

## VOLUNTEER VOICES

August 25, 2015

### International Day of Charity: September 5, 2015 by Claudia Juarez

The United Nations established International Day of Charity to sensitize and mobilize people to help others through volunteering and charitable activities. The day was chosen to commemorate Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who devoted her life to helping the destitute in India. Mother Teresa was baptized on August 27, 1910 in Macedonia and was a teacher for 17 years before she experienced a "call within a call" to devote herself to caring for the sick and poor. She founded the Missionaries of Charity, which established hospices and centers to help the "poorest among the poor." Even though her work was controversial, she remains one of the greatest humanitarians of the 20th century and was recognized as recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.

How do charities help? - Charities can help by campaigning for better employment rights, helping people get back to work through language or skills training and resume writing support, providing humanitarian support in the wake of natural disasters or human conflicts and even sending in medical doctors as with the Ebola outbreak not so long ago.

How can helping a charity help you? - A recent working paper from Harvard University explored the existing research regarding the notions that happier people give more and that giving actually makes you happier. Sounds confusing? It turns out that in fact, people who are happy tend to give more time, money or support and in turn, giving makes them even happier knowing they are helping. It creates a circle of positive energy and everybody wins.

Charity is not just donating money but contributing your time as a volunteer or donating things you no longer use to people needing help. This September 5th, let's all think about what else can we do. It will enhance the lives of those we help, and will make our lives happier in the process!



Christine McIver

### Kids Cancer Care by Claudia Juarez

When children are diagnosed with cancer, a real nightmare starts for those families. After such a diagnosis for her son, Christine McIver discovered there were no cancer camps in Alberta, so in 1994 she founded the Kids Cancer Camps of Alberta. These camps help meet the needs of the whole family at each stage in cancer from diagnosis through treatment, and even mourning. Today, Kids Cancer Care is one of only a handful of charities in North America dedicated to supporting the entire continuum of childhood cancer, fighting the disease on all fronts with camps, the best treatments at the hospital and innovative science in the lab. They also create brighter futures for patients through post-secondary scholarships. See how you can help here: <http://kidscancercare.ab.ca/get-involved>



Source: <http://www.biography.com/people/mother-teresa-9504160>



### FEATURE VOLUNTEER: Claudia Juarez

Claudia comes from Argentina with a degree in Public Relations. Before coming to Canada, she worked on the construction of the first large scale clean hydrogen plant in the world, a stepping stone for clean renewable energy development. After settling in Calgary she started volunteering at CCIS to gain local experience and make new friends. Because of her background with languages, she participated in CIWA's Labour Market program, where she became certified as a community interpreter. Today she still volunteers with CCIS while working as a professional interpreter to help immigrants break the language barrier.