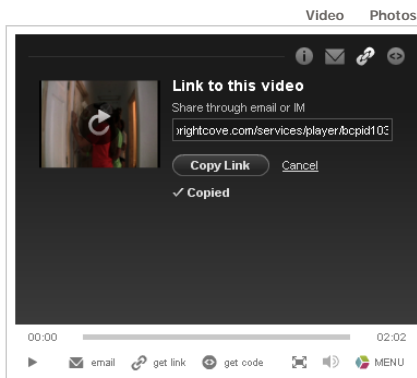


Providence girls paint HabiJax homes

The volleyball team took a break from their summer vacation to volunteer.

BY [JESSIE-LYNNE KERR](#) | STORY UPDATED AT 8:42 AM ON THURSDAY, JUL. 9, 2009



Members of the girls volleyball team at the Providence School gave up a day of their summer vacation Wednesday to volunteer at HabiJax, helping two Jacksonville families achieve the dream of home ownership.

Lindsey Jones, 12, the rising senior who organized the project, said her coach suggested the team do some mission work during the summer.

"So we signed up our team to help HabiJax and do some community outreach," Jones said. While she acknowledged the community service will look good on college applications, she said the mission was spurred by the belief that helping others was the Christian thing to do.

The girls worked through Wednesday's rain, mostly doing interior painting on the homes nearing completion on West 20th Street and on Meharry Avenue.

Jennifer Wassmann, a builder and superintendent on one of the homes, said HabiJax takes volunteers age 14 and older but limits teens to doing such jobs as landscaping, painting, caulking and spackling. "We don't let them use power tools," she said.

Brooklyn Kelly and Rachel Buttrey, both 15 and rising sophomores, were busy painting doors in one of the houses. They said this was the first time they'd volunteered with HabiJax.

"It's fun and I'd do it again," said Buttrey, leaving behind a dab of white paint as she scratched the tip of her nose.

Kelly said she had painted doors at her home.

Over at the Meharry Avenue house, Maddy Stottemyer and Christina Quinlan, both 14, and Sara Brown and Melissa Matchett both 15, were painting doors to rooms and closets.

"This is a good chance for our team to bond," Brown said. "And it is kind of cool knowing we are helping someone and havin fun learning."

Matchett said the team considers the project "a good way to reach out to others."

The team usually participates in Operation Christmas Child where they fill shoeboxes with small gifts that are mailed to children in Africa.

Providence School, a K-12 private college preparatory school on Hodges Boulevard founded 13 years ago by New Life Christian Fellowship, has about 1,550 students drawn from across the Jacksonville area.

The girls said they'd like to adopt the two families on whose homes they are working, possibly by providing swing sets for the spacious backyards.

Amy Rabb, a crew leader for HabiJax who was overseeing the girls, said they are usually pretty energetic and ready to get the job done.

"They're doing great," Rabb said.

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