



OAM Volunteers at Clothes that Work

By Magistrate Ann Weatherhead
Cuyahoga County Domestic Relations Court



The OAM Magistrates at Clothes That Work in Dayton, Ohio.

Our 2013 Spring Conference volunteer project was at Clothes That Work, a grass roots organization in its fifteenth year of providing “interview appropriate” clothing to job seekers in Montgomery County. They also offer image counseling and other training to people seeking work in the area.

If the OAM volunteers have learned anything through the half dozen volunteer projects we have worked on, we have learned that sorting is often a big part of the job. Volunteering at Clothes That Work was no exception. It is housed in a large building that it shares with other organizations. About 20 magistrates and one intrepid spouse of a magistrate sorted in a big warehouse area. We sorted hangers (they only used a certain kind), and we sorted clothes by size. Some of us had retail experience in selling clothes, which came in very handy.

The organization had an open house the day we were there, and some of us helped put the thrift store furniture back where it belonged after that event. In addition to the work we did at the site, several magistrates donated business clothing, which CTW will distribute to their clients to help them present a professional image in the workplace.

The amount of oversight and direction the OAM volunteers are given varies greatly from venue to venue. Magistrates are problem solvers, and at each volunteer project, particularly where we are told what to do but not how to do it, we quickly develop a system to work as a team. At Clothes That Work, for example, one person would yell the size of a garment, and the person manning the appropriate rack responded. Then the clothing would be passed from person to person until it reached the spot in the rack where it belonged. This sort of teamwork, plus the great attitude and good sense of humor of the magistrate volunteers make our volunteer projects fun.

A rainbow appeared in the gray Dayton sky as we finished our work and got ready to return to our hotel; a celestial treat that capped off another successful OAM volunteer project.

On a sad note, there was a fire at the Vail Meadows Equestrian Center, the site of our 2011 Spring Conference volunteer project. Almost all of the horses that were used for equestrian therapy perished, as did several other animals. Their address is Vail Meadows Therapy Riding, 6118 Cedar Point Road, Oregon, Ohio 43616. 