
Good News Department

Generation Y Finds New Ways To Help

by Tessa Hoerner &
Adam Ballance

(NAPSA)—We are often referred to as the “Internet Generation” or the “Reagan Babies,” but by definition we are Generation Y. Many perceive us to be entitled, privileged and demanding. The reality is we are 75 million young, empowered Americans who are taking our nation by force.

We have been transformed by inexplicable acts of violence within our schools, the tragic events of September 11th, political instability at home and abroad and natural disasters that have damaged communities across the country. And because of these experiences, we are a generation dedicated to bringing real change to our communities, our country and even the world.

Therefore, it shouldn't be surprising that tens of thousands of us from across the nation skipped the traditional spring break rite of passage that includes sun, sand and endless parties. Instead, we headed to depressed urban neighborhoods, desolate rural areas and the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast to help individuals and communities desperately in need of help, hope and rebuilding. In fact, more than 40,000 students and young adults participated in alternative spring break programs this year.

Alternative Spring Break provides Generation Y with an incredible opportunity to spend a week volunteering. As participants



Thousands of students volunteered during their school breaks.

in United Way Alternative Spring Break, we helped to rebuild communities that are still struggling to recover from the destruction of Hurricanes Ivan, Katrina and Rita and to revitalize urban communities that continue to combat significant housing, education and child care challenges.

In its third year, the program, which is sponsored by Deloitte and FedEx, continues to provide us with the opportunity to give back. We came together this spring throughout the Gulf Coast and in Detroit, Michigan to address the great needs of these areas through thoughtful, focused and dedicated volunteer work.

Generation Y is truly committed to making a difference. United Way Alternative Spring Break is an excellent vehicle for helping us achieve our goals. We are committed to making our mark and putting Gen Y—all 75 million of us—on the map as a vital component of our country's future.

• Tessa Hoerner and Adam Ballance are United Way Alternative Spring Break Volunteers.