

THE
Link
NEWS OF THE CORPS

Atlanta Urban Corps
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INTERNS INITIATE PROGRAM

Wheat Street Baptist Church, pastored by Reverend William H. Borders, has for many years served its congregation as one of many Baptist churches in Atlanta. Recently, however, Wheat Street Baptist has been making concerted efforts to meet the social as well as the spiritual needs of its people. Serving in the Church's Wheat Street Garden and Community Center are six Urban Corps interns. Under the supervision of Reverend John Howard, Associate Pastor and head of the Education Center, interns Karl Paul of Georgia Tech, Sandra Mincey of Spelman, Cynthia Knight of Clark College, Joanne Mitchell of Morris Brown, and Phyllis Atkins and Linda Robinson of Georgia State, are coordinating programs in recreation and community relations. Assisted by three youth aids from EOA and nineteen Neighborhood Youth Corps students, the Urban Corps interns work five days a week and often in the evenings to provide the children of the Wheat Street area with constructive experiences in recreation and to investigate the social needs of the community. Karl, Sandra, and Joanne concentrate their services in the area of recreation while Cynthia, Phyllis and Linda work in the community learning from residents their needs, complaints and suggestions for a better community.

The Urban Corps interns have found that the children in their charge are not at all accustomed to participating in even the most limited programs of recreation and social stimulation that middle-class children take for granted. In an interview with Karl Paul, who serves as recreation director for the Center, it was learned that the interns and Wheat Street Baptist are attempting to offer some alternative to this situation.

After meeting in committee with area supervisors from the city Parks and Recreation Department, Karl found that there are virtually no arrangements in the city for sports leagues for youngsters. As Karl said, "Most of us have grown up in towns where softball leagues for kids were the expected summertime recreation arrangement-- and here in the inner city where leagues would be so valuable there is only one league established."

On Friday, June 27 a meeting of Parks and Recreation supervisors was held at 10 A. M.

Recreation programs were discussed, and it was at this meeting that Karl Paul learned of the lack of organized sports leagues in the city. By 3 P. M. that same day Karl had organized a meeting at Howard High School to begin work on drawing up such leagues. Seven of the fifteen Parks and Recreation Department supervisors attended. Over the week-end Karl compiled the information and ideas that came out of that meeting and by Monday had made arrangements for the 'American League' and the 'National League'. As Karl pointed out, there will be differences between these newly formed teams and the typical softball leagues of Hometown, U. S. A. There will not be any freshly laundered suits with matching caps. Neither will there be an abundance of regulation equipment.

There is a lot more to community relations than a kid's participation in a softball league. There is a lot that can not be accomplished by the Urban Corps interns at Wheat Street Baptist Church Garden and Community Center this summer. But there is now operating a recreation program that did not exist before these interns took the initiative. And there are numbers of Atlanta's inner city children participating in a constructive team sport who until now hardly knew that the opportunity for such programs could be made available to them.

Wheat Street Baptist Church is making an effort to answer the needs of its people. Urban Corps interns are helping. It is in programs such as this one that the opportunity to learn and serve becomes a personal and meaningful reality.

STREET THEATRE OPENS

The first season of the Library Urban Corps Street Theatre opened during the past week with the performance of "A Soul Gone Home," a play by Langston Hughes. The play was presented on July 7 and July 8 drawing crowds of 125 at the first performance and 75 at the second. This same play was presented July 11 at the Trinity Methodist Church. Directed by Arthur Pellman, instructor of drama at Clark College, the Street Theatre will present short plays throughout the summer on street corners, in churches, and anywhere that it is thought a crowd will gather spontaneously. Five Urban Corps interns will perform with the theatre:

They are Andrea Frye of Spelman, Young Hughley of Atlanta University, Christine Smith of Georgia State, Michael Stublefield of Morehouse and Gary Enck of the North Carolina School of Performing Arts.

MEETING OF THE COMMUNITY RELATIONS COMMISSION TO BE HELD.

The Community Relations Commission has released information on upcoming meetings to be held throughout the month of July. The Urban Corps feels that it would be to the interest of interns, supervisors and others concerned with our urban problems to attend one or several of these meetings. Therefore, CRC's schedule is included in The Link for the purpose of making known to its readers an excellent opportunity for becoming acquainted with the Commission:

July 14 University Homes Area (8:00 P. M.)

