



Quality of Life, Quality of Living

ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY BENEFITS OF HOME REPAIR WORKCAMP



INTRODUCTION

Racine, Wisconsin has been the beneficiary of eighteen years of Group Workcamps Home Repair Mission Trips. Most recently, in June 2016, 452 teenage volunteers completed work on 63 local residences bringing to 944 the total number of Racine area homes touched by the loving care of Group Workcamps. The 2017 Workcamp, scheduled for June 18-24, will surely push us beyond the 1,000-home mark.

Racine Neighborhood Watch, Inc. (RNW) has been the local partner, or 'co-sponsor', with Group Workcamps since the first Racine Home Repair Workcamp in 1999. As the local partner, RNW does an immense amount of preparatory work in advance of and during the Workcamp Week.



The annual Home Repair Workcamp lasts one week and involves up to 500 youth and their adult leaders. Together, their efforts represent as many as 15,000 hours of labor invested in repairing homes for elderly, low-income, and disabled residents. Workcamp also produces economic benefits for the City and region through its operations and through its participants. The value of this great annual infusion is immeasurable.

KEY FINDINGS

Racine's Home Repair Workcamp Week is singlehandedly the largest and longest-standing outreach to Racine area homeowners. Over the eighteen years, Racine Neighborhood Watch, Inc. and Group Workcamps together:

- Hosted 6,592 volunteer 'campers' and more than 300 volunteer staff
- Completed work on 944 Racine-area homes
- Accumulated over 216,500 hours of volunteer labor valued over \$2,353,200.00
- Since its first collection in 2009, volunteer 'campers' have donated over 12,500 pounds of nonperishable food items valued over \$9,000.00
- Had an economic impact – from the material costs, donated services, volunteer staff labor, along with spending by campers – of more than \$4,600,000.00



VALUE TO THE COMMUNITY

RACINE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH, INC. AND GROUP WORKCAMP HOME REPAIR MISSION TRIP ARE IMPORTANT ASSETS FOR RESIDENTS, BUSINESSES AND THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

In conversation with campers, residents, and community leaders, Racine Neighborhood Watch learned:

“With everything going on in the world, it is great to see young people doing good. They were very polite. It gives me faith that this generation will be okay. God bless this program and please keep it going.”

Diane H. (WC 2016)

“It means a lot to us for the hard work you’re doing to bring our communities together and rebuild them. We are thankful and appreciate everything you’ve done for us and for others as well.”

Rafael M. (WC 2016)

“This has meant everything to us. With having cancer, I have not been physically able to do these things myself and this is a real Godsend.”

David Z. (WC 2009)

“Thank you! This has meant a great deal to our family. What they have done in one week would have taken us months and eaten up our budget for things we may need more. Everyone was so kind. Thank you!”

Denise P. (WC 2009)

“This week, obviously, has meant for me a new fence; the old one was quite dilapidated and I could not afford to replace it. This was a Godsend for me. More importantly, this was a great experience to meet all of the wonderful people (esp. the ‘kids’) involved with this program. This is a great thing and I thank you all very much.”

Sandi W. (WC 2016)

“Pleased that young workers can do the work they did. I’m so happy with them I’ll have this group back again and again, please.”

G. A. W. (WC 2016)

“This week has been so wonderful! The kids and their leader has been like having all of my family back at home; they have been polite, friendly, courteous and great to have around. I wish and hope all families have this opportunity.”

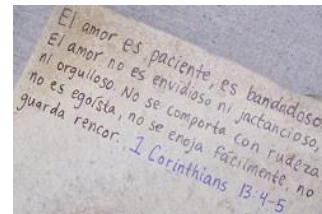
Carrie S. (WC 2012)

“This week has been a huge help to us. Our front porch is not only beautiful but safe. We loved getting to know the crew and had a lot of fun. God bless!”

Laura B. M. (WC 2013)

“This experience has meant more to me than just fixing m house. I’ve learned that I can start to trust people again. This crew has taught me that people need people. They brought so much life back into this house.”

Vivian K. (WC 2013)



“This week has been one of the best in my life. I so looked forward to it, since the work that needed to be done was overwhelming to me. The work they did was fantastic! One of the crew said she wanted to paint my house a certain way, ‘this feels like my home and I want to do it the way I would if it were my house.’; So, you see, they brought their tools, their supplies, their muscles, and their hearts. They leave me with memories of them and a piece of their hearts for me to treasure. I am, and always will be, truly grateful for the opportunity to share our lives this week.”

Mary W. (WC 2009)

“This week was an eye opener; prompted a change in how I keep up; changed my approach at work, all for the better. Enjoyed the group and a pleasure to be associated with. Neighbors enjoyed the kids’ presence, too. The ripple created is broader than I could anticipate!”

