

Liberty Students Provide Relief in Hurricane Sandy Aftermath

Forty-three Liberty University undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff from the Center for Ministry Training rolled up their sleeves last week and put the love of Jesus into action as they provided relief to victims of Hurricane Sandy's devastation.

Liberty's CMT team partnered with the Southern Baptist Conservatives of Virginia and the North American Mission Board on the trip to Staten Island, N.Y. In September 2011, more than 300 Liberty students provided disaster relief to flood victims in New York—the first time SBCV had asked a college group to help.

"It's really neat to see people really being the hands and feet of the body of Christ," senior Caleb Serafini said.

Serafini, a business/marketing major from Maryland, joined the team in rebuilding homes destroyed by the storm.

The group split up into five teams who worked together to help gut 10 water-damaged houses, power wash mold and debris, and spray mold-killing chemicals all over the site. Within four to six weeks of this process, homeowners will be able to begin reconstruction.

"It is great to be able to build relationships with the families who were affected by (Hurricane Sandy)," said junior Greg Weaver, a worship major from Texas. "Many of them are not believers. In this instance, we get to show the love of Christ in not only our words, but by our actions."

The team also assisted the Red Cross in making meals and

distributing food for those affected by the hurricane.

"We are extremely thankful to Liberty for creating this opportunity," said Tim Moroz, administrative assistant for CMT, who added there was a large response of students wanting to sign up. Liberty funded the trip, allowing them to participate at no cost.

David Jenkins, associate professor with Liberty's Center for Counseling and Family Studies, said during the trip he heard very positive and heartfelt feedback from homeowners, residents, and even other agencies such as the Red Cross saying how impressed they were with the team of students.

"Having participated in several disaster responses, I don't think they could have done a better job," Jenkins said. "It went very well with some clear plans for follow-up and ongoing training and service opportunities. Liberty's CMT team and administration staff delivered to these people a powerful message of love and support."