

FALL 2020

JVC Magazine

News for Former, Current, and Future Jesuit Volunteers and Supporters



FORMING A STRONGER ANTI-RACIST ORGANIZATION

JVC's renewed commitment
to social and racial justice



A JV DISCOVERS AN UNEXPECTED CONNECTION
WITH A MIGRANT FARMWORKER //

THE MISTERS OF BAGHDAD //

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CONTENTS

Message from the President	3
Resilience and Love in the International Program	4
<i>Our International Program is on pause because of COVID-19, but we are resilient.</i>	
On Becoming Actively Anti-Racist: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at JVC	6
<i>JVC seeks funding and structural changes necessary to incorporate in its culture to move to function as an actively anti-racist organization.</i>	
Message from the Board Chair	8
JV to FJV Legacies	9
Lessons in Kansas City and the Significance of Place	10
<i>JVs and FJVs alike hold a deep affinity for where they served.</i>	
Fulfilling Needs in U.S. Healthcare	12
<i>Dr. Fauci acts as a role model to this FJV working with clients in need.</i>	
FJV News	13
The Last Word	19

Cover Image

Photo by Nicole Antonacci (San Diego 2019-2020) at
Black Lives Matter marches held in San Diego, California.

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THE BEATITUDES

5 Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he
went up on a mountainside and sat down.
His disciples came to him, ² and he began to
teach them.

He said:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs
is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they
will be comforted.

5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit
the earth.

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness, for they will be filled.

7 Blessed are the merciful, for they will be
shown mercy.

8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will
see God.

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they
will be called children of God.

10 Blessed are those who are persecuted
because of righteousness, for theirs is the
kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when people insult you,
persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil
against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be
glad, because great is your reward in heaven,
for in the same way they persecuted the
prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:1-12 (NIV)

JVC
DARE TO CHANGE



Dear Friends,

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN LIKE NO OTHER. THE COVID-19 GLOBAL PANDEMIC HAS RADICALLY CHANGED HOW WE ENGAGE WITH EACH OTHER. Jesuit Volunteers are witnessing the ways that existing disparities in our healthcare system are intensified by COVID-19, exacerbating the inequities experienced by those they serve. Within this setting, our challenge at JVC is to rethink how we support volunteers in a virtual world.

At the same time, global protests demand the eradication of anti-Blackness embedded in our systems and culture. These demands require a genuine commitment to anti-racism work. JVC is doing our own work to become an anti-racist organization. We are deepening our commitment to our core values of spirituality, simple living, community, and social justice.

Our history over the last 60 years is a testament to JVC's resiliency. In this year's *JVC Magazine*, you'll read stories of resiliency spanning our history through the reflections of an FJV who served in 2019-20 in Kansas City to one of the "Misters of Baghdad," a former volunteer who served in a precursor to our International Program in 1963-64.

You also can read our response to JVs' and FJVs' call for a deeper and more visible commitment to anti-racism work. On our website you will find concrete steps we are taking to move towards that goal, recognizing that this work is never finished. **JVC is working to build resilience for these times. With strength and resolve, a clear sense of purpose, a nurturing spirit, and by listening to and learning from you.**

Volunteers are attending local vigils and protests that call for dismantling the systems that hold racism in place. JVC is helping JVs reflect on and analyze these experiences by incorporating a focus on anti-racism in the formation program. We hope that, in turn, it enriches the ways JVs approach their roles with our partner agencies, as members of their JV households, and in how they live out the four values as former JVs.

We have been inspired over the past few months as we have seen members of the JVC community step forward to support Jesuit Volunteers: as they serve at nonprofits around the country to provide spiritual direction for JVs while they make transitions in their lives; to accompany BIPOC JVs as they live out their year with JVC; and, to support us financially to ensure we can continue with our work.

The life and ministry of Jesus is a model of the resiliency required to put our faith into action. The transformation required of us is what we refer to in JVC as being changed for good. May we let our experiences in service continually shape and transform us. Our motto "dare to change" meets people where they are on their journey. May we all be challenged to deepen our commitment to creating a just world and act ever more boldly to put that commitment into action.

In the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12), Jesus offers eight blessings and proclamations that acknowledge the poverty, persecution and blessings experienced by the "anawin"—those who have been disenfranchised by the society in which they live and who, through it all, remain faithful to God. It is the resiliency of mind, body, spirit, and soul.

In August 2020, we commissioned and sent 200 volunteers—this year's representatives of our JVC community—to go out, listen to and serve those who have been silenced by the systems and structures that work against them. We invite you to recommit to accompany JVC and the work of forming "great-souled persons" who have a determined spirit, are dedicated to their service, are open to listening to each other's journeys, and who share a vision of the world we want to create together. **We invite you to contribute to their experience in ways that are meaningful to you through donations, offering your skills and talents, your presence, and your prayers.**

We are a resilient organization because of you. In turn, my wish is that our work brings you hope. I hope that by accompanying us, your spirit is strengthened and inspired to lean into the work with us—the JVC community.

TOM CHABOLLA
JVC PRESIDENT

INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

RESILIENCE AND LOVE IN THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM

BROOKE SILVAS (JVC STAFF)

Nothing is more practical
than finding God,
That is, than falling in Love
in a quite absolute, final way.
What you are in love with,
what seizes your imagination,
will affect everything.
It will decide
what will get you out of bed in the morning,
what you do with your evenings,
how you spend your weekends,
what you read, whom you know,
what breaks your heart,
and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.
Fall in Love, stay in love,
and it will decide everything.

—Joseph Whelan, SJ



The **ICONIC** *Fall in Love* prayer is often misattributed to Pedro Arrupe, SJ. It's a JVC favorite and some might say it is a bit overused, but I can't think of a better prayer to encapsulate the experience of being an International Program volunteer with JVC. When you are completely immersed in a new place, it can be easy and practical to find God in all things and to fall in love with everything around you. Being immersed in such a love, one can only imagine how devastating it might be if someone called you up out of the blue and told you it was all over?

