

# KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

## UMCOR SAGER BROWN

101 Sager Brown Road, P.O. Box 850, Baldwin, LA 70514



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## A Message of Welcome

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Dear Friend of UMCOR Sager Brown:

Greetings and thank you for selecting us as you plan your next mission journey!

We are excited that the number of short-term volunteers coming to UMCOR Sager Brown continues to increase, as we often operate at capacity. We rejoice in this blessing, and we recognize that to continue to provide a true mission experience, we must always find ways to improve our volunteer services.

We continue to experience increased costs for our food, utilities, gas and maintenance materials, just as you have experienced increases in most everything you purchase. To adjust for this, we have had to increase the cost of our food and lodging, effective for all new bookings. [View our rates here.](#)

The staff at UMCOR Sager Brown constantly strive to conserve wherever possible, and employees are committed to maintaining and improving our level of services for our mission teams.

All the details and forms you need for a rewarding mission experience are contained in this booklet, "Know Before You Go." We have changed some of our policies, so we encourage you to read this information carefully prior to coming to Sager Brown.

Finally, please help support UMCOR Sager Brown by spreading the word! Churches learn about us from our vast roster of short-term volunteers. Any awareness generated for UMCOR Sager Brown at the local church level is greatly appreciated. You can direct people for more information here:

<https://umcmission.org/umcor-supply-depots/>

UMCOR Sager Brown staff and employees are confident that your mission team will have a meaningful mission experience. We look forward to your future mission journeys with us.

Blessings,

Amy Fuselier

Director of UMCOR Relief Supplies

# A Short History of UMCOR Sager Brown

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UMCOR Sager Brown has origins in New Orleans. In 1867, a group of women in New Orleans formed the Orphan's Home Society Corporation. This was a means of raising money to provide a home for African American boys who had been orphaned by the Civil War. It was funded primarily by the Freedmen's Aid Society, a predecessor to the Black College Fund of The United Methodist Church, and John Baldwin, a plantation owner in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana.

Very early in the life of the orphanage, a large monetary gift donated by William Gilbert of Winsted, Connecticut, allowed a school for African Americans to be built with Dr. W. D. Godman as director. The institution was named the Orphan's Home and the Gilbert Academy and Industrial School. Eventually, Gilbert Academy was moved to New Orleans near Dillard University and became a preparatory school. The school in Baldwin, grades one through eight, then became known as Godman Industrial School. Godman and his wife directed the school and the orphanage and were responsible for building a Methodist church on the property.

In the early 1900s, the Orphan's Home and Godman Industrial School were in dire financial straits. Dr. and Mrs. Godman took the student choir, the Jubilee Singers, on a tour of the northeastern United States to raise money. Mrs. Addie Sager and Mrs. C. W. Brown became familiar with the plight of the organization through a concert given for the North Central New York Methodist Conference. Sager and Brown purchased the school and gave it to the Women's Home Mission Society, a forerunner of the Women's Division of The United Methodist Church, to operate. The institution was known as Sager Brown Home and Godman School until 1978. That year, the home and school closed, and the property was put up for sale. Twenty-eight acres and 10 brick buildings on beautiful Bayou Teche were for sale for \$100,000, but no buyers emerged. The property was vacant for 14 years.

In 1992, Hurricane Andrew hit the coast of south Louisiana, causing major damage to the area around Baldwin. UMCOR came to the area with volunteers and supplies and used the old Sager Brown campus to stage their operations. After two years, UMCOR determined that the Sager Brown campus would be an excellent location to build a UMCOR depot where disaster relief supplies could be collected and provided to the world. The depot opened in 1996.

Many see the hand of God prominent in the events that formed the history of the Orphans' Home Society Corporation. It was preserved through hardship and changes until it could again be a healing ministry to those in need. The road beside the UMCOR Sager Brown campus is still called Orphan's Home Road. The property is still owned by the Women's Division, and the site is a significant piece of Black history.

Today, the campus is a living, working monument to more than a century of United Methodist mission. UMCOR is a leader in serving those who are hungry, displaced, sick or in poverty because of natural or human-made disasters. Each year more than 3,000 volunteers come to UMCOR Sager Brown to work in the UMCOR Depot or to serve the community of Baldwin, Louisiana – to help make a difference.

If you are interested in participating and adding your name to an ever-growing list of missionaries dedicated to making a difference in the world, read on, and if you feel the call, join us. We would be thrilled to include you as a part of our ever-growing history.

