

UKnighted



Students Volunteer Their Time During Spring Break

Spring Break is one of the most anticipated times of the year for students. They plan exotic getaways that provide an experience that takes them far away from the rigors of everyday life. Although most students see Spring Break as a time for themselves, a group of UCF students choose to use their Spring Break for the benefit of others. Those students participated in an opportunity that took them far away from their everyday world, hoping to make a positive change in the lives of others. These students took part in UCF's Alternative Spring Break (ASB), sponsored by Volunteer UCF, LINK, and the Recreation and Wellness Center (RWC). ASB places teams of UCF students in communities around the country to engage in volunteer service projects with local non-profit agencies.

This year's ASB trips sent students to volunteer sites across the southeast. Projects involved students in a variety of activities from repairing damaged homes that had been untouched since Hurricane Katrina to working in the classroom with underprivileged children. ASB participants volunteered at the following service sites:

- Mid Atlantic Border Collie Rescue, Chestertown, MD
- Hurricane Katrina Relief, New Orleans, LA (2 trips)
- Habitat for Humanity, Charlotte, NC
- Habitat for Humanity, Meridian, MS
- Dolphin Observation and Research Center, Grassy Key, FL
- Café 458 (a shelter and restaurant for the homeless), Atlanta, GA
- Cumberland Trails, Crossville, TN
- Junior Achievement, Birmingham, AL
- 2 Extreme ASB (partnership with the RWC), Brookside, AL

Each trip is comprised of eight students, one student site leader, and one faculty or staff advisor. The site leader goes through an extensive training program and takes an integral role in planning the trip and in the development of the service learning plan for the entire experience. Many students attending this year's ASB are returning participants, some of whom have accepted the additional responsibility of becoming a site leader for their trip.

According to Lisa Cunningham, who went on ASB as a freshman to Birmingham and returned as a sophomore to be a site leader for that trip, "I learned even more about how Junior Achievement as a program tries their hardest to improve student's knowledge on a daily basis. As a site leader, connecting with students and trying to form a team was the most beautiful experience I've been involved with." The advisor also goes through a training program and helps the site leader in planning the trip; on-site the advisor leads the logistical oversight and group reflection. The role of advisor is also a wonderful experience for the university's faculty and staff to interact with some exceptional students.

Carita Felipe, returning for her second year as ASB student director, has participated in ASB since her freshman year. Reflecting on her own ASB experience, Felipe said, "I've made life-long friends through ASB and I think that's one of the main points I try to make on ASB. I think everybody should be interested in ASB, even if it's just for one year, because it's an experience that will mean more to them 10 or 20 years from now than any cruise or week spent laying on the beach – and it will also have a lasting impact on those they help while on ASB."



The Extreme ASB participants pose for photo next to the Five Mile Creek Trail sign. Students spent part of their week cleaning up the trail and area that was flooded in 2003.

Though it can be difficult to explain how powerful this experience can be, senior participant, Stephanie Neubert, shared her feelings after working on homes in New Orleans, "This was my second time going to New Orleans for ASB. The rebuilding process of New Orleans is in action mainly due to volunteers. I learned from my experiences what still needs to be done, and how just one week volunteering with almost 20 people really made a difference. Many people don't get to see what you see over there and it's hard to explain exactly how it is. It is a really inspiring and powerful experience. It opened my whole group's eyes talking to homeowners and hearing their stories about Katrina. I gained a connection and life-long friendship with my team because we were all trying our best to give these people back their homes and lives."

For the first time, Volunteer UCF partnered with the RWC's Outdoor Adventure program to provide two "Extreme ASB" trips. The group of 13 participants made a great connection with a little town outside of Birmingham, called Brookside. Students and staff cleaned up the roadsides, an old cemetery and the areas around historical 5 Mile Creek. One participant said, "it was a very emotional experience and everyone felt a deep connection with not only the town, but the mayor of the town as well." They also had a chance to participate in some fun outdoor activities, including canoeing, horseback riding and caving. Participants described the experience as "the best way to spend your spring break," "a great opportunity to meet new people and try new skills," and "working together with others toward what is important and what life's all about."

