Youth Volunteers Energize Salvation Army’s Holiday Efforts

By Greg Meitus, Public Relations & Marketing Manager

Each year during the Christmas season, we are reminded of the generosity of our community by the thousands of volunteers who commit their time and energy to serving those in need. At The Salvation Army, we were especially pleased this year by the number of young people who shared their energy and enthusiasm during our holiday efforts. Well over 500 Syracuse area high school and middle school students served as Salvation Army volunteers in November and December, helping with bell ringing, food and toy sorting, Christmas Bureau Distribution, and several other activities.

Our youth volunteers came from many different Syracuse area neighborhoods and represented many different groups, including schools, churches and Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops. In addition, many youth participated with their families. Most impressively, they came with smiles on their faces and a real passion for helping others.

On December 22nd at the Oncenter, 30 students from North Syracuse Junior High School helped out with Christmas Bureau Distribution. They were there as members of their school’s Builders Club, a co-educational service organization that provides these students with opportunities to serve their school and community.

I had a chance to speak with four of these students, all of whom served as personal shoppers during Christmas Bureau Distribution, helping clients pick out age appropriate toys and books for their children. Ninth grader Olivia commented, “The thing I’ll remember the most is the appreciation and excitement in the faces of the families I helped. It feels really good to help people and I’d like to do it again.” Fellow ninth grader Kaleigh added, “A mother brought her daughter along and the girl was amazed by all of the toys. This was their first time at Christmas Bureau and they looked so thankful. I was really happy to be able to help them.” Mike also enjoyed being a personal shopper and recalled the smile of a woman when he helped carry her items to the door. “It was really nice atmosphere. Everyone seemed relaxed and happy to be there.” Rachel has done school projects with the Builders Club, but nothing quite like Christmas Bureau. She says, “I think it’s important to help people in our community. I really enjoyed seeing the happy faces of parents when they picked out toys for their children.”

Christian Brothers Academy’s Peer Ministry Program offers juniors and seniors the opportunity to reach out to those in need through community service activities. This Christmas, the students of CBA “adopted” our Cab Horse Commons Daycare and Infant Center, delivering personalized gifts for and spending time with all of the children in care. The looks on the faces of the children were absolutely precious as 20 CBA students circulated through the different day care rooms delivering gifts and sharing stories, games, and good cheer. Ben Barrett, a junior, donned a Santa suit, adding excitement to the festivities.

A few weeks after their visit, I had lunch with Santa Ben and two of his classmates and asked them some questions about their community service experiences. Ben shared, “Through community service, I realize how blessed I am. I feel that it’s important to use the gifts that we have to help others.” Jack O’Brien, a senior, shared how community service has broadened his perspective of the world. “I’ve realized how lucky I am to have breakfast every morning. For some kids, this is completely foreign. Our small gift of time can make a big impact on kids’ lives.” Jasmine Harrell, who loves working with children, stated, “Coming to Cab Horse was a great experience for me, because I felt that our visit meant a lot to these children. It made me feel really good to see the smiles on their faces.” All three students agreed that the personal connections they’ve made through volunteering have been rewarding. Jack added, “We’ve had a lot of fun working together and I think we’ve gained some perspective on how we can make a difference with our lives.”

Another way that youth in our community are making a difference at The Salvation Army is through our Young Leaders Advisory Council. The Young Leaders are a group of professionals who are under the age of 40 and have made a commitment to helping further the mission of The Salvation Army by supporting its programs. Our Young Leaders also set a great example this holiday season by putting in countless hours as volunteers at various events. One of these Leaders, Nick McLaughlin, has been involved with The Salvation Army for over 13 years. Now 30, Nick first volunteered at Christmas Bureau Distribution in 1997 as a member of Cicero-North Syracuse High School’s Honor Society. After witnessing the magic of this event first hand, he was hooked. Nick says, “I went away to college, but started volunteering again when I got back. When I went to work for C&S Companies, I was able to get some of my colleagues interested in helping out at the toy tables. It’s been a great experience for all of us.”

Last year, our Young Leaders helped to develop and organize the Turn-Around Jumpers 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament, which raised over $21,000 for The Salvation Army’s Booth House for homeless and runaway teens. Young Leaders Jen Feher and Mike Kelly are organizing this year’s tournament, hoping to build on last year’s success. Jen and Mike have been able to combine their passion for basketball with their desire to help others. As Mike says, “It’s great when you’re able to raise money for things you believe in while doing something that you love.”

