POST-GRAD SERVICE BASICS

Meeting Your Basic Needs

Most year-of-service programs cover your basic needs:
- room, board, local transportation, basic health insurance, the likelihood of being about to defer loans
- a small, monthly stipend
- many also offer the Americorps Education Award toward loans or further education

Program Differentiation

Programs differ in several ways; you need to discern what is most important to you in a program:
- International v. Domestic
- Length of commitment
- Faith-based or secular
- Type of community
  - Recent college grads
  - Lay people and religious in an intergenerational, established community
  - On your own
- Urban vs. Rural
- Specific cities, states, or countries
- The range of job options available (teaching, medical work, environmental work, etc.)
- Size of the program
- Application process and deadlines

TOP 5 REASONS TO DO A YEAR OF SERVICE:

1) You want to serve, and you're eager to learn about yourself, your world, your faith, people, justice, a profession, etc.
2) You want some “real world experience” before you take a job or go to graduate school
3) You are not sure what you want to do next, but you know you want to take a year “on” rather than “off” while figuring things out
4) You are drawn by your faith and/or social commitments to serve and learn and grow
5) You’re so ready to match your passions and skills with the world’s needs!

Family, Friends, and Significant Others

- Some graduates have support and encouragement from loved ones about volunteering
- Some graduates experience indifference or even opposition from loved ones about volunteering
- No matter what your loved ones opinions on the matter, do not dismiss them. Appreciate it if you have support and talk with important people in your life if you do not. Family and friends should not make your decisions for you, but they can and should be part of your discernment process.
- If you are seeking to volunteer with a significant other, many programs are willing to work with you but probably will not place you in the same living community. Many programs have more than one living community in the same city. Many cities have more than one program. Or you don’t have to be in the same part of the country or world for a year or more. All part of your discernment . . . .

Other Recommendations

- Find a program that “fits” you best: most program directors understand that while they would like to recruit you to her/his program, it is more important for everyone that you discern which program is best for you
- Apply to more than one program in case your favorite doesn’t work out, but don’t go wild; 3 or 4 applications tops should be plenty if you have done your research and been thoughtful through the application process
- Talk to the Program Directors, but also ask to speak with current or recent volunteers who know about the position you are interested in

More information

- CFJ’s Post-Graduate Service website (www.xavier.edu/cfj/community-engagement/Post-Graduate-Service1.cfm)
- Take time to thumb through, highlight, and mark up the Catholic Volunteer Network RESPONSE guide.
- Set up an appointment on campus to talk with Molly Robertshaw in the Center for Faith and Justice (robertshawm@xavier.edu or 513-745-3560) at any point in the year. She is an alumnus of JVC: Northwest, but would be happy to walk with you through your process of discerning and applying in whatever way is helpful.