grievance system available.

The workshop on sexual harassment was intense. A lot of questions were raised and answered. In the workshop people were able to share feelings and experiences. The workshop provided Boaz & Ruth staff with the opportunity to reiterate policy concerning Sexual Harassment. The workshop hopefully will pave the way for better working relationships and reduce stress.

Strengthening Communities: Two years ago Donna Burris a member of Woolridge Road Church came to a Boaz & Ruth informational luncheon. Ms. Burris was impressed by the members and with what they were doing to change the Highland Park community in spite of their own challenges. The stories members share at the informational luncheons forms a connection / bond between the hearer and the listener. Donna Burris was affected with a spirit of wanting to help and be a part of the Boaz & Ruth mission. She shared that experience with another church member and brought her to a Boaz & Ruth informational luncheon.

The two women convinced the new Pastor to choose Boaz & Ruth as a mission project. The SPIRIT was conveyed from one human being to another, the desire to assist someone who is trying to make a positive change or bring about positive change can be an (entity) or (strength); a moving force that persuades / motivates a person, a commodity that cannot be bottled.

What I am striving to describe is a force/spirit caught by many individuals who come in contact with Boaz & Ruth members and its mission. That spirit brought Ms. Burris back to Boaz & Ruth in the month of December 2008 and she came back with the full support of the Woolridge Road Church. Over four hundred Woolridge Road Church members are now committed to helping the Boaz & Ruth program / Highland Park Community. It is charitable spirit that provides the support and strength which keeps the Boaz & Ruth doors open.

Sustainability: Describe your program's efforts during this reporting period toward sustainability (defined in terms of media and marketing, volunteer/leader development, collaboration, fundraising/resource development or other areas that may assist the program toward self-sufficiency).

In the month of December Boaz & Ruth slashed prices, had bargain sales and refurbished the sales floors of the Furniture and Home Accessories Stores in an effort to increase sales. Boaz & Ruth has doubled its efforts to make the retail stores prices fair and affordable. I have seen more customers shopping at the 3030 Meadowbridge Road location. It is safe to say business is picking up. In the month of December Ms. Thornhill, Boaz & Ruth's first customer was seen shopping. A sighting of Mrs. Thornhill and other community members indicates that word of mouth advertisement is in action.

Community members are telling each other about the cut prices and sales. No business can survive on new customers alone. It is the repeat customers who continue to patronize the store which makes it a success. Boaz & Ruth's Furniture and Home Accessories Sales Stores bring in vital revenue which helps to keep the doors of Boaz & Ruth open.

Challenges: Describe any challenges your program currently faces.

One challenge faced in December was completing the performance service plans/ descriptions for each member.

What strategy will you employ to address these challenges?

Service plan / description has been established and written.

Assistance: Our program needs the following assistance from the Office on Volunteerism and Service (please be specific).

No information reported

Special Events: Describe a special event that your program has organized or participated in. Examples include service projects, community planning meetings, recognition events, etc.

On December 18th, Boaz & Ruth held its 6th Annual Christmas Caroling Celebration. It was a wonderful event, members from the community, Woolridge Road Church, AmeriCorps and Boaz & Ruth staff participated. There

was a bit of a twist to it this year. Instead of a hay ride the participants walked from door – to – door singing Christmas carols.

Community members opened their doors to see Christmas Carolers singing familiar Christmas songs. They were surprised and excited to see us. I think most people don't get to see real life Christmas Carolers expect on television. In the process of going from house to house singing, the Christmas Carolers went to one of the Retirement Homes in the community. It was a joyous occasion to be a part of.

The Christmas Caroling took away some blight for one night and brought some delight to many. The singing of Christmas Carols and fellowshiping with others lifts the spirit. Carolers continued singing until they reached the Fire Station 15 Mini Mall. A Christmas Dinner was served and the spirit of goodwill toward mankind was relished by all.

Member Highlight: Provide a brief description of one member's role in your program, along with a two or three sentence response from the member.

AmeriCorps member Michael Waddy stated: “when I first got into the Boaz & Ruth program I thought it was just a job. But, it was much more than a job and reached beyond my expectations”.

a. My day starts with the morning classes. I had many personal issues that were troubling me. The classes really helped me. Conflict Resolution, Anger Management, Healthy Family and counseling sessions with Paul Morgan revealed many things to me about me. After classes I report to my life lab.

b. That I had many personal issues that were troubling me and that I could not move forward unless I addressed them. I was in emotional pain.

c. I have gotten ride of some issues which I had pushed down deep inside. Those issues stemmed from when I was a small boy. It took a lot of counseling sessions with Paul Morgan to get through what I had stuffed inside me. The classes and counseling sessions saved my life.

d. The Boaz & Ruth program will help people who want to be helped.

Notes: Please list any additional information that you believe the Office on Volunteerism and Service needs to have.

No information reported

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1 Comments

[Steve Whitman](#) said on 1/14/09 at 11:39 AM
Lloyd/Veronica,

I have saved the December monthly report as Approved.

Thanks!
Steve

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