

Operation Serve: DuPage

Thank you for your partnership!



Abby, Aubrey, Lizzie, Emily, Bella, Ayla, & Rachel Greetings Mission Trip Supporters!

What an incredible week of serving with really great ladies around our home in DuPage County. I am honored by their sacrifice of choosing to use their spring break to wake up early, work hard all day, and serve others. Repeatedly the host ministries of the day were impressed and grateful for how they balanced hard work, cheerful hearts, and lots of fun. I am also appreciative of the volunteers who gave up a day to serve with our team. I saw the students serve Jesus and I saw them grow closer to Him through it. I can't wait to fill you in on the details, and who better to do so than the girls themselves? Take it away team!

Tuesday - Starting off strong at home by Ayla Walsh

On Tuesday, we began our trip by working locally at our home church. Most of the labor involved yard work. At lunch we got to hear from Tom - the facilities manager at the church - about his heart for taking care of the church building God has blessed our people with. We had lots of fun working together as a team and learning about how we can serve God and our community through the maintenance of our church!



Describing the trip in a few words



Abby Galbraith "Hard work and great fun!"
Rachel Wells "Good to see God's work"
Emily Maruyama "Absolutely life changing!"
Aubrey Benson "Community, bonding, team-work and laughter"
Mark Dunning "Grateful and proud of our ladies"
Bella Clinton "God's work = hard but fulfilling"
Lizzie Latoundji "Refreshing look into God's work"
Ayla Walsh "Practical, impactful, overall brilliant"
Abby Latoundji "Growing in the community, exciting!"
Felicity Stombaugh "Impressed by the girl's servant-hearts"
Hannah Gambrel "These girls passionately pursued service!"

Tuesday Evening - Our team goes out on the town *by Rachel Wells*

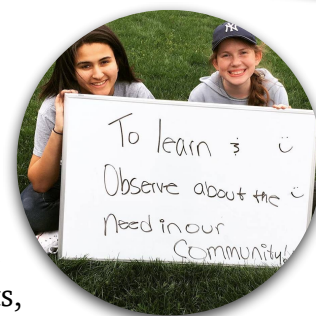
Tuesday night the DuPage team went out in search of fun and team unity. We had dinner at a local Mexican restaurant and then went to play a game called WhirlyBall (which is essentially lacrosse on bumper cars), and capped of the night with ice cream. The leaders and Lizzie dominated the game (*text added by Mark*) but we all had fun. The night helped us build upon existing friendships and learn to rely on each other, which proved beneficial for the remainder of the week ahead of us. I am grateful for the close friendships and strong team unity we found along the way - with them we were able to serve God with good attitudes and hard work through the tasks set before us.



Wednesday - Meeting local needs of international neighbors *by Emily Maruyama*

On Wednesday morning we got right to work at Repeat Boutique where we helped sort clothes. We learned that this place gives free clothes and things of all kinds to immigrants, missionaries, and refugees. After this we went over to World Relief

DuPage where we cleaned out and washed about 10 vans; these vans help to get immigrants/refugees all around town to help them find jobs, pick them up from the airport, and more. We learned firsthand about the need that is right in our community, and how all the volunteers have such a heart to serve, which was so encouraging to see.



DID YOU KNOW?

- ◆ 71,000+ DuPage County residents are living in poverty and are one paycheck away from homelessness.
- ◆ The average age of a homeless person in DuPage County is 8 years old and the child poverty rate in DuPage County is 11%.
- ◆ In 2000, the suburban Chicago immigrant population (788,000) surpassed the city of Chicago's immigrant population (629,000), an unprecedented development.
- ◆ The suburban immigrant population grew by 377,000 persons in the 1990s, an increase of 91.9%.

Sources: The U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 & 2011 Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates: 1.usa.gov/1qpmHPI and The DuPage Federation for Human Services Reform: bit.ly/1XvNft4

Thursday - Beginning to see the lost and hurting around us *by Bella Clinton*

On Thursday we were blessed to be able to go to People's Resource Center, which if you don't know is a food pantry in Wheaton, and Jubilee Village - transitional housing for young moms through Outreach Community Ministries. It was an impactful time and it was interesting to see people in all different walks of life serving at these places daily and doing it with loving hearts. It was especially cool that we got to take on their role of serving others in our community for a couple of hours and see what it was like. We got to help people at Jubilee Village when we cleaned out their





basement storage. It was such a cool day but also heartbreaking because we saw so many - especially at the food pantry - who were in very hard places in their lives. Overall, Thursday was super exciting and awesome!

Friday - Continuing to see those in need in our community by Abby Latoundji

On Friday we started the day off both sad to be wrapping up and excited to serve at new places: Outreach Community Center and Jubilee Furniture. While working at Outreach we did lots of stuff like learn about the amazing things they do with kids, clean up their classrooms, pick up loads of trash, and lots of other hard work. After lunch we headed over to

the Jubilee Furniture where we learned about the great work they do, they showed us around the place, and then we prayed for our time there as well as the entire week. We went into their yard and picked up trash, put massive pictures into storage, and also moved furniture. Afterward we got some ice cream and went back to church to have our final debrief. We talked about how this week grew the whole team closer to each other and to God - which was perfect because we had great laughs but we all went on this trip to serve God and to glorify Him and do His work too. Going on this trip meant so much, serving in my own community was a great place to serve others in Christ's name.

Final Thoughts from our time serving God through others by Lizzie Latoundji

Jesus taught that the greatest commandment is to love God, and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself. I wanted to use my spring break to show neighbors that I love them through service because of the gratitude I have for Jesus for all He has done for me. I want to love people like Christ loves them. The DuPage Mission Trip was an opportunity to be a light to my neighbors and show them who God is by loving them and then serving them. During the week I saw how Christ's love puts others' needs ahead of our own, just like Jesus did through His death.

Thank you for helping make this mission trip a reality and blessing many through your support!



- The 2016 Operation Serve: DuPage Mission Team

Bella Clinton, Rachel Wells, Lizzie Latoundji, Emily Maruyama, Abby Latoundji, and Ayla Walsh with leaders Aubrey Benson, Abby Galbraith, Felicity Stombaugh, Hannah Gambrel, and Mark Dunning (Student Ministries Director)

WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO GOD FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

"Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus the Anointed. Whenever you cross my mind, I thank my God for you and for the gift of knowing you. My spirit is lightened with joy whenever I pray for you."

Philippians 1:1-3

