



# CAPTIONS

## Cap Corps Midwest



Transform Your World!

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#### Cap Corps Midwest Mission Statement

*In the spirit of Jesus  
Christ, Francis and Clare  
of Assisi, the Capuchin  
Franciscan Volunteer  
Corps (Cap Corps) is a  
community of women  
and men who serve  
among people in need as  
full time volunteers, shar-  
ing common prayer and  
simple living.*

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### A Life Transformed

By Nathan Fouquet (Tocumen, Panama 2006-2008)

*Nathan wrote this article halfway through his 2 year commitment to Cap Corps in Tocumen, Panama, where he has done various community building projects through the Capuchin Parish of San Pio de Pietrelcina. Pictured here (second from the right), Nathan poses with some young adults from the community who celebrated his one year anniversary of arriving in Panama last August.*

If I was asked to sum up my volunteer experience, up to the moment, in a few words, well...I couldn't. However, what I would offer as a response would be a few words of wisdom that a former Cap Corps volunteer shared with me: "Don't go into your volunteer experience expecting to make a difference in the lives of the people around you, because those same people are going to make a difference in your life!"



It's true. I feel differently. I think differently. I see the world differently. I have learned to live a life of simplicity and humbleness, and I am just as happy, if not, happier as I was back "home" in the States. I have learned the values of community and sharing through random visits to houses. I have learned to appreciate taking time out of a "busy schedule" to talk to a person and the importance of the simple words "Thanks for listening to me." I now understand the value and necessity of family and friends in times of need and how crucial the role is that these people play in our lives.

Now, you all might be thinking, "I already knew these things before volunteering," or, "those things are common sense." I also knew all this, but had never experienced it. As I live

alone, I am the person being visited frequently. I am the person often seeking a friend to talk to and having to have that friend find time to come over to keep me company in my loneliest moments. I am the person that says, "Thanks for listening to me." I am the person that has had an utterly difficult time in midst of my loneliness. However, these people, the Panamanians, have reached out and have let me know on various occasions that I'm not alone. They have taken me in and have really taught me the importance of the simple things and what can make a person feel right at home, even when one is thousands of miles from what is considered "home."

In other words, these people have changed my life. If it wasn't for the people here and their sincere care and love for one another and for me, I would probably be at home right now. But, they haven't let me give up. They have encouraged me when I've felt discouraged and have lifted me up when I've felt down. I only hope that I can offer the love and support that I have experienced here to someone someday. The Panamanian people, my family, have made my volunteer experience what it is today, and I will forever be in debt to them.

## Alumni News

Heather (Warner) Holton (Milwaukee, 2003-2004) and her husband David welcomed a boy, Samuel Francis (Pictured at Right), into their lives on February 29, 2008. They have named him Samuel Francis and he is joined at home by older brother Joseph. Congratulations Holton family!



Rachael Madden-Connor (Chicago, 2004-2005) moved to Alexandria, Virginia two years ago to process financial aid paperwork for The Art Institute of Washington, a design college. Since then, she transferred to Argosy University, a sister school, to work as the Academic Affairs Coordinator. In December 2007, Rachael was promoted to Coordinator of the Clinical Psychology department at Argosy, where she oversees all of the administrative aspects of the department, the largest department on campus. She also adopted a grey tabby named Merton, pictured below.



Kristen Schumann (Bluefields 2003-2006) and Mark Heberth tied the knot on February 8, 2008. The happy couple met in Bluefields. Kristen works as a teacher for Bright Horizons Family Solutions in Madison. Below, the newlyweds are pictured with Kristen's Cap Corps comadres, Janet Hendrickson and Susan Lenn.



Lindsay Ohlert (Milwaukee 2006-2007) spent the summer teaching English in Da Nang, Vietnam. Lindsay has family in Saigon, and was happy to visit SE Asia for the first time. She returned to her Cap Corps placement, Messmer Preparatory School, this fall to begin her third year teaching Spanish.

Larry LaCross (Detroit 2005-2006) and his wife, Megan, welcomed a daughter on August 6. Her name is Clare Ann and she weighed 7 lbs, 14 oz, and was 22 inches long. Congratulations LaCross family!

Alumni: Please keep us up-to-date on your life and work! We are always happy to hear from you. You can submit your news to [capcorps@thecapuchins.org](mailto:capcorps@thecapuchins.org).