Well, on a Friday, the 13th of March, I was the one who had to make these calls. As I shared the news with JVs, I was met with silence, tears, disbelief, anger, frustration, and so many questions. As the person whose role it is to support them, I felt powerless and frustrated with everything happening in the world and not being in control of any of it. There was nothing I could do to make this situation better. All I could do was try to make their transition home as easy as possible, but even this proved unusually difficult. The following days and weeks consisted of frantic purchasing of flights, canceled flights, purchasing new flights, and having Peru go into lockdown. I found myself trying to strategize all the ways I could convince a team of Navy SEALs to extract the seven volunteers stuck in Peru. And finally, waiting for the U.S. Embassy to bring them home on repatriation flights. I'm anxious just thinking back to those few weeks of uncertainty.

In a typical program year, DisOrientation retreat in-country focuses on preparing second-year JVs for their departure and return to the U.S. Upon their return, the grieving and healing process can take months, even years. Of course, none of us could prepare for what was coming this program year. The JVs were abruptly told they had to leave, unable to say proper goodbyes, unsure of when or if they might ever return. This complete lack of closure, plus a pandemic ravaging our country, and everyone social distancing, was a recipe for an exceptionally heavy transition.



Yet it has been during these months of deep sadness and grieving, both for volunteers and for all involved, that I have felt glimpses of hope. I've seen strength, perseverance, and resilience in these International Program volunteers. Once all the volunteers were home, our dedicated team of International Program Staff put together a six-week virtual Re-Entry Retreat. We held weekly sessions to talk about the re-entry process and continue our practice of spirituality. The retreat themes included finding balance and self-care amidst such strange circumstances, honoring the relationships formed in-country, practicing how to share our stories. And ultimately, we spent time identifying ways to move forward in a healthy way.

Despite their broken hearts, they showed up to our virtual sessions, wanting to talk about the pain, the brokenness, the grieving. They shared stories, laughter, and tears. Even though some of them had never met each other in person, they were brave and vulnerable with each other. They created a unique sense of community across countries and cohorts. They always showed up authentically. I am grateful for their example of presence. Volunteers give me hope. They remind me that being authentically present with each other is what relationships are about. This is what can build real connection and healing, even in the virtual world in which we now live.

Five months after their return, we gathered one final time for a Closing Ceremony. The afternoon was life-giving, like a breath of fresh air, leaving me feeling inspired and hopeful. The JVs brought a sense of joy and lightness into space. They shared favorite memories from their time in-country, they affirmed and honored each other, and International Program former JVs shared their support and words of wisdom. The ceremony provided some sense of closure that we all needed, JVs and staff alike. By the end of the summer, many of the JVs seemed to be moving on with renewed hope. A few volunteers joined our Domestic Program, some found new intentional living communities and new volunteer opportunities, others started jobs or graduate studies, and several are still supporting their worksites remotely. Many are taking action in their communities to contribute to pandemic relief efforts and the work of racial justice and anti-racism. I feel immensely proud to have worked with such strong and resilient individuals.

Our Closing Ceremony reminded me that at the core of our program is love. I believe we are called out to the margins not to fix, or to heal, or even to help or serve as much as we think we might. I believe we are called, whether we know it or not, to experience God's love. As international volunteers, we have the great privilege of walking alongside communities that reveal to us who God is, not through words, but actions. Upon arrival, we are often greeted by a display of hospitality unlike anything we've ever seen, and a gift that we certainly have done nothing to deserve. But as we journey together with our newfound guides, we find that they can radically transform us, if we let them. We are called to this faraway land to see what the busyness of our lives in the US has hidden from us. We are called to learn from our neighbors this simpler way of being in the world, this way of loving each other unconditionally, the way God loves us.

Whether our International Program JVs spent two years or two months in the field, one thing is for sure: the people and cultures in which they were immersed have changed them. Our job as returned international volunteers is to make a habit of living out the values our host communities have taught us—generosity, hospitality, community, and most importantly, agape love. The 2018-2020 International Program Jesuit Volunteers surely fell in love, as Joseph Whelan describes. I am confident that they will stay in love and allow the people they have fallen in love with to affect everything they do and everything they become. As 2020 continues to present us new challenges and heartbreak, we are lucky to have these strong, resilient, loving human beings here at home with us, as the values they learned abroad are certainly needed now more than ever.

ANTI-RACISM

ON BECOMING ACTIVELY ANTI-RACIST: DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AT JVC

JVC is energized to identify and advance the learning outcomes of our volunteer cohorts in the area of racial justice: to train staff and board members to be advocates in this work, and to better equip JVC's community to lead lives dedicated to anti-racism, and ultimately towards dismantling oppressive structures. We have consolidated some of our efforts over this past program year and we are working on a long-term plan proposal that seeks to encompass feedback submitted over the past few years by our stakeholders, JVs, FJVs, former and current staff, and board members. This letter represents our response and our commitment.

We WHO HAVE EITHER volunteered to serve on JVC's Board of Directors or who serve on JVC's leadership team recognize the importance and urgency of your letter requesting a statement and a plan of action from JVC.

Your letter clearly communicates your frustration that JVC has not done enough to demonstrate its commitment as an anti-racist partner in the fight for racial justice. We recognize this fact and will continue until we can manifest real progress from a place of non-racism to active anti-racism. Your example of coming together to put forward your ideas embodies the best spirit of JVC and we hear you. It is clear to us, while some steps have been taken, much more remains to be done, and we want you to know that we are deeply committed to owning our shortcomings and working to implement a plan of action incorporating your demands for anti-racism work at every level of our organization.

