



# **JESUIT ALUMNI VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

**VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

## **Jesuit Alumni Volunteer Mission Statement**

We, the Jesuit Alumni Volunteers, strive to become men and women for others through our service to the family of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, our dedication to living simply in an intentional faith-based community, and our commitment to spiritual/personal development.

### **Introduction**

In 1999, three recently graduated alumni of Jesuit universities sought to volunteer in a Jesuit apostolate. In response to the extensive needs and limited resources of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, the Cristo Rey Jesuit Alumni Volunteer [JAV] Program was founded as a structured service program for recent college graduates. In a short time, the JAV program has become a vital part of providing a Jesuit education for our students. Our hope is that the JAV program will continue to support Cristo Rey through the work of its volunteers and through their wonderful witness to educational values in the Jesuit tradition.

Because of their familiarity with the ethos of Jesuit education, the volunteers are particularly suited to assist with the mission of Cristo Rey by the emphasis they place on a life of faith and their sensitivity to the need for social justice in our contemporary world. While the JAV program primarily accepts alumni of Jesuit secondary schools, colleges and/or universities, in special cases it also considers qualified graduates of other Catholic schools.

Primarily motivated by generosity and a self-giving attitude, our volunteers truly demonstrate what it means to be men and women for others. Our volunteers are expected to serve as strong role models for the students by behaving professionally, displaying sincere dedication to our mission, and walking the path of Jesus Christ. Through their commitment to service and openness to community life and spiritual development, it is our hope that volunteers will find their time at Cristo Rey profoundly enriching.

For those who desire to support the mission of Cristo Rey in volunteer service, this handbook contains general guidelines concerning what the JAV program expects from its volunteers, and also what volunteers can expect from the program. While the guidelines in this handbook are potentially evolving, nevertheless they serve as the basis of mutual understanding regarding the spirit and expectations of the JAV program.

### **Organizational Structure of the JAV Program**

The JAV program is an independent program within the structure of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School that responds to the needs of the school and cooperates with the entire Cristo Rey family in support of the school's mission. The ultimate responsibility for the Program's mission resides with the President of Cristo Rey. The President relies on counsel from the JAV Program Coordinator and the JAV Program Chaplain who are in charge of the day-to-day operation of the Program.

The JAV Program is managed on a daily basis by the Program Coordinator. The Coordinator is responsible for the recruitment, orientation, service placement, and ongoing development and evaluation of the volunteers. The Program Chaplain is responsible for the ongoing spiritual formation of

the volunteer community, and serves as a resource to the volunteers as they reflect upon their service experience. The Coordinator works in conjunction with members of the Leadership Team to determine work responsibilities for each volunteer. This process seeks to create the best fit between the gifts and talents of each individual volunteer and the needs of the school community.

## **Benefits**

All Jesuit Alumni Volunteers will receive full Health Care Insurance Coverage, including Medical and Dental, for the entire length of the program, beginning on August 1<sup>st</sup> and continuing through July 31<sup>st</sup> after their second year of service. They are also fully covered for auto insurance whenever driving one of the school's vehicles. The school covers all rent costs, utility bills, home maintenance, and basic transportation. Each volunteer receives a monthly stipend of \$300. The Program will provide board above and beyond the monthly stipend to be issued through the normal pay cycle. The monthly stipend is meant to cover all personal expenses such as clothing, entertainment, and long distance phone calls. In keeping with the spirit of simple, communal living, volunteers should not receive any outside personal funding during their time of service.

After successful completion of each year of service, all volunteers in the past have received either the full-time Segal AmeriCorps Educational Award, totaling \$4,725 to be used toward further educational costs or payments of pending student loans. During the two years of service with Cristo Rey, volunteers' student loans will be deferred utilizing federal loan forbearance or an economic hardship deferment, and the interest accrued could possibly be suspended, depending on the availability of government funding at the time.

## **Service**

### **Length of Service**

The Cristo Rey Jesuit Alumni Volunteer program is a two-year commitment. Each year begins for the volunteers in the early part of August, one week before faculty and staff report to Cristo Rey. At this time, the volunteers receive an orientation to the JAV program and to the school. The first year of volunteer service consists of eleven months of service and one month of summer vacation. For second year volunteers, the program ends with the conclusion of the academic year.

### **Areas of Volunteer Service**

Volunteers provide the school with a wide range of important services. Overall, a volunteer's workload is meant to be a full-time job that can simultaneously allow time for the growth and development of the individual and the entire volunteer community. From the school's point of view in requesting volunteer assistance, the Program Coordinator serves as the gatekeeper of the volunteer's professional commitments. From the point of view of the volunteer, the Program Coordinator helps to determine their overall schedule of responsibilities, in conjunction with the Leadership Team and others.

