

Alternative Winter Break Opportunities

Below you will find a sampling of the hundreds of volunteer opportunities available for an alternative winter break. These opportunities all have activities available for volunteers in December, and need volunteers on a regular basis. If you have any questions, would like help contacting the site, or need help finding a volunteer opportunity around your community during winter break, please feel free to contact Rebecca Bohl at the VCSC, bohlr@lawrence.edu.

Midwest Opportunities

Easter Seals Respite Camp

Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin: Disabilities

Website: <http://camp.eastersealswisconsin.com/help/volunteer.html>

Description: Currently, we are looking for people to volunteer for our weekend programs at Respite Camp in Wisconsin Dells. We provide on-site room and board, as well as a brief training period. Volunteers are needed Friday at 3:00pm for training and the camp session lasts until Sunday at 4:00pm. Respite weekends count as 50 volunteer hours, during which volunteers will work one-on-one with campers with involved physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral disabilities in a variety of fun camp activities, as well as assisting with personal care. Weekend camps during winter break include December 11-13 and December 27-30.

Contact: 608-254-2502 VCroissant@wi.easterseals.com

Misericordia/Heart of Mercy

Chicago, Illinois: Disabilities

Website: <http://www.misericordia.com/gettinginvolved/volunteer.asp>

Description: Misericordia is home to more than 550 children and adults with developmental and physical disabilities. They offer volunteer opportunities that are individually designed to help the children and adults achieve and maintain the highest level of independence possible. Participants will interact with these individual in their daily events, ranging from baking, puppetry, swimming, chores, and music.

Contact: Please contact Rebecca Bohl at the VCSC if you are interested in this opportunity.

One Heartland Center

Willow River, Minnesota: HIV/Aids, Children

Website: <http://oneheartland.org/>

Description: The One Heartland Center in Willow River, MN always needs extra helping hands, and during the winter months volunteers can help clean and fix up the facilities, along with helping out with some of One Heartland's programs. If you are interested in helping out at the beautiful 80-acre site, let us know. We also have food and housing options available!

Contact: 1-888-545-6658 JillRudolph@oneheartland.org

Teach For America

Twin Cities, MN; Milwaukee, WI; Chicago, IL: Education

Website: www.teachforamerica.org

Description: Participants would assist first and second year teachers who dedicate two years to teaching in urban and rural under-resourced schools. Participants would have the opportunity to observe classroom dynamics and help with classroom, extra-curricular and community activities, with a variety of age groups in the K-12 range.

Contact: Please see website for individual location contact information.

Opportunities outside the Midwest

Austin Zoo and Animal Sanctuary

Austin, Texas: Support Work with Animal Sanctuary

Website: www.austinzoo.org

Description: With more than 300 animals across more than 100 different species, Austin Zoo and Animal Sanctuary is a private, non-profit zoo rescuing animals and serving the Austin community. Situated in the beautiful Hill Country just outside of town, Austin Zoo is visited by hundreds of thousands of individuals each year. Volunteers will assist the zoo with various tasks on the grounds. Openness to physical labor and outside work is required.

Contact: Casey Pfeiffer, 512-288-1490 casey.pfeiffer@austinzoo.org

Casa Familiar

San Ysidro, California: Community Development

Website: <http://www.casafamiliar.org/index1.html>

Description: Over fifty programs are carried out under Casa Familiar's leadership. These programs include a wide variety of community revitalization and affordable housing projects, adult and youth social services, educational programs, art and culture classes, recreational activities, technology training, as well as projects related to immigration and borderland issues.

Contact: 619-428-1115 info@casafamiliar.org

Cumberland Trail Conference (CTC)

Crossville, Tennessee: Environmentalism/ Trailbuilding

Website: www.cumberlandtrail.org

Description: CTC assists in protecting, preserving and promoting the Cumberland Trail. Students will help CTC build and rejuvenate trails in the mountains of Tennessee. There will be opportunities to learn eco-friendly methods of building new trails and preserving existing ones. The CTC places a high priority on interlacing earth and conservation education within the trail building program format.