Each one of us, as we strive for justice, deeply shares the pain, frustration, anger and sadness that we have experienced so acutely over these last months, as the depth and endurance of the structural racism woven into the fabric of our country since its founding has been made even more obvious. **In a letter this summer, Tom Chabolla expressed on behalf of JVC:**

The abhorrent murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Tony McDade and others are only the most recent and visible examples of the persistence of racism, discrimination and oppression, which every one of us has a responsibility to end.

As a board and leadership team for JVC, **we are fully committed—in partnership with the organization's constituents, especially the community of volunteers and former volunteers—to help JVC become a stronger anti-racist organization**, and for our efforts to be woven into each of our values of spirituality, simple living, community and social justice, following the call of St. Ignatius of Loyola to be “women and men for others”. Our commitment to social and racial justice informed our search for Tom Chabolla, who brings critical experience to the role of president. During his tenure, Tom has been filling gaps to assure that JVC has the resources to pursue the vision shared with him by JVC's community. The board has added new and diverse trustees to support JVC in its mission and in its journey. Many of us are FJVs who identify closely with the depth of your desire to see meaningful change.

In response to staff work sessions, Tom reinstated the internal JVC Racial Justice Task Force and empowered them to develop a plan of action that embraces the demands stated in your letter and turns those demands into time-relevant goals and strategies. Initially, they have prepared an overview of what has been done in the past, what is already in progress, and what new ideas are being considered. Some examples include:

- + JVC has worked to provide better financial support by integrating the availability of financial assistance into the application process and expanding the number of agreements for student loan forgiveness.
- + JVC's Recruitment Team recently hired an FJV to focus recruitment efforts and build partnerships with historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs).
- + JVC launched an FJV BIPOC Mentorship Program for accompaniment throughout a JV's term of service.

These plans will live on the website. Please know that we see this as a living document, and very much a work in progress. We will be communicating our intentions and action steps throughout our media channels, but more importantly, we will know that we are on the right path when you know that you have been heard.

As we all lean into this critical work with even greater urgency and commitment, JVC is ready to listen, discern and shape initiatives that strengthen the organization and make us even more effective at supporting our mission, living our values, eradicating racial and social injustices, and leading a racially-diverse and inclusive program experience.

Amid this pain and struggle, we are also hopeful—just as **John Lewis, truly one of our modern day prophets, wrote to us all from his deathbed not long ago:**

“

While my time here has now come to an end, I want you to know that in the last days and hours of my life, you inspired me. You filled me with hope about the next chapter of the great American story when you used your power to make a difference in our society. Millions of people motivated simply by human compassion laid down the burdens of division. Around the country and the world, you set aside race, class, age, language and nationality to demand respect for human dignity.

CONGRESSMAN JOHN LEWIS

We see all of you in these words. We are hopeful with you as the next generation. We believe that our shared goal of strengthening JVC to be actively anti-racist is achievable if we work together.

In closing, our mission and values guide us and our community. Our value of community states that “*we are committed to developing mutual relationships across lines of difference, and we assume goodwill on behalf of those around us.*” We are grateful for your willingness to allow for this dialogue to help move JVC towards creating a more just and hopeful world.

Thank you to all who are taking the initiative to make us a stronger and more effective community.



Dear Friends of JVC,

DURING THIS UNPRECEDENTED PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY AND HARDSHIP, THE POWER AND STRENGTH OF THE JVC COMMUNITY AND MISSION IS EVEN MORE EVIDENT. 2020 is a year we will long remember as the year COVID-19 shut down many parts of our economy and took the lives of loved ones. It is the year that has led our JVC president, Tom Chabolla, and our dedicated staff to adapt to remote meetings, assist international volunteers in transitioning back to the U.S., complete our recruitment remotely, and to support our volunteers and agencies in continuing their work and fulfilling our mission while taking precautions to remain safe. JVC has joined the virtual world with a vengeance. Our community continues to learn new lessons and embrace the change.

The new 2020-21 JVC cohort of 199 volunteers have traveled to their cities and begun their work at their placement agencies. They were asked to self-quarantine in their houses for two weeks prior to starting their service. They joined a virtual orientation program and are now actively serving in their agency roles.

During the new program year, the leadership and staff will not only **adapt to supporting the community in the new virtual world**, they are working with the Racial Justice Task Force, the larger FJV community and the board to **support the community in its social and racial justice work**. We are deeply grateful for the organization and community's commitment to this work. The JVC website will be updated with goals, initiatives and accomplishments. We are committed to marshaling our time and resources to do more.

We are eternally grateful for the support JVC receives each year. We are grateful for the volunteers who dedicate a year or two to service. We are grateful to their friends and family who support them with Send Me to Serve. We are grateful to the past and present volunteer Jesuit and lay members of the Board of Directors. We are grateful for FJVs who continue to be active as mentors, community support or donors. We are grateful to Tom and the staff who go above and beyond running the organization.

We could not have the impact that we have without the entire community. The more we pull together to support JVC and each other, **THE MORE WE CAN DO.**

Thank you again for standing with us and sharing this journey!

JOAN HOGAN GILLMAN
CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**THE
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INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS



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the United States*



FJV Joseph McKellar
(Boston 2004-05)

Co-Director
PICO California



The top way people find out about JVC is from Former Jesuit Volunteers.

*Photographed here are the 2019-20 Jesuit Volunteers with an FJV relative.
We love when the four values transcend generations and influence an entire family!*

APPLICATION DEADLINES

November 30 | February 1 | March 29

(limited placement opportunities come March 29)

LESSONS IN KANSAS CITY AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PLACE IN MY FORMATIVE EXPERIENCE



IZZY SHAHMIRZA grew up in Santa Cruz, California. She graduated from UCLA, where she studied Molecular, Cell and Developmental Biology, and pursued a minor in Global Health. Izzy loves playing sports, spending time with her family and her dog, going on hikes, visiting the beach, and Latin dancing! She is proud to be the daughter of two immigrant parents—her mom is from Jalisco, Mexico and her dad is from Tehran, Iran. Her passion to serve the Hispanic immigrant and refugee population, especially the youth, is what led her to JVC, and serving at the Migrant Farmworkers Assistance Fund.

