

What to expect as a volunteer

There are three main areas of ministry in which volunteers with SUM/Katrina Relief participate. The first area is tarping roofs that are leaking and in need of emergency repair. The second area of ministry is the chain saw crews. These crews cut back the trees and other debris tossed on top of houses, sheds, during the hurricane. The third ministry field is 'Mudding Out'. These crews, at the request of a local resident, enter the person's home and remove everything inside. Their belongings are placed curb-side to be later picked up by the city.

Below is a portion of a testimony written by "Darren" a volunteer who participated in 'Mud Outs' while here at SUM.



"What if the money and the means were all gone in a flash flood? For thousands of people, this is now their reality. Here I am in New Orleans, a complete stranger to these people, throwing out a whole life's worth of their ruined stuff onto a muddy sidewalk. I wonder how many divorces happened as a result of this stuff. I wonder how many kids were yelled at and slapped as a result of this stuff. I wonder how many fights and lonely nights were caused by this stuff. I wonder how much anxiety, time and energy were spent keeping track of this stuff. It took a lifetime to collect and 2 hours to destroy.



What if all my stuff, everything I owned, was tossed onto a stinking, filthy and dirty trash heap? All that was left was me, my wife and my son. I could not be distracted by a PlayStation 2 or a Dodgers game or UNIX. Where would I be without my job, career aspirations and 401K? What if there were no fancy dinner parties to attend, no casual cookouts, no potlucks and no IN-and-Out Burger?



If my whole life turned into one big mud out and the distraction of stuff was now gone, could I be at peace with who I have allowed myself to become? Would I like the person I am? Could I have a clear conscience on the choices I made in life? Would I be encouraged and proud of the relationships I built? I know that relationships are all I take into Heaven, but am I willing to accept that they are also all that matters on this earth?"