

BRIDGE BUILDER



Fall 2011



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Mission Statement:

We partner with organizations and congregations to create and expand ministries of compassion and justice in the communities of Southeast Florida.

Get Involved:

If you would like to know more about how to donate and/or volunteer, please contact us at:
305-442-8306
info@sflum.org
www.sflum.org



From the Desk of the Director



Random Acts of Kindness?

As part of our family vacation this past summer, we took a week long, 275 mile bicycle trip along the Mississippi River. Much of the journey however was fairly strenuous riding along country roads in Missouri hill country just west of the river. By the end of day six, we rode into St. Louis and arrived at the base of the Gateway Arch. Our 15 year old son, Josiah, summarized the trip by saying it was the best vacation ever!

One thing that struck me as we sojourned through small towns such as Hannibal, Missouri and made our way across the city of St. Louis was the genuine kindness of people. I lost count of how many people simply wanted to chat with us to find out where we might be going. I remember one Casey's General Store clerk who left the cash register to come outside and give us tips on the best roads for our next stage. Or the woman who flagged us down as we rode into one small town simply to tell us, "Welcome!". Or the grocery store manager who was eager to give us free, unlimited ice and filtered water.



In St. Louis, we had two flat tires that slowed us down. While changing the flats, one person stopped to invite us over to her house for lemonade and later another person seeing our challenge invited us over for a cook out! I guess you could say we were beneficiaries of multiple random acts of kindness throughout the week. But I think in the end, there was nothing random about their kindness. It reminded me about our purpose at South Florida Urban Ministries.

We aim to be strategic (and not random) about our daily efforts of service and kindness. For you see what we do at Branches, the United Way Center for Financial Stability, Project HEAL, ASSETS, etc... is done in such a way as to create maximum impact in the lives of those we serve. By connecting the people we serve with viable opportunities to improve their lives, we are fulfilling our mission of empowering people to move from poverty to prosperity. We are able to do this because there is nothing random about the very kind support we receive from so many! Thank you!



In anticipation of the next kind act,

Brent McLaughlin
Executive Director

Turning fun activities at Branches into life-long results!

Latest Happenings

Strengthening Families in Florida City



A group photo at Cauley Square!

Teresa Guardado, a SFLUM employee for over four years, recently joined the Branches Florida City team in time to start exciting new opportunities for the women and families in that community. This summer, along with the help of Pastor Audrey Warren and AmeriCorps member Megan Beddow, Teresa started a five day a week program for adults, mostly focusing on women. After dropping their children off at Branches Summer Shade camp, the adults would gather for classes that focused on mental, spiritual, and physical health. A different class was offered each day, ranging from computer skills, fitness, communication, and arts.

At the conclusion of the summer, the women gathered for a final celebration at Cauley Square, a local Homestead tea market. There they were able to have a tea party and enjoy the local gardens as a chance to participate in fellowship and something different from their normal routine.

In addition, while the entire Branches staff took fifty of their children and youth to summer camp, the women gathered together to give back to Branches. To show their appreciation, they provided an

in-depth cleaning of the entire portable building and helped organize it for the start of school. It was definitely a valued gift they gave the Branches staff members!

This fall, Teresa plans to expand her services and offer new classes. Branches Florida City has an English class in place, however she will also offer a GED course to help our families succeed in their education goals.



Celebrity



Cruises®

You are Invited

Date: Saturday, October 22, 2011 Time: 11:00am—3:00pm

For an exclusive ship tour and an exquisite sit-down luncheon aboard the beautiful Celebrity Millennium at the Port of Miami!

For details & tickets, please contact Carmen at crossmore@aaasouth.com or 305-661-6131 x2229. Hosted by AAA Travel.

Ticket Cost: \$50 per person

Proceeds benefit SFLUM's Thanksgiving program! Space is Limited!

Note: Guests must be 21 years of age or over. RSVP Deadline is October 3rd!



The gorgeous Celebrity Millennium in open waters...



Enjoy award winning cuisine aboard the most elegant and romantic cruise line at sea, Celebrity Cruises!

Thank You, SFLUM Sponsors & Stakeholders!

List includes contributions received by SFLUM from May 23, 2011 to August 31, 2011.

If you sent a contribution during this period and do not see your name on the list, please contact us at (305) 442-8306.

