

Touching Lives

Founded in 1995 by two Jesuit priests, IVC makes the difference in the lives of the materially poor, in the capacity of organizations that serve the poor, and in the spiritual life of its volunteers.

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps® (IVC) is mature men and women, using their skills, talents and life experiences to touch the lives of the poor and disadvantaged, offering hope and human dignity. Several hundred IVC members volunteer in 16 major metropolitan areas with agencies that directly assist the poor or address poverty-related issues.

Ignatian Volunteers are committed. They pledge to give up to 600 hours of service per year (normally two days per week). They also are committed to reflecting on the meaning of their service by keeping a journal and meeting monthly with a spiritual guide to ponder and pray about their volunteer experiences. They also meet monthly as a community sharing a common purpose.

IVC makes the difference in the lives of the materially poor

In a recent Georgetown University study, IVC volunteers were overwhelmingly positive about their role in meeting today's social challenges.

- 93% say they spend their latter years in fulfilling ways.
- 89% say they make a difference in people's lives.
- 86% use skills they had before joining IVC to help others.
- 86% learn more about the problems of poverty, and other social issues.
- 75% report an increased awareness of God's active presence in their lives.
- 82% say IVC provides a means to put their faith into practice.



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Experience. Service. Reflection.

IVC
Makes the Difference



MAKING THE DIFFERENCE

...For the Poor

Ignatian Volunteers work to improve the lives of men and women who are materially poor. Volunteers work in a variety of settings providing assistance to children, adults, seniors and families. Their work includes providing nursing and hospice care, emergency services, affordable housing, tutoring and afterschool care, adult education and food and shelter. By sharing their knowledge, their skills, their compassion—or even just a kind word and a smile—they can and do have an impact on individual lives.

Joe volunteers at a soup kitchen that provides job and life skills training for men and women moving out of homelessness. Joe created a resume for one of his students, focusing on her current training and stressing her commitment to turning her life around for her herself and her children. When she read Joe's draft, she smiled through tears and said, "Mr. Joe, I've never had a resume in my life and now you've given me this beautiful thing. I'm a person. You've given me myself."

...For Community Organizations

IVC places volunteers with partnering community organizations. In addition to providing direct service to the people the organizations serve, some agencies working to overcome poverty engage Ignatian Volunteers to help them with administrative tasks, program development work, special project needs or other jobs. In a time of dwindling resources for human services, the steady commitment of mature Ignatian Volunteers helps these front-line organizations stretch their budgets to serve more people in need.

"Our partnership with IVC has been a tremendous blessing to Friendship Place. We'd be hard pressed to find volunteers elsewhere with the levels of expertise displayed daily by our three IVC volunteers; and we couldn't afford to pay for the help they give us. Their contributions help us serve more than 600 homeless men and women a year on a shoestring budget."

Jean-Michel Giraud

*Executive Director
Community Council for the
Homeless at Friendship Place
Washington, DC*

...For Volunteers

Ignatian Volunteers are guided through a reflection process based on The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola. This process helps volunteers discover the deeper meaning of the work they do, and to see Christ more clearly as they labor among their brothers and sisters who are poor. Reflecting and praying in the Ignatian tradition—individually and communally—deepens the experience of service, and is a unique feature of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps.

"IVC offers an educational and prayerful arm to volunteerism. Christ has charged us to love one another; that was His greatest commandment. The Jesuit community has become a model of Christ's teaching for me, and it has helped me in my aim to be a lifelong student of that teaching."

Mary Himrod

IVC Volunteer