



The Helping Hands and sanitation crews had their work cut out for them.



Anna J.



Rodney R., a local homeowner, Hallie R., and Landon R.



"When you're serving these people, the love you feel for them is definitely memorable."

Working with one homeowner was especially memorable for Hallie. "He had been in an accident years ago, so he wore a back brace, and yet he was still helping with us," she says. "It was an amazing experience."

A Memorable Experience

And "amazing" was just one way to describe it. Many youth also explained why the opportunity was memorable for them.

"The people we helped had gone through some rough times," says Derek T., 13, from Alabama. "I felt warm inside doing service for other people."

"Talking with the people, you couldn't even tell that their houses were just destroyed. They were so thankful and smiling and positive," says Gavin R., 14, from Alabama. "When you're serving these people, the love you feel for them is definitely memorable."

"You can see these things on the news, but you never really know what people are going through until you go out and help," says Luke G., 13, of Georgia.

Life Lessons

Many volunteers also felt that the hard work and service helped them gain new understanding.

"I realized that everyone has problems, and sometimes people need help because they can't help themselves," says Lindsay K., 14, from Georgia. "It was hard. It was really hard. But I am grateful that I am in a

good situation so I can help others." Madison C., 13, from Alabama says, "Service helps you understand that bad things happen to people and that they can get over it, so you know you can get over hard things too."

"It was a great way to prepare for a mission," says Jared R., 15, from Alabama. "You were tired, you woke up early, and it was hot. But you went in there and got it done. Once you got into the swing of things, everybody was talking and having a good time."

Gloria G., 16, from Georgia, says, "I realized that there might be big problems in the world, but God will always be there. He'll always find a way to help you even though you might think that you lost everything and there's no hope. He's not going to abandon you."

"I've been having issues with my testimony, but what He did for these people showed me that He really does care, He really is there, and He's going to make sure we're OK."

"I learned that I should give my all and not give up when I'm tired or bored," says Landon. "I think in some ways the man we helped blessed my life more than I blessed his. I know God gave me this opportunity to serve because He loves me and He knew I needed it."

"I was able to serve as the hands of Christ," says Julia C., 15, from Georgia. "It was humbling, and I was grateful that I was blessed to go. I loved the experience." NE