Most of the areas of service listed below are based on the needs of the school, though others may come from the interest and initiative of the volunteers themselves. While the following list is not intended to be complete, it does reflect the types of service that are currently expected of all volunteers:

**Driving** Cristo Rey would not exist without local corporate support in the form of jobs for our students. The Corporate Internship Program (CIP) is the school department that manages the employment relationships between Cristo Rey students and local firms. In order that students find their way to and from work, CIP needs drivers to transport them to and from their jobs. The responsibility for student transportation is shared in part by the volunteers, who each drive a 60-90 minute route once a day, either in the morning or the afternoon, according to a schedule set by the designated CIP transportation coordinator. The volunteer driver is expected to maintain student discipline while in the school vehicle, including compliance with dress code, code of conduct, and all other student regulations. Because of the importance of this shared responsibility, each volunteer must possess a valid driver's license in good standing. Moreover, volunteers will be asked to obtain a commercial driver's license, at the school's expense, in order to drive the school's larger vehicles.

**Teaching** All volunteers will teach according to the needs of the school and according to a volunteer's ability, experience, and previous training. In general, volunteers will be asked to teach in two different capacities:

**1) Independent Teaching** Each volunteer is expected to independently teach a minimum of two courses per semester. Currently, volunteers are responsible for teaching Keyboarding, a one semester, freshman class, in addition to many other classes including, but not limited to: Mathematics, English, History, Economics, Civics, Drama, Music, Physical Education and many others. Volunteer placement in a particular class is based on both the current needs of the school and the personal interests and abilities of the volunteer. For volunteers who lack teaching experience, we will offer to match up the volunteer with an experienced mentor teacher to accompany and advise the volunteer in his/her work as a teacher for as long as the volunteer desires. At the start of each school year, we provide a two-week long Orientation for all of our volunteers, which includes workshops on effective teaching practice. At these workshops, the volunteers learn about and practice basic teaching methods, classroom discipline techniques, assessment and evaluation tools, lesson planning skills, curriculum development, and professional development.

**2) Substitute Teaching** Substitutes are needed to cover classes in response to the expected or unexpected absence of faculty. All Cristo Rey faculty are expected to be available for substitution. Therefore, all volunteers are also expected to be available for substitution during their regularly scheduled "On Call" class periods.

**Supervisory Duties** Like all faculty, volunteers are scheduled and regularly called upon to assist with the supervision of students before school, in study halls, during lunch, in the computer lab, and in other situations including proctoring for testing days or exam weeks, as the need arises.

The following is a list of activities which the individual volunteer may choose to be a part of throughout the year:

**Student Activities** Cristo Rey offers a variety of extracurricular activities for its students. Volunteers moderate many of these sports, activities, student organizations and clubs. Depending on the needs of school and the interests of the volunteer, volunteers are expected to be involved in extracurricular activities.

- Campus Ministry** Cristo Rey offers retreats to all of its students. These retreats are planned and organized by the campus ministry department. Volunteers are expected to assist with the coordination of these retreats. While each volunteer is not expected to assist with every retreat, all volunteers should expect to help with at least one retreat per year. Volunteers may also be asked to assist with other campus ministry activities as the need arises.
- Summer Programs** At the conclusion of the academic year, first-year volunteers are required to work at Cristo Rey for three weeks during the summer, and then they will have the other month free for vacation. As the term of service ends for the second-year volunteer at the conclusion of the academic year, they are not obligated to continue working in the summer.

## Time Expectation

As would be the case for any full-time job, during the academic year, volunteers are expected to be at Cristo Rey each school day, from 7:45 A.M. to 3:45 P.M., Monday through Friday, at a minimum. Volunteers are also expected to be a part of the driving rotation for the CIP program and involved in athletics or other student activities, all of which may require working with students outside of normal school hours. A volunteer's schedule changes often during the year, but historically, schedules have ranged anywhere from 50 to 60 hours per week. It is understood that all volunteers will be present at any events organized for all faculty and staff of Cristo Rey, including faculty meetings, retreats, etc. Given the importance of all the varied volunteer responsibilities and time commitments, the supposition is that volunteers will not seek outside employment during their time of service at Cristo Rey.

**Forseen Absences/Personal Days** - If a volunteer foresees that he/she will need to be absent during normal school hours or would like to use a personal day, the volunteer should approach **BOTH** the Program Coordinator and their direct supervisor (Teaching - Principal, CIP – Transportation Coordinator/Director of CIP, etc.) to schedule the absence. Such personal days must be taken within the allotted number of personal days (3) as outlined in the Employee Handbook. All procedures for covering work responsibilities on the given day should be completed (contacting the Registrar to arrange for substitution, etc.).

