



# THE PRUDENTIAL SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY REPORT

The official newspaper of The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, sponsored by Prudential Financial and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Copyright 2008 Prudential Financial. All rights reserved.

## Missouri Teenager 'Fell in Love' With the Idea of Feeding Needy People

**W**fell in love with the idea of helping others through serving food," says Kristen Allcorn. A lot of needy people in Sedalia, Mo., are glad she did.

Kristen, a 2008 Prudential Spirit of Community National Honoree, found a service project she loves after volunteering at a soup kitchen in nearby Kansas City. She wanted to do something similar in her hometown, but when she looked around, she discovered there weren't any programs that offered free hot meals in her community.

So Kristen went to work. She got a local building owner to donate space. She persuaded the Central Missouri Food

Bank to supply her on a regular basis. She went to her local school and civic organizations and recruited volunteers to prepare and serve the meals and clean up afterward.

When all the pieces were in place, the Community Café, as Kristen called her soup kitchen, began serving hot meals five nights a week. The first night 12 people showed up. Now it's often about 60 people. One woman who has come says that without the Community Café, she wouldn't have



Kristen Allcorn

enough money to care for her son and would have to put him in foster care.

Kristen may be the executive director of the Community Café, but she still helps serve meals. That's in addition to raising money, planning menus, organizing volunteers' schedules, running monthly board meetings, and more.

But all that work hasn't cooled Kristen's love affair. After having served thousands of meals, Kristen says she still walks away from the Community Café every day

with a sense of accomplishment. "People who come do not walk through a line with their plates and receive the slop of the day," she says proudly.

"Instead," she says, "they are treated with dignity and respect. They are served as if eating in a restaurant. They experience friendly faces and a hope that life will get better."

Kristen's experience of starting and running the Community Café has left a deep impression. "I live for helping others," she says. "Albert Einstein once said 'Only a life lived in the service to others is a life worth living.' I completely agree with this statement."

## Since the Death of Her Brother, She's Been Raising Money to Fight Cancer

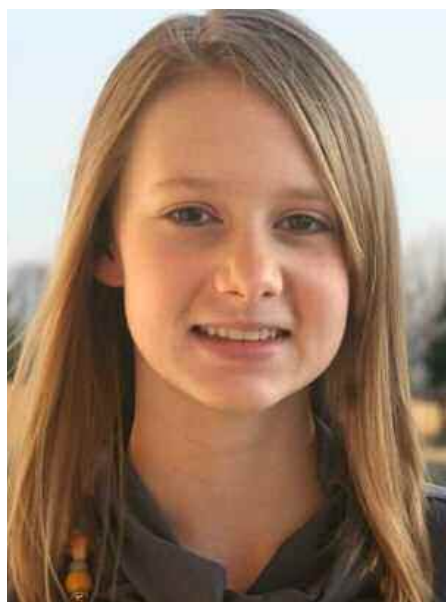
**T**here can be nothing more horrible than to lose a family member to cancer. After Riley Miller of Bowling Green, Ky., lost her younger brother, she looked around for a way to help other families in the same situation.

By organizing a citywide day of lemonade sales, Riley has raised \$50,000 over the last three years for childhood cancer research.

It's been a lot of work, but Riley says that after her little brother lost his battle with leukemia, she "realized how important it is to make a difference in the short time we have here."

Riley's annual lemonade sale days have taken a lot of work. This past year her team of 200 volunteers managed nearly 30 lemonade stands around town. Before the big

day, Riley raises public awareness by talking to the media, making signs and flyers, and going door-to-door.



Riley Miller

"I have never felt such pride and sense of being as when I am working hard to help others," says Riley, a 2008 Prudential Spirit of Community National Honoree.

## You Have Until October 31 To Send in Your Application

**Y**oung people in grades five through 12 have until October 31, 2008 to send in their application for the 14th annual Prudential Spirit of Community Awards, sponsored by Prudential Financial, Inc., in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

"We've seen a tremendous number of amazing young people since we created this program in 1995. We're delighted to be able to call attention to their selfless acts of volunteerism, and to give them the recognition they so richly deserve," said John R. Stangfeld, chairman and chief executive officer of Prudential.

Participating schools and local organizations will select Local Honorees in November. A

state-level judging committee will then select the top two candidates from each state and the District of Columbia. Each State Honoree will receive a \$1,000 award, an engraved silver



medallion and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, DC, with a parent or guardian, where 10 National Honorees will be recognized.

For complete instructions on how to enter, please look at the box on the last page.

