



Our most productive summer ever!

By Paul Patterson, Freedom and Mobility Program Director

In eight weeks we built four wheelchair ramps and installed two elevator-lifts (one of which also involved a lengthy ramp). When added up, that's about 150 feet of wheelchair ramp! All thanks to interns who were eager to learn, and to a number of volunteers who were quite skilled and willing to stick it out a little longer on a job site. Most importantly, we were able to bless six disabled seniors who had been confined to their homes and able to get out only under very dangerous circumstances. They can now safely make it to the doctor, to church, or even out into the yard to enjoy some fresh air. God is good!

Heading into summer, it's hard to know how productive we'll be in terms of our Freedom and Mobility program (wheelchair ramps and lifts). After all, we have a lot of other things going on, we can't control the weather, and we can never be sure what sorts of skills our summer interns and volunteers will bring. That being said, I'm happy to report that this was our most productive summer ever.

Former intern now shepherds others



2017 Summer interns

“The SALT Program has really been a life-changing experience for me. Not only did I get to walk alongside people in the community, but I also got to witness God work in the lives of the teams that came through. It was so fun to help people step out of their comfort bubbles and experience God’s love in a new way. It also helped me step out of my own comfort bubble and learn what good leadership looks like.”

**Marissa Irakoze
2013 SALT Intern**

It’s really amazing to look back on my experience as a Workday intern, but now I serve on the other side. As a Workday staff member, I’ve had the incredible opportunity to shepherd our summer interns. It was a blessing to serve in this position.

God sent us five young women who were excited to grow in their relationship with Christ, to work hard, and to walk alongside the teams that came through. Each of the girls possessed such different personalities, struggles and gifts, but God used each of them in beautiful ways. They loved our city well. It was a blessing to see their willingness to jump into any challenge, and to persevere in the midst of the exhausting summer. It was no easy task to be on call essentially 24/7 the entire summer, to welcome new groups week after week, to work daily in the hot summer sun, and to handle

other issues that might arise. But my experience has been that it’s through these hard moments that God works most in our hearts.

Every Tuesday night, we had a night of encouragement and prayer we called “Moments with Marissa.” It was during these meetings that I witnessed the unfolding of a deep level of love for the Lord, for His Kingdom, and for each other. I left these meetings feeling so encouraged and blessed by their hearts. I never had an official title, but here’s a list of options our interns came up with: SALT Shaker; Mama Marissa; Director of Spiritual Discipleship; Intern Coordinator; Dean of Intern Activities.

To each of our summer interns--we were so blessed by you and we are praying for your upcoming college semester!

By Marissa Irakoze
Workday Refugee Team Assistant Director

Wrestling with issues of justice & reconciliation



The team from New City Fellowship Church

One of the best parts of the summer for me was watching the visiting teams being broken and having to wrestle with the ugly history of our country and the way that minorities and the poor have been oppressed. In particular, the leaders and youth from a Nashville team struggled long and hard with the information we were presenting them. As a result, they yearned to be agents of racial reconciliation and justice back home. They did not want to allow things to go back to normal. It was great to see them start thinking about ways that they could serve the least of these in their city.

I was able to learn a lot about justice and reconciliation and what that looks like on the ground. Through Workday our teams were able to build wheelchair ramps, visit widows in their loneliness, tend gardens and yards, paint, etc. It was fun to see the teams learn new skills as

well as myself. I would say I am more proficient in saw work now! As good as all the work was, I believe the best thing that the teams received was seeing the work that the Lord is doing amidst the poor. The groups learned how He is calling them to pursue justice and mercy



where they live, not as a suggestion, but as a requirement (Is. 58:1-12; Matt. 25:31-46).

The summer season has officially ended for New City Fellowship. Things at the church are quiet now. Workday, tutoring, tuck pointing and college teams have all stopped.

It is strange as it all comes to a halt, like a car going from 100 miles-an-hour to zero in a few seconds.

Overall, it was an exceptional summer with great co-workers, great teams, and great relationships with the poor and least of these. The Lord is moving in St. Louis and I am so happy to be able to see what He is doing! Blessings.

By Stephen Manyara, Assistant Director South City Workday



God's grace for a day brimming with activities

By Andrew Stern, Director, Workday

Summer is the busiest time of year for **Workday** and for many of the ministries that fall under the **Restore St. Louis** and **New City Fellowship** umbrella. What does a “typical” Monday look like? Here’s an account of one of our bustling summer days ...

7:00 am: Devotions begin for the staff of the **Harambee Youth Training** ministry. The leaders pray for the 80 crew members who will tuck point the homes of seniors and widows in the community. Simultaneously, about 60 Workday high school students and leaders from Alabama, Indiana and Illinois enjoy breakfast in the Freedom School cafeteria. Their morning meals were prepared by **Umetulisha**, our food ministry.

7:30 am: Workday **summer interns** start praying for the day.

7:45 am: Crazy happens when a 19-year-old man brings a gun onto our church office grounds and threatens to shoot another teenager. A Harambee pro crew member, filled with God’s Spirit, tackles the gun-wielding youth. Fortunately, no one is injured.

8:00 am: The Workday volunteers from Alabama, Illinois and Indiana open their day with prayer and wor-

ship. These **summer teams** are learning about God’s kingdom agenda to care for the poor. Also entering at eight are seven **CityLights** interns from around the nation. This corps of college-age students prepares to teach 50 West End neighborhood children who participate in **Firm Foundation Tutoring**.

9:00 am: Firm Foundation tutees arrive. CityLights interns pray for the children who are absent because of difficulties at home. Harambee staff and crews head out to tuck pointing job sites. Fueled with breakfast provided by Umetulisha, the teens retouch the mortar in between the bricks of homes of elderly occupants. **Health Connections** delivers seniors, single moms and refugees to medical appointments. **Freedom School** teachers are prepping in empty hallways that will soon be filled with 140 pupils, 90 percent of whom receive scholarships.

Noon: By this time, the office staff is aware of the incident involving the gun-toting man. Now hundreds of people are praying. They intercede for the young man who brandished the gun, for the youth who witnessed the scuffle, and for the Harambee students and staff. Prayers are coming from people around the country.

1:00 pm: After consuming a mid-day meal provided by Umetulisha, ministry participants begin their afternoon work of tutoring kids, tuck pointing homes, building wheelchair ramps, painting homes, working on gardens, visiting widows, and much more.

4:00 pm: Harambee has ended its work day, but not its prayer day. Umetulisha cooks dinner for the 60 Workday volunteers from Alabama, Indiana and Illinois.

7:00 pm: After supper, summer teams conduct **Bible clubs** in two Northside apartment complexes and in two South City parks. Attending these evening events are nearly 80 neighborhood children, many of whom who do not know Jesus as their Savior.

Also on the scene is the Spirit-filled young man who tackled the 19-year-old gunman earlier that day. He is overjoyed that no one was hurt, yet he grieves for the young man who brought the gun. Even so, he is amazed by what God is doing in the neighborhood.

Another “typical” day of God showing his grace, justice and mercy in St. Louis.

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