Contact: 931-456-6259

Give Kids the World

Orlando, Florida: Health/Social, Children

Website: www.gktw.com

Description: Give Kids the World is a non-profit resort that creates memories for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. Since its founding in 1986, Give Kids the World has welcomed families from all 50 states and 50 countries. Volunteers will work in the Give the Kids the World Village and Resort in a range of capacities, such as operating rides, planning family activities and helping at concession stands. Volunteer housing options are available.

Contact: 407-396-1114 volunteergroup@gktw.org

House of Neighborly Services

Denver, Colorado: Poverty/Self-Sustainability

Website: www.honservice.org

Description: The House of Neighborly Services has provided service to low-income individuals for over 48 years. The agency's mission is to compassionately address and respond to the effects of poverty, while helping prevent further crisis and to empower those they serve to become more self-sustaining. A few of their services include a food program, educational classes, and utility assistance. Volunteers will work with individuals from the organization to provide assistance.

Contact: 970-667-4939 info@honservice.org

Immokalee Friendship House

Naples, Florida: Homelessness

Website: <http://www.stmatthewshouse.org/index.html>

Description: Since its inception, Immokalee Friendship House has provided meals, clothing, and shelter to thousands of individuals in Greater Collier County. The shelter is nearly always at capacity, quite often including families with young children. Volunteers can help out with a wide variety of activities, including serving meals, working at the thrift store, or organizing food pantry supplies.

Contact: 239-657-4090 kerri@stmatthewshouse.org

Katrina Corps

New Orleans, Louisiana: Disaster Relief

Website: <http://katrinacorps.org/>

Description: Katrina Corps is a volunteer organization that was formed in December 2006 for the purpose of speeding up the recovery process in New Orleans. This year, to get the schools, community centers and homes ready for the coming year, we will mainly be doing whatever it takes—painting, rebuilding, gutting, landscaping, possibly helping with murals, moving families back into their homes, as well as ground cleanup and making the impossible possible. Housing and transportation is provided for volunteers for one week, for a fee.

Contact: 313-477-2879 info@katrinacorps.org

So Others Might Eat (SOME)

Washington, D.C.: Poverty, Homelessness

Website: <http://www.some.org/>

Description: SOME (So Others Might Eat) is an interfaith, community-based organization that exists to help the poor and homeless of our nation's capital. We meet the immediate daily needs of the people we serve with food, clothing, and health care. We help break the cycle of homelessness by offering services, such as affordable housing, job training, addiction treatment, and counseling, to the poor, the elderly and individuals with mental illness.

Contact: 202-797-8806 web@some.org

St. Bernard Project

New Orleans, Louisiana: Disaster Relief

Website: www.stbernardproject.org

Description: St. Bernard Project is a community-based nonprofit organization headquartered in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, a uniquely tight-knit, working-class community that suffered catastrophic damage in hurricanes Katrina and Rita. By organizing and utilizing volunteers, the organization has been able to rebuild hundreds of homes for people in southern Louisiana. Volunteers will work on one of their housing projects. Openness to physical labor and outside work is required. Volunteer housing options are available.

Contact: 504-277-6831 volunteer@stbernardproject.org Online volunteer registration is also available.

Youth Service Opportunities Project (YSOP)

Washington, D.C. and New York City: Poverty, Homelessness

Website: <http://www.ysop.org/>

Description: YSOP is committed to helping young people become part of the solution to societal problems by showing them how even their smallest actions can make a difference in the lives of others. YSOP volunteers prepare and serve meals at soup kitchens; they provide recreational activities and companionship to young, formerly homeless children; they distribute food and supplies at food pantries; they socialize and bring snacks to people in drop-in centers. Occasionally they join in special projects we have been asked to staff, such as painting a new shelter with residents or distributing clothing at a clothing bank. Volunteers can help for one service day or weeklong.

Contact: NYC: 212-598-0973; DC: 202-347-2525

Useful Links

www.1-800-volunteer.org

www.volunteermatch.org