Flipper Temple A.M.E. Church, 580 Fair Street S. W.--an initial meeting to hear the problems of the neighborhood.

July 16 Buckhead Area (8:00 P. M.)

The "Hall of Bishops," Cathedral of Saint Phillip, 2744 Peachtree Rd., N. W.--a city-wide meeting to discuss "What are the responsibilities of whites in improving human relations in Atlanta?"

July 22 Perry Homes Area (8:00 P. M.)

Perry Homes Community Center, 2125 Clarissa Drive, N. W.--a return meeting to report to the citizens on action taken as a result of CRC's June meeting.

July 25 (2:00 P. M.) CRC's regular monthly meeting in Committee Room No. 4 City Hall.

July 29 Bellwood Area (8:00 P. M.)

Central City EOA Neighborhood Center
840 Marietta Street, N. W.--an initial meeting to discuss the problems of the neighborhood.

PROGRAM TO CONTINUE

Plans are being made for the continuation of the Urban Corps intern program in Atlanta beyond its summer 1969 employment structure. As more specific information is made available, The Link will keep its readers up-to-date with the projected plans. All interns, supervisors and others who are interested in continued involvement with the Urban Corps should remain in close contact with the office and should make their intentions known as soon as possible.

FINANCIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO VOLUNTEER INTERNS

All volunteer interns working with the Atlanta Urban Corps program are advised that they will receive payment of the first half of their stipend on July 16 and the second half on August 27. This announcement comes from the office of Inmond Deen, Director of Finance. Interns should plan to pick up their paychecks between the hours of 1:00 P. M. and 5:00 P. M. in the Urban Corps office on the days stated.

WATCH FOR W.M.R.A. RALLY

SERVICE-LEARNING CONFERENCE SPARKS INTERN RESPONSE

Much could and has been said of the Atlanta Service-Learning Conference which was held June 30-July 1 (See Vol. II, The Link). There were speeches and panel discussions, work groups and informal sessions. Some people in attendance felt that they knew quite well what the service-learning concept involves. Others were there to find out. For the Urban Corps interns who attended the two-day conference the experience meant different things and carried varying degrees of credibility. The following are responses from six interns gathered a week after the Conference thus allowing a period of reflection on overall opinions:

(1) Diane Lewis (Spelman) Atlanta Girls Club: "I'm afraid I was not very impressed by the Conference. It sounded to me as though it was simply a chance for the Conference to pat itself on the back."

(2) Rudine Arnold (Spelman) Kirkwood Center: "I enjoyed the Conference and especially the discussion which pointed out exactly what it is that the student interns are doing in the city. The talk sessions were more valuable than the speakers."

(3) Raines Carrol (Morehouse) City Personnel "The Conference was generally pertinent, but the students wanted to know more about what is going on in our own city now."

(4) Janice Snider (Univ. of Kentucky) Mayor's Office: "The morning sessions were dull. Interns were not really a part of the Conference. Hopefully the next Conference will be more meaningful. Frankly, I would have rather stayed at work."

(5) Anne Mayeaux (Emory) City Personnel "I wish the Conference could have been more concrete. The whole thing was more related to public relations than to the interns. However, it is difficult when a conference is planned in advance, as it must be, to relate content to the people who are actually to participate. I felt that the audience was more liberal than the speakers and that there was a sense of restlessness in the audience. It would have been good if more student organizations could have been represented. I especially enjoyed the chance to get together with the other interns. After all, we can learn so much from one another."

(6) Sally Cantor (Lake Forest) Service-Learning "Among the most important elements of the ASLC was the fact that numerous service oriented agencies were able to put aside their own individual points of view and focus on the larger dimensions of service-learning. Due to the nature of my Urban Corps assignment I feel that greater attention should be focused on the learning aspect of the Urban Corps assignment. Interns need to think out the meaning of their experiences. . . and what it tells them about themselves, their goals and their society. The service aspect is easier to realize, but the learning aspect must have equal focus. The first part of the Conference contained this element.