



Monthly BRIEFING

JANUARY 2009 | CORPS YEAR 2008-09

CITY YEAR DETROIT

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MLK DAY OF SERVICE

On January 19, 2009 at City Year locations across the United States, hundreds of volunteers joined City Year staff and corps members in a day of service to honor the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We celebrate his commitment to social justice and civil rights through a day of transformative service projects.

Here at City Year Detroit, MLK Day is "a day ON, not a day off." It is a chance to powerfully and visibly make a difference in our communities. Our volunteers are as passionate about serving as we are. We engage more than 400 volunteers each year, which include families, corporate employees, youth, and community members who want to make a difference. We partner with several metro-Detroit organizations which enables this day of service to have powerful impact in the metro-Detroit area. This year our 17 projects included transforming two schools (Vetal Elementary and Chadsey High School), helping out at Gleaners locations throughout metro-Detroit, and sorting clothing donations at St. Vincent de Paul thrift stores and at Family2Family. Volunteers served in about 15 service projects this year in various parts of the metro-area.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee."

-Marian Wright Edelman

WORD OF THE MONTH

Mentor

Noun

"men-tor"

A trusted counselor or guide; a tutor or coach.

MONTHLY TIDBIT

January is National Mentoring Month. National Mentoring Month (NMM) was first established in 2002 (and officially passed in Congress early January 2009) in order to bring attention to the need for youth to have positive adults in their lives. Over 3 million youth in the U.S. have mentors who serve as positive role models. However, 15 million youth are in need of mentors in this country.

P.I.T.W. OF THE MONTH

28: Build every relationship with "CIA" — Communication, Involvement and Appreciation

Connecting people and institutions for positive action through community service is City Year's primary method of social change. Think of the City Year organization like a needle, and the corps and staff as the thread, weaving together people and entire sectors of society (non-profits, businesses, policy makers, government). We can only be effective by strengthening existing relationships, and building new ones. "CIA" is a short-hand reminder of the three critical aspects of relationship building: (1) Communication, (2) Involvement and (3) Appreciation. Communicate constantly — both the positive and challenging information. Involvement is at the very heart of what City Year is about. If you involve people, they become committed. Finally, appreciate people and institutions: a thank you letter, a phone call, a note from the whole team, a plaque, or a small gift like a City Year mug are all real ways of showing appreciation.

City Year, Inc., a proud member of the AmeriCorps network, is a national service program that unites diverse 17-24 year olds for a challenging year of full-time service, leadership development, and civic engagement.

Through transformative service, City Year corps members break down social barriers and build stronger communities.

If you would like more information about City Year or how to volunteer call us at

(313) 874-6859. You can also visit us at our website: www.cityyear.org/Detroit.

CITY YEAR DETROIT

BUILDING DEMOCRACY THROUGH CITIZEN SERVICE, CIVIC LEADERSHIP & SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

SERVICE UPDATE

- Our team is very excited to officially begin the 2009 City Heroes program!
- We had our first Heroes Saturday on January 24, 2009. About 75 City Heroes came to learn about “-isms”, stereotypes, and prejudice. Our high school students had a great time!
- The Comcast Team tutors students at 2 different schools each week. We tutor 1st-6th grade students at Westside Christian Academy, a school in the Cody-Rouge neighborhood. We also tutor K-3 grade students at Salina Elementary in Dearborn, MI. Starting in February, we will begin working with an after-school program at Cody High School and will also tutor students at Ann Arbor Trail Middle School (both in the Cody-Rouge neighborhood in Detroit.) We are excited to work with these schools and to tutor and mentor so many amazing youth.

HEROES OPENING DAY

Saturday, January 17, 2009 City Year Detroit officially kicked-off the 2009 City Heroes and Young Heroes programs. These two programs engage middle-school students and high-school students throughout metro-Detroit to get involved in their communities through community service and learning about social issues. Young Heroes participants, City Heroes participants, Heroes parents and family members, and community members came out to celebrate the official kick-off of our 2009 Heroes programs in metro-Detroit.

100 City Heroes pledged the next five months to serving their communities (see background photo.) They were led by inspirational speeches from representatives from Bank of America, Comcast, and State Farm, which sponsor the Heroes programs locally and nationally. Many thanks to Olivia Visperas for inspiring our Heroes. Osvaldo “Ozzie” Rivera from C.L.A.V.E. (Community of Latino Artists, Visionaries, and Educators) gave an engaging performance and many words of encouragement to our Heroes. This event was a huge success and we are thankful that so many came out to celebrate our 2009 City Heroes and Young Heroes programs.

Thanks Comcast for supporting us at Heroes Opening Day!

UPCOMING DATES

Violence in Society Program Day—
February 7, 2009

Violence in Society Service Day—
February 21, 2009

Rummage Sale/Bake Sale—
March 6-7, 2009

Healthy Lifestyles Program Day—
March 14, 2009

Heroes Showcase—
March 19, 2009

ISMS PROGRAM DAY



Team Leader, Mandy Traaseth, leads Morning Circle with her team, *It's In Your Hands*.

Ripples and Joys:

A Joy from Elizabeth Gray

“I helped plan the “-isms” Program Day and was not quite sure that the City Heroes would get much out of it. “Maybe they won’t like the day,” “maybe the material will bore them,” I thought to myself. But as the Team Leaders led the activities and as the Heroes responded to the topic, I realized that the day really went well. At the end of the day, my team, *Ubuntu*, did their debrief. Most of them gave the day a 5 out of 5. It was an unexpected joy.”

On Saturday, January 24, 2009, we had our very first City Heroes Program Day! Over 70 City Heroes came out to Zion Lutheran Church in Ferndale for the Heroes Saturday. The City Heroes learned about “-isms” (such as racism, sexism, classism, and ableism). They also learned about how prejudice and stereotypes impact communities.

Through several interactive activities, skits, and discussions, the City Heroes powerfully discussed these topics. One of the most touching activities was the Privilege Line, which enabled the City Heroes to see those similarities and differences between each other that are not readily visible. Throughout the day, our Heroes grew closer together as peers and as teammates.



City Heroes and Team Leaders pose for a thank you picture to Zion Lutheran Church (our venue for Jan. 24)

JOIN US

Interested in seeing the 2009 Comcast Team in action? Want to meet the Comcast team and our City Heroes? Thank you, Comcast, for inviting us to events and service projects at Comcast. We have loved meeting you all. We invite you to come see the work we do with our youth. We would love for you to come and visit us on one of our Saturdays or for the Heroes Showcase in March. Please contact Elizabeth Gray at egray09@cityyear.org if you would like more information.



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