



Volunteers
of America®

SOUTHEAST

CARING

www.voase.org

Spring 2013

EVERY PERSON CAN BE A LEADER

PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES HAVE THE CAPACITY TO BE LEADERS WITHIN OUR COMMUNITIES, IF ONLY SHOWN THE WAY!



Pictured above is the first graduating class with their Leadership mentors. Upon completion of the 12-week program, each group will participate in a community project. The group will continue to meet quarterly following successful completion of the program.

Modeled after Leadership Mobile, the Leadership Development Program provides individuals with a developmental disabilities diagnosis the opportunity to participate in a leadership program which is integrated in the community but takes into consideration the unique learning style of each individual. Volunteers of America Southeast will offer participants the opportunity to explore development of leadership skills through the Leadership Development Program. Individuals who desire to join the program are referred by Volunteers of America, MARC, Department of Mental Health Region III Regional Community Services, Mobile Independent Living Center, or Mobile Therapeutic Recreation Department.

JUDY DAVIS PLANS PROJECT OF GIVING BACK

One of the graduates of Leadership Development, Judy Davis is planning on sending get-well cards to people in hospitals as a part of her community project. Judy lives independently at Cottonwood Apartments, a senior residential facility in Mobile, Alabama. Judy has many friends at Cottonwood. She has a servant's heart and is always offering her help wherever she finds herself. When you see her, it will usually be with a sweet smile on her face. Congratulations Judy and all the rest of the graduates on completing this milestone! We celebrate with you!



Pictured above is Judy Davis, along with her mother and father who traveled to see her graduate from Leadership Mobile.

There are no limits to caring.®

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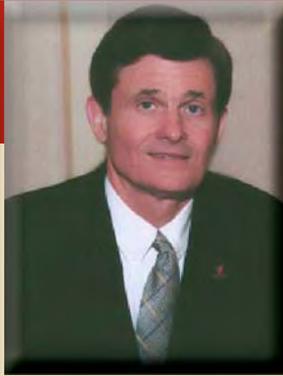
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President's Message

Leadership is an interesting subject. I have read much on the subject, and everything I read teaches me something different. But I always learn the most about leadership when I see it in action. At Volunteers of America, we have many leaders and many followers. Sometimes I am a leader, but many times, I am a follower.

With a wonderful staff, I often have the opportunity to follow many people's leadership. Such was the case one day a couple of years ago when Iris Harris, a long-term employee, presented to me the concept of the people we serve being a part of a leadership class experience ... maybe a part of Leadership Mobile or at least modeled after such a fine program. I was moved by the concept and immediately knew this was one I should follow. As a result, we recently had our first graduating class of Leadership Development! The experience was one of learning, growing, gaining self-confidence and self-esteem! WOW! What leadership!!

The Council on Quality and Leadership recognizes our exceptionally strong services to persons with disabilities. Employers around our communities also recognize our quality services, as we have worked to see well over 100 individuals employed in meaningful ways. And just think, that person who has always wanted a job, and now has one, is gaining skills and self-confidence and even paying taxes!! Isn't that the American dream! Leadership helps each of us to experience our hopes and dreams.

We will continue to work, creating new opportunities for individual growth. We strongly believe that old adage, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime!" We are in it for the long haul ... for life!

One of my conclusions from what I have read on leadership is this: "Leadership is the art of removing barriers and empowering a person to become who God created him or her to be."

Jesus said, "I came not to be served but to serve." [Mark 20:28] Service is leadership.

Thank you for your leadership in my life and for your belief in the mission of Volunteers of America.

Wallace

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Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
7:30 am
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WKSJ 94.9 FM
WZEW 92.1 FM
or visit www.voase.org

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA SOUTHEAST REACHING AND UPLIFTING

👤 Families Affected by Disasters

👤 Elderly

👤 Veterans Services

👤 People with Intellectual Disabilities

👤 People with Chronic Mental Illness

👤 People who are Physically Challenged

👤 People who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

👤 At-Risk Youth and Children

👤 People in our Supported Employment Program

👤 Substance Abusers

👤 Home Ownership

👤 Faith-Based and Community Groups

👤 Housing Needs in our Communities

2,140 People Served Every Day in Residential Settings



TORNADO RELIEF

On Sunday, February 10, 2013 a tornado cut a path through the University of Southern Mississippi and the town of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Volunteers of America Southeast partnered with University Baptist Church, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and American Baptist to assist in recovery efforts. Volunteers of America Southeast provided equipment to help with the clean-up and personal care kits for volunteers and individuals displaced by the storm.

HEROES NEXT DOOR

Heroes Next Door is a program funded by a grant awarded to Volunteers of America Southeast through The Home Depot Foundation. The Heroes Next Door program takes a home in foreclosure and completely repairs and refurbishes the site. Upon completion, a veteran has the opportunity to purchase the home under a lease/purchase agreement.

