NCCU BREAKS GROUND ON NEW EAGLE HABITAT HOUSE

BY SWETHA KUMAR AND MARQUITA JONES

Members of the NCCU and Durham communities gathered on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Jan. 18, to celebrate the groundbreaking for a new home for NCCU staff member Tijuanda Farrington and her daughter Constance. In partnership with Habitat of Humanity of Durham, NCCU volunteers have begun construction of the home.


There was more than just ceremony, though; 77 volunteers worked at the site before and after the speeches, putting in a total of 320 hours, hammering wall frames and clearing the back yard. Among them were 30 men from NCCU's Centennial Scholars Program.

The project is part of Eagle Habitat, a program launched in 2006 to provide homes for NCCU community members and to revitalize neighborhoods surrounding the university.

Completion of the home is expected in April or May. Farrington, a library assistant who has worked at NCCU for 14 years, can't wait. “Getting a Habitat house is what I would imagine winning the lottery feels like,” she said.

A Chapel Hill native, Farrington said she moved to Durham in 1996 with her baby daughter and little more than the clothes on her back. Pastor S.M. Sudler of The Church of Deliverance helped her get back on her feet and encouraged her to apply for a job at NCCU. Becoming selected as a Habitat homeowner, she said, has given her a chance to spread her ministry, which is love and passion for people. “Salvation is an act of love, community, and humanity,” she said.

Constance Farrington is 14 now and a freshman at Northern High School. She is active in organizations such as Delta Academy, Teens Against Consuming Alcohol, the Northern High step team and The Church of Deliverance Youth Choir.

For more information about Eagle Habitat, contact Ruby Messick at (919) 530-5384 or Dr. Deborah Bailey at (919) 530-7078.
When Kristina Nwabuike reviewed the 170 community service agencies listed on the NCCU website, one program stood out — America Reads. It is a children’s literacy program that works in partnership with the Durham Public School System and Operation Breakthrough. The program is offered as a work-study program through the Academic Community Service Learning Program (ACSLP).

Nwabuike, a nursing sophomore who loves to tutor and to read, knew that the program would be a perfect fit. “Community service is about giving of yourself,” she says. “You should find something you enjoy doing and bring that passion to helping others.”

America Reads, unveiled by the Clinton Administration in 1996, challenges all Americans to help ensure that every American child can read well and independently by the end of the third grade.

Nwabuike is one of 40 NCCU students who have taken on this challenge by volunteering with the program. These volunteers work one-on-one with children and adolescents in nearby schools — W.G. Pearson Elementary in Nwabuike’s case. “The best part is when the kids try to buddy up with you,” she says. “They ask you to play or build things with them, or ask if they can read with you. It is really cute.”

Nwabuike says her biggest influences have been her teachers, and also a man named Uncle Naim, a community mentor and faux relative. “The world needs more people who are willing to listen and make a difference, take the time to understand individuals, and make a positive impact on the people they encounter,” she says.

Her desire to emulate Uncle Naim led Nwabuike to major in nursing. “I wanted to make a difference,” she adds. “Nursing would allow me to travel, meet new people, and change lives.”

Nwabuike came to NCCU almost two years ago from California as a result of her father’s transfer of employment. “I like NCCU,” she says. “I appreciate that they emphasize the importance of service and working as a group.”

NCCU students are required to complete 15 hours of community service per semester, totaling 120 hours to graduate.
The Academic Community Service Learning Program (ACSLP) was heavily involved in NCCU's 2010 celebration of the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

ACSLP's MLK events began on Jan. 12 with the "Doing Good, Doing Well" forum, co-sponsored by the Department of Public Administration. Featuring panelists Christopher Gergen of Duke University and NCCU alum and entrepreneur Solomon Burnette, the forum focused on the idea of social entrepreneurship. Moderator Dr. Deborah Bailey and the panelists challenged audience members to focus their ambition and creative energy on enterprises that are successful, profitable, and beneficial to society.

At the university's MLK Convocation on Jan. 14, speakers in the auditorium urged students to heed Dr. King's call to service — and ACSLP partners in the lobby offered opportunities to sign up to volunteer on the spot.

The MLK week of service began in earnest on Jan. 18, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, with a groundbreaking ceremony for the Eagle Habitat house intended for NCCU employee Tijuanda Farrington and her daughter.

Service activities continued with a blood drive Jan. 18-20 and concluded with the Million Meals project on Jan. 20, in which students from NCCU, Duke and Northern High School helped package meals for shipment to families in undeveloped countries.

"This year, more than ever, Dr. King's influence is being shown through students' eagerness to participate in service," said Swetha Kumar, ACSLP staff member. "Fifty students were willing to hop on a bus on a Wednesday night and go package meals for people in need hundreds of miles away."

Sonya Scott, MBA Associate in the School of Business, leads by example. "You can't ask someone to do something you won't do yourself," she says. For 18 years now, Scott has served the Durham and NCCU communities with passion and dedication.

A Brooklyn native, Scott earned her undergraduate degrees from NCCU in Business Management & Education in 1991 and Hospitality & Tourism Administration in 2000, and then a graduate degree in Public Administration in 2008. She began working at NCCU in 1992 as an advisor to Phi Beta Lambda, a business organization for students.

Some notable PBL service programs sponsored and organized under Scott’s leadership are Million Meals, Highway Cleanup, and Share Your Christmas. Scott says programs such as Million Meals demonstrate to students the importance of sharing with those less fortunate. "With all that we have and all that we want, so many people don't have anything," she says.

Scott has started other service programs outside of PBL. In 1997, she organized NCCU’s participation in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Walk to Cure Diabetes. The university continues to take part annually in the walk.

