



All Things Ignatian



Service and Justice Trips

Creighton Center for Service and Justice

The Service and Justice Trips Program can trace its roots back to 1983 when a group of nursing students took one of their school breaks to travel to Eastern Kentucky to do service work. Since then, the Service and Justice Trips Program has grown in size and scope having helped thousands of Creighton students live out the University's mission to the service of faith and the promotion of justice.

Today, the Service and Justice Trips Program has built relationships both locally and nationally with over 30 community partner organizations which serve host to our week and half week long trips. In 2010, about 300 students participated on a trip where they not only provided needed service, but also immersed themselves into the culture of one of the host communities where they met local leaders, learned about assets and issues facing the community, and built relationships with community members. Each trip is site specific with the focus determined by the location. For instance, trips to El Paso and Pilsen, IL focus on immigration and issues facing the Latino population in America; trips to West Virginia, and Lincoln, NE, focus on environmental justice and sustainability; and trips to Cleveland and the Siena/Francis House focuses on homelessness. Though each trip is unique, the seven pillars of the program — service, justice, solidarity, simplicity, sustainability, community, and reflection — frame and are incorporated into all trips.

Just like the original idea for Service and Justice Trips came from a student, today's trips are largely a student run and student led endeavor. With guidance and support from the Creighton Center for Service and Justice, a group of students called the Core Team undergo personal formation and leadership development over the course of a semester. The Core Team, then, facilitates the training and formation of the student coordinators who lead the trips, and guide the formation of all the program's participants. Formation for all members of the Service and Justice Trips Program include community building, basic social analysis components, reflection, and Ignatian elements such as the Examination of Consciousness.

Each year, student participants are encouraged to bring back lessons and experiences from their trips and host communities and incorporate them into daily life at school. This year, there was an added emphasis on linking the systemic injustice confronted with social policy in order to engage in advocacy efforts upon returning. Advocacy efforts this year included letters to the editor, campus education projects, and participation in congressional legislative visits in Omaha and in Washington, D.C.



Above: Betsy Aderbold, Amanda Grade, and other participants protest nuclear bombs on their Fall 2009 trip to Albuquerque, NM. Below: Luis Vazquez hangs out with some elementary school kids on his Spring 2010 trip to Detroit, MI.



“I really felt I was able to form a deeper relationship quicker because of the language barrier... One of the only things we could communicate was love.” –Pilsen participant, Fall 2010