**Sick Days** - In the case of sickness, the volunteer should inform the Program Coordinator the volunteer should approach **BOTH** the Program Coordinator and their direct supervisor (Teaching - Principal, CIP – Transportation Coordinator/Director of CIP, etc.) to cover their work responsibilities. Volunteers should then take advantage of the health care benefits provided by the school policy.

**Bereavement** – Volunteers may request bereavement time as outlined in the Cristo Rey Employee Handbook.

## Professional Behavior

Volunteers will be expected to know and follow all regulations and guidelines of faculty conduct as listed in the Cristo Rey Employee Handbook. Because the volunteers are strong role models for the students, they are expected to be dressed appropriately, in a professional, conservative and modest fashion, fit for a corporate setting, in accordance with the Cristo Rey dress code.

All volunteers are expected to maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students. While it is our hope that the volunteers will develop good relationships with the students of Cristo Rey, it is expected that as adults, volunteers will strive to maintain the professional distance

necessary to fulfill their supervisory role among students. Developing overly personal or peer-type relationships may be detrimental to students and is therefore strongly discouraged.

Volunteers are also expected to maintain clear boundaries between the community house and the school. For reasons of propriety, community privacy and legality, no Cristo Rey students or graduates are permitted in the volunteer residence.

## **Community Life**

Volunteers are expected to live in community with other members of the program and to embrace a lifestyle of simplicity during their tenure as a volunteer. Such a commitment to community life involves mutual respect, an attitude of service, and consideration for all areas of community life. Here are some guidelines for the community life of the Jesuit Alumni Volunteer:

### **Running of the House**

All volunteers are expected to share the duties of running the community. This includes such responsibilities as grocery shopping, cooking dinner, cleaning, and basic home maintenance. Volunteers are expected to show respect for both common and private living quarters by helping to maintain a house that is neat, clean and orderly. The volunteer community will receive a yearly home improvement budget from the school for them to use as they wish to improve their physical living situation regarding minor repairs and cosmetic changes. If there is a more expensive structural repair needed, the volunteers must notify the Program Coordinator of the problem, and then the school will address it.

### **Weekly Meetings**

Volunteers meet as a community at least one night a week. While the structure of the community meeting is planned by the volunteers in conjunction with the Program Coordinator, the elements of community nights may include: shared prayer, personal sharing, issues related to house business, and other community-building activities. All volunteers are expected to attend these community meetings. Volunteers can also expect to celebrate Mass regularly as part of their community meeting.

### **Transportation Policy**

The school takes care of all transportation needs for the volunteers. The terms of use of the volunteer vehicle are outlined in a Volunteer Vehicle Agreement. In addition, the school covers all gas costs and vehicle maintenance. Therefore, there is no need for a volunteer to bring his/her own vehicle to Cristo Rey during his/her time of service. If a volunteer sees the need to bring their own vehicle, they should discuss this beforehand with the Program Coordinator.

### **Presence in Community**

The volunteer community is expected to be the primary support community during a volunteer's term of service. Presence is both a physical and spiritual reality impacting both the real circumstances of the community as well as individual and communal attitudes, morale, and the spirituality. This is a serious commitment that calls for understanding and mutual accountability. Even for volunteers who have family or close friends in the area, it is expected that they will not spend entire weekends away from the JAV community. While home visits and visits to friends are certainly permitted, the volunteer community is to be more than a Monday through Friday commitment.

**Travel**

If a volunteer has a need to travel away from the community overnight, the volunteer should request a meeting with the Program Coordinator. The dialogue between volunteer and Program Coordinator is meant to facilitate reflection upon the part of the volunteer AND the community regarding the duration and circumstances of the trip, its potential impact on community life, and the frequency of such travel during the course of the semester and year. When permission for such travel is granted, the volunteer is then responsible for communicating the location and contact information of their trip to the community.

Regarding overnight guests of the community, volunteers should approach their fellow volunteers in advance in order to obtain approval for such guests.

**Romantic Relationships**

While a volunteer is not expected to put his or her current personal relationships completely on hold during their time as a volunteer, romantic relationships which encourage a volunteer to absent himself or herself from the life of the community are discouraged. Likewise, dating between volunteers is discouraged and sexual relations of any kind between volunteers are prohibited while both remain in the JAV program. Since romantic attraction between volunteers is always a possibility, volunteers are asked to be open with the Program Coordinator about such relationships.