\$20,000 and above

Bell, Trish & Dan
The Children's Trust of Miami Dade
Volunteer Florida

Between \$10,000 and \$19,999

St. Luke's UMC Windermere Mission
Capital Endowment Fund
United Way of Miami-Dade

Between \$5,000 and \$9,999

Bank United
Catalyst Miami
Florida Conference of the UMC
Hudson, Mary Ann & Sherrill
Gonzalez, Denise & Charles

Between \$1,000 and \$4,999

Alabanza Evangelical Baptist
Church
Alma DDB
Anona UMC
Anonymous
Cummins, Kary
Fulford UMC
Miami Lakes UMC
Paton, Ann

Between \$500 and \$999

Avondale UMC
Bell, Sandy & Rod
Christ Church Ft. Lauderdale
Citrus Health Network
Deppman, Ed
Hollywood Hills UMC
Iglesia Metodista Unida Coral Way
Korean American UMC of South
Florida
Marathon Community UMC
McLaughlin, Karen & Brent
Nivet, Steve - **gift in memory of his
mother, Antoinette Nivet**
Perrine Peters UMC
Regions Financial Corp
Rodriguez, Juan
Villalba, Victoria

Between \$200 and \$499

Aetna Foundation, Inc.
Alger, Richard & J. D.
Baurichter, Dalia & Anthony
Cross, Margaret
Everglades Community UMC
First UMC Homestead
First UMC South Miami
Florida Sterling Council, Inc.
Harris Chapel UMC

Hershberger, Rosemary & Ray
Inman, Kate & Haines, Daniel
Leotide, Charlot
Memorial UMC Seekers Sunday
School Class
Olympia Heights UMC
Parlato, Herbert
Torres, Kim & Raymundo
Wimberley Presbyterian Church

Up to \$199

Bagg, Julia
Beddow, Megan
Bennett, Erma
Big Pine UMC
Books & Books
Browning, Susan
Carlton, Roy
Cartwright, Kelly-Ann
Chaffin, Lisa & Lynn
Craig, Amanda - **gift to honor
Megan Beddow on her
birthday**
Cutler Ridge UMC
DeMoulin, Amy - **gift to celebrate
the wedding of Christi Dye &
Will Johnson**

Deppman, Darlene & Edward
Eloissaint, Kettlene
Gascoigne, Tiffani & Brian
Gilberts, Lars
Greist, Victoria & Douglas
Guardado, Teresa
Heritage UMC
Hernandez, Alexandra
Hill, Isabelle & Frank Smith
Hispanic American UMC
Horman, Janet
Horne, Kelly King
Just Give
Key West UMC
King, Charles & Diane
Laguna, Ana & Miguel
Lunsford, Anita
Matecumbe UMC
North Hialeah Hispanic American
UMC
Palm Springs UMC
Pike, Isabelle
Pinnock, Ivy & Lilla
Poshard, Deanna & Keith
Prasad, Prestin
Ralsten, Johana
Redland Community UMC
Robinson, Sandra & Roland
Royal Barnes, Erika
Santiago, Esther & Isolina

Silver Palm UMC
South East District of the UMC
Spencer, Sandy & Flannery, James
Stockbridge, Paula
Turner, Selen & Andrew
Watts, Nancy & Dean
Wesley Hispanic UMC

In-Kind Donors

- Adrienne Arsht Center for 12 tickets to Summer Shorts
- Attendees of the 2011 Florida Conference UMW School of Christian Mission for underwear, socks and diapers
- Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Florida for hand sanitizers / pens
- Citibank, N.A. for journal notebooks and pens
- Danny Hernandez & Marielys Blanco for 30 backpacks with school supplies
- Fabio Fernandez for fishing trip with t-shirts, awards and lunch for 15 Branches youth
- Florida International University Metropolitan Center for used office furniture
- Kathryn Becker, John Holian & First UMC Coral Gables for new floors for Branches South Miami
- Nancy Gray for Christmas decorations
- Molina Healthcare of Florida, Inc. for bags filled with supplies, hand sanitizers and pedometers
- Nat Moore Foundation for 66 tickets to the Florida Marlins Baseball game
- Royal Caribbean Cruises for 30 beach bags
- Sweet Personalities for 25 custom-made AmeriCorps graduation chocolates
- Community Bank; Dade Medical College; Miami-Dade College Homestead; SCAA; Smart Start & Somerset City Arts for non-perishable food items for the Emergency Services Network



Branches Update

2011 Branches Summer Shade!

Summer Shade is our unique Branches summer camp, which prevents summer learning loss among 200 participating students. Branches staff and volunteers plan fun, engaging, and challenging activities and lessons that give our students new opportunities to learn and have fun. Summer Shade also puts a special focus on reading to make sure our students maintain and improve their fluency and comprehension skills. The summer is also packed with field trips to places like the Miami Seaquarium and Rapids Waterpark, as well as opportunities for fitness, giving back to our community through service projects, and creative learning lessons on topics like music, art, poetry, history and more!

One special activity which took place this summer was Group Drumming, organized by PlayTime Drums. 40 students from South Miami and Florida City took part in this four week long drumming workshop. The workshop is designed to teach students social skills such as leadership, communication, teamwork, and self-expression through the use of different percussion instruments. The students loved the program because it gave them a time to feel creative and empowered, not to mention the fact that they got to bang on drums for hours!



An awesome belly flop caught on camera!



Students hard at work, creating beautiful art.



Celebrating India's Festival of Colors...by covering yourself in colorful powder!



Enjoying Group Drumming together!



Back to School! Our elementary students are all smiles with their new backpacks and supplies.