As the Salvation Army of the Syracuse Area celebrates its 128th anniversary, we feel very encouraged by the fact that so many young people are carrying the torch of public service. Seeing the work that these young people are doing in our community gives us confidence that The Salvation Army will continue to be able to provide valuable services to those in need for another 128 years. So next time you hear a disparaging remark about today’s youth, please take the time to remind this person about the many young people in our community who are “Doing The Most Good!”
At The Salvation Army, we are blessed with THE MOST INCREDIBLE volunteers in the world. OK, we’re biased, but we know that none of our holiday efforts would succeed without you. On Distribution Day, 844 volunteers worked in a variety of roles. Another 419 volunteers helped sort toys and food items in the days leading up to the event. Thousands more helped with bell ringing at our red kettles, registering families for Christmas Bureau, and working with our various programs that serve infants to seniors. Thank you for your energy, enthusiasm, and commitment!

• Booth House celebrated 30 years of service with a new home, increased capacity, and an amazing show of community support. Since its inception in 1979, Booth House has offered shelter to over 9,000 youth and their families.
• Our Young Leaders Forum utilized its creativity and enthusiasm by organizing a new event: Turn-Around Jumpers, Changing Lives One Hoop at a Time. This event raised over $20,000 for Booth House.
• The Salvation Army established after school programs at LeMoyne Elementary and Huntington School in partnership with Yes You To Education Syracuse and the Syracuse City School District.
• Our Adult Day Center celebrated 60 years of service and we met with community leaders to think creatively about what the next 60 years of service should look like.

• On May 1st at the Oncenter, 2,600 Syracuse area residents came together to pack 867,585 meals for victims of the earthquake in Haiti.
• Due to increasing homelessness in our community, the number of individuals utilizing our shelters increased by 10% this year. In addition, the number of meals served by our Food Pantry increased by 7,000.
• At Barnabas Center, our amazing Street Outreach Team maintains a constant presence in Syracuse neighborhoods most affected by recent violence. They do a great job of building permanent relationships with and giving hope to young people who feel trapped in a cycle of violence.
• On a more personal note, Paula Cerio joined our team as Director of Quality and Program Development. Paula brings a wealth of social service experience to The Salvation Army and we welcome her passion and care for the individuals and families we serve.

As we look forward into 2011, I worry about needing to do more with less resources, but I also have faith that this community will continue to pull together to build the support systems we need to help those who are struggling to reach their full potential. Thank you for your ongoing support of The Salvation Army as we continue to find new ways to serve those in need.

This year, Christmas Bureau Distribution provided turkeys and food boxes to 2,566 families and gifts, books, and stocking stuffers for approximately 6,500 children. While we are not able to print the names of everyone who contributed, we want you to know that your efforts are appreciated. This thank you card reminds us of the human connections we make when we give our time to serve others.

AN ARMY OF VOLUNTEERS

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CHRISTMAS 2010
A Season of Giving ~ A Season of Thanks

The Salvation Army works with an amazing group of partners throughout the year to make sure that struggling families in our community will have food and gifts for their children at Christmas. These partners include The Hayner Hoyt Corporation, 174th Fighter Wing, Bank of America, Catholic Charities of Onondaga County, Contact Community Services Helpline, Delaney Moving & Storage, Food Bank of Central New York, InterReligious Food Consortium, Oncenter Complex, Onondaga County Sheriff’s Department, Success by Six, Syracuse Fire Fighters, The Post Standard/Old Newsboys, United Parcel Service, United States Marines, United Way of Central New York, and Wegmans Food Markets, Inc. Thank you!

RED KETTLE HOST SITES

Thanks to Carousel Center, Shoppingtown and Great Northern Mills, Tops Markets, Price Chopper, K-Mart, and Wal-Mart stores for hosting our bell ringers from November 12 – December 24. Over $169,000 was contributed locally through our Red Kettle Campaign.

CORPORATIONS, SCHOOLS, AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

Hundreds of schools, companies, and community groups participated in Food and Toy Drives and Angel Tree and Mini Red Kettle Campaigns. Thank you for your dedication!

Thanks also to the local performance groups who joined us at Carousel Center on two consecutive Saturdays for So You Think You Can Ring. Congratulations to our top fundraiser, The Dance Studio (Fairmount & Manlius), who earned themselves a live spot on Channel 9’s Bridge Street.