### Quiz Question

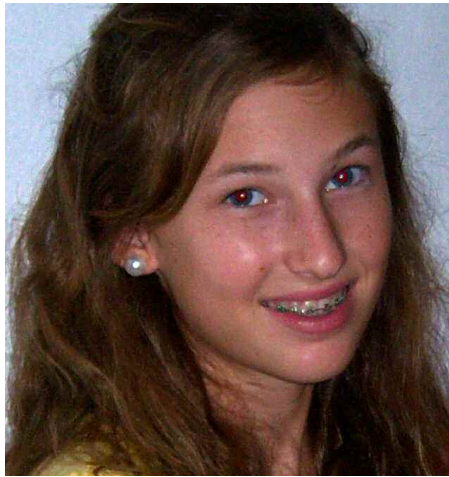
Which U.S. city had the highest percentage of adults who volunteered in 2007? Was it Miami or Minneapolis-St. Paul? (Answer and more questions are on the back page)



## HELPERS AROUND THE WORLD

**W**had never seen such extreme conditions” says Noelle Schmitter-Schrier of Alaska, remembering the five months she spent in a small mountain village in El Salvador teaching English to children.

According to Noelle, “If they know English, it improves their chances of getting a job that



**Noelle Schmitter-Schrier**

pays more than \$2 a day,” so she felt that what she was doing was very important work.

During her time there, Noelle taught some 250 chil-

dren, including 200 who didn’t know any English. When she was finished, Noelle’s pupils could carry on basic conversations and read simple books. “For me, the 4-H pledge to serve my world really came alive” during her time in Central America.

\* \* \*

After Anna Schuck of Connecticut saw a documentary about the devastation caused by the long civil war in Uganda, she wondered why no one was doing anything to help. “I couldn’t bear to watch the injustices taking place before me. How could we sit back and watch millions of people suffer and do nothing?”

Anna couldn’t. She started a school club to raise money for a boys’ school in that African country. The club – which she called The H.U.G. Club, short for “Helping the Underprivileged Globally” – raised more than



**Anna Schuck**

\$28,000.

Anna’s biggest project was “Rock Uganda,” a series of seven rock concerts that Anna organized with the help of other volunteers she recruited.

\* \* \*

“About a year ago, I began saving money that I was earning. I didn’t know what I wanted to use the money for, but I knew I wanted to give it to someone who needed it.”

Then one day Cori Goodwin of Virginia started reading a

World Vision catalogue that had come in the mail. “I began looking through it and loved the idea of buying things for people in Third World countries.” She decided that giving a cow to an impoverished family would be a great thing to do because it would give



**Cori Goodwin**

the family a source of food and income.

“This gift has a long-term impact on a family and their community,” she says. “It really is the gift that keeps on giving.”

## NEWS

At the recent Summer Olympics in China, rainy weather at times threatened the softball competition. But thanks to volunteers who dried the field using sponges and buckets, all the games were played.

\* \* \*

An 18-year-old college student in California is run-

ning for a seat on his local board of education. The young candidate says that, if elected, he will push to have the school board spend money more wisely, and encourage student volunteerism.

\* \* \*

It took volunteers more than

12 years, but this year they finally finished and published a book about butterflies in Connecticut. Some of the volunteers were scholars, others just butterfly enthusiasts. All of them willingly donated their time and talents.

\* \* \*

Last month the two U.S. presidential candidates appeared

on the same stage in New York City and said that they would emphasize volunteerism if they are elected president. Both John McCain and Barack Obama said they support a bill in Congress that would expand the size of the national service organization known as Americorps.



The 2008 Prudential Spirit of Community National Honorees come from nine different U.S. states. There are two from Colorado and one each from: Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Tennessee. Can you identify each of these nine states on the numbered map?

(Answers are on the last page.)

## 'I Figured That if They Needed Help, I Would Give It to Them'

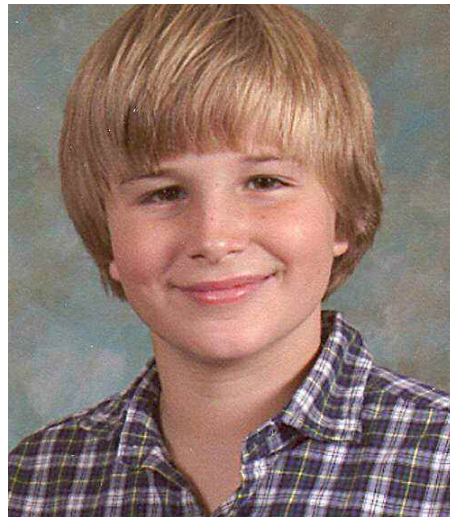
Jake Martin has two brothers who are autistic. "After seeing how disadvantaged my brothers are, I began to think: How could I help?"