Scott says she hopes students have learned from her to not only have a strong commitment to service and the community, but to also be effective leaders.
AGENCY PARTNER SPOTLIGHT: FOOD BANK OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA AT DURHAM

BY MARQUITA JONES

More than 86,000 people are at risk of hunger in the six-county area served by the Durham branch of the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina. Among them are more than 26,000 children and nearly 7,000 people aged 65 and older.

One of the challenges to preventing and ending hunger is to eliminate the shame and stigma associated with it, says Patrick Spencer, volunteer coordinator for the Food Bank’s Durham branch. He emphasizes that the Food Bank is a place that people can come to without fear of judgment. It is “a resource that is available to anyone in need — we are here to help,” he says. Last year, the Durham branch distributed more than 5.3 million pounds of food.

The Food Bank of Eastern and Central North Carolina serves 34 counties and has branches in Durham, Raleigh, Wilmington, and Greenville. The Durham branch, established in 1999, has been making sure that no one in Durham and five neighboring counties (Orange, Chatham, Granville, Person and Vance) goes hungry through its efficient distribution of food to 160 partner agencies.

The Food Bank raises awareness of hunger and hunger prevention through programs that include food drives, the mobile food pantry, and backpack programs, which provide for the nutritional needs of children on weekends and other times when schools are closed.

To learn more about the Food Bank at Durham or to volunteer, contact Spencer at 919-956-2513 ext 2104 or visit their website, <www.fbcenc.org>.

SERVICE UPDATES

BY MARQUITA JONES

HIV/STD Testing, Nov. 10: Members of Project Save a Fellow Eagle (SAFE) and the Gamma Beta chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity organized an HIV/STD testing event; 20 students participated, creating fliers and class announcements and attending educational sessions.

Phi Beta Lambda Highway Cleanup, Nov. 14: 10 Phi Beta Lambda members spent their Saturday cleaning up a stretch of highway, helping to keep Durham beautiful!

Veterans Night at Golden Corral, Nov. 16: In observance of Veterans Day and to show appreciation to local veterans, 30 students served dinner to area veterans at Golden Corral.

Children’s Health Fair, Nov. 17: 2 NCCU student volunteers took part in educating middle-school students about health care issues such as obesity and good hygiene. NCCU students also prepared health care packages for distribution.

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Walk to Cure Diabetes, Nov. 7, 2009: A total of 68 NCCU students participated in the 2009 JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes. Student volunteers assisted with event parking, setup and booth maintenance, and each volunteer raised $30 or more. The total for the event was $1, 529 for juvenile diabetes research.
SERVICE UPDATES CONTINUED

Eagle Pride Blood Drive, Nov. 17-19:
A total of 290 volunteers donated blood and also participated in screening for marrow type.

NCCU Staff Senate Food Drive, Nov. 18-20:
Ten students donated nonperishable food items and assisted with sorting through donations. On Nov. 20, they delivered the food to the Durham Rescue Mission.

SGA Interfaith Food Shuttle Turkey Takeout, Nov. 20:
Sponsored by SGA, five student volunteers distributed turkeys to local nonprofit agencies.

Operation Warmth, Nov. 21:
Ten students took part in Operation Warmth, a program sponsored by New Beginnings Outreach, a local nonprofit organization. Students assisted with event setup and distribution of winter clothing and food.

McDougald Terrace Gift Drive, Dec. 3:
Twenty-five NCCU students spread cheer and good tidings to children during the holiday season by purchasing, sorting and wrapping gifts for children in the Eagle Village and McDougald communities.

Children’s Christmas Party, Dec. 5:
The Student Activities Board hosted a Christmas party for children at the Durham County Department of Social Services. Twenty-five NCCU students played games, joined the children for lunch and distributed gifts.

Share Your Christmas, Dec. 6:
Ninety NCCU students generously gave their time and shared what they had with the community.

SGA and ACSLP Harvest Feast, Dec. 6:
Twelve students served a holiday meal to local residents. The Harvest Feast was a collaboration between SGA and ACSLP.

Doing Good, Doing Well Forum, Jan. 12, 2010:
The Doing Good, Doing Well forum was one of the many events hosted by ACSLP in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Attending the forum on social entrepreneurship were 35 students. Four Durham entrepreneurs spoke about how they could start a businesses and use it to give back to the community.

MLK Convocation, Jan. 14:
In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the university convocation featured Dr. Freddie Parker, professor of history. Dr. Parker delivered a stirring speech on Dr. King’s legacy and the work that must be done to continue his legacy. Sixty-seven students attended and signed up for community service activities afterward.

MLK Jr. Blood Drive, Jan. 18-20:
In honor of Dr. King, 220 NCCU students took part in a blood drive.

Million Meals, Jan. 20:
Million Meals is a collaborative service project run by NCCU and Duke students. Students from both campuses packaged dry meals to be shipped to poor countries to feed one million families. The number of NCCU students who participated was 160.
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**Calling students, faculty, and staff!**  
Volunteers are needed for Eagle Habitat Build. Community service credit available.  
Contact Swetha Kumar, AmeriCorps VISTA program associate, at (919) 530-6143.

Are you interested in social justice?  
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Contact Kelly Shinn, recruitment coordinator, at (202) 387-3222, ext 221, or <Recruitment@LutheranVolunteerCorps.org>.

**Help NCCU raise awareness of hunger! Participate in Hunger Awareness Week, March 15 - 21!**  
Community service hours available for students.  
Contact Marquita Jones, AmeriCorps VISTA program associate, at (919) 530-7081.

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**QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS? CONTACT US!**  
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