

# THE BLUE BANNER



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## UNCA students build houses for the needy

### Military deployments affect UNCA

Ginger McKnight  
News Reporter

Eight UNCA students and two campus ministers worked over spring break to build a house in Andrews, S.C. as a part of the Habitat for Humanity's Collegiate Challenge.

"I don't think a single person in our group really felt that we were sacrificing anything," said Jessie Shuman, a senior math and French major.

"We had so much fun and it was the most perfect weather. Eight hours work and a couple at the beach. It wasn't like we were dreading it at all. It was pretty nice."

Staff and students on the board of UNCA's Cooperative Campus Ministry chose the program and site for their spring break trip, which was open to all the students on campus.

The students on the trip represented members from multiple campus ministry groups, their advisors and other students not affiliated with campus ministry groups, according to Rev. Amy Rio-Anderson, the United Methodist campus minister.

"The campus ministers work every year to get together with the students and find out what kind of trips they would be interested in doing and start looking at different programs and locations," said Rio-Anderson.

"We had a meeting with the campus ministers and representatives from the United Methodist Campus Ministry, Presbyterian Church Fellowship, Catholic Student Association and Baptist Student Union."

When the UNCA group started their work on the house, they picked up where another group had



COURTESY OF REV. AMY RIO-ANDERSON

Jessie Shuman, senior math and French major, spent spring break with seven other UNCA students helping build a house for the Habitat for Humanity Collegiate Challenge in Andrews, S.C.

left off at the end of their trip the week before. "The UNCA students installed windows and doorways, along with putting on siding and shingling a roof, according to Rio-Anderson.

"When we got there, the sheeting had been put up on the walls outside and the paper on the outside of the walls," said David Larkins, a senior computer science major.

"Basically, we put on the roof with the sheeting and the tar paper and shingles. We went around and

did windows and doors, and we started on siding."

A regular work crew worked alongside the students. The work crew included a paid Habitat for Humanity supervisor and retired volunteers.

"Habitat's Collegiate Challenge always has a paid supervisor so that even people with no experience know what to do," said Rio-Anderson.

"They also have (retirees), who are a crew and help out, that came and



COURTESY OF REV. AMY RIO-ANDERSON

Bill Schaff works on the roof of the Habitat for Humanity house. Students installed siding, shingled the roof and installed windows.

*"They also have (retirees), who are a crew and help out, that came and worked with us everyday. They were a lot of fun. One night we went out to dinner with them and all of their spouses and had a big fish dinner."*

Rev. Amy Rio-Anderson,  
United Methodist campus minister

worked with us everyday. They were a lot of fun. One night we went out to dinner with them and all of their spouses and had a big fish dinner."

The crew and UNCA students worked well together, according to Shuman and Larkins.

"I think it was amazing, the amount of camaraderie between the crew, whose average age was like 55 or 60, and us college students, who were like 20-year olds," said Larkins.

"There was the obvious visible generation gap, but when we were

standing there working with them they treated us with the utmost respect. They trusted us beyond what we trusted ourselves in many cases."

The group quickly started work on the houses and were up on the roof nailing in shingles by the second day of work.

"Most of us had never done construction work before, but they put hammers in our hands," said

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## Troops face resistance, close in on Baghdad

Becky Reese  
News Reporter

As the war in Iraq continues, coalition troops press towards Baghdad while taking controlling of other Iraqi cities along the way.

"I think that the war is progressing the way it is supposed to," said Erin Wood, a sophomore education major. "We all know this wouldn't be done with overnight, but I still think that the sooner this is all over, the better."

Troops have progressed slowly at times, as U.S. ground forces have yet to reach the Iraqi capital of Baghdad.

Coalition forces destroyed a key Republican Guard unit protecting Baghdad Wednesday morning, according to CNN.com.

Gen. Vincent Brooks said U.S. forces had defeated the Republican Guard Baghdad division in the town of Al Kut, which is approximately 100 miles southeast of Baghdad, according to CNN.com.

