

[Day 1: The Adventure Begins](#)

March 9, 2014 By [Lindie \(Edit\)](#)



Despite the dreaded spring forward time change, every member of the Collegiate Challenge group arrived on campus ready to go at 9 am this morning. Maybe not all bright eyed and bushy tailed, but we were ready to pack into three mini vans and head to Spokane, Washington for a week of working with Habitat for Humanity.

The drive took us first through the Gorge and then through eastern Washington. But what we drove through was not the focus. Our minds were set on getting to know each member of the 15 person travel party. To ensure this, we stopped every two hours and did a car scramble; each person switched cars so that they were with a different group of people every time. Along with getting to know each other, different music choices, topics of conversations, personalities, and moods would come with each switch.

Upon arrival in beautiful Spokane we headed to Whitworth University where we faced our first challenge of the trip; figuring out their school cafeteria so that we could eat dinner. Luckily finding the building was the easiest part, figuring out what was being served and finding a table to sit at proved a bit more challenging. But after finally settling on some chicken (followed by a delicious ice cream sundae) and piling eight people into a four person booth we had eaten dinner and were ready to see where we would be sleeping for the next six days.

Prior to leaving for the trip, we had been told we were going to be spending the nights in a church. Upon arrival at the church we realized we were actually going to be staying in a castle complete with kitchen, bathrooms, Ping-Pong table, and a gym. Yes, this church-castle has it all and will definitely be a fun place to enjoy our free time at. Don't worry, I'm sure these future adventures will come up in this blog throughout the week.

All in all, I would say that day one was pretty successful. We made it to Spokane, started to get to know each other, and are now tucked into our sleeping bags ready to rest up for our first day of work tomorrow.

Until tomorrow,

Erin Dees (CoChallenger #3) and the rest of the crew.

[Day Two: Tile Overload](#)

March 10, 2014 By [Lindie \(Edit\)](#)

Today was the first of working as a group at the Habitat store in Spokane. Upon arrival all we knew was we would be working till four but we really had no idea what to expect. We were given a brief summary of how the store works and its contribution to Habitat. It is set up as a regular store where anyone can go in to purchase “Home Depot” like goods at half price with all the proceeds going towards building Habitat houses. After the briefing we were put right to work.

Initially the tile section was very disorganized making it difficult for customers to shop for tiles. We had to use pallet jacks to move literally tons of tiles from the old shelving unit outside and then back in onto the new organized shelving system we put in place. It was a lot of manual labor, constantly moving racks, organizing tile and lifting boxes.

We took a lunch break around noon. Making our way to the conference room, we finally got to sit down for the first time in 3 hours. We ate our lunches while solving riddles about swordfish, gold fish and playing “AROUND” the world.

The day continued with more pallets, tiles, and grout. We continued to organize the tile racks and by the we could all see the impact that we made at the store and how grateful the employees were.

It may not get 2 million retweets but we like to think our selfie is comparable to the Oscar’s.



We headed back to the church for a quick nap before heading to Whitworth for dinner. We looked like true Pirates navigating our way around the cafeteria. Dinner was followed by our nightly reflection where we discussed the question “what is service? How is it different than volunteering?” We reflected on our days work and talked about our expectations for the upcoming days.

We finished off the night by playing “the fun game” which was suggested by Sommer . It is a combination of Catch Phrase and Charades and is always guarantees a good laugh.

Overall, the first day of work was a success and we look forward to our first day on a building site tomorrow.

Until tomorrow,

Erin Dees (CoChallanger #3), Sara Bindl (CoChallanger #6), Sarah McDonagh (CoChallanger #11), and crew

Day 3: Bring on the Construction

March 11, 2014 By [Lindie \(Edit\)](#)

The day started with a 6:30 wakeup call by Caitlin and Shelly. After making breakfast and packing a lunch we were able to get to the work site by 9 to meet the Habitat crew who would assign us our tasks for the day. We were broken up into three different groups, each working on a different house doing different tasks. Some of these tasks included measuring, cutting, and installing trim, putting in insulation, painting, and digging a trench. Although most of us had limited experience in construction, the habitat crew was able to give us direction and walk us through each task so that we could learn and do them to the best of our abilities.



