

October, 2009

WHY DO YOU VOLUNTEER?

*Interviews with
three
VIA
volunteers*



Charys Youngsma has been a part of the Faith in Deed program for about a year now, building a relationship with a visually impaired woman.

Why do you volunteer with an organization like VIA?

I volunteer with VIA because God has blessed me richly in my life and this is an actionable way for me to show my gratitude for that, and for me to make a contribution to His Kingdom.

What do you do?

I work with a woman who has been totally blind since college. She is funny, charming, independent and a joy to work with. Every other Monday, I go to her house and read her mail to her and pay some bills. A couple of times, I've worked with her to put some outfits together for a conference or a vacation. That was fun!

How much time do you spend volunteering?

I spend about 3 or 4 hours a month with her.

What are some of the benefits/ things you like about it?

Shelley inspires me: her perspective, her independence, her strong faith, her positive attitude. We've developed a good working relationship and a friendship, too.

Dave Cady and his wife, **Paige**, have volunteered with VIA for over 25 years in a variety of ways. We are thankful for their caring and faithful service. Here are Dave's thoughts on volunteering.

Why do you volunteer with an organization like VIA?

My answer is in two parts because I think the question has two parts. First, why do I volunteer? The simple answer is: I can. But that must be quickly followed up with: I must. What I mean by this is that I have been blessed with the physical, occupational and spiritual gifts that enable volunteering. But more importantly as a follower of Jesus Christ it is what I am expected to do. Which leads to the second part of the question, why with an organization like VIA? The simple answer to that is I can best carry out this mandate through an organization that "serves the community by equipping and enabling Christian volunteers and churches to be Christ's transforming presence." (VIA mission statement)

What kind of volunteering have you done?

The list includes helping with plumbing and other home repairs, helping with moving, reading for and assisting a visually impaired couple, mentoring with Partners for Success, and serving on the VIA strategic planning team.

What are some of the benefits you have seen come from this?

As is true with most volunteers I have found that I gain more than I give, particularly in terms of being taught humility and gratitude by those I work with. More importantly, I have sometimes seen amazing incremental emotional, professional and spiritual change occur in people's lives.

Marilyn Gray has been a faithful volunteer with the Partners for Success Mentoring Program since 2005. She has been involved in 3 very successful matches and has recently been placed into her fourth match. Here's what Marilyn had to say:

Why do you volunteer with VIA?

VIA has been a calling for me. I believe God led me to this organization so that I can return some of the blessings that I have received during my life. Having someone who believes in you and supports your goals can often make those goals more attainable. So, if I can offer that support and build that confidence in someone who feels at a disadvantage then perhaps they can be successful in living their dreams and following God's path.

What do you do?

I mentor women who are seeking employment and trying to make their lives better. Mostly, I just listen as they discuss their past and begin to formulate a plan to move forward. I offer positive re-enforcement, as they are surrounded by a lot of negativity.

How much time do you spend volunteering?

It depends on how often we meet. It averages out to about 3 to 4 hours a month.

What are some of the benefits/ things you like about it?

I absolutely love meeting these wonderful women! They have so many obstacles in front of them but they exhibit such determination and a will to succeed that it really enriches my life to witness God's work in their lives. I find it helpful to share my experiences as I encourage others to jump in and find a way to volunteer within their communities.



Donn's Desk,

As part of VIA's Strategic Planning process, the board has updated and reaffirmed our organization's Value Statements. Some things that we added that we want to emphasize include: *Expressing a heart for our communities.* By loving our neighbors and partnering with them we can be God's transforming presence to improve neighborhoods and enhance the lives of people there. *Building meaningful relationships.* We desire to build and strengthen healthy supportive relationships between churches and their communities and between Christians and their neighbors. *Seeking Justice.* We want to educate about justice issues in our society and seek justice for all, especially those most vulnerable in our world. Please join Volunteers in Action in thinking, praying and planning how we can best carry out these values in our ministry work. VIA's updated Value's are:

- **Being Christ's Transforming Presence**
- **Building Relationships with the Community**
- **Education and Equipping**
- **Respect for Diversity**
- **Stewardship**
- **Seeking Justice**

For more information and a more detailed description of each of our Value Statements, please visit our website, www.volunteersinaction.info and click on the **About VIA** tab.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW BLOG AT:
www.volunteersinaction.info/blog

VIA is also on **Facebook**:
Become a Fan!

Financial Report Jan-Sept 2009

Budgeted Income & Expenses:	\$137,775
Actual Income:	108,670
<u>Actual Expenses:</u>	<u>134,375</u>
Shortfall:	(25,705)

Your financial contributions are greatly appreciated and are important to continue the work of VIA. Our annual "**Partners in Ministry**" fundraising campaign will be coming in about a month. Thank you for considering a gift to VIA.

Extreme Community Makeover - Working with our neighbors in West Denver

On August 8, 2009, Volunteers in Action partnered with Confluence Ministry's Extreme Community Makeover project to spruce-up 10 homes and 1 church in the West Denver neighborhood. Our focus was on working with homeowners in this community to enhance their homes. 55 volunteers worked with homeowners to rototill and sod a yard, stain a large fence, trim bushes, cleanup yards and alleys, mow lawns, repair fences, and build a sandbox for an in-home day care. Volunteers also spent time talking, joking with and getting to know the homeowners. At Westside Christian Fellowship, volunteers built a kitchen wall, carpeted a room with carpet squares, repaired doors, did clean-up and repaired plumbing to prepare the church basement for the Westside Learning Center School to start the next week.

Thank you very much to all the volunteers who helped make the day a great success!



Rototilling and brand new sod for this front yard.



Working with a homeowner to spruce up her home.



A new sandbox for an in-home daycare.