Finally, Christmas Bureau Distribution would not have been possible without the massive logistical support provided by the 174th Fighter Wing and an enormous contribution of food items from Wegmans. Bravo!

THE MEDIA

The extraordinary coverage provided by local media for our holiday efforts played a big role in the success of Christmas Bureau Distribution. Thanks to the reporters and staff at YNN, CNY Central, 9-WSYR, Clear Channel Radio, and WAER for getting the word out about what we do. Tom & Becky at B104.7 and the staff at YNN deserve special mention for their help with our Turkey Drive, Bridge Street for supporting So You Think You Can Ring, and Y94 for publicizing Drop Off Day.

OUR CHRISTMAS BUREAU PARTNERS

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but I know from the work that I do that each and every one of us, approximately 10 percent of my income to charitable giving, can make a noticeable difference in someone else’s life, for example, I’ve made a conscious effort to donate a percent of my income to charitable giving. In my community, I’ve seen how this can make a difference. People who receive these donations are less fortunate. Unlike the stock market, an investment in community is a full time endeavor.

In these challenging economic times, it’s more important than ever for each of us to ask ourselves, “What can we do to improve our community and help others who are less fortunate?”. Unlike the stock market, an investment in community is a full time endeavor. Investing in community allows you to be creative, because there are many ways to get involved with local and national non-profits. A financial commitment is often the easiest way to support your favorite groups. In my life, for example, I’ve made a conscious effort to donate approximately 10 percent of my income to charitable organizations. Some years, that hasn’t amounted to much, but I know from the work that I do that each and every dollar makes a huge difference when we all do our part. For some, it’s easier on the budget to break things down into smaller pieces by doing a monthly pledge of $5 or $10 per month.

Volunteerism is another effective way that people invest in their communities. Our community is blessed with thousands of volunteers who step up each year with abundant energy, contagious enthusiasm, and an incredible variety of skills. A pair of helping hands is often as good as gold to non-profit organizations. Those of us who work at non-profits bear witness daily to the fruits of your investments. We see children who learn to read, families who find shelter in sub zero temperatures, teens who are offered alternatives to gangs, and single mothers who are supported as parents. These are the concrete, observable impacts of your investments.

Equally tangible are the riches that you receive from your investments. “Making a difference” is not an abstract concept, because your gift of money or time connects you directly to the lives of other human beings. Our government also recognizes your contributions by offering you the possibility of a tax deduction. And if you give on behalf of a business or community group, you send out a positive message about your company and implicitly challenge others to do the same. Investing in community is contagious… when others see you doing it, they want to participate as well.

During the holiday season, more than at any other time, our hearts go out to others. But it is important to remember that investing in our community is a full time endeavor. Each and every day of the year, local organizations provide the support needed to get people on the right track and guide them toward self sufficiency. When you give regularly to the charities that make a difference in your local and national communities, you may be surprised by the benefits that you reap!

Paul de Lima has been a supporter of The Salvation Army here in Syracuse for decades. In 2005 we were thrilled to receive permission from The Salvation Army’s National Headquarters to induct him as a Life Member of our Advisory Board.

Many years ago Paul made the decision to name our Salvation Army in his will. We are thankful that he is including us in the plans that include his wife, children and family. We talked with him recently about that choice. “No one had to ask or convince me. It was really a simple decision. My long association with the Army has enabled me to play many roles with the organization. I have been able to see the programs in action, the people that are helped, and the good that the Army does.”

“It is a sensible way to make a donation of a legacy. Among the many programs that I have seen in the community, the Army’s are outstanding. I am familiar with the wide range of programs and I have directly seen the benefit to people.”

“I am always encouraging people to get involved and see for themselves. Naming the Salvation Army in my will is something that makes me feel good to be able to do. I also am comfortable knowing that The Salvation Army has a long and successful track record of sound fiscal management, which is important to me.”

There are many ways that individuals can contribute to The Salvation Army that make it possible for us to continue to change the lives of people in this community. Several of these opportunities can be a part of your overall financial planning, with a variety of types of return on investment.

To find out more, please call Peter Irwin, Director of Development, at (315) 479-1319. As is always the case, your conversation will be kept confidential.

Paul de Lima
In Memory of Bob Schlichting

The Salvation Army of the Syracuse Area lost a dear friend in January when former Advisory Board member Robert Schlichting passed away after a courageous fight against Parkinson’s disease. Bob joined our board in 1985 and retired in 2005 as an emeritus member. His enthusiasm for community service was apparent, whether he was taking board minutes, ringing bells at our red kettles, or working with S.U. student volunteers at our Dome Day events during football season. Bob’s wife Ruth, and all of his family, are in our thoughts and prayers.