Heroes Next Door has united two successful Volunteer of America programs: One Family at a Time and Neighborhood Stabilization. This project will also bring together the Volunteers of America Southeast faith communities, volunteers, and existing community resources to address the needs of veterans' families in Alabama who have recently lost their home or are moving into permanent homeownership. This project will also allow the opportunity for employees of The Home Depot to take an active role in the refurbishing of the home. Referrals for potential home owners are developed through the Veterans Administration in Mobile and Birmingham.



The first home has been completed and Michael Diegan, a U.S. Army veteran, will have moved in by the time this is published. According to Michael, "I am extremely grateful. The service Volunteers of America provides is wonderful, and the work done to make this home livable is amazing. It is very nice. I've never had anything like this."

HELPING FAMILIES STAY IN THEIR HOMES



ThisWayHome

ThisWayHome is a program developed to assist families that are close to foreclosure and, if possible, to prevent foreclosure through loan mitigation. Recently, a couple contacted ThisWayHome Housing Resource Center staff to discuss their situation. Following a health emergency, "John" was unable to work. While waiting for SSI disability, the couple fell behind on their mortgage. With the assistance of the staff at ThisWayHome, a modification of their loan was approved, substantially reducing their interest rate and thus their house payment.

Since the beginning of ThisWayHome in 2012, 45 families have been able to file mortgage modifications and prevent foreclosure!



2012 SEASON OF CARING

Over 20 years ago, Volunteers of America Southeast began a partnership with WALA Fox10 during the Season of Caring with “10 Caring Gifts”. This partnership promotes the true spirit of the season by giving individuals, businesses, and school groups the opportunity to help those in need in our community.

The 2012 Season of Caring was the most successful ever! More toys were collected, more coats and blankets were donated, and more food contributed than ever before. Because of the generosity of so many, a record number of individuals in need received help.

The individuals, businesses, and school children who partnered during the Season of Caring listened to the words from Romans, chapter 12, where Paul tells us if our “gift is to give, then give generously.” Through these partnerships, over 3,000 children had a special Christmas, food was distributed to over 4,600 individuals, and coats and blankets went out to warm over 600! This was truly a spirit of generosity.

To all those who gave, whether it was one food item, blankets, or a truck load of bikes ... thank you! Thank you for allowing Volunteers of America to be your hands to help those in need. Thank you from those you helped, whether it's an elderly person who received a box of food, a child who smiled on Christmas morning, or the person living in a tent city who is now warm from the cold. Whatever you gave, you helped someone in our community.



Pictured at left is VOA President Wallace Davis, along with Mr. and Mrs. Pilot. Pilot employees gave hundreds of toys and bikes, also pictured here.

DO NOT NEGLECT TO SHOW HOSPITALITY TO STRANGERS, FOR THEREBY SOME HAVE ENTERTAINED ANGELS UNAWARE.” HEBREWS 13:2

FOOD FOR THE HOLIDAYS

There is something wonderful when items are donated and then delivered to a person in need. Even though this happens often, it is always a rewarding experience. During the Food for the Holidays campaign, there were many stories of food delivered to those in need. One such story occurred when a food box was delivered to the door of an elderly lady living alone. When she was given the gift, the lady began to cry and explained that she had only a few items in the pantry and no money until the beginning of the next month. She then thanked the “angel” delivering the box of food.



THANKSGIVING DINNER FEEDS 1,000

Thanksgiving is a time of traditions, and the Thanksgiving meal at the Light of the Village Academy is a wonderful example of a community coming together and sharing that tradition. For the past 11 years, on the Wednesday evening prior to Thanksgiving, hundreds have come together to share a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. Those attending enjoyed

fried turkey donated by the Bay Minette Rotary Club and all the traditional sides and deserts. Volunteers served 1,000 dinners to residents of the Alabama Village community!



MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE...

In today's turbulent economic times, unemployment rates remain high. Alabama's current unemployment rate of 7.2% represents approximately 155,000 unemployed Alabamians. Seeking employment has never been more competitive than it is today. That has not deterred **Volunteers of America's Supported Employment Team**. They continue to work tirelessly to ensure that individuals with disabilities have the same opportunities to realize their career goals as others. The Supported Employment job developers and coaches are outstanding at assessing individuals' strengths and job preferences through a process called "discovery". Making sure they match the person to the job is more important than just getting the job.

Our Supported Employment Team members are excellent in researching job openings, chasing down job leads, helping individuals prepare for job interviews, and, of course, side-by-side teaching ("job coaching") newly hired employees their duties at their job site.

