

Inspiring Others

At Home Sweet Home Ministries, we believe that God created each of us with unique and special abilities and that He wants us to be active contributors. Whether it is through our jobs or through volunteering, every one of us can live in a way that inspires and shows others God at work in the world. A few years ago, Bloomington High School's Special Education program contacted our Warehouse Operations Manager, Valerie Barnett, to see if there was a way for the students to come to the warehouse to learn job skills and the value of work. And just like that, a relationship was born.

"We want to approach our volunteers with the love of Christ. We want to recognize their differences and embrace their strengths to make us all more successful."

"The STEP program provides young adults at Bloomington High School who may have limited abilities the chance to learn life and job skills in our community. We wanted them to focus on their strengths and abilities, not on their limitations. Over the past few years, we've realized how much this partnership fits into our mission and vision. We are so blessed that they have picked HSHM to contribute to," says Valerie. "We have set up a quiet room with various tasks where the job

process can be broken down. Separating jewelry is one of the main tasks, and it has helped us tremendously. Separating and pairing jewelry can take a long time at the warehouse, and because of what they have been able to do, more jewelry is sorted and sent to the Mission Mart Thrift Stores where it is sold. In 2015, over \$12,000 worth of jewelry was sold. That money helps support the programs and services at Home Sweet Home Ministries, while providing meaningful work for the young adults." Valerie continues.

In addition to the STEP program, Marcfirst, Heartland Halo, and Highroads School are all bringing students to the warehouse to learn job skills training. Most of these programs have progress reports to offer feedback to the volunteer about work expectations. This is a vital part of that individual learning, because it shows what it is actually like to enter the work place and learn what is expected of you.

"Over the years, we've seen relationships built and independence gained. We had one regular volunteer from Marcfirst, and as he volunteered here, we were able to identify his strengths and develop real life job skills for him. He started off sorting shoes, but we worked with him and now he does janitorial tasks as well as sorting shoes. These are skills that will enable him to apply for jobs in our community," says Valerie. "We want to approach our volunteers with the love of Christ. We want to recognize their differences and embrace their strengths to make us all more successful."



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A Message from MARY ANN

Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart.
– Psalms 37:4

Why did 3,762 volunteers provide 48,981 hours of service to Home Sweet Home Ministries last year? Because they found delight in doing so!

Some have time and talents to share and they enjoy the fellowship in working alongside our clients, staff, and other volunteers. Some enjoy volunteering with a group from their work, church, or family. Some parents want to teach their children about helping others and they find that they (the parents) learn a lot along the way as well.

Our volunteers have gifts for teaching, preaching, healing, cooking, serving, repairing, welcoming, inspiring, and encouraging, just to name a few. Our volunteers have the gift of accepting others, just as they are, and treating them like the children of God that they are.

In giving to others, our volunteers find that they are blessed as well. Sometimes they discover gifts and talents they did not even know they possessed. As volunteers begin to know those around them their prayer life extends to people they only came to know through their volunteer service.

Volunteering blesses the volunteer and the people and organization that benefit from the volunteer service. That is why so many people take delight in volunteering at Home Sweet Home Ministries.

Check out our list of volunteer opportunities at www.hshministries.org to find out where you can delight in sharing your talents.

In His Name,

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Project HOPE for Home Sweet Home

Home Sweet Home Ministries was honored to work with the Multicultural Leadership Program to develop a Linguistic and Cultural Competency plan. The purpose of a LCC plan is to improve access to culturally competent programs, services, and activities for individuals whose English is limited. This plan is important in order to ensure HSHM's ability to fairly and efficiently serve the community, enabling the staff to communicate and interact with members of our community. Because of this, many of our materials were translated from English to Spanish, over 40 translators and interpreters were recruited to volunteer, and they identified over 15 different languages that volunteers are fluent in. HSHM's website

can also now be translated into many different languages, with the help of Google Translate. Home Sweet Home is extremely grateful for MCLP! [If you would like to volunteer as an interpreter/translator, visit \[HSHMinistries.org\]\(http://HSHMinistries.org\)!](#)



Run For Hope

The 2016 Run For Hope was a success! And it was a success because of the support from all of our terrific sponsors including our presenting sponsor, Fleet Feet Sports Bloomington. We could not do it without the support of those who believe in our mission to instill hope throughout the community. We'll see you next year!



- Busey Bank
- Cargill
- CEFCU
- Clemens & Associates, Inc.
- Commerce Bank
- Complete Nutrition
- Country Financial
- Double Tree by Hilton Hotel
- Drake Orthodontics
- Farnsworth Group
- GROWMARK
- Lingenfelter Insurance
- Marriott Hotel in Bloomington-Normal
- Masters Bros.
- Midwest Food Bank
- Newman & Ullman
- Nicor Gas
- OSF St. Joseph Medical Center
- State Farm Bank
- Sysco

The Breakfast Club is serving up hope!

