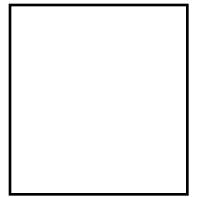




## Franciscan Community Volunteers

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# Taste OF ST. CLOUD



Monday,  
**May 5, 2014**  
4:30–7:30PM

Territory Golf Course  
Coyote Moon Grille  
480 55th Ave SE, St. Cloud, MN 56304

**Tickets: \$25**  
(\$30 at the door)

### Ways you can support the Franciscan Community Volunteers “Taste of St. Cloud”

- Purchase tickets online at [www.fcvonline.org](http://www.fcvonline.org)
- Invite friends or family to join you at the event
- Help sell paper tickets and receive a complimentary ticket—contact office for details!
- Create a themed basket of items for the silent auction
- Donate empty baskets of varied sizes for the silent auction

**We are looking forward to this event  
on Cinco de Mayo!**

**Supporting Franciscan Community Volunteers.**

A ministry of Franciscan Sisters of Little Falls, Minnesota



Franciscan Community  
Volunteers

# Community Connections

## Walking in Solidarity

*Kristen Wall, Franciscan Community Volunteer*

“It must be nice to live in a country where no one is homeless,” mused a fellow musician and client at the homeless shelter where I worked in Hungary last year. I’m not sure that my clumsy attempt at a counter-argument in Hungarian convinced him otherwise. Fortunately or unfortunately, from this side of the Atlantic, the realities of homelessness in the United States are pretty clear, even if most often we would rather look the other way. On December 19, 2013, FCV volunteers and staff took part in the Homeless Memorial March in downtown Minneapolis. The event served as a memorial for over 150 people who were either homeless, formerly-homeless or advocates for the homeless across Minnesota and died in the past year. Sadly there are probably many more individuals who never received a funeral whose names were not recorded at this event.

The march followed a route that would almost certainly be familiar to someone experiencing homelessness in Minneapolis, beginning at the government center and continuing down Nicolette Avenue all the way to Simpson Housing and the United Methodist Church. The contrasts were stark as we passed towering skyscrapers, corporate and executive headquarters, festively decorated shopping centers, and the well-illuminated route of the weekend Holidazzle parades, all the while feeling very small. Each participant carried a sign with the name and hometown of an individual being remembered.

We were asked to process in respectful silence. It was almost eerie at first as we waited to cross the street, hearing only the clanging of flags against their flagpoles in the wind. Silence allowed us to notice these things, as well as hear the voices of those who have actually experienced homelessness along the route. Some were understandably angry at our experience that only lasted a couple of hours, dressed up in layers upon layers of high-quality clothing that is cost prohibitive for many. Others smiled and gave a simple “thank you,” while still others pronounced blessings. The voice that struck me the most, though, was the first to punctuate our



**At the 2013 Homeless Memorial March in December our group joined about 250 others, marching silently through Minneapolis in memory of those who passed away during the year who were homeless in Minnesota. From left: FCV alum Caitie Tobin, current volunteers Augie Lindmark and Kristen Wall, and Kaitlin Depuydt, associate director.**

silent march. In a loud voice he cried out, “You need to make your voices heard loud and clear! Too many children are homeless! Too many immigrants are homeless!” Not knowing how far his voice would carry, this man boldly witnessed to the social injustice he saw.

The reasons for the existence of homelessness in our society are many and complex. Good choices are not always made at the many liquor stores we passed along the route, but unjust systems in which we all play a role, if only passively, are also to blame. It was telling that the vast majority of the marchers were white while homelessness in Minnesota disproportionately affects people of color. Historical and present racial prejudices have an impact. Broken family systems, stigma and untreated mental illness, insufficient educational attainment, expensive health care, unfair wages

*(continued on page 3)*

FCV is a sponsored ministry of:



**FRANCISCAN SISTERS**  
OF LITTLE FALLS, MINNESOTA

# Recognizing our service site partners

As young adults apply to the FCV program, they express their service interests and experience, which is then matched with the need within community organizations around St. Cloud. The matching of volunteer and service site is a multi-step process, and it often results in new service site placements for the FCV program. We are happy to be working with several nonprofits for the first time this year, and we are equally grateful for the continued partnership of our ongoing service sites. Over the years, FCV has collaborated with 21 nonprofit organizations as service sites for our volunteers; these are our 2013-2014 FCV service site partners:



