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East Side Homes Get Rehab Help from Out state

Forty volunteers from Illinois to fix up houses

DETROIT – Forty volunteers from Urbana, Illinois will wield hammers and saws this week, to help refurbish three homes on the city’s east side.

The group, which will work on houses on Faircrest between Celestine and Queen, chose to assist with the community’s revitalization after viewing a documentary last fall that aired on CNN called, “The Poverty Trap.” The series included a segment about Detroit, and featured some of the east side’s neighborhoods.

“There are many of us who have been committed and working to restore the east side, and we are finally starting to see some results,” said Mike Fisher, head of the Detroit Community Initiative, who was interviewed as part of the CNN documentary. “But we’re glad to have the help of anyone who shares that commitment.”

The group of 28 youths and 12 adults, known as the CREW Mission, will work on fixing up the three eastside homes during the hours of 10 a.m. -3 p.m., Monday, July 9 through Thursday, July 13, 2007.

CREW stands for Christ Renews Everyone’s World, and is a part of the religious education program at St. Patrick’s Parish in Urbana, Illinois. Since 2000, CREW volunteers have dedicated one week each summer to helping fix up homes. Detroit’s work marks the group’s eighth trip.

“We’re looking forward to coming to Detroit and to doing some work for some homes that need a little bit of fixing up,” said Dwight Raab, the crew leader, who by day is an agricultural economist at the University of Illinois.

CREW members will be housed at the University of Detroit-Mercy during their stay.

For more information on CREW, contact St. Patrick’s Parish at 217.367.2665.

Detroit Community Initiative (DCI) has been at the forefront of neighborhood restoration and community development in northeast Detroit over the past 12 years. DCI and its affiliate Northeast Village CDC recently completed construction of 49 new affordable single family homes. The Saratoga Homes project is fully leased.

On the web: www.detroitcommunity.org