IZZY SHAHMIRZA (KANSAS CITY 2019-20)

AS I AM LOOKING BACK ON THE YEARS LEADING UP TO THE JESUIT VOLUNTEER CORPS, I never thought that I would find myself living in the Midwest. This Californian was thrilled to say “yes” to serve at the Migrant Farmworkers Assistance Fund (MFAF) but cautious about moving to Kansas City, Missouri. As someone who identifies as a Mexican-Persian woman, I knew I was signing up to possibly feel like an “outsider” in a traditionally less ethnically diverse region of the United States.

Now more than halfway through JVC, I recognize the value of understanding the history of a place and my role in this new community. I knew I could not truly know the significance of a place if I did not take the time to meet the people living in this space and actively seek out answers to the questions: *What draws people to KC? What keeps people here? What brings people back?* These questions arose as a result of the discomfort I felt to move away from the vastly diverse state of California to a state where racial divides are clearly visualized.

Kansas City is notorious for its historical “dividing line,” also referred to as Troost Avenue, that creates a segregated boundary between the “haves” and the “have-nots.” Neighborhoods east of Troost are primarily populated with low-income, African American people, while neighborhoods west of Troost are inhabited with white people of high socioeconomic status.

Furthermore, there is another population that I greatly identify with that is hiding in the shadows of Kansas City: the Hispanic population.

In the early 1900s, Mexican immigrants started the movement to the states of Kansas and Missouri during the expansion of the railroad industry and to fulfill the need for cheap labor in agricultural and meat-packing work, as well as to flee poverty and the negative impacts of the Mexican Revolution. Although Hispanic immigrants were the ones—and remain to be—willing to perform the grueling agricultural work, they were—and continue to be—discriminated against. Lack of access to education and necessary social services, in addition to language barriers, enclosed Hispanic immigrants in an isolated society within Kansas City.

Through the Migrant Farmworkers Assistance Fund, we serve families who have established and embedded roots in rural Missouri. Many of the seasonal farmworkers make the strenuous trek from diverse states of Mexico, as well as various regions of the U.S. because they are drawn to a source of income that will allow them to provide for their families. The income these farmworkers collect is nothing compared to what they deserve, yet, it is more than what they would receive in their areas of origin. However, it is more than the agricultural work that keeps—or brings back—these Hispanic farmworkers and their families in rural Missouri.

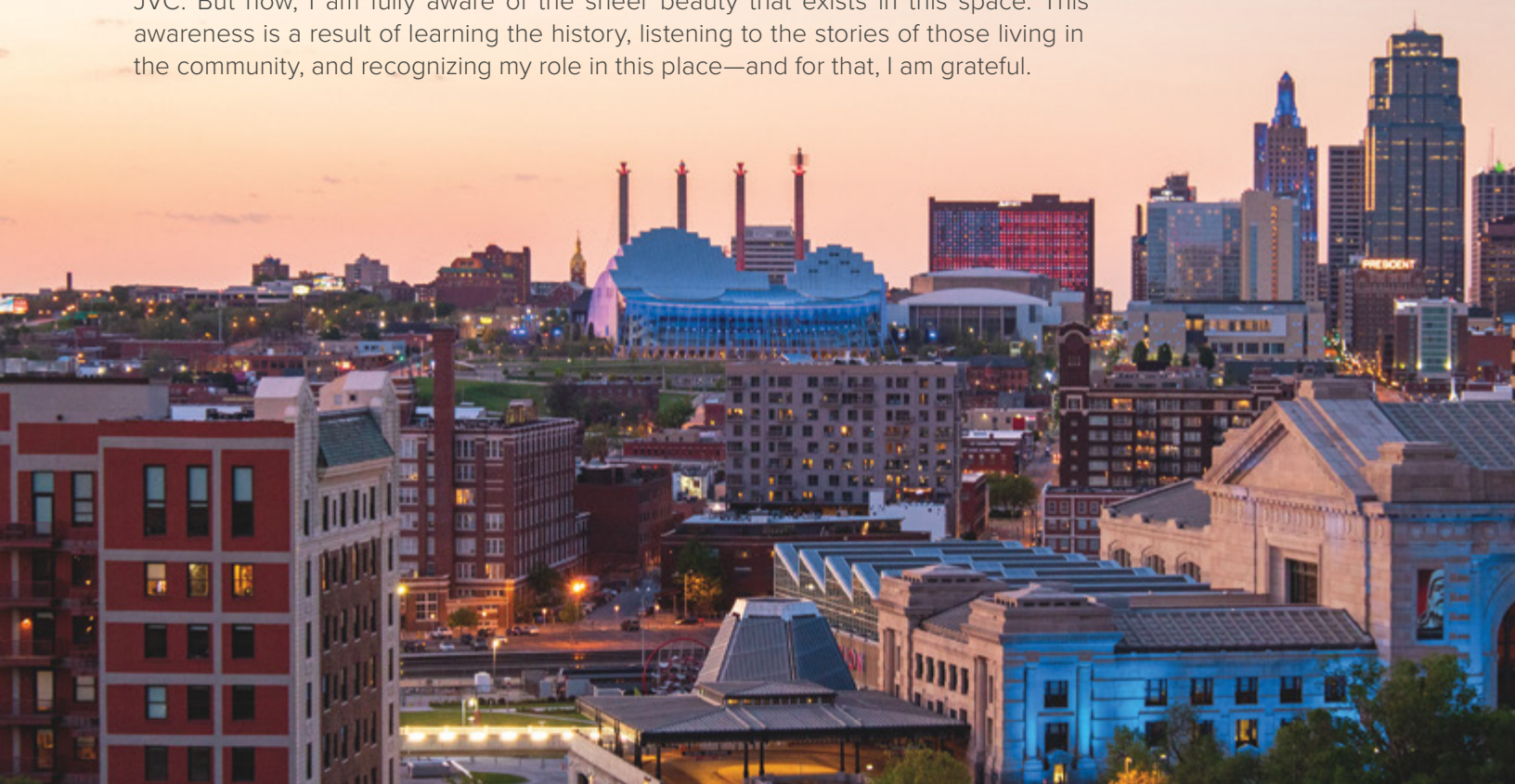
While serving at MFAF, I have met and come to know a migrant farmworker from Michoacán, México. He, like many of our families, has been performing agricultural work for most of his lifetime. When he first immigrated to the U.S., he traveled to Watsonville, California—where my mom and her family immigrated to, and where my family remains today. When I collected this information, I immediately informed him about my family as well as my childhood and adolescent experiences in Watsonville. He then made the connection—he clearly remembers working in the lechuga (lettuce) fields with my grandfather and uncles in the 1970s. All I could think was, *what a small world!* This man recollected the names of my family members, their nicknames in the fields, and the experiences they had while harvesting lettuce. This man continued to share with me that in the course of his lifetime, he has created two homes and two families—his home and loved ones in México, and his home in Missouri with the farmworkers he works alongside with and the established relationship with MFAF. He travels back to Missouri every harvest season not just for the agricultural work, but to be present with his family.

