

Stockton College's Make A Difference Day Service Projects Draw More Than 100 Volunteers

Volunteers Served in the Community, Reflected on Superstorm Sandy

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members, to organize books, clean toys and assist with clerical work at Free To Be, Stockton's childcare center.

"Giving back to the Stockton community is how we made a difference. [Free To Be staff members] were appreciative of our efforts," said Schoenstein, who is a member of the Stockton Honors Program and the GKIHS.

On the main campus, volunteers commemorated the one-year anniversary of Superstorm Sandy. "Last summer we realized the importance of commemorating Hurricane Sandy at its anniversary and that we wouldn't be done recovering," said the Rev. Juliann Henry, manager of pastoral care for AtlantiCare Regional Medical Center.

Make A Difference Day was an opportunity to "pause and reflect at how far we've come," she explained. "We need to take time to regroup and gain strength for the continued process of recovery."

Representatives from a number of organizations including the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the Arc of Atlantic County, New Jersey Hope and Healing, and the Atlantic County Division of Public Health were on campus to offer assistance to Sandy victims.

A series of reflective art projects gave students the opportunity to express their thoughts about Sandy recovery. A chalk art project transformed the dormitory walkways into passages, drawings and reflections about Sandy.

Volunteers with the Sandy oral history project used audio recorders to document the experiences of Sandy victims who were willing to share their stories. The project is part of a larger initiative of the Stockton Wellness Center to record and archive three- to five-minute Sandy narratives.

Project leader Brian Pluchino, a professional services specialist, said, "Several people shared their amazing stories of recovery and helping others, revealing the impact of the storm."

In the afternoon, volunteers on campus came together to listen to the Rev. Henry's interfaith service. "Today we gather, on the eve of the first anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, to remember where we were this time last year and to mark the ways that this storm has changed our lives and changed our community," Henry said.

She pointed out three lessons learned: that recovery work is painful, not everyone wants to be rescued and that grace is real and can carry one through the ther r(ther)P gr t to-1(es)-2o f1 ()thrE be 2(am)4