



Participants in the Alpena Pride Program refurbish a house on Ford Avenue on Alpena's north side, one of the Volunteer Center's recent initiatives.



Volunteer Center provides First Step

By MARIA STANDEN,
STAFF WRITER

Many new developments have been happening within the ACC Volunteer Center. Besides co-sponsoring the October 29 Student Action Fair, the Volunteer Center has been busy with two new programs--the First Step Program and the Alpena Neighborhood Pride Program.

Providing a meaningful opportunity for both volunteers and the community has been one of the main objectives for the Volunteer Center as it celebrates its 20th anniversary this month.

Alpena's Volunteer Center is unique in that it is one of eight volunteer centers in the country that is associated with a university or community college.

"Alpena was always highly regarded as a volunteering community... so there already was a strong foundation here for a volunteer center," said Chris Angel, Director of the Volunteer Center. "Even though we are not noted as being one of the biggest volunteer centers, we have been noted as being a progressive center with a lot of great things happening and we are always continuing to grow."

The program started in mid-August. During the first semester, the participants take a course to introduce and help them to decide on a career to pursue. The second semester involves courses to train the participants for the job of their choice. During the program, participants also attended a Ropes Challenge Course that focuses on team building and leadership. In its first year, the program has 27 people that range in ages from 18 to 51.

"It [the program] has been very favorably received... the participants have been very committed, energetic, and willing to learn," said Angel.



Angel credits much of the success of the center to the staff. "We have a wonderful staff here at the Center. Everyone works really hard to make the Center what it is," said Angel.

First Step Program, funded by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) and the Northeast Michigan Consortium, is a pilot program to provide job training to income-eligible individuals.

Funded by First Federal Savings & Loan of Alpena, the Alpena Neighborhood Pride Project will be focusing on homes in need of refurbishing on Alpena's north side.

This year's project includes painting five houses and siding two houses and will be done by the end of October. Angel said that the program will start again next spring and he foresees it growing to be even bigger and better next year. Involved in this year's project were the ACC Student Senate, the men's and women's basketball teams, Youth Volunteer Corps, Habitat for Humanity, and First Federal.

"Even though the cost of living is rising and people are working hard to keep up, there still is a need for volunteering," stated Angel.

"Trends are showing people getting involved in more short-term volunteering, things like volunteering with your family or doing volunteer work at home are becoming patterns. Since state and federal funds have decreased - the need for volunteers has increased," Angel added.

If you are interested in volunteering or want to find out more about the Volunteer Center, contact Chris Angel at 356-9021, Extension 335.

AmeriCorps builds hope

By BECKY BLACK
STAFF WRITER

This fall an exciting new movement is sweeping through Alpena--AmeriCorps. This national service organization works to involve youth ages 11-18 in direct community service through service learning in their own classrooms. AmeriCorps has been around four years and is funded by the National Service Organization. Across the nation, there are only 11 AmeriCorps sites and 45 AmeriCorps members. Alpena was awarded three of these 45 slots, and Alpena is the only AmeriCorps site in Northeast Michigan.

The three Alpena AmeriCorps members are Tony Rosado, Kristen Issacs and myself.

In exchange for donating a year of service working the youth of the community, AmeriCorps members get a living stipend throughout the year. Upon successful completion of the 1700 hours of service, each receives an educational award of almost \$5000 to help with college.

After the first year is completed, members have an opportunity to re-up for a second term of service and a second educational award, making this an opportunity for members to receive almost \$10,000 for college.

Alpena's AmeriCorps members recently returned from a weeklong training in Kansas City. All AmeriCorps members from around the country were sent there to network, share ideas, learn a lot, and have a great time!

During the week, everyone present participated in a service project of our own. There were three options--building a butterfly garden at the facility where we were lodged, painting a mural at the camp, or traveling to the Quindaro Ruins, the largest archaeological underground railroad site in the nation to do a little "landscaping."

So I headed off to Quindaro, weed-whacker in hand. We actually "unearthed" a couple of stone wall building remains, one being a school. It was a great experience for everyone.

AmeriCorps focuses on four major areas of need--environmental, human,

educational, and public safety. Some of the projects already underway locally are the neighborhood PRIDE program, in which a group of students are working to paint and refurbish houses on Ford Avenue in Alpena; packing commodities at NEMSCA; working with elementary at-risk children to help with reading readiness; and also a collaboration with Roger Witherbee's education classes.

Although AmeriCorps works mainly with junior high and high school age youth, you will see us around here at ACC. Feel free to ask questions. We'd be happy to answer them for you.



Becky Black (left), an AmeriCorps member, changes the landscape during a recent training in Kansas City.

Phi Theta Kappa expands membership

By JEANETTE KORTMAN
STAFF WRITER

Everyone has heard reference to Phi Theta Kappa at one time or another around campus. But PTK is not a fraternity or a branch of the student government. So what is it?

Phi Theta Kappa is the International Honor Society

for students of two-year colleges who are able to maintain a 3.5 or better grade-point average and are enrolled in an associate's degree program.

At ACC, Phi Theta Kappa has approximately 60 active members and is advised by Wesley Law, political science and history instructor. The purpose of the organization is to recognize and encourage scholarship among students.

"I believe that Phi Theta gives opportunities to those members who put forth an effort to improve the organization. Hopefully, scholarships and other awards will be given to our members after we accomplish our goals," said Sherry

Srebnik, the treasurer of Alpena's chapter of PTK.

One thing that the group is required to do is to participate in one major project each year. Last year PTK sponsored an AIDS Awareness presentation in the college's new theater, which was a complete success.

This year's endeavor will be a family oriented project entitled, "Family: Myth, Metaphor, and Reality."

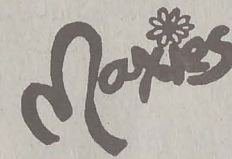
Phi Theta Kappa will be holding monthly meetings in which all members are encouraged to attend and get involved. These meetings will usually be held on the last Wednesday of every month and will be advertised around campus.

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