



2017

REFERRAL AGENCY MANUAL

NORTHEAST

Providing Christ-centered missions
that serve people in need and
promote spiritual growth and
leadership development in youth and young adults



U.M. ARMY VISION

Continue to grow in ministry with God and become the hands and voice of Christ while receiving guidance from the following core principles:

- We are a God-led, volunteer, youth-focused organization.
- We believe God changes lives through the U.M. ARMY experience.
- We believe in increasing the number of lives touched in a planned and responsible way.
- We believe in being proactive in protecting the persons we touch, the environment and the corporate organization.
- We believe program operation can be accomplished with hard work, compassion and honesty.
- We believe in developing well-trained program leadership.
- We believe that all aspects of the U.M. ARMY organization will be managed with integrity.

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History of U.M. ARMY

U.M. ARMY is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation organized and operated for charitable purposes. Started in 1979, thirty-six youth and adults from three Houston churches held the first U.M. ARMY work program in Athens, TX. Numbers of participants are now over 4,000 with more than 1500 work sites to be completed every summer. Various state agencies such as the United Way, Senior Citizens organization, Visiting Nurses, etc. provide referrals.

In 2002, a new chapter was formed to operate programs in the Southwest Texas Conference area; and in 2003, a chapter was established in the Northeast Jurisdiction with its home office currently in Pennsylvania. Then in 2013, a chapter was established North/Northwest Texas. U.M. ARMY continues to look for ways to expand our services throughout the US.

U.M. ARMY volunteers preview work sites to determine suitability before they are assigned to work teams. Common projects include building and repairing wheel chair ramps, handrails, porches, windows, steps, roofs, and floors, as well as yard work and painting. In addition, emphasis is placed on visiting with those being helped, sharing a lunchtime meal and an evening dinner with all clients.

Volunteer participants arrive at their assigned host city on Sunday afternoon, work Monday through Friday, and leave on Saturday. They sleep on the floor in a local host church, help fix their own meals, and clean the facility daily. In addition to giving up a week of their time, volunteers pay registration fees to cover meals, program activities, and the costs of building materials. The adult volunteer staff includes a Director, Safety Coordinator, Kitchen Coordinator, Program Coordinator, Site Coordinator, Tool/Materials Coordinator, and Administrative Coordinator. Field staff is made up of Color Group Leaders and Work Team Adults. There are approximately 3 work teams for every Color Group Leader. Each individual work team is composed of 4 - 5 youth and 1 adult.

A typical day at U.M. ARMY begins with a 7:00 AM wake-up, followed by a devotional and breakfast. Teams work from 8:00 AM till 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. The teams then return, shower, and have dinner and an evening worship program. Lights go out around 10:30 PM each evening.

Work Philosophy

- ❖ Preparation
- ❖ Safety
- ❖ Teamwork
- ❖ Leadership Development in Teens
- ❖ Servant – Nothing in Return
- ❖ Free for Client

We pay to offer others what they may not have without us. When we leave – quality of life has been improved. Our work is the vehicle for God's love to be shared with people, regardless of race, religion or gender.

Work programs provide meaningful opportunities for Christians to put their faith to work. Young people discover the importance of loving with actions, not just words. Participants realize the power of God's love as they provide practical assistance to their neighbors. Through challenging experiences, young people and adults learn what it means to be a servant.

U.M. ARMY youth and adults work together to provide repair and construction work on porches, windows, handrails, roofs, floors, ceilings, steps, and other areas of need. They also paint and do yard work. U.M. ARMY attends to the greatest need(s) at each site as possible.

Clients are invited to provide any materials they wish, so they may feel part of the work being done. U.M. ARMY will supply all other materials it can.

While time, resources and ability may keep participants from doing all they want for their clients, work teams leave knowing they have brought some improvements along with the message of God's love to each site. In fact, U.M. ARMY stresses visitation with clients as perhaps the most important aspect of each team's efforts.

Funding

U.M. ARMY is a Non-Profit 501 (c)(3) corporation. There is no paid staff in the programs. Everyone is a volunteer. Participant's fees and various donations fund U.M. ARMY.

Many companies provide matching grants for volunteer services performed by their employees. We are especially grateful for those volunteers who take the time to apply for these matching grants in the name of U.M. ARMY.

Any additional donations or contributions will allow each chapter to reach out to touch the lives of more people and are greatly appreciated. Please explore our website for additional information and ways to support this mission organization: www.umarmy.org

If you are aware of funding opportunities for organizations such as U.M. ARMY Northeast, please contact us:

Jennifer Vastardis
U.M. ARMY – Northeast
124 Reveille Road
Wayne, PA 19087

General Information

U.M. ARMY is an exciting, growing, youth ministry spreading across the nation. Youth and adults provide home repairs for those unable to help themselves. They experience work, fellowship, worship and fun daily. Participants say they learn more about God, others, and themselves:

“A nine year old girl took hold of our hearts. She needed attention and love. She touched my heart with her smile, her willingness to help us and her tears as we pulled away. I learned that an ounce of love, patience and kindness can change a person’s life. This little girl changed my life; I hope I made a difference in hers.”