The participants of Alternative Spring Break displayed a dedication to community and personal values rooted in a strong sense of integrity, that reflect the values exemplified in The UCF Creed. For more information on ASB, visit www.asb.getinvolveducf.com or call the Volunteer UCF office 407.823.6471.

Students Interact, Learn and Have Fun at Fiesta Event

The Second Annual Pre-Spring Break Fiesta at Golden Knights Towers was held on March 4 with 128 students attending this year's program – a 36 percent increase in student attendance compared to Spring 2008. The primary focus of this event was to enhance student awareness of the many campus support offices and programs, and to prepare students for the upcoming “multi-term registration” activities. Students had the opportunity to ask staff questions, receive information about campus programs and services, and learn about ways to stay connected with UCF. This year's program included safety issues in preparation for and during Spring Break week.

The fiesta theme added to the event's atmosphere along with music provided by JAMZ 102 FM radio station, pizza and refreshments, numerous donated gift card prizes and other giveaways. Students had to meet with at least nine campus representatives and get their card “stamped” from individual campus resource offices to be eligible for a prize and receive their LINK Loot points. The points earned can be used to bid on free prizes at an auction at the end of each semester.

The event was coordinated by the Sophomore & Second Year Center in



Students check -in at the Pre-Spring Break Fiesta prior to connecting with various campus representatives.

collaboration with Housing and Residence Life, Campus Police/Community Relations and several other UCF support offices.



Overview of the event

Fitness Program: A Closer Look

The Fitness program at the Recreation and Wellness Center (RWC) promotes health and wellness. Group Exercise classes such as Yoga, Pilates, Spinning, traditional aerobic and resistance classes assist participants in improving their cardio-



Josh Foutz, fitness attendant consults a UCF student on how he can workout his shoulders on the cable cross.

respiratory fitness while also building strength and endurance. Personal training and fitness assessment services are available to assist in evaluating fitness levels and provide guidance to reach or maintain fitness and wellness goals.

In addition, the Assisted Workout Program benefits those who need assistance and guidance with their workout. Graduate students, who are working towards a degree in physical therapy, teamed up with the RWC to provide this opportunity to students with disabilities. Recent and upcoming program initiatives, include the UCF Biggest Loser, Half Marathon Training Course, Punch into Summer and Mind Body Master Class.

Rosen Student Life Informational and Fun Spring Events



On March 17, the Rosen College of Hospitality Management students enjoyed caricatures and making their own bumper stickers at the Spring Fling. Hillel, the largest Jewish campus organization in the world, attended in order to reach out to the Jewish students and market their on-campus activities at Rosen. Students who wore green for St. Patrick's Day were entered into a drawing to win a “Role Models” DVD.



The Rosen students learned about proper wellness through health professionals at the Wellness Expo on March 5. The event included a nurse, dietician and counselor. Students had the opportunity to receive free cholesterol, blood pressure and body fat screenings. Brochures from the Wellness Center were also distributed.

Housing Event Attracts Student

Off-Campus Student Services and Student Neighborhood Relations held the Spring 2009 Housing Fair in partnership with the Central Florida Future newspaper and the Student Government Association. Over 30 vendors and 500 students packed the memory mall for the event, which was designed to bring the local housing market to UCF students.

Student DJ and UCF Housing Ambassador James Jarmon set the tone with some jammin' beats as students enjoyed bags full of free gifts and entered drawings for prizes ranging from iPods to free rent. Knightro made a special appearance and had a small competition with mascots from local restaurants.

“It's great that I can come to one place and get all the information I need to make my housing decisions for next year, plus its fun, and I love free food,” commented Cheryl Jenkins.

The housing fair has been a partnership program for the past two years. For more information, contact Jimmy Moore at 407.823.4475 or jsmoore@mail.ucf.edu.