# Your Mission Experience

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## Overview

UMCOR Sager Brown has a rich history of serving others in times of distress. We deeply appreciate your interest in our mission programs and hope you will come and be a part of this special place.

While at Sager Brown, you may work in our 48,000- square-feet depot receiving, sorting, packing and shipping supplies for disaster relief or you can be part of a community project, such as housing rehabilitation or providing food for older adults. You may do maintenance on our campus or just help as you are able. Your individual spiritual gifts and talents will be coordinated with our ever-changing weekly needs.

We are eager to welcome you and add your name to a long list of missionaries who care enough to put their faith in action. The work, enthusiasm and love shared during the mission experience will have a profound effect on the lives of the participants. Without a doubt, volunteers will grow in their Christian love and experience spiritual enrichment.

UMCOR Sager Brown welcomes teams or individuals for short-term mission experiences. Volunteer mission teams stay in a climate-controlled dormitory environment, with centrally located restroom and shower facilities. Sager Brown also has efficiency apartments that include a private living area, kitchen, and bathroom. Ten full RV hookups, laundry facilities, meeting rooms and a stand-alone kitchen are also available.

Volunteers interested in serving UMCOR Sager Brown for an extended time can apply for long-term volunteer (LTV) opportunities. Lengths of service range from a month to several months, depending on our needs. Anyone interested in being an LTV may contact the Volunteer Services Department at UMCOR Sager Brown ([volunteers@sagerbrown.org](mailto:volunteers@sagerbrown.org)) for details. Room and board are provided to LTVs during their stay.

Tobacco use is restricted to designated areas on campus. Safe Sanctuary debriefing is conducted during orientation for both long-term volunteers and short-term volunteers. Guests using an RV space are allowed to have pets with them, but pets must always be on a leash and are not allowed in any buildings on campus.

## Check-In/Out and Daily Schedule

UMCOR Sager Brown offers a five-night mission experience beginning Sunday evening (check-in between 3-5 p.m.) and ending Friday at noon. Volunteer hours at UMCOR Sager Brown are from 8:15 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 3:30 p.m., with a lunch break from noon to 1 p.m. On Friday, work in the depot ends at 3 p.m. Time is needed to clean and restock supplies for the next workday.

After normal mission work hours, on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m., the Gift Shop is open for apparel, donated crafts, jewelry, salsa and other souvenirs. Purchases are by cash, check, debit or credit card.

Teams will have an opportunity to do some sightseeing and touring of the area if they choose. We recommend that this be done on Wednesday since no meal will be served on Wednesday evening. Work is always available on Wednesday morning and afternoon for those who do not desire recreational activities.

Our week culminates with Vesper services, a time of sharing and Holy Communion in Jubilee Chapel on Thursday evening. The service is planned by volunteers and designed to inspire the talents of mission team members. Clergy are encouraged to assist in the communion service.

## Leadership Responsibilities

UMCOR Sager Brown welcomes teams of all ages. We serve ecumenical intergenerational groups, youth fellowships, college students, adult groups, and church, district, and conference teams. Individuals are also welcome.

Due to the nature of the work at UMCOR Sager Brown, one adult (at least 21 years old and at least five years older than the oldest youth they are supervising) must accompany every five youth (ages 12-18). (For instance, if the oldest child is 17, the adult must be at least 22 to count as an adult supervisor.)

Adults must provide 24-hour supervision of youth teams. We always require a minimum of two adults in areas where children are located. Married couples can only be considered as one chaperone when counting the number of chaperones needed for a group. In family groups, it is the responsibility of the parents to provide 24-hour supervision of children and youth. Team leaders are responsible for any disciplinary action needed.

## Background Checks

To provide a “safe space” for all people volunteering on the UMCOR Sager Brown campus, as well as acting in accordance with Safe Sanctuary Policy, all volunteers age 18 and older are required to submit a recent (within three years of visit) screening background check. Background checks will remain on file and valid for three years from the date of background check.

Those needing assistance with securing their background check should contact the Volunteer Service Department by email at [volunteers@sagerbrown.org](mailto:volunteers@sagerbrown.org).

We at UMCOR Sager Brown seek to provide an experience that is both spiritually transformative and safe. If you have questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact us at the above email.

