

Letter from Adam Hartnett

Missions Intern



I am relatively new to the St. Luke's family and I am so excited to be a part of this community. I began my involvement with St. Luke's during the summer of 2012 as an intern. After finishing up a Master of Social Work degree at Florida State University, I am excited about putting into real-life practice what I have learned in social welfare and social policy.

This past August I re-started at St. Luke's as an intern under the missions department; my main focus was Community Transformation. Having completed my academic responsibilities, I have been tasked with the new role of maintaining a regular presence in East Winter Garden. My days are now filled with

visiting schools, gardens, community centers and other community events, as well as keeping in contact with some of the community leaders. It is one of the most exciting opportunities in which I am able to share my skills.

What we are doing here at St. Luke's has great power! It is the first place I have been that truly values and utilizes what I have found to be imperative qualities in mission. It is our privilege to work from a foundational belief that in God there is hope and purpose. God gives us hope that through the Bible, our traditions, community around us, and our own experiences there is something better, more fulfilling ahead; and this message gives us purpose to be a part of the betterment of the earth and the lives of other people spread across the globe.

A second quality imperative in mission is the commitment and importance of relationships inherent in a community-based transformation initiative. Not only has St. Luke's made a long-term commitment to East Winter Garden; we also regard the dreams and desires of the community as a high priority. Through this relationship-based commitment, the layers of mistrust and misunderstanding that have resulted from decades of oppression begin to peel back and disintegrate. I hope my understanding of development, community systems and social change, as well as the social work values of social justice, dignity and worth of the person will help us develop strong and healthy relationships.

We have begun to understand how all these factors work together to arrive at the work we are doing in East Winter Garden. We are moving toward a community transformation initiative that expresses a message of hope and purpose that empowers every person involved, including volunteers, community members, and social service professionals alike.

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