Retired Salvation Army Executive Director Bobbie Schofield recalled Bob with these words:

“It is said that a man is only as good as what he loves, and Bob loved all good things…his family, his country, and volunteering with devotion and consistency. He was a delightful, gentle and generous soul, loved by us all at the Army.”

The Salvation Army Needs Volunteers Throughout the Year

While November and December are big volunteer months at The Salvation Army, our Volunteer Coordinator Bonny McCabe is constantly looking for individuals who want to contribute their time to serve others. Bonny says, “Many people don’t realize that we have 40 programs that cater to the needs of all age groups, from infants to seniors. I enjoy matching each volunteer to the program that fits his or her interests and skills.”

Please give Bonny a call to learn more about volunteering for programs such as our Food Pantry, Emergency Shelter, Licensed Day Care & After School Programs, and Adult Day Center. We also need volunteers for special events like our Turn-Around Jumpers 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament, coming to Le Moyne College in June.

In addition, those who like to work with their hands are sometimes needed for painting and carpentry projects, and those with office skills are needed in our Development and Human Resources departments.

Bonny can be reached at 479-3668 or bonny.mccabe@use.salvationarmy.org

2nd Annual 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament

SAVE THE DATE!
June 11 & 12, 2011
Le Moyne College Athletic Complex
Competition by age bracket – all ages welcome

Honorary Chair: Mike Hopkins, SU Men’s Basketball Assistant Coach
For more information, visit sasyr.org or call 479-1321

MEMORIALS

IN MEMORY OF
Given By

DAVID LANGLOIS
Jack Kissel
BRUCE W. OSTERMAN SR.
Richard T. Duann
CHRISTINE REES
Artur R. Rees
GEORGE ROBINSON AND
DONALD “SKIP” COLEMAN
Bryan J. Coleman
JAMES RAYMOND ROCHIE
Le Moyne College
EARL H. VANCAMP
Chere Plummer
FRANK M. WINTERS
Philip Winters
HERB WISER
Jack Kissel

IN HONOR OF
Given By

AXA EQUITABLE TEAMMATES:
RAY BAUTISTA
MADIA COLSON
JIM FERGUSON
MINDY FORTINO
DILCY HALL
JOHN HENTGES
ALICIA KLEM
ANDREW KUSS
SHAY LOYSEN
MIKE MACKO
DEBI MAZZOLE
FRANK REDONDA
TAKITA WILLIAMS
CAROLYN WOJACK
DALE P. ISBELL

GLENNA HALL
Joe Potts
JIM AND MARYL HUGHES
Benjamin G. Hughes
ROBERT MCCOLGIN
Elizabeth E. McBride
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John J. McCormick
MARGARET AND
BILL MORAN
Josephine M. Fowler Cleveland
DR. ERIC AND
MRS. JOANNE PETTIT
Lori Pettit
MR. AND MRS. THOMAS POTTER
Robert C. Merriam
HAYES WANNAMAKER AND
TAMMY ANTHONY
Barbara B. Wannamaker
PAT, MARY, AND DEAN
James L. Wilcox
STEPHEN NETZBAND FAMILY
John Taylor-Netzband
WILLIAM AND
SAUNDRA JOHNSON
Lauren Johnson Albani

IN MEMORY OF

John T. Arnott
DICK AURELLI
George Jones
BARRABRA BECKER AND
EMILY FRATELLO
Annette C. Goodman
ROD CHESSER AND
MOSCHELLE KEENE
Veli Chesser
Rovena Keys
L. EARL COLLEY
Muriel V. Kirkpatrick
HAROLD GUILD
Jack Kissel
MRS. HOWARD
Herbert S. & Eleanore L.
Howard Charitable Foundation

(Includes gifts recorded from October 22, 2010 through January 24, 2011) Those who make gifts in honor of another or memorial gifts to our Salvation Army of the Syracuse Area have chosen a meaningful, tangible way to demonstrate not only how much they care about someone they love, but how much they care about people in need. These gifts may be sent to the Development Office at 677 South Salina St. Syracuse, NY 13202.

Please visit our website at sasyr.org to find out more about The Salvation Army of the Syracuse Area and to sign up for our E-Newsletter.