## Dress Code and Work Participation

Please use discretion in the selection of clothing during your stay at Sager Brown. Shirts should always be worn. T-shirts are acceptable attire. Walking shorts or skorts should have a six-inch or longer inseam. Skirts above the knee and full-length pants without holes and cuts are also acceptable.

Halter tops and sports bras worn as outer garments are not acceptable. Spandex clothing or sheer tops showing undergarments, along with clothing expressing alcohol/beer slogans and obscenities are not acceptable. **Closed-toe shoes are required while working.**

All volunteers (youth and adults) are encouraged to participate fully in the programs of Sager Brown. This includes attendance at meals, kitchen ministry, meetings, work in the depot, community or campus projects, evening gatherings and special events. If any team member cannot fulfill these activities due to health or physical limitations, please notify the Volunteer Services Department.

## Food Services

Each volunteer can elect to eat all meals or no meals. Three meals per day are served in the cafeteria Monday through Friday, except Wednesdays and Fridays, when only breakfast and lunch are available.

## Sleeping Facilities

The following sleeping facilities are available at UMCOR Sager Brown:

Facility	Description
Zook Hall	The main dormitory contains 57 beds. Towels and linens are provided.
Dixon-Rabb Hall	This self-contained dormitory facility sleeps up to 30 people. Towels and linens are provided.
Peck Hall	This hall contains two long-term apartments and six one-bedroom efficiency apartments for long- and short-term volunteers. Towels and linens are provided.
RV Facility	Contains 10 full-service RV slots with a bathhouse and laundry facilities.

**Note:** Please plan to bring your own hair dryers, as they are not provided. Laundry facilities are available onsite, with detergent provided. Donations are appreciated.

## COVID-19 Volunteer Protocols

Volunteers are encouraged to delay their visit or wear a mask/practice social distancing of at least 6 ft apart, if they have symptoms consistent with COVID-19.

## Donations for Kits

We suggest that because of UMCOR Sager Brown's limited resources, each team bring 10 kits per team member for processing in the depot. In lieu of kit donations, a team can contribute \$50 per team member, which will be used for material resources in the depot.

Donated kits and kit components are the lifeblood of UMCOR Sager Brown. Any additional kit donations from you, your church or your conference are always greatly valued.

# Making a Reservation for Your Group

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## Scheduling Your Group

Although we encourage as many people as possible to experience this ministry, we ask that you realistically consider your team's size. Overbooking slots does take away from other teams.

Reservations are made online by clicking the link below or going to [umcmission.org](http://umcmission.org):

<https://calendly.com/volunteerservices-sagerbrown/mission-week-clone>.

An invoice for the processing fees and trip costs will be sent to the email listed on the reservation. The reservation will be tentatively booked but not guaranteed until processing fees are received. Contact the Volunteer Services Department at 337-923-6238 or email [volunteers@sagerbrown.org](mailto:volunteers@sagerbrown.org) with any questions.

Once the reservation is booked, the team leader must remit the processing fee within 30 days of receiving the invoice to guarantee your reservation dates. Reservations begin the second Wednesday in January at 10 a.m. and we recommend reserving your dates a year in advance for peak times.

The processing fee must be received within 30 days of making the reservation, or your reservation will be cancelled.

## Fees

**A non-refundable processing fee of \$50 is required for each volunteer.** This fee applies to all individuals originally listed or added to the team roster. Until the processing fee is paid, applicants have no guarantee of the requested date.

**Important note: The processing fee is a stand-alone charge and will not be applied to the room and board portion of the team's bill. The processing fee must be paid within 30 days of receiving the invoice. Failure to do so will result in cancellation of the reservation.**

Our overnight rates are shown on the chart below. We make every effort to give couples a room together; however, we cannot guarantee this. Because of the numbers of teams coming, we sometimes must separate men and women to utilize all our bed space.

ITEMS	RATES
PROCESSING FEE	\$50/person
LODGING IN ZOOK/DIXON RABB	\$150/week
LODGING PECK APARTMENT	\$475/week
RV SPACE	\$150/week
MEALS	\$150/week
WEEKEND LODGING/5 MEALS	\$120/person
DAY GROUP WITH LUNCH	\$27/person
DAY GROUP WITHOUT LUNCH	\$15/person

**PLEASE NOTE:** Lodging and/or meal prices are prorated during holidays.

## **Billing Process**

An invoice will be sent to the email listed on the reservation for the processing fees and all trip costs. The invoice will include due dates, and the team leader will receive email reminders. The reservation costs, to be paid according to schedule, may be revised without penalty up to the half payment (90-day) deadline.