The answer wasn't long in coming. When Jake heard that the teachers at the summer school one of his brothers attends needed help, he quickly volunteered. "I figured that if they needed help, I would give it to them," he recalls thinking. He even convinced some of his friends to volunteer.

For the last three years Jake has been a volunteer at his brother's summer school. At first he only gave out snacks. But when Jake asked if he could do more, the teachers assigned him to help the kids paint, draw, play sports, play musical instruments, and do math. Last

year Jake worked eight hours a day – and loved it.

"What I got out of my work was a greater ability to help special-needs children



Jake Martin

excel. I learned that no matter how hard something is, you can do it – no matter what."

For all his efforts, Jake was named a Prudential Spirit of Community State Honoree in Alabama this year.

## Brittany's 'Reading Teams' Read to Young Children in Day-Care Centers

While Brittany Oliver's parents used to read to her every night, she says that "many parents, unfortunately, are not convinced of the extreme need for reading to their children."

Brittany wanted to do something about that, so she and her sister volunteered to read to children at a local YMCA. When Brittany saw how thrilled the kids were, she started thinking bigger.

Thus began a program Brittany calls "Reading Teams" where volunteers from her school and community regularly go to local day-care centers and after-school programs to read to children. Brittany's program has some 80 volunteers who read at 10 different sites. Brittany does the

organizing.

"The most significant measure of Reading Teams' success is the excitement that can be seen on the



Brittany Oliver

faces of the children when a volunteer comes to read," she says.

For her contributions as a volunteer in her community, Brittany was named a Prudential Spirit of Community State Honoree in Indiana this year.

## Matthew Renzulli Collected 28,000 Pairs of Socks for the Disadvantaged

Thanks to Matthew Renzulli of Wayne, N.J., a lot of homeless and disadvantaged people in the nearby city of Paterson have socks to wear.

Matthew collected 28,000 pairs of socks by buying and making sock collection containers and asking local schools, churches and businesses to display them prominently. He and other students from his school regularly picked up socks from 45 different collection locations in six counties.

Why make socks your volunteer project? Matthew says that when he was very young, he volunteered at a homeless shelter with his family. There he met a man who wore only sandals despite it being winter. "His feet suffered greatly from the effects of his diabetes," Matthew recalls. "I thought I must do something to help him and others who came to Eva's Village,"

the name of the shelter.

So Matthew started not just collecting but also sorting and packing the socks and then storing them in his garage until he could deliver them to Eva's



Matthew Renzulli

Village. "I am fortunate that I have been able to help poor and needy people in the inner city," says Matthew, a 2008 Prudential Spirit of Community State Honoree. "Hopefully, the contribution of clean, warm socks has helped bring some joy and comfort to these people."

## Megan Beck's Unusual Project: 'Shades' for Fluorescent Lights

If we were to tell you that Megan Beck is really into shades, you might think she loves to wear sunglasses. But to this Kansas teenager, "shades" has a very different meaning.

It was when Megan was a volunteer in a special-education classroom that she noticed the autistic children were distracted by the room's bright fluorescent lights. When she was told there wasn't any money to buy shades for the lights, she decided to raise the money herself.

Megan started a party planning company she called "Girly Girl." With the help of others, her company started providing entertainment at children's birthday parties, Girl Scout meetings and team parties.

Megan earned more than \$1,000 from 18 parties she

planned. She used that money to buy 48 shades for nine autistic classrooms in her school district.

"By providing these shades, the learning environ-



Megan Beck

ment of autistic children was greatly improved," says Megan, a 2008 Prudential Spirit of Community State Honoree. "I also educated hundreds of adults and young people in my community about the needs of children with autism."

## Quiz

- As the highest-ranking of all major U.S. cities, approximately what percentage of adults in Minneapolis-St. Paul volunteered in 2007:
  - 20%
  - 30%
  - 40%
  - 50%
- What percentage of Americans who volunteer in a given year do not do so the following year:
  - 20%
  - 33%
  - 50%
  - 70%
- Approximately how many million Americans age 16 and older performed volunteer work in 2007:
  - 37
  - 52
  - 61
  - 79
- How many hours of volunteer service did Americans perform in 2007:
  - 800 million
  - 1.9 billion
  - 4.6 billion
  - 8.1 billion
- What percentage of Americans who performed volunteer service in 2007 contributed at least 100 hours:
  - 12%
  - 22%
  - 34%
  - 45%
- Which state ranked the highest in adults who performed volunteer service in 2007:
  - Utah
  - Alaska
  - New Jersey
  - Ohio
- Which state ranked the lowest in adults who performed volunteer service in 2007:
  - Nevada
  - Florida
  - New York
  - Kentucky

1. c; 2. b; 3. c; 4. d; 5. c; 6. a; 7. a

### QUIZ ANSWERS

#### Quiz answer from page 1

The Corporation for National Community Service ranked 50 major U.S. cities based on the percentage of adults who volunteered in 2007. Minneapolis-St. Paul ranked first, while Miami ranked 50th..

