

Guidelines for Host Families in the Summer Service Learning Program

Program Overview

The Summer Service Learning Program (SSLP) is an eight-week service experience as part of a three credit Theology course. Students serve at approximately 200 sites throughout the United States and are sponsored by Notre Dame Alumni Clubs. The SSLP provides Notre Dame students, alumni, and alumnae with an opportunity to address the injustice of poverty. The program is greatly enhanced by conversations between students and alums about social issues, challenges at the site and how to integrate social concerns into life beyond Notre Dame.

As a three-credit Theology course, the SSLP requires students to participate in two orientation sessions, complete the reading and writing assignments during the summer, and participate in follow-up discussions during the fall semester, in addition to their work on site.

Students receive a tuition scholarship of \$2,300 and as an Alumni Club host family, you provide the student(s) with room and board.



Host Families

You are the student's home for the summer and therefore are a major source of support for their experience. Students frequently reflect the tremendous impact you have on them. With this support and connection in mind, here are some ideas and guidelines to ensure that both your and their needs and expectations are met in this relationship.

1. **Communication:** Make household rules and expectations clear right from the start. If you expect the student to abide to a curfew or help out with household chores, which we encourage, establish this from the start and ask for the student's response. In this way, the student will truly be a member of the household and know what that means in your home.
2. **Meals:** Host families are the main source of meals for the student volunteers. If the student needs to bring a lunch to their site, be sure to have food available for them to pack a lunch. Discussing schedules and working to share dinner each evening during the summer is a great way to find time to talk about your community and the student's work. If family dinners are not always possible, please let the student know what food is available for them to prepare their own dinner. In some clubs, members of the Alumni club who are not housing the student invite the student over for dinner.
3. **Course expectations:** Students have reading and writing to do during the summer, so they may need to spend some time alone in their rooms doing this work. We ask them to participate in family activities as much as possible.

4. Share in the Experience: Many of the SSLP students are engaged in meaningful but often intense work throughout their stay. Ask questions, give advice, and be supportive. You are a significant resource to students as they grow in understanding of their experience.

5. You do not need to entertain the students. It is great for them to see the sites of your city or area of the country but we also encourage living simply and thinking about what it means to live in solidarity with those with whom they are developing service relationships.

Host families have a lasting impact on students and many stay in touch for years to come. Students also enjoy visits from the host families when families come to campus on football weekends or at other times of the year. We deeply appreciate your hospitality!