"The Baghdad Division has been destroyed," said Brooks in an article on CNN.com. "The dagger is clearly pointed at the heart of the regime."

Bob Annot, an embedded MSNBC reporter with the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force, reported from near Al Kut that U.S. forces are driving towards Baghdad.

"They are on Route 6, and they are heading north toward Baghdad," said Annot in an article on MSNBC.com. "Even more important, they encountered the Baghdad Division of the Republican Guard and basically made this a completely ineffective fighting force."

The U.S. Army also reported that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> brigades of the 3<sup>rd</sup> infantry easily captured Karbala, a city approximately 50 miles south of Baghdad, according to CNN.com.

The Army's 3<sup>rd</sup> infantry division pushed through Karbala after a night of bombardments, according to MSNBC.com.

At least 20 Iraqis died and an unknown number of soldiers taken



COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. army infantrymen discuss plans in the desert near Karbala.

captive according to field reports. No U.S. casualties were reported, according to MSNBC.com.

"They're in serious trouble, and they remain in contact now with the most powerful force on Earth,"

said Brooks in reference to the other Republican Guard units, according to MSNBC.com.

"The goal is to punch here, punch there and then go get [Baghdad]," said a senior military official Tues-

day, not long before another U.S. offensive began, according to CNN.com.

However, Iraqi Information Minister Mohamad Saeed Safar claims that the U.S. has lied about their progress in the war, according to the BBC Web site.

"They lie every day," Sahef told a press briefing. "Therefore, what they say or allege about success and advances in Najaf and Karbala are illusions," according to the BBC Web site.

The British military views the war with Iraq as a very decisive engagement.

"It's probably fair to say that the battle for Baghdad began the moment we crossed the start line, but this is certainly a decisive engagement," said U.K. Commander Brian Burridge, according to the BBC Web site.

UNCA students have varying opinions on the progress of the war with Iraq, and many have concern over the troops fighting against

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Kristen Ruggeri  
News Reporter

America's war with Iraq has affected many UNCA students who share their stories of how the war is affecting them and their loved ones.

Bryan Greene "Everybody is really worried about me being deployed," said Bryan Greene, a sophomore history major who is currently on call as a National Guard. "But I tell them they don't have anything to worry about."

Greene carries a phone with him whenever he goes out. He is waiting for a call from the military who will assign him mobilization orders, giving him eight days to report to his army or home station.

It's difficult to decide whether to support peace or support the country's decision to go to war, according to Greene.

"It's not necessarily that I agree with what's going on, but since it's my job and it's what I have to do, I'm going to do it," said Greene.

"I got accepted to UNCA, but I wasn't a real good student in high school, so I didn't get any type of scholarship. I come from a pretty modest income family, and since I didn't want to take out any loans, I joined the National Guard. They pay for about 55 percent of everything."

"When I joined in August of 2000, a lot of people were joining the Reserve and National Guard because they thought they would get all the benefits and not have to do anything except for their weekend drills," said Greene.

"The Sept. 11 attacks acted as a wake up call for Greene. "I knew that if something happened I would probably have to go over seas, but it didn't really hit me until Sept. 11," said Greene.

Zack Giles "My best friend from home, Blake Johnson, is in the Marine reserves and got activated about two months ago," said Zack Giles, a junior multimedia major.

"I just want to see Blake alive again. I know it's going to be weird when he gets back because he's probably going to be an entirely different person."

After Johnson graduated from high school he didn't know what he wanted to do with his life so he decided to join the reserve because of the pay. The next thing he knew he was sent off to the Middle East, according to Giles.

When Johnson found out about his deployment he was not scared or excited, according to Giles.

"He knew what he was getting into when he signed up for the reserves, but he wasn't very happy about it," said Giles. "He said he is perfectly willing to fight for his country if it's for a good cause, but he did not necessarily feel this was a good cause."

Johnson knew he would have to go to war some time ago. The military told him to be ready to leave at anytime, according to Giles.

"First they said it was going to be

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