

Mission Volunteer Program

Volunteers Needed for the Gulf Coast

There is still much work to be done in the Gulf Coast area; there will be for the next few years. Reformed Church World Service (RCWS) and the RCA Mission Volunteer Program have partnered with some of the organizations that are helping survivors of the hurricanes of 2005 and 2008.

We hope that your church will consider sending a mission team to help these partners through the ongoing recovery process. For more information or to register a volunteer group, please contact Nancy Ellens in the Mission Volunteer Program office at nellens@rca.org or (800) 968-3943, ext. 243.

A note from Jay Harsevoort, RCA coordinator for volunteers:

In early November, I visited our partners listed below. Everyone is saying the same thing: 'No money is coming in. Compared to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, there are far fewer financial donations and volunteers.'

Volunteers can be a great encouragement for people affected by Hurricane Ike and the previous hurricanes. I would like to challenge groups to give a \$100 per person donation when serving as volunteers for any of these partners.

Habitat for Humanity of Jefferson County in Beaumont, Texas

This Habitat partner continues to build new homes in the Beaumont and Port Arthur areas. Volunteers will stay at either the Holiday Inn Midtown for \$39.99 per night or in the local YMCA's volunteer accommodations for \$30 per week—these are special rates for volunteers. This Habitat partner usually has two to three houses in various stages of completion, so there are options for varying skill levels within a group. Habitat provides lunch each day; volunteer groups are on their own for breakfast and supper. A donation of \$100 per volunteer is suggested.

Habitat for Humanity: Calcasieu Area, Inc., in Lake Charles, Louisiana

This Habitat partner continues in its effort to build new homes for those affected by the 2005 hurricanes. Volunteers will stay at the United Way Southwest Louisiana Volunteer Housing Center. The center is equipped with washers and dryers, bunk beds, and kitchens where groups may cook their own meals. This partner is no longer scheduling volunteer teams every week, but it still has a need for volunteers. A donation of \$100 per volunteer is suggested.

Southeast Texas Interfaith Organization (SETIO) in Port Arthur, Texas

This organization was formed after the 2005 hurricanes and continues to work in the area to help with cleanup and rebuilding after the 2008 hurricanes. This year, SETIO will be working mainly on cleanup. Next year, they will begin the transition to rebuilding houses. Accommodations are in churches at no charge for volunteers. Groups will purchase and prepare their own meals. A donation of \$100 per volunteer is suggested.



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