



Dominican Volunteers USA invites you to consider the many ways our volunteers have been able to use their gifts in ministry, and then think about how you might be able to contribute your own.

Ministry sites vary widely in locations across the country. Each volunteer is individually matched with an appropriate organization that is mutually beneficial for the volunteer and the organization. DVUSA invites nurses to consider our ministry locations using their skills as an RN. We have positions in schools for those who have backgrounds in education or an interest in teaching and working with young people. English majors have used their gift in teaching adult education classes. Biologists find great satisfaction in joining one of our ministry sites on organic farms. There is a ministry placement for most interests, and the staff is committed to finding a great fit for each of our accepted volunteers.

The placement process involves a conversation with the DVUSA staff following acceptance into the program. We learn more about your interests and then share with you placement sites that we think fit your gifts. Volunteers are given the option to speak with the ministry sites they are interested in and even visit if possible. In the end, each volunteer chooses which site best fits their interests in volunteering.

Here is an idea of the many locations and ministry categories that are available with DVUSA:

Atlanta * Chicago * New York City * New York state * New Orleans Houston * San Francisco area * Spokane, WA * Racine, WI * Grand Rapids, MI * Adrian, MI * Akron, OH * Columbus, OH * Denver, CO

Healthcare/Nursing * Social work * Education * Childcare * Refugee/Immigrant services * Parish ministry * Campus ministry * Literacy education * Elderly outreach * Peace and justice advocacy * Environmental services * Community organizing * Homeless shelters * Social services

Not all sites are available in every location, and community options for men and women are different in each place as well. Contact us at the DVUSA office to find out more about the locations or ministry opportunities that you are interested in learning more about, or send in your application and let us begin a conversation about how your gifts might serve one of the ministry sites available.



A significant part of the Dominican Volunteer year is the supportive Dominican community living experience. Dominican sisters and friars open their hearts and homes to volunteers each year. The volunteer is invited to participate in all aspects of community life: shared prayer, meals, house retreats, chores, celebrations and social events.

Our volunteers find that Dominican community life provides them with the support and mentoring they need during their ministry experience. Volunteers often form lifelong friendships in their community. The volunteer has their community to come home to and tell stories of the day, receive support, share laughter and feel a part of a larger Dominican family. Your community is there for all the experiences of your year, to welcome you, to support you, to challenge you, to celebrate with you, and to love you.

Communities come in different shapes and sizes. A volunteer may be the only lay person living with a group of three or four sisters. Other houses have larger groups hosting two or three volunteers. Some communities are located near each other so that the volunteers have a chance to network and form friendships outside the house as well. For example, we have community houses near each other in Chicago, and our volunteers in the Midwest often have the opportunity to spend time together throughout the year. Every effort is made to connect the volunteer to other communities in the area, such as other volunteer houses or nearby campus groups, contributing to a balanced peer support system.

Determining a good fit for community life for our volunteers is a significant part of our placement process. A healthy community life supports a year in ministry, and we encourage volunteers to carefully consider community options in discerning their placement. When possible, we connect potential volunteers with former volunteers who have lived in the community they are considering. Hearing a first hand experience is helpful in determining if this will be a good match.

Entering into intentional community is an adjustment. The transition to a year of volunteer simplicity can be difficult, but our volunteers have the privilege of entering into that transition with a group of people who are welcoming and supportive. Our volunteers appreciate the stability of sharing in an established community with Dominicans who have experience in ministry and who are dedicated to journeying with them through the year. The transition is made smooth by joining a setting that is hospitable and warm. Volunteers quickly learn that they are an essential piece in the community that they join.

Although we do not require volunteers to be of any specific faith background, we do require a willingness and ability to live in a faith-based community and participate at a comfortable level.

spirituality
find your gifts



Dominican Volunteers USA is rooted in the Catholic traditions and spirituality of the Order of Preachers, Dominican religious men and women in the United States. Founded by St. Dominic de Guzman in 1170, the Dominican Order is spread throughout the world. The Dominican Family gathers men and women committed to preaching the Gospel, learning and sharing the Truth, and living a life devoted to prayer, study, community and mission. Dominican volunteers are invited to be a part of this family of preachers as they commit to a year of being of service.