Last year at Home Sweet Home Ministries, we served over 108,000 meals. We could not prepare and serve meals to the men, women, and children of our community without the help of our faithful volunteers. One group in particular has made a significant impact since they started volunteering in 1997. The State Farm Breakfast Club has been providing scrambled eggs, pancakes, bacon, biscuits with sausage gravy, and orange juice every Saturday since then. The Breakfast Club started out as a one-day volunteer project by eight people as part of State Farm's "Make A Difference Day." They provided a hot breakfast that Saturday, and when they were leaving someone commented, "Wow too bad we can't get a breakfast like that every Saturday!" And from there, an idea was born.

The group currently has 107 volunteers who provide hot breakfast each Saturday at Home Sweet Home Ministries and they are mostly comprised of State Farm employees. Over time though, employees have brought along family, friends, church members, and colleagues from other organizations.



Tracey Vincent, a crew leader for The Breakfast Club, shares her experiences. "I was looking for a way to get involved with our community, and find ways for my kids to experience a different aspect of life. I heard about The Breakfast Club and decided to get involved. And it has been an amazing experience. It has been awesome to bond with my coworkers at State Farm. It has become a little community! I know it has given me and many other people a different perspective and has impacted us greatly."

"Serving reminds me that you never really know what someone has gone through, and that everyone has a story to share. It has also taught me the importance of being there for one another. Sometimes just sharing a hug or a smile can make a huge difference in someone's heart." Tracey continues. "I think volunteering and giving back to your community is so important. You can't measure the amount of empathy it will give you towards others."

Tonya Kaberna, another regular Breakfast Club volunteer, shares this about her volunteering experience: "Through this club, long lasting friendships are easily formed, families work as teams to share their love with those staying at the shelter, and each week those staying at the shelter experience a moment of how important they are to us by being a part of our community." Looking for something to do with your company? **Visit our website at HSHMinistries.org to see the different opportunities we have.**



HSHM Women's Auxiliary

Women's Auxiliary exists to support the work of Home Sweet Home Ministries and is open to all.

On April 11th, the Women's Auxiliary will hear about volunteering at Home Sweet Home Ministries, from Linda Smith, our Volunteer Coordinator. The May 9th program will feature Jan Holmes, Director of Residential Services, who will talk about case management services at Home Sweet Home. Both meetings will begin with registration at 11:30am potluck lunch at noon, and the program at 1:00 p.m.

The annual spring luncheon will be at noon on June 13th at St. Luke Union Church in Bloomington. For more information, contact president, Pat Parmenter, at (309) 661-8842.

ISU Students Make a Positive Difference in our Community

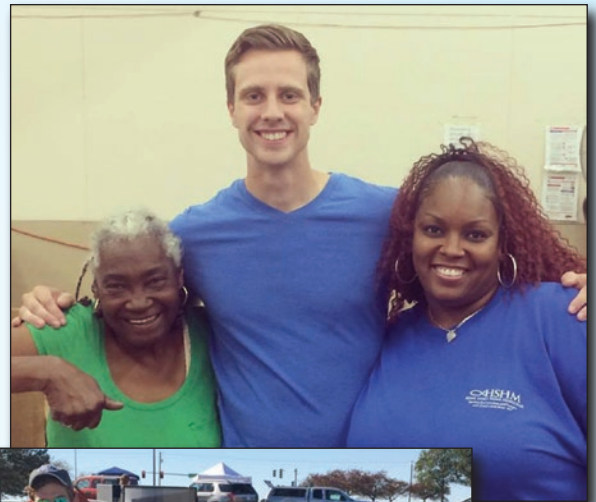
Every year, over 22,000 students come to the Bloomington-Normal community to attend classes, play sports, and get involved in campus life. For many, it can be hard to make time for anything else. But one group from Illinois State University has made volunteering a priority, and has volunteered almost 300 hours. That group is Encounter Campus Ministry, and they've made it a priority to serve the community in between school, work, and life.

"My only experience volunteering before I came to ISU was volunteering at my church back home. When I heard about Home Sweet Home Ministries, I knew it was a place I wanted to serve. The mission and vision really hit home with me, and I realized it would be a perfect fit." Says Junior Haley Weber. "It has been amazing to see what goes on behind the scenes. I never realized how much prep goes into making meals and sorting the items that are donated. It really opened my eyes."

Encounter has volunteered in many capacities at HSHM, from sorting at the warehouse to spending a night in their car to raise awareness about homelessness in our community.

"I have volunteered at HSHM for many years before I came to Encounter. When we started looking into volunteering in our community, it just made sense that we'd serve there." says Jake Rolfs. "Previously I've always served at the warehouse. It wasn't until I started leading at Encounter that I realized how big the ministry truly is. There are so many different ways to get involved and serve."

These student volunteers not only make an impact in their community, but many of them also commented that volunteering has helped them in many ways. "Volunteering has opened my eyes and has given me a different perspective. As Christians we are called to be the hands and feet of God, but it's not always going to be easy. When you are at college, it can be so easy to get caught up in yourself and all the things you have to do. But volunteering at HSHM reminds me that serving others is more important than being comfortable." Are you a student looking for ways to make an impact in your community? Then visit HSHMinistries.org for more info.



It's more than a donation, it's hope.



Over 25,000 nights of shelter.



Over 8,000 people impacted by our programs & services.



Over 108,000 meals served to the men, women & children of our community.

Visit Hshministries.org for more info!