**Spiritual Life**

It is the hope of the JAV program that volunteers' experience includes more than just service work. It is also a hope that volunteers will find opportunities for personal and spiritual growth. Therefore, the JAV program is committed to providing for the spiritual formation of volunteers in the Jesuit Catholic tradition. To this end, the JAV Program Chaplain will assist the Coordinator in providing volunteers opportunities for both personal and communal spiritual development. These opportunities may include but are not limited to the following:

**Community Prayer**

As mentioned above, the JAV community is expected to meet regularly to pray as a community. At the beginning of each year, the community will meet to plan the schedule and format of the prayer nights. The Program Chaplain will assist this process by meeting in advance to provide spiritual literature or other resources to the volunteers.

**Community Masses**

Throughout the volunteer year, all community members will be expected to celebrate Mass together on a regular basis. Masses will be celebrated by Jesuits working in the school and will include the Program Chaplain and the Coordinator. The JAV Community along with the Chaplain and Program Coordinator will be responsible for scheduling Mass times into the community prayer schedule.

**Community Retreats**

As a community, volunteers participate in four retreats over the course of the year: an orientation weekend retreat in August after the volunteers first arrive; a day of retreat during Advent; a mid-winter weekend retreat; and a day of retreat at the end of the volunteer year. Additional Jesuit and Archdiocesan retreat programs will also be made available throughout the school year should the volunteers desire to attend as a community or as individuals.

**Personal Spirituality**

Our hope is that all volunteers will have the desire to develop their personal relationship with God during their time as a volunteer. We encourage regular prayer and spiritual growth, ideally on a daily basis. The Program Chaplain is always available to listen to the spiritual desires of a volunteer and help them in whatever way he can to develop in their own spirituality, for example by suggesting styles of personal prayer, spiritual reading, etc.

**Spiritual Direction**

If a volunteer feels committed to prayer in their personal life and wants to develop further in their relationship with God, then the Chaplain can assist the volunteer in finding a spiritual director who can accompany them and help guide their spiritual growth.

**Simple Living**

Simple living is perhaps the most difficult of the four pillars to articulate. This section serves as the beginning of a dialogue which the Cristo Rey Jesuit Alumni Volunteer Program hopes to have lived out in community. While there are many elements of this Volunteer Handbook that speak to our commitment to living Christ's example of simple servant leadership in the Gospel, there are no explicit instructions for how to do this. The primary responsibility for being accountable for simplicity rests with the volunteer. It is a clear objective of this Program that all aspects of the volunteer's service be charged with a commitment simple living. This has been defined as seeking an understanding of sustainability in one's own life and the life of the community, as living within one's means, as making concerted efforts to conserve and reuse, and as actively engaging in the discernment process to make such determinations. It is clear that this is no simple task. It is the hope of the Program that the community can engage in their struggle to live simply as a community and, working in conjunction with the Program Chaplain and Coordinator, its members can explore what it means to live simply in the context of Christian spirituality and the volunteer experience.

**Volunteer Evaluations****Work Supervision**

All volunteers will follow the supervisory structure assumed by full-time employees in their areas of primary service. The Director of the Corporate Internship program will provide supervisory comments and input regarding driving responsibilities. The Principal and Department Facilitator will be involved in teaching supervision as outlined for teachers in years 1- 3 at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in the Teacher Supervision Packet. All other supervision and evaluation of volunteers will be facilitated by those directly responsible for the content area in which the volunteers serve (e.g. – Athletic Director for coaches, Student Activities Coordinator for moderators of clubs, Director of Campus Ministry for retreat rector, etc.).

**One – on – One**

Volunteers are expected to meet with the Program Coordinator regularly for the purpose of evaluating their experience and performance. The purpose of these meetings is twofold: to listen to a volunteer's experience and provide constructive feedback about their various aspects of service in the school and their role as a community member as well as a person of faith. Moreover, these meetings are opportunities for the volunteer and the Program Coordinator to address any issues, problems or conflicts that might develop in the course of their life and work in the

JAV program. These meetings will not consist of professional assessment nor evaluate their job performance. Instead, they are intended to facilitate the growth of the individual volunteer within the context of the JAV and Cristo Rey communities.

**Year-End Evaluation**

Along with these periodic meetings conducted by the Program Coordinator, each volunteer will submit a self-evaluation of their own experience and performance at the end of each year. This volunteer feedback will be complemented by an end-of-year evaluation from the Coordinator that will include input provided by the President and the Program Chaplain. All input will be collected by the Program Coordinator and presented to the volunteer in a constructive manner.