#### MAP ANSWERS

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. New Jersey | 6. Florida      |
| 2. Tennessee  | 7. Iowa         |
| 3. Colorado   | 8. Pennsylvania |
| 4. Minnesota  | 9. Kentucky     |
| 5. Missouri   |                 |

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

"I now have this great life and owe it all to foster care and this wonderful family," says Sean McAdam of Lewisberry, Pa., explaining what motivated him to help his foster family nurture and mentor more than 100 foster children in their home.

"Foster kids need a lot of love and attention, and I am happy



Sean McAdam

that I can contribute some of this to them," says Sean. "I let them know they can count on me for help and leadership when things get tough."

Sean, who asks his friends in school to include the foster kids on his sports teams, emphasizes that, "No child should go without someone who cares for them, loves them, and wants to teach them right from wrong."

\* \* \*

"Helping my former art teacher was important to me, because she had been a great teacher," says Brianna Hartford of Littleton, N.H.

Thus did Brianna volunteer to help her former teacher – not once or twice but four days a week after school for a full school year.

Brianna washed tables, cleaned floors, put away materials, delivered projects to students' homerooms, and performed other tasks that weren't glamorous, just important.

"I learned from my volunteer



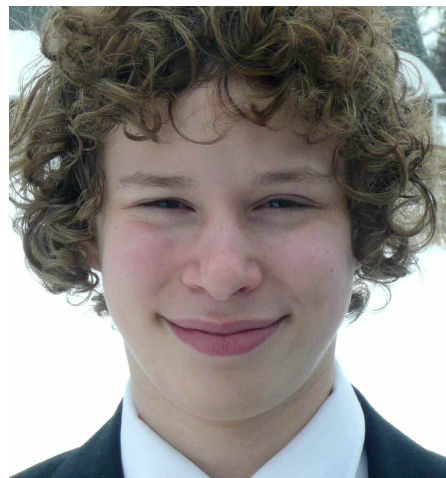
Brianna Hartford

experience that it is important to set aside time each day to help others and to always help people who have helped you in the past."

\* \* \*

"To some, math is an endless battle that makes no sense," says Phil Brockman of North Dakota, who volunteers as a math "coach" for elementary school students getting ready for competitions.

"I want people to see that math is much more like a soccer



Phil Brockman

match than a battle – there are multiple ways of achieving the same goal, but most importantly, there is excitement in the process."

Phil is a three-time state middle-school math champion. Before he became a coach, the middle-school math club he coaches was in danger of disbanding. "Through my coaching and writing, I hope to make more people fans of math and problem-solving," he says.

# COMPUTER CORNER

[www.tunes4thetroops.org](http://www.tunes4thetroops.org)

"I have always had a special place in my heart for the men who serve our country," says Kaylee Marie Radzynski of Cleveland, Tenn., explaining why she started a campaign to collect CDs and DVDs for U.S. soldiers overseas.

Thanks to Kaylee's campaign, over 350,000 discs have been collected, in part through a Web site that allows people to donate and keeps them informed about Kaylee's campaign, called "Tunes 4 the



Kaylee Marie Radzynski

Troops." Her goal is to collect half a million CDs, DVDs and books on CD by this Christmas.

How did Kaylee get started?

She met military personnel who were returning home who said what they had missed most (besides their families) was entertainment. "I began to brainstorm. I first collected my CDs and DVDs, then my friends collected theirs, then my school, and it eventually made its way to the community, the state, and now it has become a nationwide campaign."

Adds Kaylee: "There is no reason why I can't do a little something to give back."

Kaylee's giving back earned her recognition this year as a Prudential Spirit of Community National Honoree.

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards constitute the nation's largest youth recognition program based exclusively on volunteer community service. Since its inception in 1995, the program has honored more than 80,000 middle and high school students at the local, state and national level. Applications can be completed online at [www.prudential.com/spirit](http://www.prudential.com/spirit) or [www.principals.org/prudential](http://www.principals.org/prudential), and must be certified by a school, Girl Scout council, county 4-H program, Red Cross chapter, YMCA or affiliate of HandsOn Network.

For more information, visit [www.prudential.com/spirit](http://www.prudential.com/spirit) or [www.principals.org/prudential](http://www.principals.org/prudential), or call 1-877-525-8491.

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