Linda J. (WC 2009)

“These kids have done things and made improvements that I am no longer physically able to do. I can now stay in my home for a few more years and not worry about outdoor maintenance.”

Debra P. (WC 2013)

“This week has been like no other week in my life. These Christian camp workers have not only transformed my house by their hard work, they have given me renewed faith and hope in the future. God bless each and every one of you at Group Workcamps!!!”

Della M S. (WC 2009)

“This is my first home. More than anything I want to be proud of my home. This week 12 folks came from as far away as Texas and they cleaned and put a fresh coat of paint on my home. I am so proud of my home and these kids helped me to make a dream become a reality.”

Benjamin J. (WC 2013)





THE 5 W's

WHAT IS A GROUP WORKCAMP?

Workcamps are weeklong home repair projects involving volunteers from church youth groups recruited by Group. At an average workcamp, up to 500 teenagers (age 14-19) and adult leaders come to a community like Racine and spend five days repairing homes for elderly, low income, and disabled residents. Participants come from churches of many denominations across the country to work – hard. They come to grow in their faith through meaningful service to others.

WHO IS GROUP WORKCAMPS FOUNDATION?

Group Workcamps is the leader in one-week summer workcamps, having forty years' experience serving others, utilizing more than 450,000 participants, and logging more than 13 million volunteer hours. Group Mission Trips leverages over 40 years of expertise to guarantee well-planned, stress-free mission trip experiences.

WHEN DOES WORKCAMP RACINE HAPPEN?

Historically, the Home Repair Workcamp in Racine has been scheduled the third week of June each year. However, this is dependent on a number of factors including the availability of a local school for lodging.

WHERE DOES WORKCAMP RACINE HAPPEN?

The area where the Workcamp will be focused is selected in consultation with city and local officials, based on greatest need and planning. Once the boundaries are determined, Resident homeowners are notified and invited to submit an application. Once an application is received, RNW proceeds through a series of steps to qualify for need and suitability. Ultimately, the number of homes selected is correlated with the number of youth volunteers registered for the workcamp.

HOW DOES A HOME REPAIR WORKCAMP BENEFIT RACINE?

Bringing Workcamps to Racine for the past eighteen years has been a winning proposition for everyone involved. Needy residents get the home repairs they either cannot afford or cannot do for their themselves. The entire community is impacted by this positive, highly visible project in which we all work together to: create better living conditions for our neighbors; boost pride in home ownership; bring thousands of dollars into the local economy through the sale of building materials, food, lodging, and more; provide positive peer role modeling to young people within our community; send a message of caring to the disadvantaged of our community; help teach adults of tomorrow the value of serving others

WHO PAYS FOR THE BUILDING MATERIALS?

Funding for project materials is a partnership between Group Workcamps Foundation and the local cosponsor – Racine Neighborhood Watch. The Foundation's exact contribution for construction materials is dependent on the number of volunteers who attend the workcamp. Locally, Racine Neighborhood Watch relies on local partners and grants to pay the balance of the material costs as well as to cover RNW administrative expenses.

HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE? THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

As Group Workcamps Cosponsors, together we can improve the lives of elderly, low-income, and disabled residents and handle a backlog of home repairs. In just one short week, homes are repaired, painted, or made more accessible to disabled residents. Entire blocks can become neighborhoods again. Forgotten homes – and their lonely residents – can get a much-needed dose of care and attention. Together, we plan and execute a well-organized, meaningful, and effective community service project that benefits all participants.

[Group Workcamps Foundation](#), a 501(c)(3) Christian service organization headquartered in Loveland, Colorado, is responsible for...

- ✓ Enlisting up to 500 participants (teenagers age 14-19 and adult sponsors) from around the country
- ✓ Contributing up to \$12,000 toward project materials
- ✓ Facilitating the workcamp by: assigning work crews, distributing tools and transporting workers to and from the worksites – overseeing day-to-day operation of the workcamp
- ✓ Handling payments and other arrangements with the local school providing lodging (i.e. food service labor, custodial labor, cleaning items, bathroom tissue, etc. and utility costs related to use)
- ✓ Administering and providing trained staff for the workcamp
- ✓ Computer-matching volunteers' skills with project needs
- ✓ Overseeing the day-to-day operation of the workcamp
- ✓ Providing food for workcamp participants
- ✓ Providing a minimal supply of tools and various equipment commonly used in workcamp projects
- ✓ Lodging, Food, and Related Expenses – the costs of all lodging, food, and other expenses of volunteers who do the repair work
- ✓ Organizing Activities – the costs of all activities specifically necessary to organize the Workcamp (finding sites, organizing food, etc.)
- ✓ Fundraising – fundraising activities where the proceeds are limited to the above responsibilities and do not include the solicitation of participants
- ✓ Insurance and liability coverage for all participants and Group staff
- ✓ Liability insurance coverage for personal injury and property damage caused by workcamp participants or staff to the school

[Racine Neighborhood Watch, Inc.](#), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, as cosponsor taking the lead in this project to build up our community is responsible for...

