

Youth Mission Trip: Idaho-Washington 2017



Serving Lunch to the Hungry. Helping the Elderly. Sorting at Food Banks. Playing with Special Needs Kids. Protecting the Environment. Cleaning up a Habitat for Humanity Restore. Supporting Projects for Veterans and Youth in Need.

Joining in fellowship and service with two United Methodist youth groups from Denver, Colorado and Redmond, Washington, our crew had a wonderful and engaging week with **Idaho Mission Project**, a service learning camp based out of Twinlow Camp and Retreat Center in Rathdrum, Idaho on June 25 - July 1, 2017.

Our week started out with four of us (Natalie, Paul, Andrew, and Emily) heading out for a long day of service with two projects. First, we helped weed around baby pumpkins that will be ready this fall for sale at an **American Legion Harvest Festival** where the proceeds will go to support Veterans in need in Idaho, including scholarships. We kept encouraging one another with the phrase, "save the pumpkins!"



All this time, Deira and Rick has been working with a different crew at the **Fish Creek Restoration Project**, which has been working for years to protect the creek that feeds into Twin Lakes, where Twinlow resides. They worked on moving soil and "sleeving" new trees. Rick was very impressed with Steve, the leader of the project, and his passion for the work. At one point, Deira ended up spending time with one youth and a leader from another church as that youth was not feeling well. Way to be kind to new friends, Deira!



Each evening followed the same routine. After our service projects, we would enjoy free time in the beautiful camp setting before a delicious dinner. Then, we would enjoy time together with just our church group before the youth played an all-camp field game while the adult leaders had a meeting to plan the next day's projects. The day concluded with a campfire with songs and a speaker followed by a devotional Bible study with Redmond UMC.

On Tuesday, Deira, Paul, and Andrew had big day with three projects. Two involved the **Elderhelp of Idaho**, helping with home projects for those who need assistance. They also served lunch at the **Union Gospel Mission** in Spokane, where they also learned about all the organization is doing and how their serving of a meal fit into all the good work going on. They even got to eat the lunch too, which they all agreed was very good!



Our afternoon was spent sorting bulk lentils for four hours at **2nd Harvest**, a large food bank, sporting stylish hairnets, arm guards, aprons, and, in Paul's case, a beard net! We had the task of packing

the lentils into individual 2 lb bags and placing 20 bags in a box to be distributed to food pantries around the region. We learned that many people experience food insecurity even when they have employment. Often, they need the food banks and pantries to supplement their income in order to provide food for their families.



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Natalie, Rick, and Emily had one site with Redmond UMC - **North-west Harvest**, a food bank that's been in the area for 10 years. They were so efficient scooping, sealing, and boxing a whole pallet of bulk white bean donations into 1lb bags that they had time for a second project. They worked on inspecting, labeling, and repacking canned pear donations from a company who donates their dented cans.



lodge as a storm rolled in, which was quite funny. After a fun evening, there was a moment of great joy when we finally figured out what animal lived in this small cage on the camp. It was a bunny named Oliver, and it definitely made Natalie's day!



Thursday was the last full day of IMP service projects, so each church group decided to go to different sites to give us a chance to be all together with our local church group even though we had had a wonderful time mixing up the groups all week. So, our FPC crew ended up all together driving 50 minutes to Sandpoint, ID to help at a **Habitat for Humanity Restore**. The regional director talked about their work; they are currently on their 19th home! The proceeds from the Restore all go to fund the building of

these homes! We were given a tough task. Heavy snow this past winter had fallen from the roof onto a whole row of window panes that they kept into their outside area, breaking many of them. So, we very cautiously and carefully moved broken windows to the dumpster and swept up broken glass. Thankfully, no one got cut at all! We also sorted through toilets, stacking functional pieces and discarded broken ones, avoiding the wasps that lived into some of the toilet bowls!

Friday was our free day, which we spent having a blast at Silverwood before enjoying dinner and sightseeing in Coeur d'Alene. It was a wonderful week of service-learning, fellowship, and spiritual formation in a beautiful setting! To view all of our photos from the week, go to the following link:

tinyurl.com/fpcyouthmissiontrip2017

On Wednesday, we ended up setting off girls to one site and boys to another. Deira, Natalie, and Emily spent the whole day with kids who participate in **Special Needs Recreation (SNR)**, based in Coeur d'Alene. We met the crew at



their home base before loading into our vans to head to Camp Lutherhaven on Lake Coeur d'Alene where the group goes swimming each Wednesday. All the youth were assigned a kid who was there buddy that they remained with during the day, and they had the best time swimming, boating, and playing in the sand!



The boys (Rick, Andrew, and Paul) went with the CO crew to the **Idaho Youth Ranch Warehouse** in Post Falls, ID to help sort items for their thrift store, whose proceeds go to support the work the organization does with youth who are having a difficult time in life. Apparently, the boys loved learning to use a pallet jack to move items around the warehouse!

During free time, Natalie joined a few others in an impressive swim across the lake. An outside burger picnic dinner turned into everyone rushing into the

