



**Volunteers For Peace**  
**INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE**  
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## **History of Projects in Burlington**

*28 Years ~ 15 Projects ~ Over 200 International Volunteers*

### **1983 Community Development**

**August 1-22**

**12 Volunteers**

The Mayor's Youth Office, the Citizen's Waterfront Organization, and the Peace Coalition of Vermont's largest city sponsored volunteers from England, France, Poland, Germany, the USSR, and the USA. Volunteers had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the city of Burlington and help with the construction of a bike path and waterfront park. Housing was donated by St. Michael's College. – *The International Workcamper*, November 1983 [pictures included!]

### **1984 Urban Beautification and Housing Rehabilitation July 8-29 15 Volunteers**

For the Second year, the Mayor's Youth Office, the Burlington Peace Coalition, city departments, and neighborhoods worked with volunteers at a pilot project involving urban beautification and housing rehabilitation. Mayor Sanders greeted volunteers upon arrival and hosted them for an evening at his home during the workcamp. The program included public discussions on issues of common concern to world youth – political ideology, the environment, peace, poverty and feminism will be featured.

### **1985 Community Development**

A group of ten social workers from East Germany engaged in a work/study tour of four American cities. The tour focused on these cities' efforts to curb the high rate of youth unemployment. During the first two weeks volunteers helped paint houses on Rose Street in Burlington and helped with the construction of a playground at a day care center. They were joined by 15 volunteers from Finland, France, Turkey, Nicaragua, the UK, the Netherlands, Spain and the USA that were part of a simultaneous workcamp organized by Jane Driscoll, Scott Simpson and Robin Lloyd of Burlington, Vermont. Both the tour and the workcamp were sponsored by The Mayor's (Bernie Sanders) Youth Office and the Burlington Peace and Justice Coalition.

**15 Volunteers**

Jan Willem van Dormolen, a SIW (Dutch) volunteer at the Burlington workcamp shared; "...for me personally, the experience was a wonderful one. I admit to having come to the US with a lot of prejudices and lack of knowledge about it, and its inhabitants. I had to give up a lot of them and I have a much better understanding of America now." – *The International Workcamper*, January 1985

### **1986 Working with Local Youth**

Volunteers from Poland, Italy, Spain, France, Denmark, Belgium, the FRG and USA were hosted by the Mayor's Youth Office of the City of Burlington and the Peace Coalition. They lived at the Alpha Gamma Rho Fraternity on the University of Vermont campus and worked on Day Care and Teen Centers. The Onion River Coop was involved with providing food for the project. Phil McMahon, Jane Driscoll and Joanne Weiss coordinated the program.

### **1987 The Urban Homeless July 3 – 19 12 Volunteers**

Volunteers worked at an emergency shelter for the homeless. The shelter provided for the physical needs of the homeless as well as addressing their emotional and spiritual needs. The Burlington Emergency Shelter recently doubled its space by adding a second story but needed assistance in a lot of finishing work which the volunteers provided! Mayor Sanders welcomed the workcampers.

"Campers Build Shelter, Break Down Barriers" *Burlington Free Press Saturday*, July 18 1987  
They came from Turkey, Poland, France, Spain, Germany and Czechoslovakia to participate in the International Workcamp program... "They've raised the morale and the consciousness from the ordinary to the extraordinary," said John Pratt, a resident at the shelter. "One day you're in a shelter for the homeless and the next you're in an international scene."

**1989 Women Helping Battered Women July 30 – August 13 10 Volunteers**  
Volunteers from 7 countries, including the Soviet Union, assisted WHBW by painting the interior of the shelter and doing some outside landscape work.

**1991 Community Service July 28 – August 17 10 Volunteers**  
The Burlington Friends Meeting hosted an international group of volunteers to help meet human service needs in the Burlington area. Volunteers helped cooking meals for homeless, cleaning in parks, painting for area non-profits and more.

**1992 Community Service & Native Americans July 26 – August 19 12 Volunteers**  
Volunteers from Cuba, France, the UK, USA, Italy, Spain and Honduras had a special experience in Burlington. The first two weeks they volunteered with local non-profits such as the Food Shelf. The third week they walked to Swanton as part of the “Walk ’92 Honoring Wobanaki – Land of the Dawn” and participated in a Native American Encampment. Thanks to Burlington Friends for hosting this project.

**1993 Nature and Kids July 31 – August 20 10 Volunteers**  
International volunteers divided their time between the Green Mountain Audobon Center, where they built trails, and King Street Youth working with children.

**1994 Global & Environmental Work July 3 – 24 12 Volunteers**  
Volunteers stayed at St. Michael’s college and spent their days on environmental projects including helping to develop a protected area, doing environmental preservation skits, and talking to kids about the environment and sustainability. They also helped prepare meals in a local soup kitchen.

**1999 Kids July 24 – August 14 8 Volunteers**  
International volunteers worked with Kings Street Youth Center assisting in the morning art camp as well as supporting youth with the Lemonade stand on Church Street. They also helped King Street with some building maintenance.

**2000 Dismas House July 8 - 29 10 Volunteers**  
The Vermont Dismas House hosted this group of 6 volunteers from 4 countries. During their 3 weeks the volunteers managed to scrape and paint almost the entire house! Volunteers also worked with Winooski Parks and Rec in building a new canoe access and some boardwalks in local parks. Mayor Clavelle met with the volunteers for lunch and to discuss the importance of Peace and International exchanges. Volunteers stayed at North Beach Campground.

**2001 King Street Youth Center July 29 – August 18 10 Volunteers**  
**2002 King Street Youth Center July 29 – August 16 10 Volunteers**  
International volunteers worked at King Street with children between the ages of 5 and 10. The work included assisting with a morning arts, swimming and gardening camp and a summer day camp. Volunteers led art, music, cooking, and international activities that teach the children about their countries.

**For the last 10 years VFP has been placing international volunteers for 3-6 month stays at the Dismas House in Burlington.** The opportunity for international volunteers to be part of the Dismas community has been beneficial for both sides.

**November 1, 2010** VFP relocated from rural Belmont to beautiful Burlington! Stop in and visit us at 7 Kilburn Street on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor.

**2011 “No More War” July 30 – August 20 10 Volunteers**  
Volunteers will spend ½ of their time in discussion about war and freedom with local community groups, non-profits, professors, and activists. They will also work with the Regional Technology Education Network (RETN) to create short PSA’s around sustainability. In the afternoons volunteers are excited to return to King Street Youth Center to share cultural and peace activities with the children. Volunteers are being housed at the Burlington Friends Meeting House.