

# Service the focus of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

## Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area blankets area with volunteers

By Peggy Hampton  
 Special to The Mississippi Link

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day 2014 was a day of service for Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area (HFHMCA) and approximately 100 of the non-profit's volunteers.

Individuals wanting to make a difference in their community that day by volunteering with HFHMCA worked at three Habitat houses and at the Care-Taker's Cottage at The Salvation Army Thrift Store at 570 Beasley Road.

"Habitat for Humanity Mississippi Capital Area reached out to help The Salvation Army after that organization experienced a tremendous loss when its Thrift Store was destroyed by fire," said Cindy Griffin, executive director of HFHMCA.

"Building is what HFHMCA does, and this method of helping The Salvation Army was a natural gift for our construction staff and volunteers."

Shamberi Horton, director of children's activities for Stewpot,

### Habitat

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volunteered at a Habitat house on Glendale Street and recruited others from the community to help, including an AmeriCorps volunteer and several teachers from Jackson

Public Schools and Canton Public Schools.

"Every year since 7th grade, I have been doing some kind of volunteer activity for Martin Luther King Day," she said. "I volunteered today at Habitat because I wanted to help a family and give back to my community."

Enjoying a beautiful day in the sun while painting a HFHMCA house on Maple Street to a "sunny" yellow was Ella McKnight, one of several cheerleaders from Belhaven University who volunteered along with their coach.

"We are trying to follow what Dr. King stood for - giving folks a better way of life," she said. "What better place to be spending the day than to be working on a home for someone."

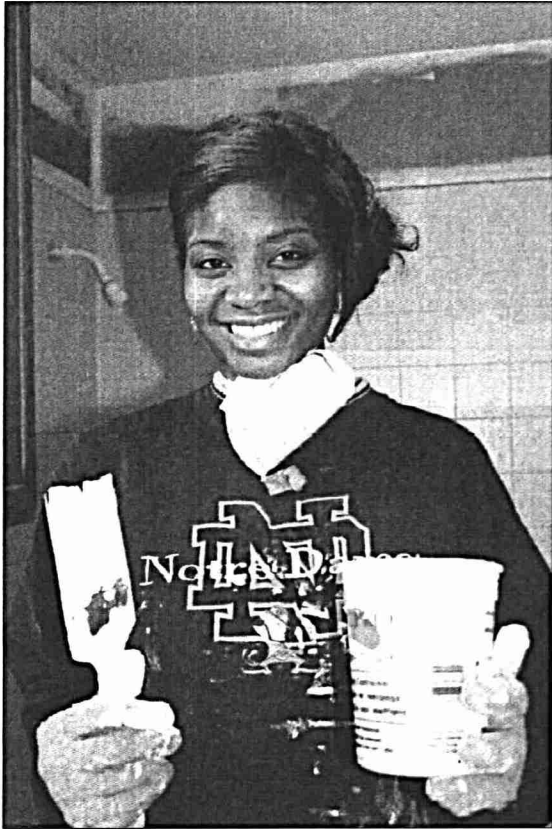
Also providing volunteers during the day were the Mississippi College School of Law, the Butler Snow law firm, the Mississippi College Biomedical Program, and Voice of Calvary Baptist Church.

A day of service on the "off day" embodies the essence of the Martin Luther King dream. Griffin said, "There is no more gratifying feeling than working together to help a brother and sister in need."



MLK Day volunteers Toni Johnson, Brittany Singleton, Shamberi Horton and Latoria McDonald

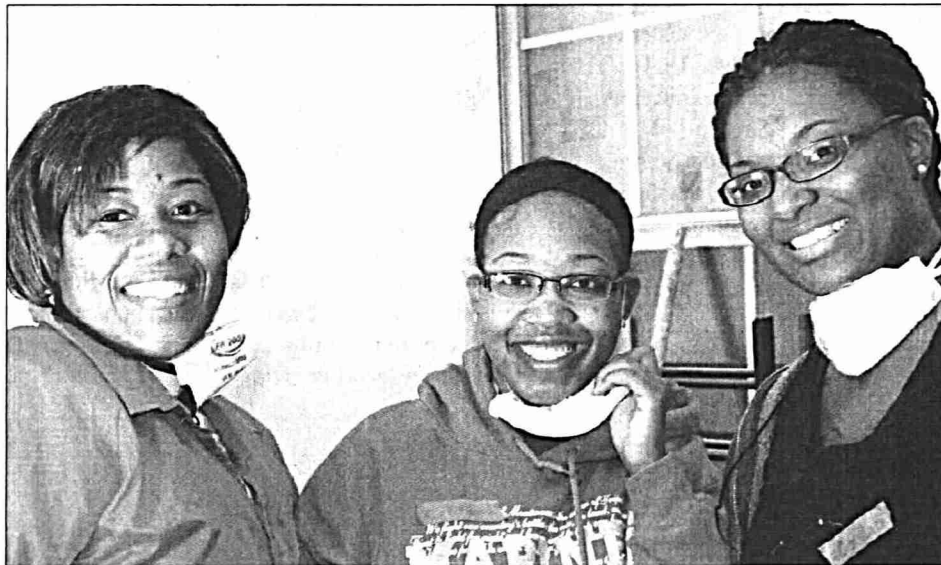




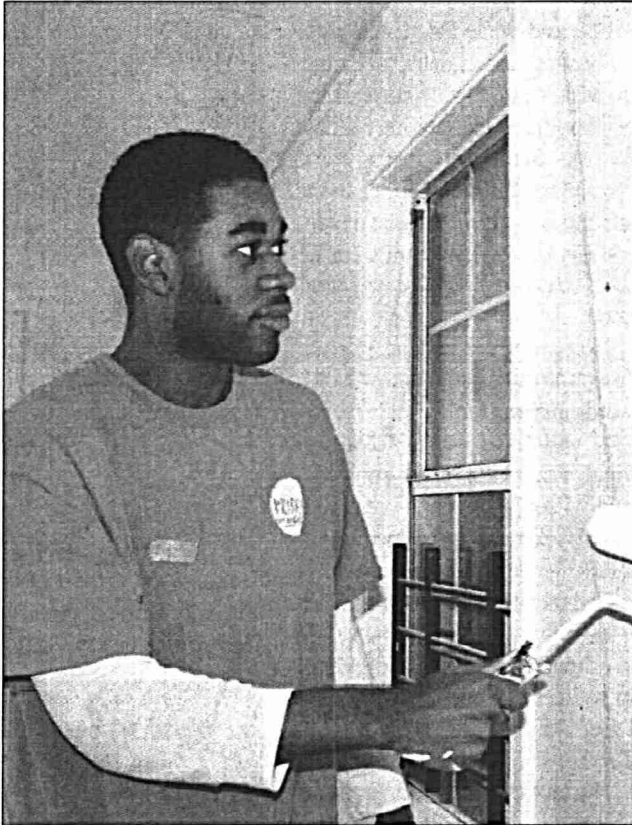
**Shamberi Horton helping with interior painting at a Habitat house on Glendale**



**Volunteer Crystal Johnson working at the Glendale site**



**Working at the Glendale Street site are (from left) T'knesha James, LaToria McDonald, and Candice Seals**



**Volunteer Justin Brown applies paint to interior walls on a Habitat house on Glendale Street**



**Mississippi College graduate student Otesa Wilson putting on a fresh coat of paint on a Habitat house on Glendale**



**Belhaven University cheerleader Ella McKnight at Habitat house on Maple Street**