## INTRODUCING OUR 2008–2009 CAP CORPS VOLUNTEERS!



Tania Brown is from Waimanalo, Hawaii. In May '08, she graduated from the University of Hawaii at Manoa with a Bachelor of Science in Family

Resources. A few things that she was a part of at UHM were the Student Leader Program at the University Catholic Center, Student Housing as a Resident Advisor, and the YMCA of Honolulu as an intern, working with kids of preschool age. She likes going on hikes, traveling, trying new things, fiber art, and reading. Tania will be providing social services to the women and kids who reside at the shelter program of Alternatives for Girls in Detroit. Aloha and mahalo, Tania!



Derek Lehecka has lived most of his life in Clawson, MI which is about six miles from the northern border of the city of Detroit. He has a Bachelors of Science in Architecture from Lawrence

Technological University in Southfield, Michigan. He got to know the Capuchins by volunteering at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Derek had the unique opportunity to participate in an architectural workshop in Vermont where he assisted in building a meeting pavilion that was trucked down to be permanently sited on the grounds of the Gesundheit Institute, the free hospital made famous in the movie Patch Adams. Derek will be serving at Vanguard Community Development Corporation in Detroit. Welcome and thanks, Derek!



Mary Buck is originally from Portland, Maine, but comes to Cap Corps via Detroit, where she spent the last two years in the Mercy Volunteer Corps.

During MVC, Mary worked part-time at the Mercy Education Project and part-time at Bishop Gumbleton's Office of Peace and Justice. Mary, the mother to one daughter, spent much of her career working in customer service, and later in union organizing. Mary has one daughter, a police officer who lives in Portland, ME. Mary will be working as a tutor and an administrative assistant at Maria High School in Chicago. Thanks for being here with us, Mary!



Corey Mehlos is from Merrill, Wisconsin and graduated from Notre Dame this spring with a degree from the Program of Liberal Studies (Great Books). He was introduced to the Capuchins through

exposure to the spiritual directors at St. Anthony Retreat Center an immersion trip to St. Ben's Community Meal in high school. In college, he taught catechism and served as a chaplain at a juvenile detention center. His hobbies include drinking Guinness, traveling, telling a good story, and bantering, sometimes in the same sitting. Corey's gift of gab will be put to good use as he coaches debate and teaches theology at Messmer High School this year. It is good to have you with us, Corey!

## INTRODUCING OUR 2008–2009 CAP CORPS VOLUNTEERS!



Gwen Meyer is a recent English Major graduate from Creighton University in Omaha Nebraska. While she calls Columbus, Ohio, or Des Moines, Iowa, home, her parents

currently live in Wausau, Wisconsin. She was influenced greatly by a summer program in El Salvador. She enjoys reading, running, and especially cooking. This interest in cooking led Gwen to research sustainable agriculture, local food systems, and the modern state of agriculture. Gwen will further this research by working at Earthworks Urban Farm in Detroit at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Thanks for joining us, Gwen!



Seema Singh just graduated from the University of Michigan with a B.A. in Economics. While at the University of Michigan she participated in Alternative Spring

Break, traveling to St. Paul Minnesota to volunteer in a 5th and 6th grade ESL classroom, working with Hmong students. She also participated as a mentor in the Detroit Asian Youth Project, a mentorship program for Hmong students based in Detroit. She is originally from Mt. Pleasant, MI and enjoys playing tennis. Seema will serve in Milwaukee as an organizing intern at 9 to 5, National Association of Working Women. It's great to have you here, Seema!



Originally from Madison, WI, Kathryn Ray graduated from Oberlin College last May with a B.A. in religion. She has an intentional concentration in North American liberation

theologies and an accidental concentration in Islam. During college, she did research on torture practices by the US military and contractors in Iraq for US Rep. Marcy Kaptur. She also organized and ran a Vacation Bible School program in rural Nicaragua. Her interests include dancing and other forms of movement, singing, playing guitar and dulcimer, vegetarian cooking, visiting public libraries, and listening to faith (or lack thereof) stories. Kathryn will work at Hope House in Milwaukee, assisting with various programs that serve the homeless and Latino community. Bienvenida, Kathryn!



Steve Tinholt, originally from Kalamazoo, MI, attended both Holy Cross College in South Bend and later Michigan State University, where he graduated this May

with a major in psychology. In college, he was a member of a social concerns committee and spent time volunteering at St. Vincent de Paul. Steve's hobbies include playing and watching football and basketball. Steve will serve at the Chicago Legal Clinic as a paralegal. Thanks for being here with us, Steve!