THANK YOU...

...to all the wonderful donors, supporters and volunteers who made Summer Shade another incredible experience in the lives of so many children and youth! We are truly grateful.

Latest Happenings

SFLUM launches the “Ways to Work” Loan Program in South Florida



Michele Edwards-Collie,
Loan Coach

South Florida Urban Ministries (SFLUM) has launched “Ways to Work” in Miami-Dade and is excited about this program which will help low to moderate income working families secure a low interest loan to purchase a used car or refinance an existing loan. As a component of the program, SFLUM will provide financial education and affordable loans to low-income families who lack access to fairly priced loans from banks and traditional lenders because of poor or no credit history. SFLUM staff person, Michele Edwards-Collie will be the Loan Coach Coordinator for this program.

Clients of this program will use the loans primarily to purchase reliable used cars to help them retain or move ahead in their jobs, reduce lateness and absenteeism at work, access additional education or job training and meet their family’s needs, such as transporting children to child care and school activities.

In order to approve and/or deny the loans which clients apply for, SFLUM has two Loan Committees which are made up of local community volunteers and experts. Each Committee will meet once a month to make decisions based on the Loan Coach’s recommendations and information. Some of the companies and organizations represented on this committee include: Bank of America, Bank United, BB&T, Belafonte Tacolcy, City National Bank, Coconut Grove Bank, JP Morgan, Partners for Self Employment, South Florida Community Development Coalition, Wells Fargo, YWCA and several others. For further details and information about this program, please contact Michele at waystowork@sflum.org.

Thank You to our Volunteers

South Florida Urban Ministries wants to sincerely thank all the volunteers who make an impact in the lives of the children, youth, families and individuals we serve each day. A heartfelt thank you goes out to Patti and Bob Roberts who have given so much of their time and talent to this organization! Patti and Bob are "snow birds" from New Jersey who enjoy spending their winters in the sunshine state. Instead of enjoying the beaches, you can find them sweating at Branches Florida City as they repair light fixtures and air conditioning units. Patti is a talented artist and interior designer who has painted numerous murals around the Branches building. This year, she even offered her talents to Florida City Elementary when she was asked to paint a 20 foot mural of the everglades in their lobby! Bob can usually be found on a ladder or holding a screw driver at all times, also known as the resident "Mr. Fix-It"! Patti and Bob have been an integral part of Branches Florida City, both in the abilities and talents that they bring, as well as the smiles and strong relationships they have built with the students and local community members. We look forward to December when we get to see them again! We love Patti and Bob!!



Patti Roberts painting one of her famous murals at Branches

Upgrading your Technology? PLEASE help us upgrade Ours!



Branches students doing homework
and research afterschool

Do you have an iPad or a computer? Well, we need your help! At Branches, we are challenging our students to open their minds to new ideas, this also includes technology. Even though the technology at our sites is basic, it is more than our students have access to at home or even at school.

If you plan on upgrading any technology in your home, please consider donating your used items to South Florida Urban Ministries:

iPads, Laptops and Desktop Computers

We are happy to pick up donations if you are unable to bring them to an area site. Thank you very much!



SFLUM To Celebrate 11th Thanksgiving Meal Delivery Anniversary

Thursday, November 24, 2011

To mark the 11th year of this meal delivery program, we will prepare and deliver meals from 10 sites on Thanksgiving Day throughout Miami-Dade and Broward Counties to feed at least 5,500 community members in need. But we need your support! Some ways you can help:

Be a Premiere Sponsor!

- **\$5,000—Thanksgiving T-Shirt Sponsor**
- **\$2,500 —Thanksgiving Site Sponsor**
(Provides 500 meals)
- **\$1,000 —Thanksgiving Sponsor**
(Provides 200 meals)
- **\$500 — Thanksgiving Supporter**
(Provides 100 meals)

For sponsorship information, please contact:

Isabelle Pike

Phone: 305-442-8306

Email: Isabelle@sflum.org

Raise Additional Support!

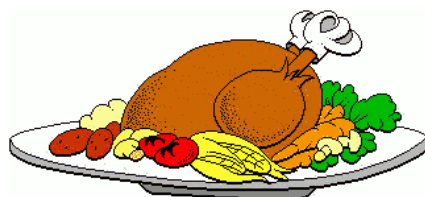
- Help us raise cash and in-kind donations to support the Thanksgiving Day Meal Delivery.
- Organize food drives (workplace, church, school, etc.) to collect non-perishable food items. These food items are distributed by our partner churches' food pantries to community members in need during the year.
- Organize volunteer teams to help with preparation and meal delivery on Thanksgiving Day.

For additional information, please contact:

Debbie Benitez

Phone: 305-442-8306

Email: Dbenitez@sflum.org



When this ministry began in 2001, we delivered over 600 meals. In 2010, we delivered over 6,500 meals. THANK YOU again to our supporters and volunteers who faithfully help us each year to provide for those who have none. God Bless!