Throughout a year of service with DVUSA, volunteers are given the opportunity to explore and share in Dominican traditions through their life in community and in the three retreat experiences that shape the volunteer year. Each August, a new group of Dominican volunteers gathers for a week of Orientation at one of our sponsoring Dominican retreat centers or motherhouses. The week is filled with sessions given by dynamic Dominican preachers devoted to topics including Social Justice, Prayer life, Ministry and Mission, Community life, and Simple living. There is an opportunity to work on a service project alongside your fellow group of volunteers. The week provides volunteers the chance to socialize with one another and learn about the group. The experience is capped off by a commissioning ceremony attended by local Dominicans.

A Midyear retreat experience is a wonderful opportunity to check in with the group partway through the year. Volunteers are provided transportation to a Dominican retreat center where the group spends the weekend reflecting on experiences, sharing stories, and hearing from Dominican preachers. The weekend is a boost of energy for most volunteers as they look to the second half of the year.

Finally, a closing retreat, affectionately called “Re-Orientation”, concludes the volunteer experience in June. It is the final opportunity for the group to gather and share how they have been changed by their experiences. A commissioning ceremony celebrating the gifts that volunteers have brought to the year is shared with many Dominicans and brings the year to a close.

Dominican volunteers are fortunate to have a close relationship with Dominican men and women who offer support and mentorship. They are role models in living a Christian lifestyle and become wonderful friends for the volunteers, friends that remain with them throughout their lives. Through community living and retreat experiences, many Dominican volunteers leave the experience with a deeper awareness of their own spirituality, and a place within the Dominican family.

Dominican Volunteers USA
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<http://dvusa.org>



DOMINICAN VOLUNTEERS USA

1914 S. Ashland Avel, 2nd Floor, Chicago, IL 60608
Phone: 708-524-5985

Application to Dominican Volunteers USA consists of five parts. **PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT.**

1. **APPLICATION FORM and ESSAYS:** Please spend some time reading all of the instructions carefully and reflecting on the questions before answering.
2. **RÉSUMÉ:** Please attach your résumé. Be sure to include your education, volunteer and work history, as well as hobbies, languages spoken, and any other relevant skills and experiences.
3. **REFERENCES:** Please submit the references to three people who know you well enough to assess your character and skills as they relate to the mission of DVUSA (next page). Included as references could be various supervisors, professors, university staff, etc. Do NOT include family members. Applications will not be processed without references.
4. **TRANSCRIPTS:** Please send us official transcripts for colleges or post-secondary schools you have attended. Transcripts should be sent from the institution directly to the office.
5. **PERSONAL INTERVIEW:** After the above materials have arrived, a personal interview will be scheduled with a staff member. Interviews will be conducted in person when possible, otherwise telephone interviews will be scheduled.

PLEASE NOTE: Your application will be shared in its entirety with potential communities and placement sites. We will disclose any personal information on a “need to know basis.” Failure to disclose all pertinent information, including health issues, can be cause for immediate dismissal from DVUSA. **All accepted applicants are subject to a criminal background check.**

DEADLINE: We recommend early application to ensure the best placement options. Application materials will be accepted starting in January. The application deadline is **June 30** for the following August. However, if you apply in June you will have limited placement options.

Name: _____ Name you prefer to be called: _____

Date of birth: _____ Age: ____* Gender: M F

Marital status: single married widowed divorced* Citizenship: _____

Present address: (until _____)

Permanent address: (if different)

Phone (day): _____

(eve.): _____

Phone (day): _____

(eve.): _____

Best time to call: _____

Email: _____

*All applicants over age 21 without dependents will be considered.
Please keep us informed if your contact information changes.

References: Please list the three persons whom you've asked to be a reference for you. (See instructions.) Include their phone number and email address.