There is a feeling of interconnectedness; a unified family established among the Hispanic population, a sense of home in Missouri. There is beauty when communities intersect; when different races, ethnicities, cultures and identities all come together to create a rich space of radical hope. A hope that one day, all the unjust and inhumane systems and structures that impact marginalized communities, people of color and those whose voices are not recognized, will soon be demolished.

I realize the problematic history of Kansas City and its surrounding regions, and for Hispanic immigrants in particular. I recognize that my role in this new community is to follow MFAF's mission to work with the migrant farmworkers and their families and not for them. I, alongside my team at MFAF, are dedicated to building a sense of trust with our clients and creating a familiar space to allow them to feel empowered by their abilities and develop autonomous skills. Migrant farmworkers, in conjunction with all immigrants, are entirely capable beings. As an advocate, a member of a collective of social justice enthusiasts, and a daughter of immigrants, I recognize the excessive barriers this population faces in their fight for equity and can, therefore, provide social services to diminish the gaps in these unjust systems.

Kansas City may not have been the location I was instantly drawn to when discerning JVC. But now, I am fully aware of the sheer beauty that exists in this space. This awareness is a result of learning the history, listening to the stories of those living in the community, and recognizing my role in this place—and for that, I am grateful.

“
As an advocate,
a member of
a collective
of social justice
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equity...”



MÁIRE ST. LEDGER (TEXAS 1996-97; OREGON 1997-98)

IN 1996, I HAD MY POST-GRADUATE LIFE ALL PLANNED, AND THEN JVC HAPPENED.

As a graduate of the University of Scranton with a math and philosophy major, I was on track to make a ton of money. I thought I would volunteer for a year to give back in exchange for the very good life I had been given, and then I would come back and start a career as an actuary.

Two life-changing years of service in JVC—one at a domestic violence shelter in McAllen, Texas and one at a county health department in Medford, Oregon—changed my life. I couldn't ignore the systemic inequity of my social safety net or the disparities in our health care system. I needed to be part of a solution.

After working for several years in foster care and adoption for a social service agency in Philadelphia, I missed using math and science regularly. I returned to school for a degree in nursing. Working at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital and volunteering at the local Catholic Worker clinic challenged me intellectually and reaffirmed my commitment to serving others.

While still interested in foreign service, there was plenty of need right here in the United States. Six years ago, I accepted a new job as a nurse practitioner at a primary care clinic that serves people who are experiencing homelessness.

While on the frontlines of health care during this pandemic, I have had to come to grips with grief. Life has changed so radically. The loss of connections to family and to favorite pastimes has been difficult. I am managing a healthy fear of COVID-19 and its devastating impact on my patients. Two heroes who give me hope right now are my patients experiencing homelessness and Dr. Anthony Fauci.

“I admire Dr. Fauci because he truly lives by the tenets of his Jesuit education: *being a person for others*.”

My patients are rigorous in their adherence to masks and social distancing and, despite their many chronic underlying conditions, they are courageous as they face daunting challenges to survive on the streets. And I admire Dr. Fauci because he truly lives by the tenets of his Jesuit education: being a person for others. His whole career has been one of service with no regard for accolades or 'good ratings.' He recently delivered an address to his high school alma mater, where he stated, “...now is the time, if ever there was one, for us to care selflessly about one another.” Truly words to live by now and always.



“MY MOST INSPIRING EXPERIENCE IN COLLEGE WAS WHEN I WENT ON AN IMMERSION THROUGH THE IGNATIAN CENTER TO KENYA AND TANZANIA. IT WAS PIVOTAL TO HELPING CLARIFY MY VALUES AND ASPIRATIONS FOR MY CAREER. ADDITIONALLY, IT REINFORCED THE IMMEDIATE NECESSITY TO WORK FOR A MORE JUST SOCIETY. I WAS NAMED AFTER A RELATIVE WHO PASSED AWAY FROM AIDS SO I'M EXCITED TO HONOR HIS LEGACY BY SERVING WITH THIS COMMUNITY.”

—William Nelson (Syracuse 2020-21)

William attended Santa Clara University and double majored in Public Health Sciences and Biology. He grew up in Sacramento, California where he started playing rugby at the age of 11, but now only referees the sport. This year, he serves at AIDS Community Resources in Syracuse, New York.



