



Catholic Volunteers in Florida

Transforming Lives Through Faith and Service

Current CV Reflects on Service Impact

As the 2015 - 16 service year comes to a close, Taylor Cembalisky reflects on her service work in the Dominican Republic.

I serve a community tucked away in the breathtaking mountains of the Dominican Republic's western region. Spending time in the community of Las Lomas immersed in the Dominican culture and being warmly welcomed into dozens of homes and lives, has reminded me that my role as a volunteer is not single-sided, but a partnership. My role as a Catholic Volunteer is to serve those with whom I am in community. It is, therefore, easy to adopt an agenda in which I seek out the needs of the community and offer my skills and talents to help fulfill these needs. My service site, however, has highlighted the many flaws of this narrow-sighted mindset.



Yes, I am serving the community of Las Lomas but I am also being served by the beautiful people here in more ways than I could ever reciprocate.

From practical skills to lifelong lessons, I have gained richness to my life that cannot be had without experience. I have been shown the swiftest and most effective way to kill a tarantula found under my bunk at bedtime, the art of hand-scrubbing clothes in the river, and the ease of turning plantains into a plate of savory tostones. I have also witnessed the unwavering strength of family bonds. The purest sincerity between community members and friends where you are not judged by what is in your wallet but by what is in your heart, and I have received the warmest welcome into a community filled with so much love. By the end of my year of service, my only hope is that I can give back to this community half of what they have given to me.



Taylor is currently serving with the Diocese of Orlando Mission Office in Azua, Dominican Republic. After completing her service year, she plans to move to New York to begin work with an NGO focused primarily on international development.

DONATE NOW



If you've ever considered a year of service but aren't sure how to get started, give us a call! We'd love to help you discover the endless opportunities involved in a service year.

Available community impact positions include:

Community Outreach

Teaching & Mentoring

Social Work & Case Management

Volunteers are supported with a great benefits package including free furnished housing, health insurance, and a living stipend of up to \$600 a month. Our volunteer family also comes together quarterly for retreats to promote personal & professional growth.

Learn more by visiting our website:
www.cvif.org

Help us spread the word!

[Click here](#) for a copy of our flyer with information about the CVIF application process to share with your community today.

Top 5 Reasons To Do a Year of Service

1. People will stop asking what you plan to do after graduation!

Everyone wants to know what big plans you have in store for the rest of your life. Maybe you have no idea yet and that's okay. Telling everyone you are off to Florida to serve communities in need will definitely stave off the ongoing questions about your career choices. Becoming a Catholic Volunteer will give you a whole year to figure out what you really want to do with the rest of your life. And it doesn't hurt that you can reflect on your hopes and dreams on one of the many sandy white beaches within driving distance of most of our service sites!

2. You'll gain the real world experience you're expected to have.

A year of service at one of our partner sites will pack your resume with all the skills and experience you'll need when you start applying for jobs in your field. Most volunteer agencies are flexible with job descriptions so you'll be able to tailor your service experience to sharpen and hone the skills you want and you might even discover some new talents and interests you didn't even know existed.

3. Serving others really does make you happier.

Whether you are placed serving an immigrant farmworker community in the Gulf Coast, the at-risk youth of Miami or the homeless veterans of Jacksonville, you'll be sure to meet some interesting people and learn a lot about yourself in the process. The greatest thing about being a volunteer is that no matter how miniscule the task may seem, there is a true purpose behind everything you do and purpose promotes happiness.

4. You'll bring about real change in the world.

Doing a year of service challenges you to leave behind the textbook case studies of "those people in need" and allows you to dive into the heart of social justice and systemic change. You'll meet and live among the people who need your help and learn the best ways to serve them. You'll do much more than talk about the problem; you'll actually be a real part of the solution.

5. Networking will mean more than updating your LinkedIn profile.

Many of our volunteers move on to great careers in the nonprofit sector and 65 percent of alumni even stay on as full time employees at the places they served. Beyond the professional world, you'll create a bond with your fellow volunteers who have come from all over the country to serve in Florida. The challenges and experiences you will face in a program as uniquely all-encompassing as CVIF breed long lasting relationships. Through retreat participation and community activities you are sure to build a bond that will likely not be broken.

Service Site Spotlight

We are always in prayer for new ways to serve our local community and we are so excited to share the good news that we've partnered with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul this year to provide support to formerly incarcerated community members across the state of Florida.

Current CV LaShanna Tyson is serving this year as the Vincentian Re-Entry Organizing Project's Outreach Coordinator. The purpose of this project is to create safer, stronger, and more restorative communities for those in need of assistance after incarceration. The project's goal is to remove barriers to reentry and increase economic opportunities through systemic advocacy.

With LaShanna's help, St. Vincent de Paul hopes to double its number of skills-based volunteers in order to replicate the success of local policy

Our Mission

Catholic Volunteers in Florida is dedicated to providing people of all faiths the opportunity to volunteer for a year and live out their faith by serving the diverse needs of the people of Florida and the Dominican Republic.

Catholic Volunteers work towards justice and peace, transforming the community they serve as well as themselves.

We live out our mission statement through our five core values:

Doing Justice
Active Spirituality
Creating Community
Living Simply
Personal Growth

Upcoming Event

New Volunteer Orientation

August 8 - 12, 2016

In The Community

We are looking forward to visiting a campus near you!

We'd love every chance to spread the word about the benefits of long term service work and help young people understand the importance of discovering their passion and purpose in life.

If you know of any opportunities for us to engage students and graduates at your alma mater, please contact Ms. Valarie with details by sending an email to vamica@cvif.org or by calling the CVIF office at 407-426-7771.

**Some give by serving,
while others serve by giving.**

Click here to make a donation today or donate by check made payable to:

Catholic Volunteers in Florida
P.O. Box 536476
Orlando, Florida 32853-6476

Calling all alumni!

How did your service year impact you? Where has your service experience taken you? Tell us about it. We'd love to share your memorable moments with the CVIF family.

Share your news

skills based volunteers in order to replicate the success of local policy changes in additional municipalities, and possibly statewide, in order to increase employment for people impacted by incarceration.

Alumni News

Join us in celebrating the precious new lives born this spring!

Cory and Alex Diaz, CV Class of 2014 - 2015, welcomed baby girl Emelie Sophia.

*Birth date: April 22, 2016
Weight: 6 pounds, 4 ounces
Length: 19 inches*



Former Executive Director, Elaine Fowler-Ray and husband Alan, welcomed baby boy William Alan Ray.

*Birth date: May 19, 2016
Weight: 7 pounds, 11 ounces
Length: 20 inches*



Share your news

We want to celebrate your new job, promotion, engagement, or anniversary!

Share your news and memories with us by emailing Vanessa at vhornedo@cvif.org and look out for your announcement in next month's newsletter.

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