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**Grant helps boost volunteer effort**

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Monday, was a day to sleep in, with no bus to catch, no test to take, no reading, writing or arithmetic.

To others, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was meant for action.

The slain civil rights leader is well known for the quote, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

Middle school students Kia Armstrong and her brother, Akeilo, answered his question by helping paint murals on the walls at the Nashville Rescue Mission.

"You're putting a smile on somebody else's face, [somebody] who probably doesn't have a smile," Kia Armstrong told News 2.

The project was one of several across the city in honor of Dr. King, lead by Hands on Nashville.

According to spokeswoman Lisa Davis, Hands on Nashville is getting volunteers in records numbers and, many through the organization's volunteer calendar.

"In 2009, we connected 34,000 volunteers to service," she said. "We think it's a great way for people to get engaged in a community. Go to a project that's already organized, show up, and it's simple and easy."

The volunteer movement in Nashville got an added boost Monday as one of 10 cities in the country to win the first ever leadership from Rockefeller Foundation Grant for Service.

The \$200,000 grant will fund a Chief Service Officer in the mayor's office with a mission to develop and implement a plan to increase volunteerism across the city.

"These are tight budget times so anything we can do to help our city without having to spend addition tax dollars is a wonderful thing," said Nashville Mayor Karl Dean.

He said more than just the money, "it's a positive thing to encourage people to be part of their city, to be part of their communities, and that's the real message."

Mayor Dean said the city is committed to have someone in the position by April, but he wants to speed that up a bit.

"I'm anxious to get this up and running," he said.

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