“I WAS LOOKING UP MEDICAL PROVIDERS TO SHADOW WHEN I ACCIDENTALLY FOUND OUT ABOUT THE JESUIT VOLUNTEER CORPS THROUGH AN FJV'S BIOGRAPHY. I WAS INCREDIBLY INTRIGUED BECAUSE CATHOLICISM AND SERVICE ARE THE TOP TWO THINGS I AM PASSIONATE ABOUT. I AM GRATEFUL TO CONTINUE BEING OF SERVICE TO GOD POST-GRADUATION.”

—Veronica Lugtu (Kansas City 2020-21)

Veronica graduated in May 2020 with a B.S. in Healthcare Studies from The University of Texas at Dallas, where she was part of the Pre-Physician Assistant Society and Newman Catholic Ministry. Her passion for service, patient care and Catholicism led her to JVC. This year, she serves as a medical and dietary program assistant with KC Care Health Center in Kansas City, Missouri.

ARRIVALS //

Katy Bradford Vosburg (Bridgeport 2006-07) and **David Vosburg (Bridgeport 2004-05)** welcomed their third child on June 20, 2019 in San Francisco. Katy and Dave met in Connecticut and now live in Oakland, California with their three kids. 🌱 A

MEDIA //

Dan Castillo (St. Louis 2002-03), a theology professor at Loyola University Maryland, published his first book this winter, *An Ecological Theology of Liberation: Salvation and Political Ecology*. 🌱 B

COMMITMENTS //

Sojourner Truth housemates **Emily Cinquemani, Connor Romenesko** and **Amanda Burns (Atlanta 2015-16)** gathered in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on February 8, 2020 to celebrate the marriage of their JV roommate, **Mikayla (Lofton) Zausch**, to Nick Zausch. 🌱 C

Detroit JV communities from the Rosa Parks and Solanus Casey houses gathered on August 31, 2019 in Chatham, Massachusetts to celebrate the marriage of **Elizabeth Mahoney (Detroit 2013-14)** and **Nick Deliberto (Detroit 2013-14)**. 🌱 D

FJVs **Megan Monahan (Chile 2012-14)**, **Andy DeVivo (Chile 2012-14)**, **Adriana Moreno (Chile 2010-12)**, **Jake Schneider (Chile 2010-12)** and **Amy Ketner (Chile 2013-15)** gathered in St. Louis to celebrate the wedding of **Emily Anderson (Chile 2011-13)** to Fernando Alvear on July 27, 2019. Emily and Fernando met during Emily's time as a Jesuit Volunteer in Santiago. 🌱 E

WORK AND LIFE //

Seven of the 10 original community members of the **San Francisco 1983-84** house met in Oakland in early March to catch up.

Donna Kelly Romero (Jersey City 1998-99; Brooklyn 1999-00) began a two-year leadership program called SPARC (Spirited Practice And Renewed Courage) through the Friends Council on Education. She is currently chair of the drama department at Friends Select, a Quaker school in Center City Philadelphia.

Marc and Jenna (Grant) Cevasco met as JVs in **Sacramento** in **2004**. Jenna worked at Women's Empowerment, a job readiness program for homeless women, and Marc worked at TLCS, a transitional housing program for mentally-ill homeless adults. Now over 15 years later, they are married and live with their two children, Grant (6) and Nathan (3), in Washington DC.

Cece Plaehn (Houston 2016-17) relocated from Boston, Massachusetts to Omaha, Nebraska to begin her medical education at Creighton University School of Medicine. She is proud to continue her Ignatian immersion and has enjoyed the collection of FJVs who have welcomed her to town!

Kim DeStefano and **Brayden Weninger (San Jose 2016-17)** met up in October 2019 to explore Niagara Falls and Canada for the first time. During their JV year they often adventured together, and now continue to meet up as FJVs to continue their adventures. 🌱 F

Sr. Carol Allan (Hot Springs, North Carolina 1979-80) retired after more than 55 years of working. In June 2020, she left her full-time position as Director of Campus Ministry at Elms College in Chicopee, Massachusetts.

Chad Baron (San Jose 2017-18) worked at Cristo Rey San José Jesuit High School for the 2017-18 academic school year, and is now part of a team hoping to open a Cristo Rey school in Orange County, California.

Courtney Willis (Meade) (Punta Gorda, Belize 2002-04) and her family (husband Carden and sons Clark, 9, and Campbell, 7) continue cultivating healthy food and community at A Place On Earth CSA Farm in Henry County, Kentucky. Courtney is in her tenth year of teaching Spanish at the local public high school, doing her best to inspire teenagers to live a life of love and service.

After his year of service, **Carl Powell, Jr. (Cleveland 2018-19)** spent five months in Beijing teaching English to children aged 3 to 13. Upon the news of COVID-19, he returned to the U.S. and started a career in sales. 🌱 G

After 28 years of maintaining a law practice, **Maryann Bozich-DiLuigi (Webster, Massachusetts 1980-81)** retired in May 2020.



GABRIELLE MARCUM (DETROIT 2016-17) *graduated law school after serving as a paralegal at the United Community Housing Coalition during her JV year. She shares...*



AS A JV, I formed habits that I hope to carry throughout my personal and professional life. My time as a JV taught me the importance of creating and maintaining right relationships through honesty and vulnerability, improved my communication and dispute resolution skills, and increased my cultural and social awareness, while also forcing me to confront and accept my own limitations.

JVC gave me the opportunity to grow professionally by learning the graces and challenges of working for justice including the limited availability of time and resources, the mental and emotional endurance required, the satisfaction that comes with using your strengths to work towards something that matters and make an immediate impact on clients lives.

Former JV Guides Salvadorian Immersion Missions

A couple of years following **Mary Delaney's (San Antonio 1982-83)** experience of being as a JV in San Antonio teaching first grade at St Philip of Jesus School, she decided to dive a bit deeper by becoming a Maryknoll Lay Missioner in Nicaragua during the years of the US sponsored Contra War. She served there for six and a half years, working in a Center of Protection for children along with working on the anti-war movement.