The team leader is responsible for all billing issues. Once the UMCOR Sager Brown associate director of Volunteer Services receives the reservation, the team leader will receive an invoice and should send the processing fees within 30 days to secure the desired dates.

Out of consideration for interested teams that may be wait-listed for last-minute opportunities, we encourage team leaders to solidify their reservation commitment four months ahead of their mission visit.

Three months prior to arrival, one-half of the team's total bill must be paid. All team cancellations or additions MUST be made prior to the half payment due date. This non-refundable payment is based on the number of volunteers booked. This is to ensure sincere commitment by the team and allow us to plan for your arrival and mission experience.

Please note refund policy as follows: For extenuating circumstances, such as a death in the family or illness, we review refund requests on a case-by-case basis. A 25% credit will be applied to dorm and meal refunds only. Apartment rentals are non-refundable. All refunds are issued as credits for a new mission trip; we no longer issue cash refunds. We can issue a one-time credit for a new trip, provided you book the new trip within 30 days of the cancellation and the trip is scheduled with a year of the issued credit.

It is preferred that the remaining one-half of the total bill is paid one month before arrival. We accept cash, checks, debit cards, credit cards and ACH transfers and checks should be payable to UMCOR Sager Brown.

## **Planning Timeline**

### **Three Months before Arrival Date**

One half of the total team bill is due. Last chance for invoice adjustments and refunds without penalty. The team leader should mail one quarter of the total team bill with team paperwork, including team roster, individual release forms, parental consents, summary sheets and background verification.

### **One Month before Arrival Date**

Total payment for reservation is due. Cancellations are non-refundable, other changes subject to penalty.

### **Arrival at UMCOR Sager Brown**

Upon your arrival on Sunday, teams must check in between 3 and 5 p.m. and attend a 6 p.m. general meeting. Many important topics are covered. Please plan to eat prior to or directly after the meeting. Restaurant selections in the Baldwin area on Sunday evenings are limited. Refer to the directory in your dorm room that includes local dining information. A full kitchen is available in the Susanna Wesley room if your team would like to bring food to prepare or a picnic-type meal in lieu of dining out. Upon arrival, go to Zook Hall and register with the host on duty. All room information and name tags will be given to you at this time. All further instructions and information will be announced on an ongoing basis throughout the week.

## Required Forms

Each mission team must complete the following required forms, which are available at the links noted and online at <https://umcmission.org/work/humanitarian-relief/supply-depots/>. Follow the link to “Relief- Supply Networks and UMCOR Depots” and “Know Before Your Go.”

1. [Team Member Checklist](#)
2. [Mission Team Roster](#) OR [Children/Youth Intergenerational Roster](#)
3. [Mission Team Special Skills and Interests Summary](#)
4. [Medical Release](#)
5. [Liability Release for Team Leader](#)
6. [Liability Release for All Volunteers](#)
7. [Youth Team Policy and Covenant for Volunteers Under Age 18](#)
8. [Media Authorization and Release](#)
9. [Background Check](#)
10. [Volunteer Program Code of Conduct Standard](#)

**Please send completed paperwork organized by form and without staples to 101 Sager Brown Road, P.O. Box 850, Baldwin, LA 70514. You may also send forms via email to [volunteers@sagerbrown.org](mailto:volunteers@sagerbrown.org).**

### 1. [Team Member Checklist](#)

This form should be provided by the team leader to each team member for completion.

### 2. [Mission Team Roster](#)

This form, completed by the team leader, contains all critical information required to set up and execute each team’s mission experience. Please take extreme care when completing the form since this information is used to assign rooms; print name badges, certificates, and room tags; and provide meal information for the kitchen. Special needs and concerns should include any individual volunteer’s dietary or health conditions.

If children will be part of the mission team, please complete the [Children/Youth Intergenerational Roster](#) INSTEAD of the mission team roster. Check the child supervision requirements (adult-to-child ratios) when completing this roster.

### 3. [Mission Team Special Skills and Interests Summary](#)

This form, completed by the team leader, is designed to provide UMCOR Sager Brown with a list of specific team members who possess special skills or talents that could be used for various special and ongoing needs.

