



GRACE Ministries of the United Methodist Church in Northern Virginia is a community outreach program serving low income families. Your support helps us gather resources to address the varied needs of families from many nations.

### Summer Intern Arrives!

By Reverend Martha Real

The GRACE Ministries staff has grown this summer! Patricia Nicastrì began a two month internship with us on June 6, 2011. Her position was made possible by a grant from ExxonMobil's Community Summer Jobs Program for college students. Patricia is a rising senior at James Madison University, with a major in Media Arts and Design with a concentration in journalism and a major in Anthropology with a concentration in cultural anthropology.

During the last four weeks she has been assisting with our food distributions at Arlington and Culmore. She has also helped with our CNA Job Fair and assisted our CNA graduates with their resumes, interview preparation and test applications. In addition, she has spent time at the Foundation Center doing research on grant opportunities for GRACE Ministries. We are very excited to have her assistance in launching our monthly email newsletter that you are reading now!

Patricia will complete her internship the last week of July and return to Harrisonburg to begin her senior year at JMU. We are very thankful for all she is doing for GRACE Ministries this summer!

### A Big Bowl of Stone Soup Spring 2011 CNA Graduation

By Patricia Nicastrì

According to legend, there once was a hungry traveler who visited a town filled with hungry villagers. The traveler looked at the villagers and said, "Let's make stone soup." None of the villagers knew what stone soup was but the traveler heated up water and took two stones from his pocket and added them to the pot. They all gathered around, with confused looks on their faces, wondering what he was doing. The traveler said, "It would be great if we had

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#### Upcoming Events

August 2- CNA class starts at Arlington UMC

September 8- PCA Class starts at Floris UMC

October 1- Bishop's Convocation on Immigration Issues at Grace UMC, Manassas

October 29- GRACE Ministries Dinner at Mount Olivet UMC, Arlington

#### July Distributions

July 2- Culmore

July 9- Centreville, Floris

July 16- Arlington, Mount Olivet, Crossroads

July 23- St. Stephens

what he was doing. The traveler said, "It would be great if we had some potatoes. Do any of you have any potatoes?" One villager raised their hand and said they had some and then ran back to their home to get them. After the traveler added the potatoes to the soup he looked out at the villagers again and said, "This needs some spices. Do any of you have any spices?" Another villager said they had some and then ran back to get them. Everyone could smell the hearty aromas filling the air. This continued as the traveler asked for corn and then for meat. Finally, everyone got to eat a wonderful meal.

"This class is kind of like stone soup except we've created a job training program...I am thankful for stone soup. I am thankful for you," Reverend Martha Real said about the Spring 2011 Certified Nurse Aide graduating class.

On June 25, the Spring 2011 Certified Nurse Aide students gathered at Floris UMC to celebrate months of hard work, memorization and dedication. After a six month program, 26 students now qualify to take the CNA state exam and are one step closer to finding a job they enjoy and fulfilling their dreams.

Reverend Real began the ceremony by sharing the Stone Soup legend. Similar to the story, the CNA training program would not be possible without the partner agencies, faculty, staff, volunteers and other resources coming together, making that stone soup. Misoon Cho, a new graduate of the CNA program shared how she memorized medical terms while driving and studied during her lunch breaks at work. Aura Guerra, another new graduate of the program said, "I'm glad to be part of that melting pot group over there, that stone soup must be good."

The CNA program, run through GRACE Ministries, allowed students to take classes while maintaining a job. Despite language barriers and cultural differences, students could bond over mutual career interests.

"Consider this a beginning, not an ending...practice your skills and your English...you're doubly blessed because you can speak 2 languages...Don't stop here, if you have a calling or a dream, follow that dream," Reverend Real said to the graduates.

Below is a photo of the June 2011 Certified Nurse Aide graduates and staff.

## Graduates and Family

### Perspectives on the Spring 2011 CNA Class

Ursula Angulo was formerly a real estate agent but wanted to make an impression in someone's life. She claims that lots of practice is what made the tests easier, the key being to reinforce the material. Now, she wants to go back to college and become a registered nurse.

Yvette Nelson wants to become a registered nurse. "I enjoy taking care of people and letting them know I'm taking care of them," she said. Yvette enjoyed the games that were used in the ESL classes as well as the CNA material.

Sindy Benavides, daughter of Norma Benavides, spoke about her mother's hard work on graduation day. She said, "[My mother] through hard work, sacrifice...has put food on the table, paid the rent...she has taken a bold step forward to complete her dreams...not only ours." She also discussed how her mother sent her and her siblings to college and later thanked all the family members for supporting the graduates.



## **Not The Sun But The...** **Moon Park shares her CNA program experiences** By Patricia Nicastrì

Moon Park has set her goals high and knows the steps to achieving them. She graduated from the first Certified Nurse Aide program run by GRACE Ministries in 2010 and since then has continued working in the medical field taking one step at a time to reach her ultimate goal, to own her own day care or nursing home.

"This [CNA class] is very important to me...It's good for my job," she said.

Moon passionately and light-heartedly described how she aims to accomplish her goals, one step at a time. She joked when asked her name and smiled saying, "Not the sun but the," and then trailed off.

After she finished the PCA training program, she was hired as a medical technician. She now works for the Fairfax County Health Department, helping elderly patients stay with their families as long as possible.

"The teachers are very thorough and have lots of passion, there's great support...individually, they act like your mom," Moon said about the CNA training program.

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