



Sandy Marksberry, one of many student volunteers at Mizzou, gives lots of love to Head Start kids.

# LEARNING BY HELPING



Nearly 1,100 Mizzou students devote an average of three hours a week of their spare time to help others. At the same time, they help themselves.

"In a tight money market, it's good to get experience," says Kathy Lang, the intern who runs the Center for Student Volunteer Action (CSVA). The majority of volunteers are juniors, seniors and graduate students who have realized that "volunteerism counts as a job," she says. "Somehow you've got to break that cycle of 'I can't get a job without experience'/'I can't get experience without a job.'"

But just like a job, a volunteer position involves a commitment that's not to be taken lightly by either the student or their supervisor. The experience should be mutually beneficial in terms of experience gained and services provided.

Lang actively recruits volunteers by speaking to some 5,000 students in classes at the beginning of each semester. She also helps students sort out their volunteer goals with referral and placement in Columbia's 80 social service agencies.

Students don't decide to volunteer for "just a simple reason," says Terry Chapman, PhD '80, former CSVA intern who wrote his dissertation on students' reasons for volunteering.

"It's a combination of trying their own wings and helping other people," Chapman says. "And that's real healthy — to help other people and help yourself."

Of the student volunteers Chapman surveyed, 85 percent volunteered in an area related to their career interests. They wanted an experience that would either help them choose a major or test one they had already chosen. Academic reasons — an opportunity to "learn by doing" — also entered into the students' decisions to volunteer.

Volunteering "opens up the door for learning," says Chapman. "Students are drawn into the world-at-large" with a chance to learn "something new about people and life."

While students may volunteer for a variety of complex reasons, one is quite simple: Volunteering is just plain fun.

Here's a look at how several students invest their volunteer energies. □

## 1 SWIMMING



A swimmer since she was a kid, Val Dietrich coaxes Anne Tillerna, 4, to get her face wet during a University Y swimming session.

## 2 CHARTING

Charting the growth of babies is Denise Halbe's favorite duty as a volunteer in the Women, Infants and Children's program, which supplements the diets of pregnant and nursing women, and children up to 5 years of age.

## 3 BROADCASTING

Broadcasting the news is just one of Linda Lenau's many responsibilities as news director of KOPN radio. Lenau also recruits and trains volunteers, which makes the journalism graduate student's volunteer position a 40-hour-a-week job. "It's stimulating to have volunteer work to go along with what you're working on at the University," she says.

## 4 DELIVERING

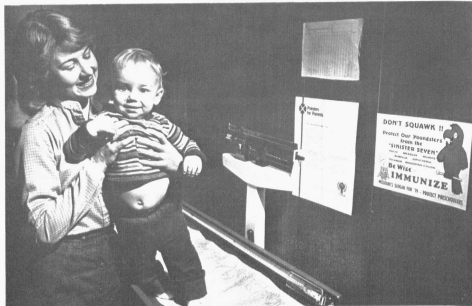
Delivering Meals on Wheels lunches and sack suppers to people like Lillie Stapleton is how Richard Gordon, a doctoral student, spends one lunch hour a week. "It seems like a petty thing at first" — delivering meals to the elderly, homebound and handicapped — "but it can mean so much to them," he says.

## 5 PROTECTING

Protecting Boone Countians from fire means rolling out of bed about three nights a week for Bill Greenblatt. "I want to be the first one there to help," the graduate student says.

## 6 PATROLLING

Patrolling with another officer or directing football game traffic are typical duties of reserve police officer Brian Kirchner. Nights range from boring to busy, says the veterinary microbiology graduate student.



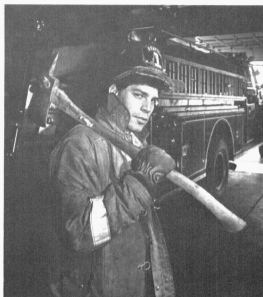
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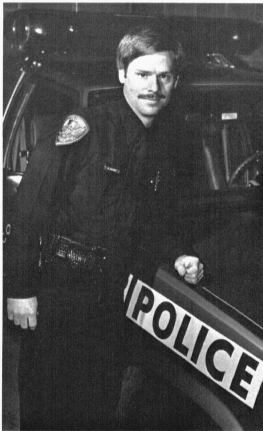
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