Clients share their experience:

“My wife and I are a thankful for the beautiful job you all did painting our home. I really enjoyed talking with you and may the Lord always bless and keep you in His care.”

“I thank my God for you because of the grace God has given you in Christ Jesus. Thank you for the joy peace and love you and the girls and boys brought into my home, thank you for the services rendered. The girls and boys were great.”

Groups travel at least one hour from home and meet others at a United Methodist church where they spend a week working in the community. Participating youth groups pool their resources of leadership, experience, tools, transportation and materials.

SAFETY

Safety is a high priority of U.M. ARMY. A Safety Coordinator is assigned to each program to monitor and remind participants daily about safety. Participants are expected to adhere to thoughtful, safe behavior in every aspect of the work program.

ACTIVITIES

Each evening’s program consists of recreation (swimming, square dancing, etc.), share time, worship and fellowship. Share time provides a chance to reflect on the day’s events in the light of the Christian faith. Worshipping God is a vital ingredient of every day.

PROJECTS

Work referrals are provided by various agencies including the Department of Human Services, United Way, and local agencies. Common projects include building and repairing wheelchair/handicap assistance ramps, handrails, porches, windows, roofs and floors, as well as yard work, painting and visitation. U.M. ARMY adult volunteers preview work sites to determine suitability before they are assigned to work groups. Due to size, scope and safety issues the volunteer students cannot accomplish some projects.

TRANSPORTATION

Each participating church and their volunteers provide their own transportation to, from and during the mission week. They pay for all costs of vehicles they bring, including trucks and trailers.

LODGING

Participants stay in classrooms at a local church facility and shower at local schools. Programs may also be held at a United Methodist Retreat Center.

TOOLS

Participating churches bring tools that are checked into the tool shed upon arrival and checked out to work teams as needed. Most churches collect tools from their members.

FOOD

Work teams assist Kitchen Coordinators in preparing and serving food from the church kitchen. The meals are nutritious and adequate for hardworking people. Sack lunches are provided for the work site. Local area churches and host church donate some meals. Additional food donations are often made by other various organizations and local businesses.

SCHEDULE

<i>6:50 am</i>	<i>Rise and Shine</i>
<i>7:15 am</i>	<i>Morning devotional</i>
<i>7:30 am</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>
<i>8:00 am</i>	<i>Gather tools</i>
<i>8:15 am</i>	<i>Leave for work site</i>
<i>12:00 pm</i>	<i>Lunch and devotional at work site with the client</i>
<i>4:30 pm</i>	<i>Return to the host church, shower and free time</i>
<i>6:00 pm</i>	<i>Dinner and free time</i>
<i>7:15 pm</i>	<i>Recreation, share time, site assignments, worship, fellowship</i>
<i>11:00 pm</i>	<i>Quiet time</i>

U.M. ARMY Group Rules

U.M. ARMY is for those willing to do plain, honest, sweaty, tiresome work to help others!

Few rules are needed since participants join with common goals of work, service and Christian fellowship. The rules are to enhance the work program experience and to continue the reputation of U.M. ARMY as a caring, effective group of people.

It is impossible to cover every rule of safety and appropriate behavior, but the rules listed below are a few of the most basic ones necessary for a safe, enriching experience:

1. Participants will comply with their covenant.
2. Only registered U.M. ARMY participants may attend the program. No outside guests or children may attend with a participant.
3. Conduct will be appropriate for a church activity.
4. Participants will conduct themselves in a thoughtful manner at all times and will abide by the safety rules.
5. Participants will follow the directions of the program leadership.
6. Possession or consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs, or weapons is strictly prohibited.
7. Participants may leave the program area only with the permission of the Director.
8. No one may enter the dorm area of the opposite sex.
9. Everyone participates in all events.
10. Participants will refrain from use of tobacco products during program.
11. Radios, iPods, mp3 players or other personal electronic equipment is not allowed.
Adults are encouraged to have a cell phone for U.M. ARMY business only.
12. Everyone must dress conservatively and appropriately for the task at hand.
13. Vehicle rules:
 - a. No youth participant may ride as a passenger in a vehicle driven by anyone under the age of 21 other than in an emergency situation.
 - b. No one may ride in the back of a truck or trailer.
 - c. All safe driving procedures must be observed and drivers must have a current drivers license and present proof of minimum liability insurance
 - d. Drivers are asked to reduce distractions while driving to ensure the safety of all participants; leveraging their navigator should a phone call or play list need to be accessed.
14. No youth is allowed to drive their own vehicle to or during the mission week.

U.M. ARMY reserves the right to determine any inappropriate behavior and to send a participant home in disciplinary cases.