### 4. [Medical Release](#)

This form must be completed by each team member. Volunteers under 18 years of age must have a parent/guardian signature. A copy of a medical insurance card or certificate of insurance must be attached as some area hospitals and doctors require proof of insurance before treatment. If you have not had a tetanus shot in the last few years, we recommend having one prior to your arrival.

If anyone in your group has unusual or significant medical conditions that may limit their ability to participate in work at UMCOR Sager Brown, be sure to list it on the volunteer medical release form and the team roster form. Also, please call the associate director of volunteer services to January 2026

discuss the volunteer's condition. We do not have medical personnel on staff at UMCOR Sager Brown.

Volunteers must provide their own health and accident insurance covering their travel to and from UMCOR Sager Brown, as well as while they are here.

View information on **optional UMVIM Accidental Insurance options on page 11.**

**5. Liability Release for Team Leader**

This form, completed by the team leader, constitutes an understanding of the working relationship and responsibilities as a volunteer and team leader with UMCOR Sager Brown. It holds UMCOR Sager Brown harmless from any liabilities concerned with the mission journey.

**6. Liability Release for All Volunteers**

This form, completed by each team member, constitutes an understanding of their working relationship as a short-term volunteer with UMCOR Sager Brown. It sets out responsibilities assumed by the short-term volunteer and holds UMCOR Sager Brown harmless from any liabilities concerned with the mission journey. Volunteers under 18 years of age must include a parent/guardian signature along with emergency contact information.

**7. Youth Team Policy and Covenant for Volunteers Under Age 18**

Each youth member under the age of 18, their legal guardian and mission team leader must read and sign this policy attesting agreement to its contents.

**8. Media Authorization and Release**

Each team member must complete this media authorization and release. Youth members under the age of 18 must have their legal guardian complete the form.

**9. Background Check**

This form can be completed by the secretary of your church, only when background checks have been conducted through your church. Please, list each team member's name and the date their background check was completed. Once all information is completed, the secretary and the senior pastor of the church must sign the form.

**10. Volunteer Program Code of Conduct Standard**

This form, completed by each team member, constitutes an understanding of the Code of Conduct Standards with the UMCOR Sager Brown Volunteer Program.

## **Rescheduling a Mission Trip**

Mission trips may be rescheduled one time within the same calendar year. If the mission team is unable to attend during the new timeframe, all funds will be applied as a donation to Sager Brown. No refund will be issued.

## **Optional UMVIM Accident Insurance**

If you are interested in obtaining UMVIM Accident Insurance, please go to the jurisdictional websites below for more information. (You can obtain the appropriate insurance regardless of where you are located.)

### **The following UMVIM jurisdictions offer USA insurance:**

North Central Jurisdiction UMVIM website: <https://www.umvim.org/ncjins>

Northeastern Jurisdiction UMVIM website: <https://www.umvim.org/nej-insurance>

Western Jurisdiction UMVIM website: <https://www.umvim.org/wjinsurance>

Southeastern Jurisdiction UMVIM website: <https://www.umvim.org/sej-insurance>

South Central Jurisdiction UMVIM website: <https://www.sciumc.org/mission2/insurance/>

# UMCOR Sager Brown Personnel Directory

**Mailing Address:** UMCOR Sager Brown, P.O. Box 850, Baldwin, LA 70514

Phone	Email	eFax
337-923-6238	Main Office Contact	337-522-7299
337-420-7038	Director of UMCOR Relief Supplies <a href="mailto:afuselier@umcor.org">afuselier@umcor.org</a>	
337-420-7036	Volunteer Services Manager <a href="mailto:volunteers@sagerbrown.org">volunteers@sagerbrown.org</a>	
337-420-7025	Associate Director of Outreach Ministries <a href="mailto:outreach@umcor.org">outreach@umcor.org</a>	
337-420-7033	Depot Operations Manager <a href="mailto:warehouse@sagerbrown.org">warehouse@sagerbrown.org</a>	
337-940-4220	Volunteer Services After-Hour/Emergency Contact	



## About the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)

As the humanitarian relief and development arm of The United Methodist Church, the United Methodist Committee on Relief – UMCOR – assists United Methodists and churches to become involved globally in direct ministry to persons in need. A part of the General Board of Global Ministries UMCOR comes alongside those who suffer from natural or human-caused disasters – famine, hurricane, war, flood, fire or other events—to alleviate suffering and serve as a source of help and hope for the vulnerable.