

## Summer 'break' at the Seattle White Center



Cadet Naomi Kuhlman with kids from Seattle White Center's summer day camp. Photo by Kevin Pontsler

### **Cadet Naomi Kuhlman recaps week one of her summer assignment.**

*By Naomi Kuhlman, Cadet*

So much is going on here at the Seattle White Center. I am enjoying interacting with people at the senior center, day camp, social service food pantry and community center, along with seeing the variety of things happening in the immediate community as well as the surrounding Seattle Metro area.

God blessed this corps with a large senior group that comes in daily; many have been coming to the center for years. They spend time with each other, hear a devotion and have a meal. I have sat with several of these men and women and heard their life stories. One gentleman is a former heavyweight boxing champion from Missoula, Mont. Another makes buttons with sayings like "Exercise daily, walk with Jesus" as a silent witness of his faith.

The day camp had 34 children on Monday. Seattle has great places for field trips, including the aquarium, zoo and water park. Here at the center, they can spend time in the computer lab and the gym, as well as participate in chapel and the closing assembly.

One of my favorite kid moments took place after one of the younger girls got hit pretty hard by a rogue basketball. “Well, that hurt really bad and now the ball scares me, but I still want to play because I like to face my fears,” she said.

I anticipate more great moments with the kids, along with opportunities to lead games, crafts, chapels and closing assemblies.

The social service program, which includes the food pantry, is a well-oiled machine. Many area grocery stores donate expired or damaged goods, so more than enough food is available to hold a distribution to the public every week day. The senior center participants come through first, followed by the public.

The community center is a great resource for the Army. Currently we use it for summer day camp, but other activities take place there, including twice-a-week youth Zumba class, and open gyms for the community. I like walking into the gym and seeing so many kids devoting their time to a sport—avoiding some more dangerous things they could be doing.

God has placed me at a diverse corps with a variety of opportunities to serve and to learn. I am equally blessed with a new family here at the White Center; the officers, staff and clients have all been very welcoming and eager to share their experience.

Major Raymond and Captain Jennifer Erickson-King are the Seattle White Center corps officers.