And, despite the current high rate of unemployment, our Supported Employment Team assisted 6 individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment over the last six weeks!! These individuals went to work at several local businesses, including McDonald's, Dollar General, America's Best Value Inn, Goodwill Industries, and a local nursing home.

This success is due to the dedication and enthusiasm of our Supported Employment Team. Through their efforts, many individuals with disabilities are now working, earning competitive wages, and have the benefit of building a natural support system through new friendships with co-workers and new experiences.

Our Supported Employment Team succeeds by helping others succeed. Everyone at Volunteers of America Southeast is extremely proud of the work they do and we thank them for making dreams come true!!



Last year, our Supported Employment Team assisted Chad Hall in obtaining a job at Goodwill Easter Seals as a greeter. He just celebrated his one-year employment anniversary at Goodwill Industries.

This has been a great year for Chad ... he was recognized by his managers & coworkers in September as "Employee of the Month".



From left to right: Breanna Broadnax (Job Coach), Dorothy Washington (Job Coach/Developer), and Deborah Murph (Supported Employment Coordinator). Great job, Ladies!!!

INTENTIONAL INTERIM MINISTERS

As part of Volunteers of America's Faith-Based Resource Center, the Intentional Interim Ministry assists churches during the period of time between the leaving of one pastor and the coming of the next. According to Chris Baker, Associational Missionary with Clarke Baptist Association; "In my almost 30 years of ministry I have seen over and over the value of an intentional interim. The stability of a trained interim pastor can make all the difference in the church moving forward."

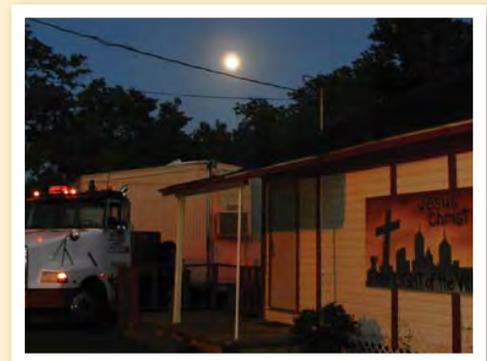
The Resource Center has ministers trained to help congregations work through a pastor leaving, deal with conflict, rediscover its mission, set new directions and goals for the ministry, and prepare for the next pastor. If you would like information about this service, contact Paul McLendon at 251-422-7729, or email paulm@voase.org.



LIGHT OF THE VILLAGE DONATION

Story by Carol McPhail @ AL.com

Light of the Village, a Christian ministry that serves Alabama Village in Prichard, has doubled its classroom space with the help of an anonymous donation. "A modular classroom, which measures 36 feet by 27 feet, was delivered Thursday," said John Eads, Light of the Village director. The donor wished to remain anonymous. "The biggest thing is to have it for summer camp, which starts in June," Eads said. The building will be used for GED classes, which serve about 52, as well as the camp, which brings in 200 youngsters ages 4 and up. Camp lasts for eight weeks. Light of the Village is 80 percent supported by individual donations. Its GED teacher is supported by Volunteers of America, Eads said. According to its website, the ministry is based on the Bible verse John 8:12, which quotes Christ saying: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."



A full moon rises over Light of the Village in Prichard, AL, as a new modular classroom was delivered on April 25, 2013

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA NATIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE

On December 13, Volunteers of America Southeast hosted the Volunteers of America National Worship Service with National President Mike King delivering the message. The celebration included a special performance by the vocal group Veritas of the University of Mobile. Held in the sanctuary of Cottage Hill Baptist Church, the service was streamed live to the 38 Volunteers of America affiliates across the country.





SOUTHEAST

600 Azalea Road
Mobile, AL 36609
(251) 300-3500
(800) 859-4431
www.voase.org

Caring Editor: Barbara Davis
Contributors: Keith Ferguson and Janet Hyde

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VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA POSITIONING STATEMENT

Volunteers of America is a national, nonprofit, spiritually-based organization providing local human service programs and opportunities for individual and community involvement.

VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA PRESENTS 2013 YES AWARD

Volunteers of America Southeast recently presented the 2013 Youth Enrichment Services Award. Youth Enrichment Services (YES) provides training for struggling mothers, a safe haven and schooling for at-risk children, and partnership opportunities for faith and community groups. The Volunteers of America Southeast YES Award was established in March, 2010. The intention of the YES Award is to recognize the outstanding achievements of a high school student in the community. The criteria for the nominated individuals are: that they be enrolled in school, provide civic contributions such as volunteering, and have recommendations by their church leaders.

This year's recipient was Taylor Moss, a senior at Bryant High School. Taylor is a member of the National Honor Society, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Student Government Association, and an Azalea Trail Maid. Taylor is also involved in her Sunday school class, youth choir, and participates in mission projects through her church, First Baptist Tillman's Corner.



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