

**Sumter South Carolina  
Sumter Habitat for Humanity  
Collegiate Challenge 2008**

To: Group Leaders  
Fm: Derek Burrell/Executive Director, Sumter HFH

Hello! I trust this document finds you all well and excited about your upcoming trip to our community! Hopefully we have already been in touch with all of you regarding Collegiate Challenge 2008, but I wanted to take the time to send you some more information regarding our Habitat for Humanity affiliate, our community and the work we do here.

This is our 18<sup>th</sup> year of hosting Collegiate Challenge, and we have hosted several thousand students from colleges and universities from as far away as Canada, Washington State and North Dakota. Our affiliate was founded in 1987 and in the past 20 years has built 102 homes in the Sumter community.

Sumter is located approximately in the geographic center of the state, relatively close to the coast and the mountains. The population of Sumter County is approximately 110,000 people, with about 53,000 living within the city limits. Sumter's economy is a mixture of agricultural, heavy industry and military. In addition to a number of farms and agricultural processing plants, we also have industry such as a Eaton, Cooper Tools, and two Caterpillar plants here. Sumter is the home to Shaw Air Force Base, housing over 4 squadrons of F-16 fighter planes. Shaw is the largest military installation in the state. Sumter is home to Swan Lake Iris Gardens, one of the most frequented tourist destinations in the state, known for its flowers and trees in the spring and summer months. For more information on our community, I suggest you visit these web sites for information and links to areas of interest in our community. Please visit [www.sumterchamber.com](http://www.sumterchamber.com) or [www.theitem.com](http://www.theitem.com)

**HOUSING**

Each of our groups will be housed in area churches, as we do each year. We will be contacting each group about the specifics of your housing.

In addition to having sleeping and eating facilities, there are also basic bathroom facilities for your use. The church has kitchen facilities and refrigeration space for some of your supplies. Sleeping will be on the floors, so each participant will need to bring sleeping bags, pillows, and so forth for their comfort. All the church facilities are comfortably heated and cooled and are conveniently located and just minutes from our worksite. It should take no more than 7 or 8 minutes to get to and from our worksite from any church location that we use.

We ask that each group **ALWAYS** maintain their housing arrangements as neatly as possible and to take care and keep clean these facilities. The only way we are able to

continually do this year after year is through the support of our church friends. You are expected to have all housing facilities fully cleaned prior to your departure.

SHOWER facilities are provided at the Sumter YMCA, 50 Willow Drive. Again, this is very convenient to your housing facilities. Sumter has one of the newest and largest YMCA facilities in the region, and has been providing showers for our student visitors for years. Showers will need to be taken each day immediately upon completion of work.

### **FOOD**

During your stay here, we promise you will be well fed! ☺ A number of area restaurants, churches and individuals will be providing a number of your meals during the week.

These are the meals Sumter Habitat for Humanity will be responsible for:

Sunday Evening Meal @ Location TBA  
Monday Lunch  
Tuesday Lunch  
Wednesday Lunch  
Wednesday Evening Meal @A local church  
Thursdays Lunch  
Thursday Evening Meal @ Location TBA  
Friday Lunch

Your group will be responsible for:

All breakfasts. Please keep it simple (Donuts, cereal, milk, juice, etc.)  
Monday Evening Meal  
Tuesday Evening Meal  
Friday Evening Meal

Each church does have basic kitchen facilities and utensils for your use. You are expected to keep all facilities clean **AS** you use them. If you would like to go out, there are also a variety of restaurants in Sumter (local restaurants and chains such as Red Lobster, Applebees, Ruby Tuesday, etc). Many of these restaurants can be found on the web links I gave you, and are also located very close by to the church where you will be staying.

All lunches will be served at the worksite. **YOU MUST INFORM US IMMEDIATELY IF THERE ARE ANY VEGETARIANS IN YOUR GROUP, SO WE CAN MAKE PROPER ARRANGEMENTS.**

There are many grocery stores very close to each of these churches. If you would like, you may purchase your needed food supplies once you arrive here.

## WORK

Well, it's the real reason you are coming here, right? ☺

As I mentioned earlier, Sumter Habitat for Humanity has built 102 homes in the past 20 years. We plan to build several more this year. For Collegiate Challenge this year, we plan to begin construction on two new homes, located in our new Habitat Subdivision, Fuller Gardens, which will be the "home" to 54 new Habitat for Humanity houses over the next 5 to 6 years.

