

Alaina Williams,  
GSV 2010-2011



“Let us share in the mission of love and reconciliation.”

—St. Mary Euphrasia

## Revolving Doors

By Alaina Williams, GSV 2010-2011

The Safe Homes Project commits to being a place where women can be safe and take steps to build a better future for themselves and their families. As a GSV in an emergency domestic violence shelter, I work to empower and support our families.

Our shelter is a revolving door, with populations transitioning rapidly: we have anywhere from a few days to three months to make a meaningful connection. With an undetermined timeline, you learn to be flexible and adapt to changing needs quickly. Whether it's through creating an art-based curriculum to help children express their emotions or running adult support groups on topics from financial self-sufficiency to post-traumatic stress, we utilize whatever means necessary to address each population's needs.

I work with women to create action plans to reach their employment and educational goals while also advocating

Our shelter is a revolving door, with populations transitioning quickly.

on their behalf to assist them in receiving public assistance, medical, and legal services. My goal each day is to culti-

vate relationships with our clients and to treat each with compassion; to provide them the resources they need to empower themselves.

I bear witness to the uphill climb from “abusive relationship” to “survivor.” I see every day how deeply cycles of abuse and poverty manifest in the lives of real women, and how budget cuts and changing legislature can drastically alter the odds for our families.

As a GSV, I show up every day to support the families who come through our doors. In the process, each of them shows me the resilience and strength that exists in the human spirit. Together, we can work to ensure a positive transition out of shelter and into their future.

## You're invited!

### 1st Annual GSV Charity Party and Silent Auction

Tuesday, November 1, 6:30pm - 9:30pm

Pranna, 79 Madison Avenue at 28th Street ([www.prannarestaurant.com](http://www.prannarestaurant.com))

\$40 per ticket, includes Southeast Asian cuisine, open bar first 2 hours

Auction items include flat screen TV, theater tickets, rock-climbing passes, and more!

To purchase tickets or support the event use the enclosed envelope or visit [gsvolunteers.org](http://gsvolunteers.org).

Tickets will also be available at the door.

# GSV Expands to Malaysia

Dear Friends:

Last year Good Shepherd Volunteers placed a volunteer in Malaysia for the first time. Magdalena Mazurek spent the year serving rural communities and women in crisis in Sabah on the island of Borneo. This year, there are two GSVs, Lara Torii and Courtney Montony, serving in Malaysia.

Despite the exquisite work being done in Malaysia, it is a challenge for PKGS to staff their programs. Social work is held in low regard in Malaysia; there are few people looking to enter the field. Therefore, the GSVs assume important staff positions in the programs and build capacity at those sites.

Lara and Courtney are beginning their year of service at Asrama Gereja St. James Tenghilan, a hostel for teenage girls. The objective of this hostel is to provide educational opportunities to secondary school girls who come from families living in poverty and residing in remote villages with minimal access to secondary school education. In selecting which girls to accept as residents, priority is given to families who are in dire need of financial assistance and who can't find a place for their daughters to stay that is near to the school. Most of the girls come from farming families and, on average, have at least five other siblings in need of support.

The GSVs are living at the hostel and provide support and companionship to the girls both day and night. Lara and Courtney supervise the girls, provide recreational opportunities, and tutor them in their school subjects, especially in English. All classes in Malaysian universities are taught in English, and so it is critical for the girls to become proficient



GSV Magdalena Mazurek with children of Sabah

in English if they are going to be able to continue their education and break out of the cycle of poverty.

It is the generosity of our supporters that enables us to place GSVs at sites where their service is desperately needed. We are grateful for all of the ways you support the GSV mission of serving women, children, and adolescents who have been affected by poverty, violence, and neglect. Thank you.

Peace,

Peter Altman  
Executive Director



GSVs Lara Torii and Courtney Montony with the girls of Asrama Gereja St. James Tenghilan

As I dropped off Lara and Courtney at the airport, my mind returned to my site visit to Malaysia last year during which I had the privilege of visiting many of the programs of our local partner, Pusat Kebajikan Good Shepherd (PKGS). PKGS engages the local communities in order to determine their needs and then works with the communities to implement programs addressing these needs.

# Handcrafting Justice

By Amanda Javalý, GSV 2010-2011 and current Marketing Coordinator

As a small non-profit with a big mission, HandCrafting Justice depends on the efforts of the GSVs each year. HandCrafting Justice is a Fair Trade project that markets handmade goods on behalf of women in the developing world. The women receive a fair wage for their work and other social support from the Sisters, while learning how to become independent and self-reliant. The overall mission of HandCrafting Justice is to empower women to overcome social and

economic injustice.

Coming straight out of the Villanova School of Business, I thought I had so much business expertise to offer Sister Maureen McGowan and the rest of the HCJ team, but I soon realized my many suggestions such as "upgrading software to maximize efficiency" and "hiring someone to manage product development" did not align with the budget. Instead I learned from the rest of the staff how to make the best use of the little

resources we had.

The two Good Shepherd Volunteers placed at HandCrafting Justice each year make a big impact on the organization. The GSVs are responsible for the day-to-day operations of logging incoming shipments, supervising volunteer groups, managing inventory, and packing shipments. My main focus during my GSV year was growing the wholesale division. I helped develop the wholesale website which just offi-

# Aiming High

By Kat Meier

Entering into this past year as a volunteer Program Coordinator at an after-school, I was the first person to admit that, of all the ages to work with, middle school students intimidated the pants off of me. So, being placed at Aiming High, an after-school program for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Bronx, was something that filled me with apprehension and uncertainty.

