



# Catholic Volunteers in Florida

*Transforming Lives Through Faith and Service*

## Message from the Director



Peace and blessings to you! We at CVIF are excited to share the amazing work of our amazing Catholic Volunteers this year.

From social enterprise and economic development in Wimauma to youth mentoring in Miami, young leaders are building relationships in local communities that lead to lasting impact and positive change. Whether teaching in Catholic schools, or serving adults with disabilities, or reducing barriers after incarceration, Catholic Volunteers are on the front lines of putting their faith into action and making a difference.

Please help us spread the word about our May 1st application deadline! We are looking for people of all ages and experiences who are called to service and justice in 2018-19. May the peace of Christ be with you and yours this Lenten season, Liz

## January 2018 Retreat Reflection

by Vanity Duran

## Now Accepting Applications!

Catholic Volunteers in Florida is now recruiting volunteers for our upcoming service year! Help us spread the word!

**Now Accepting Applications for 2018-19 Service Year**  
As you consider career paths, consider participating in a **LIFE-ALTERING** year of **FULL-TIME** service that will bring you many **NEW** opportunities!

- Full-time volunteers needed for positions in teaching, community development, special education, social work, youth programs, immigration and legal services, restorative justice, and more.
- Benefits include housing, health insurance, monthly stipend, quarterly retreats, and AmeriCorps Award for qualifying positions.
- 65% of our volunteers are offered employment in the organization where they serve after their year of service.
- Volunteers focus on five core values: Active Spirituality, Personal Growth, Doing Justice, Building Community, and Living Simply.
- Applicants should have a heart for serving marginalized communities in Florida or the Dominican Republic.

**Apply now for a year that will change your life!**  
To learn more or to submit an application go to [www.cvif.org](http://www.cvif.org)

START DATES:	AUGUST 2018	JANUARY 2019
DEADLINE:	MAR 1 (EARLY); MAY 1 (FINAL)	OCT 1, 2018

Volunteers serve for one-year while CVIF provides their housing, health insurance, a monthly stipend, and quarterly retreats, which includes faith formation, social action, leadership training, and professional development.

CVIF allows volunteers to learn the true importance of giving back to the community and that service can truly be a way of life. Alumni say that doing a year of service will change your life in the most unexpected and amazing ways if you let it!

If you are someone or knows someone who may be interested in this opportunity please let us know!

For details, go to [Apply to CVIF](#).

## Welcome New Volunteers!



Catholic Volunteers in Florida started off the new year at their annual Winter Retreat in St. Augustine. Known as the oldest city in the country, the volunteers met at the Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine Villa Flora-Brown Hall Renewal Center.

Just in time for the celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., this retreat focused on social justice. Volunteers were offered opportunities to learn about Catholic Social Teaching and taking action on important social issues, including the "[March for Life](#)" in St. Augustine.

Catholic Correctional Chaplain to Florida's Death Row, [Brother Dale Recinella](#) shared his work on death row and efforts to end the death penalty in Florida. Volunteers were given a chance to experience the realities of incarceration with a tour at the Tomoka Correctional Institution. This helped ignite our Catholic call to honor the life and dignity of all human persons. Sister Florence Bryan, who serves on the CVIF Board, led a reflection on discernment and prayer. Catholic Volunteers also celebrated Mass with Bishop Estevez at the Cathedral (pictured above).

Another highlight of the retreat was sharing a delicious meal with the Sisters of St. Joseph and having a chance to visit with the retired Sisters at Lourdes. "I have never seen such dedication and love to God before," remarked LaShanna Tyson. "Visiting the Sisters was one of my best experiences with CVIF," said Edson Jean. "To love and serve God as much as the Sisters do, and to remain committed like the sisters is something I am taking back into my life from this retreat."



Amorandah Ferris is originally from Clermont, FL where she served as a Guardian Ad Litem for the state of Florida, advocating for children in dependency cases. She graduated Summa Cum Laude with a degree in International Studies from Florida Atlantic University and was active with Model United Nations and the Catholic Newman Club. Amorandah currently serves as the Community Outreach Specialist with Enterprising Latinas, Inc. in Wimauma.



Maria Greco is no stranger to serving others for she's participated in several overseas missionary trips. For the past seven years, Maria Greco has run an annual non-profit dance camp. Maria has worked at a mission retreat in Maine for two summers and traveled to Medjugorje for a pilgrimage trip. Maria currently serves as a Resident Assistant at Bishop Grady Villas in St. Cloud.



Shari Benjamin graduated from Winston-Salem University with her degree in Therapeutic Recreation. She has traveled to South Korea, Japan, and the UK. Shari has worked with the College Summit Organization and as a volunteer for Guilford County Schools. She now serves in Miami at the Overtown Children and Youth Coalition as a Community Relations Coordinator.



## Upcoming Events

- Spring Retreat April 16-20 St. Leo Abbey
- Career Fair Florida State Univ March 29th
- CVIF Closing Celebration June 23rd in Miami

## 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.

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

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## Volunteer Spotlight

Catholic Volunteers in Florida wants to congratulate all of our volunteers for their hard work and accomplishments at their service sites thus far. Here are a couple highlights!



Culinary arts program offers opportunities for Wimauma residents

Vanessa Hornedo is a LEAD Volunteer in Wimauma as a Business Development Coach with Enterprising Latinas, Inc. She has played a leadership role in the launching of Wimauma EATS, a culinary arts program where members will be taught how to successfully launch a food business and eventually become certified. Sara Arias-Steele, ELI's Program Manager, says that Vanessa has a natural talent for guiding people into realizing their dreams. "You can tell from working with her daily that her passion IS helping hard-working low-income women succeed in this small community." Check out ABC Action News coverage about the new program in the photo above!



Gianna Borst teaches Religion and Social Studies at St. James Catholic School in Miami. Her interactive teaching skills have been able to help students make meaningful connections and improve their participation in the classroom. Having fun while learning also helps retain information because the process is enjoyable and memorable. Gianna's enthusiasm and spirit have made such a difference with her middle-school students that she has been offered a teaching position next year! Congratulations, Gianna! Check out Ms. Borst's awesome teaching rap in the video above!