

The volunteer service program of the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales

Summer Intern Info Document and Essay Questions

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OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

THE CITY OF CAMDEN

Summer Internships are at DSW's Camden NJ location. DSW and our founding order, the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales have been in Camden for about 5 years. Camden which is often ranked as the most dangerous and impoverished city in the country. There is no denying the great need that is here—there are frequent problems with crime, poor education, chronic homelessness, and the selling and using of narcotics. Camden is also a place of wonderful hope and faith. The combination of Camden's needs and faith is what makes this city such an interesting and dynamic place to live and serve. During your time here, you will be immersed in the culture and experience of serving. Camden is over 40% Hispanic, mostly Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. Whether it's attending Spanish Mass or serving the homeless, you'll get to see the thriving side of Camden by living in our North Camden neighborhood.

SAFETY

Although Camden has a reputation for crime, you will be safe here during your stay of service. As we tell retreat groups who serve here, you are safe because of the work you do with the church. The local residents have a great respect for the church and those who come to help others. Holy Name is the neighborhood Catholic Church, and its name and people have been well respected in the area for years. The safety precautions for being in Camden are the same as any city—stay with the group, don't be outside alone at night, don't pick up sharp objects, etc.

AGE REQUIREMENT

At this time we are only accepting applicants who are 18 years of age or older (18 by the time of service).

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES- WHAT YOU WILL DO

During your stay as a Summer Intern, you will participate in group service projects at various nonprofits throughout the city. In addition, you'll be placed at a service site where we'll match your talents with a need in the community. Potential projects could be:

- Facilitating an after school program at a nearby low-income housing project
- Feeding the hungry through the Cathedral's Sandwich Ministry
- Plan events in the neighborhood park: e.g.- basketball tournament, movie night, etc.
- Serving at a youth technology training and education center which helps high school dropouts get back on track and into college
- Serving the homeless Tent City residents

SERVICE PERIOD

We acknowledge that students' summer schedules can be hectic and varied, and we want to accommodate as many Interns as possible. As such, the dates of the Internships will not be decided until interest is received from applicants. You, as an applicant, will help determine when the Internship will occur. About 5 Interns will comprise your summer community. This will enable you to be a part of our DSW community during your stay, yet also form your own community with your fellow Interns.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Outline for the application process:

- **April 1st-** Applications Due
- **Phone Interview-** After Application, references, and essays are received
- **May 1st-** Announcements of Acceptance go out

BENEFITS

The benefits of service to the poor are many, but most importantly- it will change your life! If you have served in Camden or a similar place of need, you know how rewarding it is to dive into a ministry and be the hands and feet of Jesus. You will grow spiritually and be developed personally through community and professionally through your intern projects. It is a unique experience that previous interns remember for years to come.

Benefits include:

- Eye opening and rewarding life experiences
- Community Service credits towards your school
- Hands on experience in your related field of study
- Networking with Camden non-profits, churches, and with other Camden volunteers

COST

The required program cost is **\$300**. This includes room and board in our parish Retreat House as well covers a few additional items like t-shirts and group social activities. If you are unable to meet the cost of a Summer Internship, **financial help** can be provided. We do not want any one's financial situation to prevent them from serving in Camden!

REFERENCES

Please include two references with your application, one personal and one spiritual. The best references will be a variety of people who know you well- such as employers, professors, peers, church members. The Spiritual Reference form is to be completed by someone who knows you in the specific context of your faith life. Do not include relatives.

References and essays are due by April 1st ! Please email to DSW.interns@gmail.com, or mail to the address on the first page of this document. Mailed references and essays must be postmarked by April 1st to the address above. Please email to confirm so we know to expect it by mail.

You will receive a phone call confirming that we have received your application and to set up a time for a **phone interview**. If you do not hear from us within a week of sending your application, please give us a call to confirm it was received (especially if sent through the mail). Announcements about acceptance into the program will go out by **May 1st** at the latest. Each application is carefully read and screened to determine if the applicant is appropriate for the DSW Program and that DSW is a good fit for the applicant.

As we receive completed applications, interviews will be scheduled within two weeks of the April 1st deadline.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

Please write an essay about yourself. Your essay will help us get to know you better as you'll potentially be sharing life with other interns for a few weeks. We ask that you use examples and explanations as much as possible. Please type your essay; it should be about 2 pages --- long enough to give a good picture of you, your gifts and why you are applying to be a part of DSW's experience of service, prayer, and community.

1. What are your reasons for wanting to become a Summer Intern? Describe experiences that have led you to this choice. What do you hope to accomplish, what do you hope to give, and what do you hope to gain?
2. DSW Volunteers live in community, sharing household chores, meals, celebrations, liturgies, prayer and more. What are your expectations and apprehensions of living in community?
3. St. Francis de Sales was committed to simple living and living in solidarity with the poor. What does simple living mean to you? How does a simple lifestyle relate to your service with the poor? What changes in your lifestyle will you need to make in order to live simply, and how do you envision making those changes living on a small monthly stipend?
4. If you have served in Camden before, with DSW or another organization, what were your favorite service activities? What images, events, or lessons still stick with you? What people do you remember?
5. Please add any other information you think would help us get to know you.