2010 Spring Break Service Trips
Photos and Reflections

182 participants were hosted by 24 communities across the country, including four right here in Omaha. 49 students served as coordinators this year.

Spring 2010 Community Partners

Albuquerque, NM
Calhoun City, MS
Chicago, IL
Cleveland, OH
El Paso, TX
Denver, CO
Detroit, MI
Milwaukee, WI
Minneapolis, MN
Montgomery, AL
Nashville, TN
Oklahoma City, OK
Okolona, MS
Omaha:
- OneWorld
- Pixan Ixim
- Siena/Francis
- Sustainability
Red Cloud, SD
St. Louis, MO
St. Mary-of-the-Woods, IN
Stroud, OK
Wheeling, WV
Wind River, WY

“1 want to get involved with my church so that together we may contribute to a solution for immigration in the future.”
- El Paso Border Immersion participant

“I have realized that I am making a change inside myself. I feel that I have grown so much and realize that the changes I make today are going to be what the future is. I have also changed my perspective on faith and its importance in my life.”
- Minneapolis participant

“It was my first experience where I could put a name on the homeless. It allowed me to make the more abstract concept of poverty relatable on a personal level. It was that experience that helped me see the humanity of the homeless and provided all the inspiration to serve the rest of the trip.”
- Cleveland participant

Pixan Ixim, Omaha Reflection
“I will make a sincere effort to live more sustainably. To do this, I hope to reduce the environmental impact that my life has on water, food, transportation, energy and material goods. I will conserve water, eat locally when possible, try to grow a garden, and ride my bike instead of drive.” — Omaha Sustainability Immersion participant

“I want to enjoy the simple things in life more— I want to love those around me better”
Siena-Francis House, Omaha Participant

“There is a tug of war going on in West Virginia between the rich, the poor, and the environment, and at least when it comes to the energy the rich will beat the poor and the environment every time. Coal has been the lifeblood of West Virginia’s economy for so long that it’s easy to overlook its negative implications because it provides jobs for people. But the question exists of how to balance the need for jobs and the need for energy to run our country with the pollution and devastation coal is causing to mountains, streams and people. And there’s no easy answer.” — Wheeling, WV participant

“Before this trip I never cared about politics, but after going on this trip I learned much about LB1110 the loss of prenatal coverage and all the injustice going on. I’m going to pay attention to what’s going on in the community and stay more informed” — OneWorld Community Health Centers, Omaha participant

“(My trip) inspired me not to use my age as an excuse not to act.”
— Albuquerque participant
Formation

Leadership formation is a key component of our Service Trips Program. Student coordinators share in a common service experience, after which they hone their reflection skills and social analysis skills by talking about their experience and asking questions. The one day retreat prepares students to facilitate small groups and work with committees. Coordinators lead their participants through conversations on the seven pillars and give them information about their host sites. All participants read “In the Service of Life” by Rachel Naomi Remen and listen to the commencement address by Fr. Greg Boyle, SJ.

Fundraising

The students did many projects this year to raise money for host sites and keep costs low. Students pay just $250 of the more than $350-per-student cost. Students sold their own manual labor in an e-mail online auction. They sold raffle tickets, spoke at St. John’s Masses, and held a Soup Luncheon in partnership with the Jesuit Kitchen chefs Rob and Mike.

Send-off Service

This year Jill Bronk orchestrated fall and spring send-off service in collaboration with people around campus. The student groups came together the Thursday just before the trips to sing, pray and reflect on the eve of their trips. Fr. Schlegel came this Spring to thank the students for living out the Creighton mission. Alumni Holly Fuller (’03) and Patrick Ritter (’08) were this year’s featured alumni speakers.

The Teams that Made it all Happen:

14 leaders were selected last spring and have worked diligently to plan and implement tireless details of this ever growing and improving program. Pictured at right are the 2009-2010 Committee Chairs Team. Consisting of 8 dedicated students who volunteered to run this year’s Service Trips Program.
Left to Right (back row) Jeff Peak, Katie Nedley, Ken Smith, Betsy Aderhold, Jill Bronk. (Front row) Blissa Tanaka, Nayeli Lopez, and Megan Lewandowski.
They collaborated with a second team, called ‘Core Team’ not pictured, they include: seniors Amanda Grade, Chandra Francis, Lauren Ho, Mackenzie Raber, and Emily Ruskamp as well as juniors Stef Stedman and Patrick O’Malley.
As part of the student formation, students invited leaders in the Pixam Ixim Community, Juana and Luis to come to speak. They shared what it means to serve, how to do it in solidarity with others, and what service trips personally mean to them as hosts of one of our Omaha Trips (pictured below).

“Letting what we cannot do stop us from doing what we can do is a recipe for apathy. Conversely, doing what we can—where we are at—is a recipe to empower ourselves as advocates for justice! As students this week you probably will not eradicate poverty or bring about sweeping political reform to oppressed peoples. But you will have your eyes opened and you will be in position to begin wrestling with the questions that will make you come alive as people.” Patrick concluded, “None of us can do everything to eradicate injustice, but we can take simple meaningful steps to empower ourselves as advocates for social justice. Doing service is one of the keys because it helps us to plant new seeds of awareness in our lives and to come alive to the world in new ways. Perhaps most important, is choosing a stance in the world that enables us to bear witness to the kind of love that is life-giving and sustaining even in the midst of the worst oppression that our world has to offer. Agape helps us to enter such situations where others have fallen asleep and to find enough light for the next step.”

How to Approach Another Culture—Juana and Luis Marcos

As part of the student formation, students invited leaders in the Pixam Ixim Community, Juana and Luis to come to speak. They shared what it means to serve, how to do it in solidarity with others, and what service trips personally mean to them as hosts of one of our Omaha Trips (pictured below).

Check out these links to see Spring Break Service Trips in the news!

St. Mary’s White Violet Eco Center hosted 17 students who were in the news! See the article and video clip.

Montgomery, Resurrection Catholic Missions hosted 9 students and Dominican University, see their news go to www.creighton.edu/ccsj to see links if you are reading a hard copy of this newsletter.