



Franciscan Community Volunteers

1600 11th Avenue S
St. Cloud, MN 56301

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We're on the web!
www.fcvonline.org

Pedal power and public transit

by Katie (Janssen) Cassady

Now that fall is upon us, the rooms at the Franciscan Welcoming House and Franciscan Volunteer House will be a bit fuller. With five volunteers moving in from across the country, you might expect to notice a difference (or at least a scaled-back college move-in weekend), but you won't. Though this group has committed to a term of 10 months of out-of-state service, not one of them is bringing a car. We think this speaks volumes of their commitment to a lifestyle of simplicity and solidarity with those whom they serve because it will foster complete reliance on their pedal power and public transportation. Special thanks to those who have donated bikes/bike repair. Please know that we will be implementing a larger portion of our donations this year to provide bus passes for the group as they travel to sites all over St. Cloud, some to two places each day! We ask that you might consider "sponsoring" a day's/week's/month's bus fare for a volunteer or for the group.

Consider what a year without your car might look like; how would life change for you? Could you do it?



Contact:

Sister Clara Stang
(320) 229-0307

Katie (Janssen) Cassady
(320) 240-6184



Franciscan Community Volunteers

October 2010



Ann Cook, Sister Clara Stang, Eilis McCulloh, Sister Giles Weyandt (FCV's Praying Sister), Greg Morris, Audrey Breeden, Will Estrellanes, Katie (Janssen) Cassady.

Commissioning

By Eilis McCulloh

On Sunday, August 29, the five Franciscan Community Volunteers were commissioned during a Mass at St. Francis Convent in Little Falls. There was a tinge of excitement in the air that morning as we walked into the chapel. One sister came up to me and excitedly said, "This is it!" The sisters were as excited as we were to begin our year of service.

Following communion, Sister Clara and Katie called the volunteers forward to introduce ourselves to the community and receive our Tau Crosses. Sister Clara and Katie placed a Tau Cross around each of our necks while saying, "Wear this Tau Cross with conviction. Let it be a sign of your commitment as a Franciscan Community Volunteer." This reminded me that I need to keep Jesus at the root of my service. In many ways, this was the official beginning of my journey as a Franciscan Community Volunteer.

Receiving the Tau Cross from Katie reminded me that as a Franciscan Community Volunteer, I am connected to something much greater than

myself. It not only connects me to my fellow volunteers, but also to the Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls and the Franciscan community at large. This great connection reminded me that I am not walking these 10 months alone. As a volunteer, we have many people supporting us. This was evident by the many sister prayers, sponsors, and others who showed up at the Commissioning Mass. I was touched to see this outpouring of love and support. The sisters truly welcomed us into their home and, for 10 months, as part of their extended family.

Following our reception of the Tau Cross, the sisters and associates blessed us and sent us forth by singing the traditional Saint Francis blessing. As they blessed us, I was able to look out at the congregation and see the many wonderful people I had met over the course of orientation week. Once

again, I was reminded of the support the volunteers have from the Franciscan community. I could feel the power of their prayers as they raised their hands over us. I felt like this was one of the most powerful moments of the Mass. I could feel the prayers of those gathered and knew that they had the power to sustain me. It felt like they were enveloping the volunteers with the Franciscan spirit.

When talking to a friend some days later, I described the Commissioning Mass as a huge "God moment" for me. It was a powerful reminder of what brought me to this program. Each song and reading spoke to my decision to move to St. Cloud, Minn., for 10 months and serve an underprivileged population. I had answered the call mentioned in "Here I Am," "Lord You Have Come," and "God Has Chosen Me."

FCV thanks these generous donors:

Thomas Wosepka of Douglas Machines, Michael & Diane Sakach, Brad & Boo Hinker, Barbara Sutton, Jack & Geri Happe, Richard

& Marion Kuklock, Kris & Michelle Shefveland, MaryAnn Penick, Knights of Columbus, Bishop Zardetti Council, LeRoy Dietmann, Diane & Tom

Cassady, Joanne Fleck, St. John's Abbey, Bernice Przybilla, Bob & Nancy Zawachi, MaryAnn & Rich Kuklouch

Meet the 2010-11 Volunteers

Audrey Breeden comes to FCV from a prior year of volunteer service in Dulce, N.Mex., where she was a grade school teacher at St. Francis School on the Jicarilla Apache Reservation. She graduated from Berea College in Berea, KY, with a degree in music education. Her creativity and music-mindedness should serve her well as she begins her work with the St. Cloud Children's Home.



Will Estrellanes hails from Bullhead City, Ariz., though he has recently been living in California while earning his degree in psychology. He has also begun work toward receiving his master's degree in educational counseling. Will has worked both in young adult ministry and in crisis counseling; both experiences should provide a well-grounded formation for him as he begins his work as a mentor with the Boys and Girls Club in St. Cloud.



Greg Morris is coming to us from the most tropical climate. Greg attended the University of North Florida where he studied English and religious studies. Though born and raised in Georgia, he remained in Jacksonville after graduation. Greg spent several months at L'Arche Harbor House where he lived in community with individuals with differing abilities. Greg will be spending his days at Place of Hope in St. Cloud, serving meals, helping with Kids Ministry and Church of the Week this winter.



