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AFMIX CAPSTONE SUBMISSION
GRANT PROPOSAL

Grant Proposal WOX
Ignatian Wilderness Immersion Experience for Women
(10 days)

Abstract

I am requesting funds to pilot an outdoor immersion program that develops leadership skills and discernment of vocation in Xavier women through connection to nature and utilization of the spiritual exercises. In partnership with the Camping and Education Foundation, and the Center for Women in Business and Leadership (launching this semester) the grant would sponsor four female students and four female faculty to travel to the Canadian boundary waters and engage in an outdoor immersion experience centered on vocational discernment through the spiritual exercises. The aim of the Center for Women in Business and Leadership is to attract, educate, support, and elevate women. Providing experiential learning experiences that are challenging and motivating allows women to gain confidence, clarity, develop useful skills such as creativity, dealing with failure, collaboration, and problem solving. The proposed immersion trip will use the spiritual exercises to develop clarity of purpose, leadership skills, and self-confidence using the wilderness as a catalyst for personal growth and self-discovery.

Description

The purpose of the trip is to provide female students and faculty a transformational experience through engagement with the spiritual exercises that aid in discernment of vocational calling and develop leadership skills using our natural world as a catalyst. The group will be met by Camping and Education Foundation staff upon arrival at the Minneapolis, MN airport and travel on a chartered bus to Baril Lake, Ontario Canada. Camp Owakonze, a former boy's camp owned by the Camping and Education Foundation, will serve as the two-day training location and final reflection post for the group.

The first two days in camp are focused on training the group for the canoeing trip before departing the island for a five-day guided canoe trip through the Ontario province. Each participant will be provided with a journal and booklet with a focused version of spiritual exercises to utilize while on the trip. The two days in camp, the group will work through module 1 of the workbook individually, followed by group discussion. Upon departure from the camp, each day on the water will begin with a reading from the workbook and conclude with an examen and time for personal and/or group reflection moving through modules 2 and 3 of the workbook. Upon returning to camp the group will complete module 4 of the exercises and trip debrief.

The immersion trip speaks to the mission of the University to "educate the whole person", increases solidarity among women, and incorporates key teachings of Ignatian spirituality. Moreover, the experience directly supports the efforts to incorporate the Universal Apostolic Preferences into campus life. Similarly, the WOX seeks to promote the professional development of women at Xavier in the spirit of the Jesuit tradition. The incorporation of the spiritual exercises as a mode to discern vocation, and the solidarity fostered among the group from facing a common challenge accomplishes both goals of the WOX. The experience offers an ideal intersection of individual, University, and the WOX's goals. In addition, there is not any other opportunity offered to Xavier women that bring together faculty and students, with a female focus, incorporating nature and the spiritual exercise as a platform for vocational discernment.

It is my hope that the eight women who engage in the experience gain a deep understanding of their vocational mission, increased self-awareness, the ability to utilize the spiritual exercises in future decisions, and a sense of solidarity. The personal testimony of the faculty and student participants will serve as the main tool for program evaluation. If successful, the program could be expanded and perhaps develop into a leadership certificate program.

Future funding could come from Mission and Identity, a private donor, or funds directed to the development of students. If the project is funded the WOX Giving Circle would be recognized through personal thank you notes and access to personal testimonies. In addition, a campus announcement thanking the group will be posted for the Xavier community and mentioned on the Women in Business and Leadership website. Thank you for your consideration.

Budget Breakdown

Cost per person (including travel) is right around \$1,200 so you could do a group of 8 women with two staff for \$9,600.



Dates depend on availability of staff for the most part. If you were doing one trip a summer for the next two years, we would probably look at either mid-summer or end of summer, with end of summer being ideal. Think August 10-22nd roughly, although length and time can adjust.

Cost Breakdown Estimate (based on 8 trippers, 2 staff, and 2 weeks):

Travel (fly into Mpls and take van up to Owakonze -- Southwest, budget of \$350/traveler, no baggage fees)* \$2,800

Fuel (Mpls to Owakonze and return): \$350

Food (\$12/person/day * 10 people): \$1,700

Permits (depends on route / 10 trippers): \$1,000

Trip Head: \$750

Assistant Trip Head: \$500

Insurance (\$100 rider per person): \$1,000

Main Gear (comes from camp - tents, canoes, paddles, life jackets, etc.): \$1,000

Miscellaneous (fishing licenses, maps, unexpected extras): \$500

Personal Gear (we provide gear list): Covered by participant.

*Travelers typically pay for misc. costs on days of travel (food, uber, baggage, etc.) but have covered this as well.