THINGS NEEDED - COMMUNITY

Sometimes Referral Agencies are able to help us identify resources in the community that may help us in our Mission Week. We list some of our needs here please know these are in no way your responsibility. However, if your agency can assist us in attaining any of these services, please contact the Director:

- Showers** – Mission work is hot, dirty work, and our work teams shower daily. We need a facility where 60 to 100 people can shower every afternoon Monday through Friday. Schools are usually available for this service. Health and sports clubs may also be available.
- Trash Service** – very necessary, and very expensive. Getting this donated or provided at a reduced rate is a real blessing, and if you have any contacts or can provide any assistance in this area, we will be extremely grateful. In most cases we need a 20 cu. yd. or 40 cu. yd. container placed on church property for our work teams. Other options are a nearby landfill that will waive fees for us, city officials who will work to get this donated or a local business owner with a large container who will allow us to use it.
- Evening Meals** – Providing an evening meal is a great project for a Sunday school class, a neighboring church, or possibly a Rotary Club (BBQ dinner). Teenagers love pizza, and donating a pizza dinner from a local pizza place is always a hit. At some of our locations we have seen all of the evening meals provided in one way or another. Your help here, whether one meal or many meals, would be of great help in our efforts to hold down expenses. We would be glad to make the contacts if you will let us know whom to call.

Contacts _____

- Snacks** – Same concept as above. Cookies, brownies, chips, fruit, peanuts, health bars, fruit bars - teenagers eat a lot! This is another great way for Sunday school classes or other churches to get involved, and helps us with our food budget.

Contacts _____

- Ice** – We use a lot of ice! Every work team packs sack lunches daily and puts them in an ice chest. And every work team takes several large containers of ice water every day. Sometimes businesses will donate ice. Some ice companies will supply a freezer and bag ice at a discounted rate, deliver and pick up the freezer. Any help here will help our budget.

Ice Company _____

- Building Materials** – Our biggest expense. If you have any contact at the local lumberyard or home improvement center, please let us know.

Contact _____

- Recreational Facilities** – When we are not working, we like to have a little fun. Evenings are time for recreation, and if you know a place that could accommodate our mission team for some fun and relaxation we would appreciate the suggestion. Possible activities are:
 - Swimming: _____
 - Bowling: _____
 - Skating: _____
 - Parks: _____
 - Square Dance Caller: _____
 - Other: _____

- Grocery Store:** one close to the church where an account for the week can be opened. Usually they will make a donation when the Kitchen Coordinator writes a letter.

- 24-Hour Photo Service:** This is usually available at a local drug store or supermarket.

- Phone Books and City/Area Maps:** These are usually available at your local Chamber of Commerce Office. Each color group and work team can use these as can the pre-site teams.

- Welcome signs:** Ask businesses and organizations to put welcome signs on the billboards and windows. This gets the community involved.

- Emergency/Medical Contacts:**
 - Local Hospital _____
 - Doctor _____
 - Dentist _____
 - EMS Services (if not 911) _____
 - Police/Sheriff _____

- City Officials (Mayor, City Manager, Council Members)**
 - Mayor _____
 - City Manager _____
 - Building Inspector _____
 - Others _____

Local Media Radio _____

TV _____

Newspaper _____

Projects for U.M. ARMY Participants

Projects That Can Be Done:

New Construction

Handicapped assistance and wheelchair ramps
Wooden porches
Enclosed porches
Small sheds

Maintenance:

Yard Work
Painting exterior and interior
Yard Clean-up
Gardening
House Cleaning

Home Repairs:

Steps
Handrails
Hanging Doors
Leaky roofs
Porches
Floorboards
Saggy floors
Window glass
Stuck windows and doors
Dry wall
Window and door screens
Shelving
Replace rotten wood
Screen doors
Outbuildings

Projects We Do NOT Do:

Plumbing including water, wastewater, heating or natural gas
Electrical components including but not limited to wiring, plugs, wall outlets & switches
New home construction or room additions
Major roof repairs
3rd story painting
Field and fencerow clearing
Major home modification
Appliance repair
Work on rental properties

REFERRAL AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

The following are some of the things that a referral agency needs to know prior to soliciting possible work sites.

- The resident must own property. Commercial property, rental units and homes being prepared for sale do not qualify for U.M. ARMY assistance.
- U.M. ARMY will only accept jobs that they feel capable of doing well that are safe, within our budget, and time frames.
- Owner should be on premises at all times while work teams are present. The owner is encouraged to visit with the youth while they work or eat lunch.
- U.M. ARMY is fully insured and a Certificate of Liability will be made available upon request.
- The Homeowner is asked not to supply water or food. The work team will bring food and water and will leave to find a rest room when necessary.
- Homeowners must realize that U.M. ARMY workers are non-skilled volunteers and therefore are unable to guarantee their work in the same way a hired contractor would. They endeavor to leave things in a much better condition than they found them.
- Projects requiring building permits will be completed in accordance with the requirements of local building codes. U.M. ARMY will assist homeowners in obtaining necessary permits in the homeowners' name.
- It is U.M. ARMY's mission to help those in a financial or physical condition that hinders them from doing the job themselves or hiring others to do it for them. As part the process, we attempt to determine those clients that have the greatest need.
- In addition to the actual work, emphasis is placed on visiting with those being helped. Therefore, we will attempt to help as many clients as possible during our stay in your area. But we cannot guarantee that we will be able to help everyone requesting assistance.
- U.M. ARMY does not accept payment for their services from a client. Clients may donate building materials if they wish but it is not required unless they are requesting a specific item be used on their job.