- 1) _____

- 2) _____

- 3) _____

Mission Statement: *Dominican Volunteers USA searches for new frontiers for the faith by inviting men and women to walk with us in mission as volunteers. Together, we respond to the needs of our sisters and brothers, especially those who are poor and marginalized. We live out the Dominican mission of proclaiming the gospel through our ministry, common life, prayer, and study within a diverse, intergenerational community.*

Essay Questions: Please answer the essay questions below on a separate sheet of paper. Essays should be a minimum of one paragraph and maximum of one page per essay. Please TYPE and number your answers.

- 1) Why do you want to do service? Mention specific experiences that led you to consider volunteer work.
- 2) Why do you want to live in community? What are your expectations for communal living?
- 3) Comment on how your life experience relates to the mission of Dominican Volunteers.
- 4) What social and/or justice issue concerns you most? Why?
- 5) What kinds of situations do you find stressful? How do you deal with stress? Give a concrete example.
- 6) Describe your family background. What do you enjoy most about your family? What do you find most difficult about your family?
- 7) Describe any experiences you have had of other cultures. These might include study or travel abroad, working or living in a different culture or region, friends of other cultures, etc.
- 8) Referring to the character portrait on page three, describe your personality using at least two of the traits. Please comment on characteristics that you consider strengths as well as areas for growth. Give examples.

Character portrait: On a scale of 1 – 5 (5 being the highest), rate yourself according the character traits below. Be honest. There should be a balance in your responses.

Cooperation		Sense of humor		Decision making	
Adaptability		Dependability		Self-discipline	
Physical fitness		Social skills		Dealing with stress	
Assertiveness		Ability to work alone		Openness to new ideas	
Self-esteem		Leadership		Acceptance of criticism	
Ability to work with others		Common sense		Sensitivity to other cultures	
Creativity		Organization		Communication skills	

Family Background

Father's name and address:	Mother's name and address:
Phone:	Phone:

List name and ages of immediate family members	Emergency Contact Information Name and Address
	Phone:

Placement interests: Check all that apply in both columns

Geographic Location

Atlanta
Chicago
New York City
New York (other)
New Orleans
Houston
San Francisco area
Spokane, WA
Racine, WI
Grand Rapids, MI
Adrian, MI
Akron, OH
Columbus, OH
Denver, CO

Ministry Options

Healthcare/Nursing
Social work
Education: Elementary Secondary Adult
Child care
Refugee/Immigrant services
Parish or Campus Ministry
Literacy education
Elderly outreach
Peace and justice advocacy
Women and children programs
Environmental services
Community organizing
Homeless shelters
Social services

*Note that each geographic location does not have every type of ministry available.

Do you have any other ministry preferences? These might include age group, rural/urban setting, ethnic or racial group, etc. Do you speak any other languages in addition to English?

Do you have a preference as to where in the U.S. you would like to serve? If so, where?

DVUSA Orientation will be held early August, 2008 and is required. Placement start dates vary but generally directly follow after orientation. Are you available to start then?

Yes No

If "No", please explain: _____

Will you be bringing a car? _____ If so, do you have the necessary insurance? _____

Have you ever been arrested? If yes, please describe on a separate sheet.

Health/Wellness: Please answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. Please number your answers.

1. Describe any medical conditions that may affect your service or placement choice. These might include physical or mental disabilities, chronic illness, medication, allergies, dietary restrictions, or any other health conditions of which we should be aware.
2. Have you ever been in counseling? If so, please give a brief explanation. Please also describe any diagnoses and medications taken related to mental health. (Note: DVUSA considers counseling to be a healthy choice in dealing with emotional stress.)
3. Are you in recovery from drug and/or alcohol addiction? If so, please attach a brief description, including length of time in recovery.
4. Will you need a reasonable accommodation for a disability in order for you to join the program? If yes, please explain.
5. When was your last check up?

Is there any other information not requested in this application that you would like us to know?

How did you hear about Dominican Volunteers USA?

Are you applying to other programs? Please list:

Please don't forget to have three recommendations sent to us, as well as your post-secondary transcripts. We cannot interview you until your application is complete! We strongly recommend you keep a copy of your completed application. We'll contact you as soon as possible to discuss your application. Please do not hesitate to call if you have questions regarding placements or the status of your application.

Thank you for applying to Dominican Volunteers USA!

I attest that all information contained in this application is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signature

Date