**Immigrant and Refugee Resources program, Bel Clare & La Cruz communities**

FCV service site for 3 years  
Current FCV: Augie Lindmark

**St. Cloud Children's Home, youth ministry**

FCV service site for 5 years  
Current FCV: Ian Peoples



**St. Benedict Senior Community, therapeutic recreation**

FCV service site for 1 year  
Current FCV: Nick Anderson



**Project HEAL, health care outreach**

FCV service site for 1 year  
Current FCV: Alison Swoboda



**Casa Guadalupe Multicultural Communities**

FCV service site for 1 year  
Current FCV: Kristen Wall



**South-Side Boys & Girls Club**

FCV service site for 2 years  
Current FCV: Nneka Arinze



**Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, Project Care**

FCV service site for 1 year  
Current FCV: Alison Swoboda



**Opportunity Matters, Inc, Pathways Day Program**

FCV service site for 1 year  
Current FCV: Nick Anderson

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## What exactly *is* AmeriCorps?

AmeriCorps is a national program that encourages service. The four program goals of AmeriCorps are Getting Things Done, Strengthening Communities, Encouraging Responsibility, and Expanding Opportunity.

AmeriCorps members are rewarded for their commitment to service with an education award at the end of their service that can be put toward student loans.

### I hear about AmeriCorps VISTA. What's the difference?

FCV Volunteers are all AmeriCorps members, meaning they do direct service with those being served at a service organization. AmeriCorps VISTA members strengthen the capacity of an organization but do not work directly with clients, students or those served by the organization.

Both are valuable players in the structure of a nonprofit organization!

### How do you find out about AmeriCorps opportunities?

You wouldn't believe how numerous the opportunities for service are—FCV is connected with AmeriCorps through the Catholic Volunteer Network (CVN), the network that supports over 200 faith-based volunteer programs. About 70 programs with CVN offer AmeriCorps as a benefit to their volunteers—we are proud to be one of them! You can find opportunities online through the Catholic Volunteer Network or AmeriCorps websites.



**Catholic Volunteer Network**

# Come on a house tour!

*Kaitlin Depuydt*

Many people are surprised when they enter the Welcoming House, the place that Franciscan Community Volunteers call home. The house is sometimes mistaken for an apartment complex, office building or a group home. Actually, the house was built in 1959 with the main purpose of providing a residence for the 16 sisters who were teachers at the school across the street—then it was Holy Spirit School, now it is St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School. The house was designed to encourage both community life and personal time, with the common spaces in one wing and the bedrooms in another.

Today the bedroom wing at the Welcoming House has 10 bedrooms for the three Franciscan Sisters and six Franciscan Community Volunteers who live there (there's also a guest room ... come for a visit!). The kitchen was built to accommodate many with its large island and two

sinks; it adjoins the living room and dining room where there always seems to be room for one more at the table!

The common spaces continue with a sisters' community room and a volunteer community room, large laundry room, meditation chapel, and a backyard for animal visitors, cookouts and yard games. Four offices for the FCV staff, young adult ministry and vocations ministry also find rooms in the house. If you're not surprised yet, I think the most unexpected area is the "deep basement," the area beneath the entire bedroom wing that is primarily used for storage and clothes lines but has a colorful mural of life advice: "Watch more Sunsets," "Take more chances," "Be Sillier," "Relax." We're glad that this unique space called Welcoming House can become a home for volunteers in community each year!



Dining Room



Volunteer Community Room

## Did you know?

Did you know that at the end of this program year, Franciscan Community Volunteers will have collectively given **230 months of service** to nonprofits in the St. Cloud area? That's **34,500 hours of direct service** given by 26 young adults over 5 years! We are inspired by this generosity and commitment to service. **Thank you** to our current and former Franciscan Community Volunteers!

## Solidarity, continued

and many other manifestations of systematic injustice are also involved.

We, like Isaiah, are called to "Cry out!" and to "Lift up [our] voices with strength" (Isaiah 40:6, 9). We must put words to the injustices we see, words that might influence those in power to enact change, and we must pronounce messages of encouragement and hope to those searching for a God who "gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak" (Isaiah 40:29). May our hearts be opened to seeing injustice in our world, our minds strengthened to discern wise courses of action, and our feet emboldened to walk in the ways of solidarity and peace.