Mary returned to the U.S. and pursued her MSW at the University of Pennsylvania. For the past 11 years, Mary has been the Director of Family Support and the Family Resource Center at Maria Fareri Children's Hospital at Westchester Medical Center in New York, providing supportive services to families of hospitalized children.

For the past several years, the Maryknoll Lay Mission Program has asked her to act as guide for their Friends Across Borders (FAB) program in El Salvador. It's an immersion experience in which participants learn of El Salvador's current reality as well as its tumultuous past, particularly during the years of their civil war in the 1980s and 1990s. The trip includes visiting the current works of the Maryknoll Lay Missioners in El Salvador as they accompany the Salvadoran people.

JVC Community Conversations and the Opportunity to Work for Social Justice

JVC Community Conversations are workshops or discussions led by like-minded presenters that address key topics of our time as they relate to our core values of spirituality, simple living, community and social justice. We are grateful to Maryknoll Lay Missioners for sponsoring these events.

Sign up for the next event online at:
jesuitvolunteers.org/events

If this challenging time has left you wishing for an opportunity to again work for social justice in community with others, living simply and nurturing your spirituality, Maryknoll Lay Missioners may be a good fit for you. Volunteers range in age from 21 to 70s, and come from a variety of backgrounds and professional experiences—including some FJVs! Check out **MKLM.org** for more information.



The Mistery of Baghdad

JVC wouldn't be here today without the commitment and service of so many dedicated people, like the Mistery of Baghdad. We love when we receive letters with historical accounts, as with this story featured here.

At our College of the Holy Cross event in 2019, JVC staff had the good fortune of meeting a few members of the "MISTERS OF BAGHDAD."

JAMES J. CALLAHAN (BAGHDAD 1963-64)

A very long time ago, the New England Province had a program called the Lay Apostolate Program made up of volunteers from Boston College, Fairfield University and the College of the Holy Cross. If memory serves, we were offered the possibility of volunteering at two Jesuit high schools in Jamaica, serving and teaching with the Jesuits in Alaska or New Mexico, or volunteering as teachers in Baghdad, Iraq, either at an intermediate and secondary school, Baghdad College, or Al Hikma, the Jesuit university there. You might say we were the precursors of the Jesuit Volunteers!

I was fortunate enough to sign up for Baghdad College and we arrived a few months after the June 1967 war that caused such turmoil in the area that lasts to this day. The college was founded in 1932, located north of the city and close to the Tigris River. It continues to this day, although without the Jesuits when the school was nationalized in 1969, and Al Hikma was nationalized in 1968 right after the Ba'athist coup of '68.

The amazing thing about the school is that the alumni still have a great respect for the Jesuits and their connection to the school. In fact, today there is an active alumni that works diligently to keep the school going and maintained.

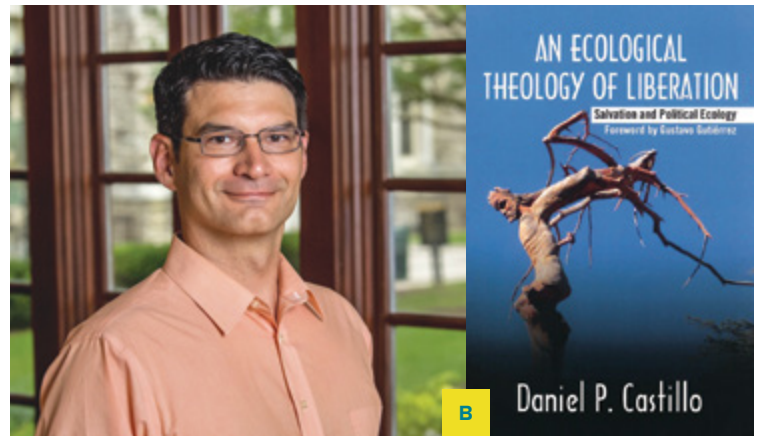
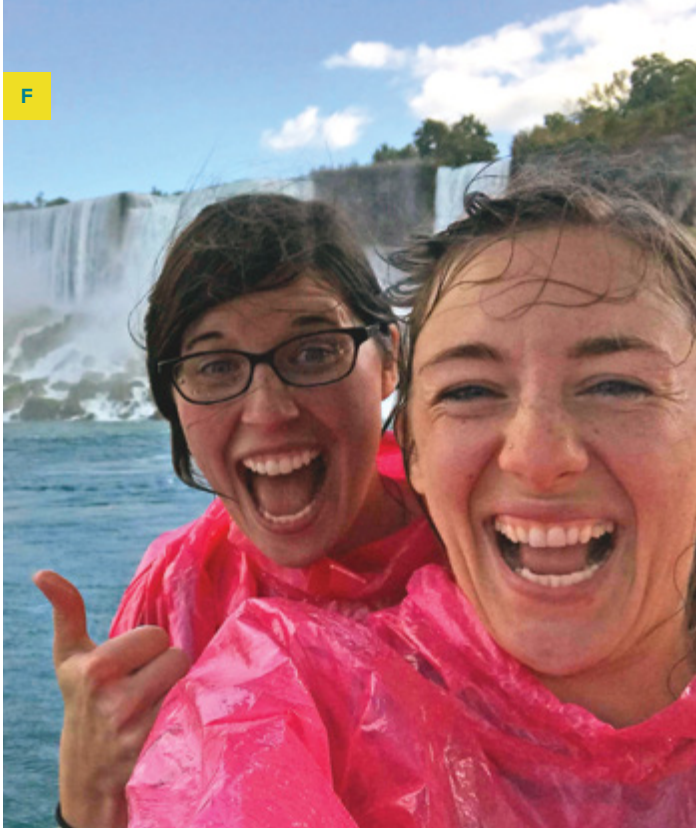
I remember going to a Baghdad College reunion, when they still had them, in Detroit that year, and I met a student who introduced himself as Mohammed, Class of 1999. Thirty years after the Jesuits. I am very proud to have been one of the "mistery"—a name given to the volunteers—and did visit the school a few times over the years before war. During one visit with a former teacher, we made an official call and I was assigned to the Embassy during that period. We were brought to the language lab and they were using tapes we had made in the 60s!