These homes will be located on Habitat Court or Habitat Drive and will be started with the groups that will be here the week of February 24. Once framed and trussed, the homes will need to be sheathed, roofed and vinyl siding added over the next few weeks, which will be what other groups will be doing until the final group departs. We will have plenty of work for each group to do for the ensuing weeks. You will meet the homeowner families for these home. Hopefully they will be able to work with your group some and will certainly spend some time visiting with you in the evenings.

Since most of the work during Collegiate Challenge will be of the "outside" nature, we have contingency plans IF it rains. Organizations such as the YMCA, Crisis Closet and a local soup kitchen always have needs for volunteers, so we can find you other volunteer work to do if the weather is too bad to work outside. However, please understand that we have no control over the weather, and extremely rainy or wet days may mean that we will not be able to work at the construction site.

Sumter Habitat for Humanity has many tools so it's not really necessary for you to bring anything. However, we do encourage you to bring your own tool belts, hammers and tape measures if you wish. The temperature will vary widely that time of year. You will want to dress in layers as it is generally cooler in the mornings and warms up as the day goes on. You can expect highs in the 60's to 70's that time of year, although one never knows what Mother Nature may throw us. You will also want to wear sunscreen, as it will be **VERY** easy for you to get sunburned in a short amount of time. Heavy workboots or thick-soled shoes are also encouraged, as are clothes you do not mind getting dirty or messed up. Our worksite tends to become very muddy after a rain, so boots are definitely recommended.

Workdays will begin promptly at 8:00 am each morning, Monday – Friday and will conclude by around 3:30 – 3:45 each day. Being a Christian-based organization, we begin each day with a brief devotion as well as a mandatory safety briefing.

There are several key contact people that you will get to know during your stay in Sumter.

We are currently in the process of hiring an Americorps Volunteer who will be your primary contact and guide during your stay. They will be the primary person who will be responsible for getting your group where they need to be, when they need to be....and will also be in charge of your housing, meals and so forth while you are here. You will



contribution to help us fund and build these homes. You may bring your contribution with you instead of mailing it ahead of time if you wish.

### **Other things to know:**

The only reason why Sumter Habitat for Humanity has been able to host students year after year is through the generosity of the citizens, churches and organizations in community. While here, we ask that you remember that you are serving as “ambassadors” for Sumter Habitat for Humanity. When the community sees you, they are in effect, seeing our ministry and the work we do. Remember that even though you are only here for a week, your actions will leave an impression and imprint on our community for a long time to come. Having said that; we ask that you always be on your best behavior, whether at the work site, at the churches, or anywhere in the public.

Please note: ALCOHOL will **NOT** be tolerated. No alcoholic beverages are allowed at **ANY** church facility or worksite. The same goes for any illegal drug use. Please remember, that you are guests in these facilities, and we expect you to abide by these rules.

No smoking is permitted inside **ANY** church facility.

Failure to comply with these simple rules will result in Habitat asking you to immediately leave the Collegiate Challenge program.

**You will receive a complete orientation to Sumter Habitat, our community and the work you will be doing on Sunday night, after your arrival and dinner here.**

We have also attached two pieces of documentation EACH volunteer MUST sign prior to beginning Collegiate Challenge:

1. A Sumter Habitat Insurance and Liability form
2. A Collegiate Challenge Participants Covenant form

These forms need to be completed prior to your departure and can be brought with you. They can be filled out and given to our Americorps volunteer upon your arrival.

### **TIME OFF**

Some groups inquire about taking a half day or a day off while here to sightsee, visit the beach or relax. Although we love you working each day (☺), we don't mind if you take either a half day or full day off, with several ground rules: One, we absolutely need to know this information at least 2 weeks prior to your arrival here so we can plan supervision schedules and cancel meals if necessary. PLEASE do not ask for a day off once you arrive or ask to change that day to another after you are here. It makes it very difficult to reschedule meals and supervision at the last minute, and we wish to avoid having this happen. Secondly, we generally cancel evening meals if you do not work that

day. If you take off on a Wednesday or Thursday and go to the beach, you will probably not be back in time for evening dinner, so please note on those days you will be responsible for your meals. Most groups that have taken time off in the past have done so by taking a half day off on Friday after lunchtime.

I hope this has answered any questions you have about your upcoming trip! Please don't hesitate to contact us by phone or email if you do have questions additional questions. We will be in contact with each of you very soon to finalize your travel and arrival plans.

We are excited about seeing you, and look forward to meeting you soon! We're excited about Collegiate Challenge 2008, and are glad you are going to be a part of our excitement!