The first few months were an adventure, to say the least: recruiting and interviewing teens, organizing curriculum, and trying to be an "authoritative yet warm" teacher. As the holiday season approached, I began doing one-on-one weekly counseling sessions with my 25 students. This was the time where I could "get real" with each of them—talk about troubles at home, relationships with teachers at school, peer pressure, and more.

During this time, one of my female students really began opening up and sharing very personal stories with me. It was a very humbling experience to enter into a conversation with a young woman, no set expectations in mind, and

have her open up about the emotional and verbal abuse that she experiences from her stepfather on a day-to-day basis. I had never had such a raw and unadulterated conversation with a young person about emotional abuse. There were definitely points where, imagining the pain and fear this student must be feeling, it was difficult for me to hold back tears.

During one particular conversation, this young lady expressed that, more than the abuse from her stepdad, her biggest frustration was the apathetic feedback her mother had about the whole situation. Her mother almost justified the actions of the stepdad. That frustration toward her mother was a real catalyst for deeper conversations between this young lady and me about sexism, gender roles, and power structures that exist in this world.

By the end of our year together, she and I must have had nearly a hundred con-



Aiming High 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Bronx

versations and check-ins with each other. The relationship I built with each of my students was wonderful, but this particular bond was paramount.

I am so grateful for the challenges and relationships I was able to build as volunteer. The support that I've provided for my students and the confidence I've instilled within them has been the greatest part of my experience as a Good Shepherd Volunteer.

**Be a part of the Good Shepherd economic justice ministry!**  
Get involved with **HandCrafting Justice and Fair Trade Uniforms!**  
Volunteer at a sale or host a sale, and we will send you the goods!  
Contact [maureen@handcraftingjustice.org](mailto:maureen@handcraftingjustice.org) for information.

cially launched recently after months and months of planning. I attended wholesale trade shows in New York and Boston as a representative of HandCrafting Justice at the booth. I spoke at sales and presentations about the mission of fair trade and economic empowerment. My general knowledge of business often came in handy, but I received far more knowledge than I was able to give. I learned a lot about the differences between the non-profit and for-profit worlds.

As I transition to my new job as Market-

ing & Recruitment Coordinator of GSV, I hope to take this knowledge of non-profit operation and administration with me. In my transition, I have become more aware of the strong connection between HandCrafting Justice and Good Shepherd Volunteers. Since the offices of the two organizations are down the hall from one another, the staff is very close. Sister Maureen has been an integral part of the foundation and development of both organizations. It was a humbling experience to work with



The 2010-2011 Brooklyn GSV Community selling for HandCrafting Justice.

Sister Maureen this past year, who lives and breathes the Good Shepherd mission. I feel privileged to be able to continue to participate in this mission.



Krystina (right) with her supervisor at the Euphrasian Residence

# The Position I Wanted

By Krystina Monetti,  
GSV 2010-2012

defeated, and seen heartbreak. Even though excitement may not be what I feel every morning, I still feel a strong pull toward work when I open my eyes for the day—a pull that I am needed, a pull to put a smile on one girl’s face, a pull to make life just a little more bearable. This is much more meaningful than a feeling of enthusiasm that I initially was expecting.

Maybe I expected the girls would want to see me every day or want to dance and sing to all my favorite songs, but that is not the life of a Euphrasian volunteer. At first it was so hard for me to understand why these girls used such harsh language or why they had what seemed like so much hatred for me and all the staff. But now I understand. I have an understanding of the life full of heartbreak, the constant degrading, and the years and years of humiliation and broken promises that define the lives of these young women.

I am not here to “help” them; we are here to work together—to work toward a life that has a brighter future and a glimpse of hope. Not every story has a happy ending here at Euphrasian, but for those that do, it makes a world of a difference. I am here to make that dream seem possible and to hold some hands along the way. I got the position I wanted.

# 2010-2011 GSVs



- Top Row:** Erika Leksan (HandCrafting Justice, NY), Lori Hendrickson (Safe Homes, NY), Karin Christenson (Euphrasian Residence, NY), Anne Skrobacz (Collier High School, NJ), Malinda Madery (Collier High School, NJ)
- Second Row:** Kylie Brandt (MS 118 After School, NY), Catherine Mock (Marian Hall, NY), Krystina Monetti (Paraguay), Christie Welch (Chelsea Foyer, NY), Tewsdey Erickson-Million (Grady High School, NY)
- Third Row:** Nova Lucero (Bolivia), Alicia Miller (Family Foster Care, NY), Haileigh Nelson (Family Foster Care, NY), Jessica Simonetti (Paraguay), Mariella McLachlin (Bushwick High School, NY)
- Bottom Row:** Aleksandra Mazurek (Collier High School, NJ), Catherine Scallen (HandCrafting Justice, NY), Lara Torii (Malaysia), Lily Roggenkamp (Chelsea Foyer, NY), Christina Hardebeck (Collier High School, NJ), Courtney Montony (Malaysia), Nicolle Walking (Public Policy, NY), Sydnie Birginal (Collier High School, NJ).

“We would like to offer you a volunteer position at Euphrasian Residence for the 2010-2011 GSV year.” When I heard those few words, a smile spread across my face, and I could not wait to run to tell my friends on campus. “I got the position I wanted!” I was so excited and grateful that I had something to look forward to as I crossed the stage for graduation that May.

Five months into my volunteer position at Euphrasian, a residential diagnostic center for teenage girls in crisis, I wish I could tell you I still woke up with that excitement every day. However, as I chase one of our residents around to pull the thumbtacks out of her mouth, I don’t know if excitement is the word I would use to describe my volunteer year.

Through my time at Euphrasian, I have cried, laughed, danced, sang, been

Talk To Us...

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✓ Contribute today at  
[www.gsvolunteers.org](http://www.gsvolunteers.org).  
Thank you!