

Volunteer Scientologists to be Recognized at Historic Fort Harrison

Hundreds of Scientologists in Tampa Bay have donated over 300,000 volunteer hours in one year alone

August 9, 2010 (FPRC) -- Clearwater – A Volunteer Awards Ceremony will be held in the historic Fort Harrison to honor the over 800 Scientologists in Tampa Bay who have donated over 300,000 volunteer hours to raise funds for the needy, rehabilitate inmates in Florida's prisons, tutor children, and to spread the message of the Universal Declaration for Human Rights and that a Drug Free Life is More Fun. Pat Harney, the Public Affairs Director for the Church of Scientology Flag Service Organization will be presenting the awards. She said, "In 1961, L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology wrote: '...a being is only as valuable as he can serve others.' This is an ideology that Scientologists internationally practice, including those here in the Tampa Bay area and I want them to know that they are appreciated for the tremendous work they are doing to raise the standard of living of the people of Tampa Bay and throughout Florida."

Harney continued, "Participation in Scientology volunteer groups, however, is not just limited to Scientologists. People of all faiths are welcome to volunteer, and most of our programs count a wide range of community volunteers."

Here is a partial list of the volunteer groups established and led by Scientologists in the Tampa Bay area:

THE COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER (CLC): Holly and Brendan Haggerty founded the Community Learning Center to provide kids a safe place to learn and to go to after school for arts programs and sports. The proud parents of four children, they have now expanded their services to include literacy programs for adults. Though based right outside of downtown Clearwater, their after-school tutoring programs are running in Pinellas, Dade, Hillsborough, Alachua, Broward-Deerfield and Broward-Ft. Lauderdale counties. Their 89 volunteer tutors have helped some 500 students in the past year alone.

CRIMINON – FLORIDA: Founded here in Florida about 15 years ago, Criminon Florida is currently run by Clearwater resident Susan Broughton. A chapter of Criminon International, Criminon Florida offers character building criminal rehabilitation programs through correspondence courses in 85% of the 75 prisons in the state and has over 2000 inmates enrolled. This activity is 100% volunteer all the way, volunteer supervisors grade inmates lessons, while others ensure that the course is properly administered.

SAY NO TO DRUGS RACE: 20 years ago, Clearwater resident and world-class runner Sandra Johnson started the Say No to Drugs Holiday Classic to promote an anti-drug message through a road race. A team of 200 volunteers produces this race, which now brings over 1,000 runners a year. From executives to chiropractors, to Boy Scout troops to sponsors, all contribute to making this event a success. Now under the direction of Chris Alexander, the race continues to be a draw for elite athletes and weekend warriors alike.

THE WAY TO HAPPINESS: Written by Mr. Hubbard in the early 1980's, the Way to Happiness is a

non-religious moral code designed to help young and old make decisions about their lives that will enable them to flourish. Here in Tampa Bay, the Way to Happiness Club, led by Clearwater resident Betsy Cramb, distributed 125,000 free booklets and held 52 events last year to educate children in the application of this non-religious moral code to improve their survival and the survival of those around them.

THE CLEARWATER COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS (CCV): What originally started as the Women's Auxiliary of the Church of Scientology, the Clearwater Community Volunteers holds fundraisers and events throughout the year for the benefit of local charities. These include Winter Wonderland in downtown Clearwater, the Easter Egg Hunt in Coachman Park, and Fashions-with-Flair Fashion show which just held its 8th annual event at the historic Fort Harrison. From these events, CCV is able to contribute tens of thousands of dollars each year to worthwhile local charitable organization such as the Make a Wish Foundation and the Children's Home of Tampa. Realtor and self-proclaimed Professional Volunteer Pamela Ryan Anderson now heads up this group which utilizes the talents of over 800 volunteers.

FOUNDATION FOR A DRUG FREE WORLD, FLORIDA: Led by Julietta Gil, this group was founded to educate people about the dangers of abusing harmful drugs. This chapter of the international Foundation for a Drug Free World gave 30 drug education lectures in schools throughout Pinellas and Hillsborough County to about 3,500 people in one year. They also offer drug free educational pamphlets, and have distributed 75,000 over the last two years. Through partnerships with a multitude of groups, such as the Dunedin Blue Jays, the Clearwater Downtown Partnership and the Sunscreen Film Festival, youth are sworn in as "Drug Free Marshals" who pledge not only to lead a drug-free life, but also to educate themselves and others about the harmful effects of drugs.

HUMAN RIGHTS AWARENESS: The protection of basic human rights has been a hallmark of the Church of Scientology since its earliest days. Here in the Tampa Bay area, two groups have picked up the torch to educate people about what their rights are and how they can defend them: the Tampa Bay Chapter of Youth for Human Rights and the Human Rights Group. Members of Youth for Human Rights give presentations on the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights in schools throughout Pinellas and Hillsborough County. They have also passed out thousands of booklets and public service announcements depicting the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Headed up by Linda Drazkowski, the Human Rights Group held its fourth annual Walk-a-Thon this March in St. Petersburg's Straub Park. More than 1,000 people from many different faiths and backgrounds marched in support of human rights."

To find out more about the work of Scientologists as volunteers log on to www.scientology.org.

Contact Information

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