



Spring 1-17-2012

## MLK Community Service Project Brings out Hundreds of Students

Winthrop University

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### Recommended Citation

Winthrop University, "MLK Community Service Project Brings out Hundreds of Students" (2012). *Winthrop News 2012*. 5.

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01/17/2012

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# MLK Community Service Project Brings out Hundreds of Students

## Quick Facts

- Volunteers arrived for the day of service not knowing what project they would be completing.
- Each team of volunteers was given the goal of making an impact on poverty to emphasize King's legacy of empowerment and service.



*Painting at Pilgrims' Inn*

ROCK HILL, S.C. – Members of the Winthrop University community spent the **Martin Luther King Jr. holiday** on Jan. 16 as a “day on” for service instead of a day off from classes and work.

Volunteers arrived for the day of service not knowing what project they would be completing. The volunteers were randomly distributed among 17 teams and given a specific project. Each team of volunteers was given the goal of making an impact on poverty to emphasize King's legacy of empowerment and service. Before disembarking for the service projects, teams listened to words of wisdom from Norris Williams '03, principal of Dutchman Creek Middle School, who encouraged them to consider the impact they could have on others.

**The 208 volunteers provided 832 hours of service to a variety of projects including:**

- distributing boxes of food through Meals on Wheels to 32 homebound senior citizens;
- distributing hot meals to 50 senior citizens at Green Street Senior Complex;
- picking up 52 bags of trash over four different roads;
- creating a scrapbook of the year's events and creating a presentation for the community for the American Red Cross;
- packing 1,416 back packs of food for Back the Pack to feed hungry children on the weekends;
- donating 101 pounds of fresh produce to the Children's Attention Home from the Rock Hill Educational Community Garden;
- painting the two daycare center rooms at Pilgrim's Inn women's shelter;
- painting three rooms at the Renew Our Community site;
- cleaning the Bethel Men's Warming Shelter; and
- sorting 10 bags of clothes, moving 280 pounds of merchandise and testing/sorting/organizing 50 different electronics, all of which is now ready to be sold at Tender Hearts ministries.

At their service sites, participants sent photos of their groups in action via cell phones to include in a slideshow that was shown at the end of the day.

“The turnout for this day of service was so great that we continued to add service sites and projects up until the day of,” said **Patricia Riley**, AmeriCorpsVISTA for Volunteer and Community Service. “The feedback that participants provided was extremely positive, and we all were proud of our students for accomplishing so much and giving back to the community all while honoring Dr. King's legacy.”

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