Amazing Breaks
Alternative Spring Break Experience
March 23-29, 2014

Each year during spring break, Fairfield University students, faculty and staff volunteer for a week of service and ministry in various areas in the United States. Campus Ministry sponsors these exciting and challenging programs, which seek to embody the University’s commitment to the service of faith and the promotion of justice. While there, participants perform home repair, assist the elderly, tutor school children, learn about the culture and form lasting relationships. While the groups work by day, evenings are dedicated to reflection, discussion and relaxation. Amazing Breaks trips are a Fairfield tradition!

This spring, Amazing Breaks volunteers will go to the following areas:

1. **Rural Renewal (Kentucky)** – The Christian Appalachian Project encompasses community, service and spirituality. Surrounded by the Appalachia Mountains, serve and learn about the injustices and realities of poverty. “It’s about realizing that the only person who will be changed is you. It is a luxury to be able to serve and to be in the position to give. For it is in giving that we receive.” COST: $350 [http://christianapp.org/vol/alternative-spring-break/workfest/](http://christianapp.org/vol/alternative-spring-break/workfest/)

2. **Urban Plunge! (Washington, DC)** – An immersion program committed to helping young people become part of the solution to societal problems by showing them how even the smallest actions can make a difference in the lives of others through meaningful volunteer work and reflection. In teams, students volunteer at different sites around the city. Volunteers prepare and serve meals at soup kitchens; provide recreational activities and companionship for homeless children; distribute food and supplies at food pantries; and offer hospitality to people of all ages. COST: $350 [http://www.ysop.org](http://www.ysop.org)

3. **Food Justice (Immokalee, FL)** – Gain insight into various cultures and experiences that comprise the unique fabric of America. Work with the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and other area agencies to learn about and assist with immigration issues facing tomato and strawberry pickers and their families who come to Florida with the promise of earning a fare wage only to be oppressed and even enslaved by their employers. COST: $600 [http://www.sfalliance.org](http://www.sfalliance.org)

4. **Rebuild & Restore (New Orleans, LA)** – The mission of Camp Restore is to “restore faith, home and community to victims of Hurricane Katrina.” They strive to do this by equipping volunteers to bring hope as they rebuild homes, churches and schools in New Orleans and the surrounding area. Work may include gutting houses, drywall, painting, landscaping, etc. and there will be opportunities yo put your gifts to work helping others in need at local nonprofits. COST: $600. [http://celsjr.org/](http://celsjr.org/)
VOLUNTEER EXPECTATIONS

You have demonstrated your generosity and openness in applying to be a participant in the program. After being selected as a volunteer, you will become a fellow traveler with nine people who have also chosen this path. Your companions, with whom you will journey throughout the semester, will eventually become for you a community of faith, providing support and challenge, both here and in the place where you will go.

The program is committed to serving as volunteers in the poverty stricken areas of the United States. Our mission is to learn about the structural and societal realities in the United States that leave some people (and, yes, even animals!) marginalized, to discuss the injustices that create poverty, to consider a theological and faith perspective on social justice. This requires that we meet regularly as a group to focus on our mission and build our communal spirit.

- **Time commitment**: Groups will meet regularly (generally once per week after returning from winter break) until their departure in March to learn about the factors and issues facing those they will work with, engage in fundraising, community building and service. These meetings MUST be a priority in your schedule.
- **Spirituality**: Faith is an important component of Amazing Breaks. In the Catholic tradition, engaging in service to the poor is a continuation of the work of Christ. Whatever your faith tradition – even if you have no faith tradition – we ask that you be open to listening, sharing, and discussing spirituality. Meetings will include prayer, reflection, discussion, etc. Please be prepared to engage with your group.
- **Fundraising**: Each participant will need to raise a significant amount of money to cover the cost of the trip. We encourage volunteers to raise this money by seeking support from employers, professors, friends, family, your home parish, etc. A portion of the funding will be sponsored by Campus Ministry. By engaging in fundraising, you also will help to educate others of the injustices and realities of poverty. It can sometimes be uncomfortable asking for money. Part of the reason we engage in this process is to give each participant insight into the way those we serve feel when asking for help as they often need to do. Please be aware that if you fail to raise the money asked of you, your attendance on the trip may be in jeopardy. The money you raised including your deposit will not be returned to you and your grades may be withheld until you have fulfilled your commitment. (We still have to pay for your program fees, transportation, etc.)

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

1. **Application deadline**: Monday, November 4, 2013, 11:59 PM
2. Submit completed application including:
   a. $100 deposit and
   b. Two references (current/former employer, teacher, etc. Sorry, no RAs)
3. Sign up for interview in Campus Ministry when dropping off application.
4. Decision before Thanksgiving.

   Students are selected based on the quality of the application, references and interview. A $100 deposit is due with your application. The money will be returned if not selected.
2013 AMAZING BREAKS SPRING BREAK SERVICE EXPERIENCE APPLICATION

Last Name __________________________ First Name _________________________
Graduation Year: ___________ Gender:   M   F
Cell Phone __________________________ Email ______________________________

Please rank service trips in order of preference. This is to show your preferences only; it is NOT a guarantee:

____ Rural Renewal, Kentucky
____ Urban Plunge!, Washington, DC
____ Food Justice, Immokalee, FL
____ Rebuild & Restore, New Orleans, LA

Please TYPE your responses to the following on another sheet of paper:

1. What are your extracurricular commitments for spring semester?

2. Have you been on a service trip before? If yes, please tell us about your experience:

3. ESSAY:
   Compose a brief statement (500 words or less) explaining why you are a good candidate to participate in the Amazing Breaks Spring Break Service Experience.

I understand the time commitment, aspect of spirituality and fundraising involved with Amazing Breaks Spring Break Service Experience and I am prepared to make a full commitment to the program. I am also aware that I may not be able to go on the trip, that the money I raise (including my deposit) will not be returned and that my grades may be withheld if I do not raise the necessary money.

_________________________________________ _________________________
Signature       Date

Application checklist
- completed application
- two references
- $100 deposit (checks payable to Fairfield University)

Submit application & deposit to:
Wylie Smith Blake
Campus Ministry
Egan Chapel Rm 109

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Monday, November 4, 2013, 11:59 PM
AMAZING BREAKS SPRING BREAK SERVICE EXPERIENCE
RECOMMENDATION FORM

Applicant’s Name _____________________________________ Class Year ______

To the reference: The above student is applying to participate in the Campus Ministry sponsored
Amazing Breaks, a spring break service program. Please consider the following carefully and
comment as to the candidate’s suitability for this program.

1. How long have you known the applicant and in what capacity?

2. Please share specific instances in which the applicant demonstrated leadership qualities.

3. Would you recommend this applicant for a service trip? Do you have any reservations
about this applicant? Please explain.

4. Overall, how would you rate the applicant?
   ______ Exceptional
   ______ Very good
   ______ Average
   ______ Below average

5. Additional Comments?:

NAME __________________________________________________________

SIGNATURE ____________________________ date___________

Please return completed form to Wylie Smith Blake, Campus Ministry,
wblake@fairfield.edu
by Monday, November 4, 2013
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NAME ____________________________________________________

SIGNATURE ________________________________________________ date_____________

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wblake@fairfield.edu
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