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MLK Day of Service Brings Together Students for Volunteer Work

Winthrop University

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MLK Day of Service Brings Together Students for Volunteer Work

Quick Facts

- The 316 volunteers provided 908 hours of service to five different service projects.
- Each site consisted of an educational component so that students could learn about the organizations and people that they were serving, and how they can continue to serve beyond MLK Day.



This group cleaned up the playground at Pilgrims' Inn.

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA – Members of the Winthrop University community spent the **Martin Luther King Jr. holiday** on Jan. 18 as a “day on” for service instead of a day off from classes and work.

Volunteers arrived for the **Day of Service** at the **DiGiorgio Campus Center** not knowing what project they would be completing. The volunteers were randomly distributed among 37 student-led teams to accomplish five different service projects. Each team of volunteers was given the goal of making an impact on poverty to emphasize King's legacy of empowerment through service.

Before disembarking for the service projects, volunteers enjoyed a performance by **Winthrop's Vision of Prayze Gospel Choir** and **Skin Deep**. They also received words of encouragement from **President Dan Mahony** who brought his family to volunteer alongside the students. **York Technical** and **Clinton colleges** also sent a handful of students.

The 316 volunteers provided 908 hours of service to five different service projects. “Winthrop experienced the highest turnout ever this year for its MLK Day,” said **Imani Green**, AmeriCorps VISTA for Volunteer and Community Service. “We received positive responses from participants regarding changes to the service projects and replacing the speaker with performances from student groups. It was also very special to see President Mahony and his family there, participating alongside the students. We are all proud to have been a part of such a great event to honor Dr. King.”

Here is what they accomplished:

- **Global Hunger Project:** The Charlotte group Stop Hunger Now organized a packaging parties, where volunteers worked in assembly lines to package dehydrated foods in the West Center that will then be shipped overseas for 29 cents a meal. Winthrop volunteers packaged more than 10,500 meals.
- **Local Hunger Project:** Four different Rock Hill churches donated their kitchens for volunteers to prepare, package and deliver warm meals to different people in need in the community. Combined, they distributed 330 meals throughout the Rock Hill Community. (Freedom Temple Ministries, St. John's United Methodist, First Associate Reformed Presbyterian and Winthrop University Baptist Collegiate Ministry opened their doors for volunteers to use their kitchens to prepare the meals. Meals were delivered to Renew Our Community, Willowbrook Crossing, Pilgrims' Inn, Apartments at Highland Park, Green Street Plaza Apartments and Dream Center).
- **Warming Project:** Volunteers made 200 no-sew fleece scarves and tied them around downtown Rock Hill, targeting areas in need. They attached notes to each scarf encouraging community members to take a scarf to help keep warm during these cold winter months.

- **Senior Story Project:** Volunteers went to Westminster Towers and the Adult Enrichment Center to interact with seniors and adults with disabilities. They completed a “Living History” booklet to help lead conversation, as well as engaged in a few simple art projects.
- **Pilgrims’ Inn Beautification Project:** Volunteers cleaned and organized the agency’s Women and Children’s Shelter, which has a great community partner connection with Winthrop.

Each site consisted of an educational component so that students could learn about the organizations and people that they were serving, and how they can continue to serve beyond MLK Day.

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 **DiGiorgio Campus Center** during the wrap-up.

For more information on the service projects, contact **Green** at 803/323-2141.

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