Like yesterday, today was filled with a lot of fun moments and getting to know each of the members on the trip. From Jose ripping his pants down the back during the trench build, to the delirious laughs at dinner each moment has brought this group closer together.

Tonight we look forward to reflection and an early bedtime so that we can wake up tomorrow morning ready to tackle another day's work.

Until tomorrow,
Sarah McDonagh (CoChallenger #11), Sara Bindl (CoChallenger #6), Erin Dees (CoChallenger #3), and the rest of the crew.

Day 4: A Picture is Worth 1,000 Words

March 12, 2014 By [Lindie \(Edit\)](#)

Some times it's hard to put all our days activities into words so today we'll tell you our story through pictures...

Shelly and Dees spent the day installing insulation!



Caitlin and Sommer climbed onto the roof to get some sun and add some finishing touches to the siding.



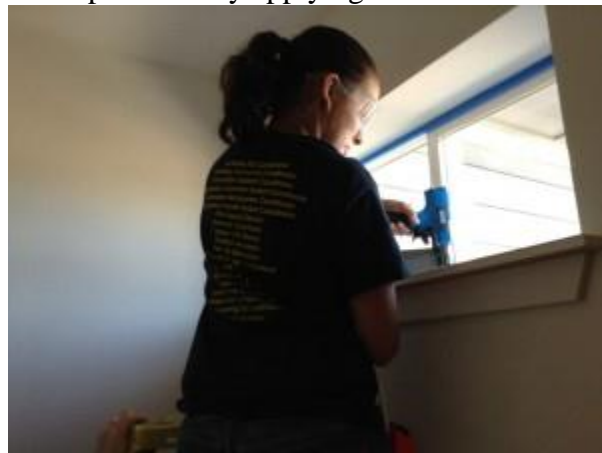
Jose, Sarah, and Pat all got a little dirt digging trenches today.



Everyone enjoyed eating lunch on the comfortable driveway!



Carmon spent the day applying trim and window sills



Dinner was a huge success as everyone finished off multiple plates of food!



We hope these pictures help you understand our day a little better!

Until tomorrow,

Erin Dees (CoChallenger #3), Sara Bindl (CoChallenger #6), and the crew.

Day 5

March 13, 2014 By [Jordan \(Edit\)](#)



Today was our third day with Habitat and we were split into two groups, one at the original job site, and the other in South Hill. The group at Deer Park did a bunch of odd jobs around the work site including siding, insulation, foaming seams, and more digging. We got a surprise at lunch from the future owner of the Habitat house we working on who brought all the volunteers authentic Moldovan food. It was an amazing experience to meet the family that will soon be able to live in the house we've been working on this week. The second group went to a different house where they caulked and painted the outside of the house. We were able to have dinner with the parishioners of The First Presbyterian Church we've been staying at this week, which was very delicious including green cake in spirit of St. Patrick's Day.



Tomorrow will be our final day working with Habitat for Humanity, this week went by so fast. Hopefully tomorrow will be the icing on the cake and we can pull together and do as much as we can with the time we have left to make a difference in this community.

Side note: The Spokesman Review did a cool article on one of the families who is moving into one of the houses we are helping to build! Read it [here!](#)

Until tomorrow,

Sarah McDonagh (CoChallenger #11), Sara Bindl (CoChallenger #11), Erin Dees (CoChallenger #3) and the Crew

Day 6: The Final Day of Work

March 14, 2014 By [Jordan \(Edit\)](#)



Hugs, thanks, and tears wrapped up the final day on the Habitat site today. It was a bitter sweet end to a week that none of us will ever forget. New friends were made, handy skills were learned, perceptions changed, and we helped continue the building process for eight homes.

One night and a seven hour drive are all that stand between us and our own beds and a nice long shower. As much as we look forward to these amenities, the time we have left will be cherished. Very rarely does a group of strangers bond like we have, and we look forward to enjoying each other's company in our last reflection and hopefully have a few laughs in one last game night.





Thanks to all that made this trip possible, it has definitely been one for the books.

Signing off,

Erin Dees (CoChallenger #3), Sarah McDonagh (CoChallenger #11), Sara Bindl (CoChallenger #6), and The Crew.