Ann Cook attended college at Belmont Abbey in N. C., where she earned her degree in theology and philosophy. Ann's involvement in music and theater both in college and after graduation has been continuous. Ann grew up in the Chicago area and will be a great resource for some of our warm-weather arrivals. Ann's time will be split between Catholic Charities' Office of Social Concerns and Hands Across the World where she will work to promote community building at a parish level, as well as through her work with English as a Second Language (ESL) and those who are newly learning to adapt to Minnesota.



Eilis McCulloh joins us from Youngstown, Ohio. Eilis studied English and history while she attended Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pa. Since

graduation Eilis has been an administrative assistant for the Sisters of Humility. Combined with her internship experience at Catholic Charities in college, Eilis is well-prepared for her work with Lutheran Social Services where she will assist resettling refugees in navigating the day-to-day necessities that come with arriving in a new country: housing, transportation, food, schools, bill-paying, community navigation, etc.



Alumni - where are they now?

Please join us in praying in support of our volunteers and the good work that has begun in them.

Spencer Buchert has continued to serve with Place of Hope over the course of this summer. He will begin classes in the fall at St. Cloud State University as he continues to pursue his future vocation as a dentist. We will be missing his delicious goose-kabobs this fall, but are delighted that he has agreed to be a sponsor for one of our new volunteers this year.

Will Braun has stayed in the volunteer house for the summer, generously offering lawn-mowing services and good company to the sisters across the street. Will is moving to Albert Lea to teach grades 1-3 as an AmeriCorps volunteer beginning this fall. Will and girlfriend (now fiancée) Brett announced their engagement this summer as well. Congratulations Will & Brett!

Caitie Tobin left Minnesota and headed straight for the Holy Land. During her stay, Caitie has had the opportunity to study the history of Christianity in its place of origin. Following her one-month course of study in Jerusalem, she and her cousin will be volunteering for a few months with a program in Bethlehem that fosters peace-building and intercultural and interfaith dialogue.

Community

by Audrey Breeden, Volunteer

There are three facets to the Franciscan Community Volunteer experience: community, spirituality and service. While service is where we will be spending most of our time and is our primary reason for being here, these elements work together, so that our practice of each strengthens the other two. We hope that living in community will foster spiritual growth, as well as provide a support network to help us through the stressful times in our service.

Intentional community necessarily varies a lot, depending on the personalities and goals of those within the community. At its heart, however, intentional community has one main purpose: to take a group of people (in our case, perfect strangers) and share space, household work and support. Though the terminology is new, people have been creating community through their families and through religious orders for centuries. Our community is quite new, so it is difficult to foresee what sort of dynamic will develop during the year. However, we have some idea of what kind of community atmosphere we would like to create. We hope to use shared work and shared space to build a supportive, open atmosphere where

we can have fun together, pray together and encourage one another through the inevitable stresses of our service work. We are very different people, but we hope to be able to use the unique talents of each person to strengthen the whole.

Obviously, there are inherent challenges to living in community. It is difficult to share limited space, and it can be humbling to watch the same petty conflicts you had with your siblings return to haunt your community. Here is where the great advantage of intentional community becomes apparent. Instead of simply bickering and then returning angrily to our separate corners, we try to listen to every viewpoint on an issue and come to a compromise that we can all agree to live by. Living in community makes you vulnerable: it is scary to lose the pleasant veneer you present to outsiders and let other people truly get to know you with all your faults. But it is only after you let people see your uncensored self that you can truly get and give meaningful support.

Ultimately, the ideal is to learn, not to look past one another's idiosyncrasies but to accept them as part of who we are.

Katherine Byers-Ferrian

will graduate from St. Catherine's University in December with a degree in peace studies. She spent a semester in South Africa studying effects of Apartheid and AIDS on the country, with special attention to issues of eco-justice. She spent the past summer as an environmental justice intern at the West Side Citizen's Organization in St. Paul, learning a lot about composting, community gardens, solar energy and urban chicken farming.

She has photographed the chickens she found downtown, calling them, "Chicks on the West Side."

Alicia Landale headed back home to Maryland for the summer and for some time with family and friends. While home she is doing some traveling and will be looking for a job closer to her family beginning this fall. Stay tuned.

Well-wishes

by Sister Clara Stang

Congratulations to our FCV manager, Katie! For sure the highlight of the summer was Joel and Katie's wedding! The day of great joy, happiness, exhilaration and delight began with a great liturgy at the Abbey Church at St. John's University and continued at the reception at Mi Famiglia in St. Cloud! I encourage you to see and hear the spirit of the day by visiting www.andrewandjessica.com/cassady. (I admit I've viewed it often and it brings back such fond memories.) Franciscans Sisters Ange Mayers, Cordelia Korkowski and I join in wishing Katie and Joel a lifetime of love and peace.



May 2, 2011

5:00-7:30PM

Territory Golf Course
Coyote Moon Grille
St. Cloud, MN