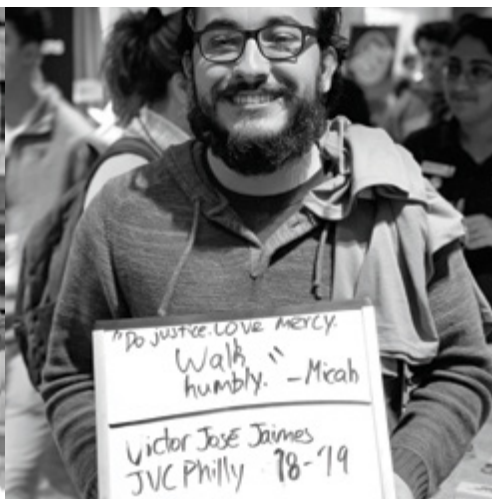
There is a book, long out of print, I assume, entitled, *Jesuits by the Tigris, Men for Others in Baghdad*—a fitting name for the amazing contribution the Jesuits, and even us early Jesuit Volunteers, made within education in Iraq.

➔
MIKE TONER
1963-65



PAUL SULLIVAN
1963-64
←





In Memoriam: Jean Merriman

BEN DEGARMO JVC AREA MANAGER

JEAN MERRIMAN passed away on January 30, 2020. Jean was one of the two house patrons for Cleveland—the Bill and Jean Merriman House. Jean and Bill were tremendous supporters of the local Ohio City neighborhood community. They are land stewards, never land lords, as Bill says, and have worked their best to keep the block of homes they own as affordable housing for individuals who need it in a very gentrifying area. Jean lived her life putting love first and caring for every person she encountered. She was a tremendous support to the JVs, having built very meaningful relationships with them over the years, as the JVs live only two doors away! Jean was known for loving music, dancing and community, and spending her time on the front porch, greeting those who walked by.

I was fortunate enough to finally meet Jean in the fall of 2019 when I traveled to Cleveland for my area visit. In seeing their home and spending just brief moments with Bill and Jean, it was as though I was in a warm, familiar home that was welcoming and loving, and displayed the true character of these wonderful people. This encounter was one of the highlights of my time with JVC and something I will forever remember.

The funeral service for Jean was held at St. Patrick Church, just around the corner from where the JVs live. I was able to attend alongside the entire current JV community, FJVs ranging from having served last year to having served 20 years ago, and about 300 other people whose lives were touched by Jean. The church was packed—a true testament to the life she lived and the work she did. The choir at this service was full of FJVs and a few current JVs. Towards the end of the service, **Megan Smith (City 2017-18)**, sang *Libera*, an Irish song, that was beautiful.

If you are ever in Cleveland, I encourage you to stop by and say hello to Bill. Jean was an amazing person and someone to model a life of love after.

“In seeing their home and spending just brief moments with Bill and Jean, it was as though I was in a warm, familiar home that was welcoming and loving, and displayed the true character of these wonderful people. This encounter was one of my highlights of my time with JVC and something I will forever remember.



THE LAST WORD



SHIVANY TRUJILLO is JVC's Manager of Admissions, where she helps prospective Jesuit Volunteers and partner agencies navigate the admissions process—from the initial application form, all the way through to matching a JV with an agency.

HOW DID YOU FIRST FIND OUT ABOUT JVC?

I was introduced to JVC in college at Saint Louis University (go Billikens). A few of my friends pursued terms of service with JVC internationally. I was intrigued by the commitment they were making for two years but ultimately decided to attend graduate school. A few years later, while I was working at Loyola University Maryland and looking to exit my career in higher education, my search led me to JVC. I was particularly drawn to JVC not just as a service program but the way the four values are infused into the daily and community lives of volunteers.

WHAT BRINGS YOU JOY FROM THE WORK YOU ARE DOING AT JVC?

Working with young adults brings me joy—it is why I initially pursued a career in Student Affairs at the college level. However, I found that I was spending the majority of my time dealing with problems and emergencies rather than working with students in a life-giving way. I wanted to have conversations about their future plans, their hopes, and dreams, what brought them joy and how they could incorporate that into a career. I love that I get to have conversations like these with young people often now—it is a beautiful thing to hear a young adult talk about why a year or two of JVC is the right thing for them. I would say though that the thing that brings me the most joy is finding the perfect agency placement for an applicant—the joy on both the applicant and the agency end makes the endless hours and spreadsheets worth it.

HOW HAVE YOU DEEPEDED YOUR EXPLORATION OF THE FOUR VALUES AS A STAFF PERSON?

Living simply is the value I have most deepened during my time on staff. Attending retreats with the JVs and hearing the sessions on Simple Living and the JV reflections has really made me think about that value not just in the sense of living without things. Rather, it has helped me to focus on shedding thoughts and emotions that bog me down and make me less open to experience the people in the world around me.



I find joy in the people and experiences around me especially the little things, I smile more, I engage more and it has been wonderfully healing for me.

WHAT DO YOU WISH OTHER PEOPLE KNEW ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION?

Working on the admissions team, I constantly have conversations with applicants who are looking for a very specific placement experience because they have been told that they need to have specific relevant experience in order to pursue their goals after JVC. Our team spends a lot of time focusing on apostolic availability and that all experiences will enrich the applicant and bring them closer to the dreams they are working toward. In general, I wish that the sphere of influence surrounding college students and recent graduates would spend less time telling them there is only one path that will help them achieve their goals and spend time on the experiences that will enhance those goals and provide them richer experiences.



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