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## JVC Northwest offers volunteer opportunities

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In 1956, Copper Valley, Alaska, a bunch of Jesuit priests founded the Jesuit volunteers. Today, Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest is one branch of that beginning organization. Recently, JVC Northwest became independent from the other nation-wide branches, but they still collaborated together. It rewrote it's mission statement on behalf of their new independence. "Jesuit Volunteer Corps Northwest engages women and men in a transforming experience of full-time volunteer service. Jesuit Volunteers work for a year or more in solidarity with persons living on the margins of society and with vulnerable places in the Pacific Northwest."

"Rooted for over 50 years in the Jesuit Catholic tradition emphasizing spiritual openness and depth, Jesuit Volunteers in the Northwest examine and act on the causes of social and environmental injustice to promote peace and structural change. Jesuit Volunteers live in communities that commit to simple living embodying a healing and sustainable presence on the earth."

Northwest is in the name because these JVC volunteers are sent to Washington State, Oregon, Alaska and Montana.

This program is for post-graduates, or any seniors who have recently graduated with a college degree. Instead of going straight into the work force, they are able to volunteer for a year with this organization in the Northwest.

There are four major values that are interwoven into this program. Community, simple living, social justice and spirituality are strongly encompassed within these yearly volunteering trips. These values are meant to be used toward and for personal growth as well as learning how to live with one another. Alex Kitchen, a JVC Northwest recruiter, also said there is a focus also placed on getting rid of material distractions. People live communally for one year in the different provided houses. There are 13 different living communities in the four previously mentioned states.

Kitchen continued to say the volunteering trips are a "cross-cultural experience within the United States." Volunteers have previously worked on American Indian Reservations and with native Alaskans.

With this program, there are benefits such as paid room and board (once you are sent to where you will volunteer), health insurance, loan deferment, a monthly allowance, and even a chance to get money back for volunteering.

Some of the work that is available to do is environmental advocacy, legal services, youth work, community organizing and pastoral ministry. Plus, as a volunteer you are not only limited to a rural area. The ability to serve in an urban or a Spanish-speaking community is also obtainable.

An application has to be completed in order to be considered for this opportunity. They can be found online at [JVCNorthwest.org](http://JVCNorthwest.org).

The priority deadline already passed, which was March 3. However, JVC Northwest is still taking applications until July.

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