



Quarterly Reflection Kansas Campus Compact AmeriCorps*VISTA Project

Quarterly reflections provide an opportunity to:

- **Assess VISTA project:**
 - what you planned to do
 - what you actually did
 - who you have affected, including yourself
 - how the community and participants have been affected
 - appropriate next steps
 - challenges
- **Develop professionally:** assess your progress and grow from your experiences
- **Build capacity for AmeriCorps*VISTA:** information provided in the reports is used to obtain more funding from Congress and to tell the world how VISTAs are making a difference!
- **Sustain your VISTA project:** develop a history file based off the reflection and Quarterly Report that others can use after you

VISTA: Margaret Howards
Service Site: University of Saint Mary
Date: July 10, 2008

Answer the following questions related to your VISTA service:

1. Summarize in 3-5 sentences what you did this reporting period to get things done in your community.

To get things done in the community I offered my services and/or expertise depending on the need. Moreover, I coordinated and attended meetings between staff/faculty, students, and community members. In addition, I delivered what I promised, upheld any commitments I had made, and volunteered whenever possible.

2. What were the highlights of the last three months? Describe something particularly successful related to your VISTA service.

Highlights for the past three months include assisting in the recovery efforts at Chapman, Kansas, working on the Leavenworth County Child Abuse Prevention Council's (LCAPC) annual fundraising breakfast, and attending the Greater Kansas City Service-Learning Consortium meetings. Seeing first hand the destruction and devastation an F3 tornado inflicted upon the residents and town of Chapman enabled me to more fully appreciate not only my home, but my family as well. More importantly, it gave me the opportunity to reevaluate and refocus my energies on matters that are truly important in my life.

Helping to make LCAPC's second annual fundraising breakfast a success was definitely a highlight this quarter. The council was able to raise approximately \$3,500.00 to help local agencies in their quest to reduce child abuse and neglect. Getting out into the community talking to individuals and raising awareness surrounding the issues of child abuse and neglect, soliciting donations, and ensuring that all details for the breakfast were in place reminded me that I truly enjoy

community projects and must be sure to look for a job that contains some of these elements.

Participating in the Greater Kansas City Service-Learning Consortium meetings provided an opportunity to network and increase my knowledge regarding service-learning. Moreover, these meetings uplifted my sagging spirits in light of the University's decision not to fund the position of Director of Service-Learning and remove service-learning from the academic arena and place it under the auspices of Student Life.

3. Describe challenges you faced and how you addressed those challenges. If you encounter similar situations in the future, what will you do differently?

The greatest challenge faced this quarter was remaining upbeat, positive, and motivated in light of the fact that the service-learning office was not funded as a separate entity. Moreover, due to the retirement of the Vice President and Dean of Academic affairs the Service-Learning Office lost its most influential advocate and champion on campus. These factors significantly and negatively impacted the Service-Learning Office's ongoing initiative to include a requirement for service learning into the University's academic curriculum. Also, the staff opted to evaluate and assess the new Vice President and Academic Dean's stand on service-learning before committing to adding a service-learning component to their classes. If in the future I encounter this position I will actively seek out another influential individual to champion the cause and take a less passive approach.

4. What are your short term goals for your project?

Return to Chapman and assist with the recovery efforts and provide support to the Volunteer Management office staff.

Plan and coordinate this fall's *Into the Streets* freshman introductory service-learning experience.

5. What are your long term goals for your project?

Ensure that all current viable projects are completed when my tour of duty is over.

6. What are your next steps?

1. Maintaining as high profile as possible in the community and at USM
2. Continuing to attend monthly meetings
3. Provide quality customer service
4. Collaborate with the registrars office
5. Continue to support USM and partner events
6. Collaborate with faculty to develop new service-learning courses for the Spring 09 semester
7. Confirm community partners for the fall semester's freshman *Into the Streets* service-learning project
8. Establish alternative break sites in Chapman for the 2008-2009 academic year

7. Other thoughts:

8. Collect at least 1 success story from any of the following groups:
 - students, staff, or community members who benefited from VISTA project-
 - community and/or volunteers- your supervisor - yourself

On Wednesday, June 11, the City of Chapman was devastated by a high level F3 tornado with winds in excess of 150 miles per hour. Chapman is a beautiful community with many old, large oak and cottonwood trees located throughout the town. Many of the trees were unable to survive the tornado and were uprooted. Many homes were destroyed and resident's lives were changed forever.

Although it will take a long time to recover from the devastating tornado, volunteers from all streams of life have joined in to help with the recovery efforts. The tornado descended upon Chapman on Wednesday night, June 11, 2008. On Saturday over 1,000 volunteers showed up to help in any capacity they could. The following day, (Father's day) brought another 440 volunteers out to volunteer. Due to the large number of volunteers pouring into Chapman, it was clear there was a need to establish a Volunteer Management Center to handle the large numbers of individuals wanting to help with the town's recovery efforts.

Recognizing the need for consistency and continuity in the Volunteer Management Center, Kansas Campus Compact VISTA's volunteered for a minimum of a week of their time to help establish and develop an efficient and well organized volunteer center that will eventually be managed and run by local residents. The first KsCC VISTA, Margaret Howards from the University of Saint Mary, arrived in Chapman on Sunday, June 22. During her eight day stay in Chapman Margaret diligently worked to provide residents with quality volunteer services as well as locate and establish a permanent building to house the center. Other area KsCC VISTA's are scheduled to man the center until August 14 when local volunteers will take over the responsibilities of the center.