Derek Burress  
Executive Director

**Scroll down for Collegiate Challenge Covenant and  
Waiver & Liability Forms**

**Sumter Habitat for Humanity, Sumter South Carolina  
Collegiate Challenge Participants Covenant**

I, (name)\_\_\_\_\_ covenant with Sumter Habitat for Humanity on (date)\_\_\_\_\_ as a worker in the Collegiate Challenge program. As my covenant with Sumter Habitat for Humanity, I have read and commit to the following:

I commit myself to being physically prepared to work up to 8 hours per day.

The safety of all participants is a paramount concern. I commit to following all rules, regulations and policies established by the leadership of this program.

If I am injured while participating in the program, I will notify the construction supervisors or AMERICORP workers as soon as possible.

I understand personal articles I bring to the site are my individual responsibility. Sumter Habitat for Humanity is not responsible for replacing lost or stolen property.

I understand that all participants are encouraged to join the spiritual life of the project by attending morning devotions.

I understand that I represent Sumter Habitat for Humanity to the community and to individuals I meet. Recognizing this:

I will abstain from all alcoholic beverages at the worksites or accommodation locations and abstain from all illegal drugs for the duration of the time I am a part of the program.

I will exercise consideration and respect for others.

I will resolve conflicts in a non-violent manner.

I will not bring any type of weapon.

I will maintain appropriate standards of personal hygiene.

I will exercise environmental responsibility.

I understand that I am responsible for my own transportation to and from the worksite.

I understand that if I break this covenant, I may be asked to leave the Sumter Collegiate Challenge Program immediately.

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
COLLEGE OR WORKGROUP

**Sumter Habitat for Humanity, Inc.**  
**Assumption of Risk, Release of Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement**  
**THIS IS A LEGAL DOCUMENT. READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING**

I have been made aware and understand that during my participation in the building of houses and in those activities associated with the building of houses conducted by Sumter Habitat for Humanity, Inc. (“Habitat”), (“the Building Activities”), and in travel to participate in the Building Activities that these risks include, but are not limited to, death, serious neck and spinal injuries which may result in complete or partial paralysis, brain damage, serious injury to internal organs, serious injury to my musculoskeletal system, loss of my hand(s), toe(s), arm(s), leg(s), severe lacerations and cuts which may result in serious and permanent injury, serious injury to and loss of my eye(s), ear(s), or teeth, and serious injury to other aspects of my general health and well-being. I also understand that the risks in participating in the Building Activities include not only the foregoing physical injuries, but also impairment of my future abilities to earn a living, to engage in other business, social and recreational activities, and generally enjoy life. Understanding these risks, I state that I am physically fit to participate in the Building Activities.

I understand that these injuries may result from certain dangers and risks which are present and which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- \*Use of tools and equipment;
- \*Falling objects from work being conducted overhead;
- \*Lifting and carrying of building tools, equipment and building materials;
- \*Falls onto the work surface or falls from elevated work areas; and
- \*Use of building materials containing hazardous chemicals or sharp-pointed surfaces.

In consideration of my being permitted to participate in the Building Activities, and as a condition of the right to participate in the Building Activities, I personally assume all risks incident to such activities. I also waive and release and forever discharge Habitat and any of its employees or agents from all liabilities, losses, damages or costs of any nature which may arise in connection with my travel to or participation in such activities (including rescue activities with the Building Activities), whether caused by the negligence of Habitat, its employees or agents, or caused by some other means. Further, I hereby agree not to file suit against Habitat or any of its employees. Third and finally, I agree to indemnify and hold Habitat and its employees harmless from all liabilities, losses, damages or costs if participation in the Building Activities (including rescue activities associated with the Building Activities), whether caused by the negligence of Habitat or its employees or agents, or caused by some other means.

I have carefully read this document, fully understand its contents and sign it voluntarily. I further state that I am \_\_\_\_\_ years old and competent to sign this document. This document shall bind me, my heirs and personal representatives.

**OVER**

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Crew \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

I am the parent or legal guardian of the participant who has signed above and who is under 18 years of age. I have carefully read this document, fully understand its contents, and sign it voluntarily. I agree to indemnify and to hold Habitat, its employees or agents harmless for any liability arising out of claims which may arise from my child's participation in the Building Activities.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Parent or  
Guardian \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_ (if participant is under 18 years of age)

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

**My emergency contact person during my time with Sumter Habitat for Humanity is:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Daytime) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_