KEEP UP WITH THE 08–09 CAP CORPS VOLUNTEERS BY CHECKING OUT THEIR BLOG:

<http://capcorps0809.blogspot.com/>

# The Threads of My Heart

By Cindy Breunig (Milwaukee, 2007-2008)

*The following is a testimony Cindy gave at a prayer vigil to honor those affected by an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raid at a meat packing plant in Postville, IA. Cindy and her colleagues organized the interfaith prayer vigil as a part of her Cap Corps volunteer service at Voces de la Frontera in Milwaukee.*

Cindy is pictured below with the Cap Corps Volunteers of 2007-2008 at their final Cap Corps liturgy in July. From left: Emily Wepner (Milwaukee), Molly McCullagh (Detroit), Jon Royal (Milwaukee), and Cindy Breunig (Milwaukee). Thanks to our newest Cap Corps alumni for a wonderful year of service!

My name is Cindy Breunig and I work with the New Sanctuary Movement of Voces de la Frontera. Here in Milwaukee and at the national level, the New Sanctuary Movement is working to support families facing separation due to deportation. We seek to provide accompaniment, support and public witness for families whose lives are forever changed from one moment to the next when ICE knocks on their door.



Like many of us who are present, my personal story is deeply connected to the recent raid, where approximately 300 of the 389 people arrested are Mayan indigenous people from the highlands of Guatemala. I worked in Guatemala coordinating a post-war mental health program, with Mayan women who were rebuilding their communities after 36 years of civil war. For the past eight years, I have continued to support this grassroots organizing effort as a friend and volunteer.

The war in Guatemala took an estimated 200,000 lives, completely destroying over 600 Mayan indigenous communities through massacres during the scorched earth policy of the 1980s. The U.S. government supported this war, through military aid, intelligence, training, and equipment; and directly participated in torture of innocent civilians, a history we see repeating in Iraq today.

Despite the signing of the Peace Accords, a new form of repression has emerged through globalization and free trade: CAFTA and its accompanying mega-development projects such as mines, biodiesel plantations, and hydroelectric dams increase poverty and displace indigenous peoples from their land.

The Guatemalan families who came to the U.S. as refugees of the war, and who were given safe haven by the Sanctuary movement of the 1980s, are connected to the families who today come to the U.S. as refugees of the structural violence of economic policies that have forced them to migrate to survive.

In Postville, Iowa, 270 survivors of that violence have been detained and criminalized, and their families are left wondering again if their “disappeared” loved ones are dead or alive. We see history repeat itself in terror, and again the faith community responds. In the proud tradition of people of faith taking a stand of conscience, St. Bridget’s church offered safe haven to hundreds of people throughout the week after the raid, and continues to help families left with nothing as they attempt to rebuild their lives.

In Guatemala, I learned that life is a woven fabric. I am here today because the threads of my heart are woven by the love, hospitality, generosity and protection I always received from everyday people who let me into their homes in Mayan communities in Guatemala, accepting me with open doors despite the legacy of violence my country has dealt them.

In the aftermath of the raid, it is gravely clear that this same hospitality and love is being denied to our immigrant brothers and sisters who have come here to positively contribute to our communities and lives.

Tonight we stand in solidarity with the hundreds of families in Postville, with the families here in our community who are suffering the impact of deportations every day, and with all of those who are living in fear that they will be next.

But it is not only the suffering that calls us to respond. It is also the beauty, the love, and the courage that you, our immigrant brothers and sisters, bring to all of us living in this country. Your struggle for your families, for dignity and justice, is a struggle for the humanity of us all.

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## FYI

- Later this fall, we will welcome Nathan Fouquet home from his 2 years of service in Panama. We hope you'll join us in Milwaukee as we gather to hear about Nathan's experience and offer him our gratitude. Please check [www.capcorps.org](http://www.capcorps.org) for further details.
- Next year marks the 15th anniversary of Cap Corps! We hope all alumni from the past 15 years will join us in Milwaukee the weekend of August 14-16, 2009 for a special celebration. Save the date!
- Soon we will begin sending out electronic newsletters. In order to stay up-to-date on Cap Corps news, please email us at [capcorps@thecapuchins.org](mailto:capcorps@thecapuchins.org) to make sure we have your most recent email address. Thank you!
- Check out our Facebook page, where we post news, invitations, as well as memories from the past. This page is linked to our website. Enjoy!