



# **REFERRAL AGENCY MANUAL**

Provide 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 camp operation can be accomplished with hard work, compassion and honesty.
- We believe in developing well-trained camp leadership.
- We believe that all aspects of the U.M. ARMY organization will be managed with integrity.

# **RESOURCE MANUAL FOR REFERRAL AGENCIES**

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# U.M. ARMY INFORMATION SHEET

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 camp in Athens, TX. Numbers of participants are now over 4,000, with over 1500 work sites to be completed every summer. Various state agencies provide many referrals of work needed, and in many areas offer extensive support. In addition, referrals are received from the United Way, Senior Citizens, Visiting Nurses, Meals on Wheels and various community service organizations.

Numerous state, regional, and city awards have been given to U.M. ARMY.

- 2002 – Volunteer Lifetime Achievement Award,  
Texas Department of Human Services
- 1995 – Exemplary State and Local Award,  
Center for Public Productivity at Newark Campus of  
Rutgers State University of New Jersey
- 1991 – Texas Long Term Care Volunteer Award
- 1989 – Texas Governor's Certificate of Volunteer Service
- 1987 – Texas Governor's Certificate of Volunteer Service
- 1987 – Volunteer Service Award, Texas Department of Human Services

In 2002, a new chapter was formed to operate camps in the Southwest Texas Conference area; and in 2003, a chapter was established in the Northeast Jurisdiction with its home office in Connecticut. Northwest Texas, North Texas, Florida, Louisiana and Arkansas are other areas where U. M. ARMY has explored national expansion.

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, who often feel lonely and neglected.

Volunteer participants arrive at their assigned host city on Sunday afternoon, work Monday through Friday, and leave on Saturday around noon. 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, T-shirts, program activities, and the costs of building materials. The adult base camp staff includes a Camp 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 program. Lights go out around 11:30 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 camps 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 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 camps. Everyone in camp is a volunteer. Camp participant's fees and various donations fund U.M. ARMY. The United Methodist Church also provides funding through grants and from the Conference Council of Youth Ministries.

Many large corporations 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.

Corporate donations for project related activities are another source of funding, and we often learn of these opportunities from our volunteers. If you are aware of funding opportunities such as these, please contact your local U.M. ARMY chapter or the national office.

In addition, each U.M. ARMY chapter has an annual fundraising campaign. Contact Lorraine in the Northeast Chapter to learn about the Shepherd's Club, Contact Jenny in the Southwest Texas Chapter to learn about the Hearts and Hammers Covenant Club, contact David in the Texas Conference Chapter to learn about the General's Club and contact Scott Atnip ([scottatnip@umarmy.org](mailto:scottatnip@umarmy.org)) to learn about supporting national growth.

Any additional donations or contributions will allow each chapter to reach out to touch the lives of more people and are greatly appreciated. Please contact your area Camp Director, chapter office or the National office listed at the beginning of this manual and let them know of sources that may be available.

## 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 my 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.

In 1979, 36 volunteers attended the first U.M. ARMY work camp in Athens, Texas. Since then, thousands of volunteers have participated in hundreds of work camps, helping several hundred families each year. U.M. ARMY has received several statewide volunteer service awards, numerous community awards and national recognition.

### SAFETY

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

### 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 some projects cannot be accomplished by the high school volunteer students.

## TRANSPORTATION

Each participating church and their volunteers provide their own transportation to, from and during camp. 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.

## 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. Some meals are donated by local area churches and host church. Additional food donations are usually made by other various organizations and local businesses.

## SCHEDULE

A typical day:

<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</i>
<i>4:30 pm</i>	<i>Return to camp, shower free time</i>
<i>6:00 pm</i>	<i>Supper 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 camp 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 (who have completed 9th grade) may attend the work camp. 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 camp leadership.
6. Possession or consumption of alcohol, illegal drugs, or weapons is strictly prohibited.
7. Participants may leave base camp area only with the permission of the Camp 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 camp.
11. Radios, CD players, mp3 players or other personal electronic equipment is not allowed, including cell phones for youth. 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 where the adult cannot operate the vehicle and no other adult is on site to drive.
  - 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 insurance
14. No youth is allowed to drive their own vehicle to or during camp.

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

## THINGS NEEDED - COMMUNITY

***We ask the host church to help us identify persons who can help with the following items. If your agency can assist the host church or us in attaining any of these services, please contact the Camp Director:***

- ☐ **Showers** – Mission work is hot, dirty work, and our work teams shower daily. We need a facility where 60 to 130 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 here 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 camps 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 who 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 pull at the local lumber yard 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

## 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  
Floor boards  
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  
Roofing (if too high, steep or weak)  
New home construction or room additions  
3rd story painting  
Field and fence row clearing  
Major home modification  
Appliance repair  
Electrical wiring  
No Rental Property

## REFERRAL AGENCY REQUIREMENTS

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

- ☐ Property must be owned by the resident.
- ☐ U.M. ARMY will only accept jobs that they feel capable of doing well, are safe, that are within their budget, and time frames. Jobs must be relatively safe for the youth to do short in duration. Typically, work teams will help 2-3 clients during the week.
- ☐ Owner should be on premises at all times while they are there. The owner is encouraged to visit with the youth while they work or eat lunch.
- ☐ Owner 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.
- ☐ Owners must realize that U.M. ARMY workers are non-skilled volunteers and therefore are unable to guarantee their work. They endeavor to leave things in a much better condition than they found them and attempt to complete all tasks.
- ☐ 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 of their process, we attempt to determine those clients that have the greatest needs.
- ☐ U.M. ARMY does not accept payment for their services from a client. They can only accept donations of materials to complete the job at a client's house