- ✓ Raising funds for construction materials and supplies
- ✓ Help coordinate securing the use of a local high school for lodging the workcamp participants
- ✓ Identifying 60 to 75 homes needing work, based on resident need that are located within 30 minutes of the school
- ✓ Providing thorough written work descriptions for each project, including travel directions
- ✓ Assembling local volunteers or employees with construction experience to prepare work descriptions and material estimates
- ✓ Working with GWC and local vendors to order materials
- ✓ Overseeing purchase and delivery of materials to the worksites in advance of the workcamp
- ✓ Providing troubleshooters for workcamp week (i.e. Mano Fencing, construction professionals)
- ✓ Finishing any incomplete projects
- ✓ Planning follow-up arrangements with Group staff



Workcamp Youth Volunteers,

- ✓ Are eager to help people who are truly in need
- ✓ Raise funds to pay for their workcamp experience (\$449 for Racine Home Repair Workcamp 2017)
- ✓ Bring many of their own tools and supplies
- ✓ Bring nonperishable food items to donate to the local food pantry (suggestion is four per person)
- ✓ Give freely of their hard work and time in return for the opportunity to grow in their faith
- ✓ Go outside their comfort zone to experience unfamiliar places, cultures and situations
- ✓ Are assigned to work crews of 5 teenagers and one or two adult sponsors
- ✓ Sleep on the classroom floor in a local high school
- ✓ Participate in well-planned evening programs that cap the day's activities and put the whole time into perspective

Workcamp Homeowner Participants,

- ✓ Have visible and apparent needs
- ✓ Are elderly, disabled, or low-income residents
- ✓ Are located within 30 minutes of participants' school lodging
- ✓ Must have someone home throughout workcamp week
- ✓ Is aware that the work will be done by high-school-age youth with adult supervision
- ✓ Will get to know their work crew members and engage with them as they are able

SUMMARY

Group Workcamp ties in very nicely with the mission of Racine Neighborhood Watch, Inc. "to assist residents in achieving safe, friendly, and attractive neighborhoods throughout the Racine community." The 'broken windows' theory of crime prevention holds that neglected properties are a breeding ground for unfavorable activities. Improving the appearance of such properties has historically been shown to:

1. Inspire similar repairs and maintenance by other residents in the area after the week of Workcamp (keeping up with the Joneses)
2. Areas in which Workcamps have been focused have seen significant decline in criminal activity
3. Homeowners who receive Workcamp services are renewed in their motivation to maintain the momentum generated by Workcamp and make additional positive changes



METHODOLOGY

OPERATIONS AND MATERIALS EXPENDITURES

To measure the impact of the Home Repair Workcamp on the Racine metro area, Racine Neighborhood Watch, Inc. examined expenditure and participant information for the 2016 Workcamp as compiled by Group Workcamps, with similar information from the previous eighteen years. Their numbers provided the basis for calculating the economic impact of operations and materials expenditures.

Expenditures for wages and salaries represents RNW's actual expenditure. Local business partners volunteer professional oversight over the home repairs, particularly in construction projects such as wheelchair ramps and fences. These local expenditures – by the local business partners and by the campers who spend their own money – are termed indirect impacts. They are difficult to measure.

VISITOR SPENDING

The impact of spending by out-of-town campers to the community is estimated from a combination of sources, including various surveys of campers, residents, and local business owners. Like the Workcamps' direct expenditures, spending by campers for gasoline, miscellaneous repair supplies, food, entertainment and retail items has indirect effects on the economy.



ABOUT THIS REPORT

Racine Neighborhood Watch, Inc. provides this background information and cumulative data to help funders make better-informed funding decisions. Our dynamic approach and critical data analysis empowers funders to respond to changing economic conditions, strengthens our local economy, and improves the overall quality of life for our community.

Our data does not include the impact on racial beliefs among workcamp participants. Consistent with the “Contact Hypothesis” which suggests that contact with other groups will increase tolerance, anecdotal data suggests that workcamp participation has a significant impact on an individual's values. Youth service, particularly involving extended periods of direct contact, may not only help disadvantaged communities, but help create a more socially conscious and more diversity tolerant society.

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GROUP WORKCAMP RACINE

COSPONSORS (1999 – PRESENT)



COMMUNITY PARTNERS SUPPORT RACINE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH AND GROUP MISSION TRIPS VOLUNTEERS IN ACHIEVING SUCCESSFUL HOME REPAIR WORKCAMPS



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE COUNTED AMONG THE PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS OF THIS ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENT, PLEASE CONTACT RACINE NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH, INC.

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THANK YOU!