



**JOHN CABOT UNIVERSITY**

**COMMUNITY  
SERVICE  
PROGRAM**

## **Table of Contents**

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Incentives for Academia</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Benefits for Community Partners/ Affiliations</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Benefits for Students</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Training</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Student Experience Evaluation Strategies</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Recognition &amp; Acknowledgements</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Certificate of Participation</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Program Evaluation</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Italy Reads</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Italy Reads Certificate of Recognition</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Community Service Affiliations</b>	<b>11</b>

**“If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping  
with a mosquito”**

**- His Holiness the Dalai Lama**

## Community Service Program



### Introduction

The Community Service Program is overseen by the Office of Community Service, Religious Life and Multiculturalism and is part of the Student Life Department. It was developed in order to increase students' personal development and civic engagement. Students of all majors are welcome to take part in the Program which provides cross-curricular benefits<sup>1</sup>. JCU Community Service's mission is to nurture a sense of social responsibility and global citizenship; to instill in JCU students the importance of cultivating an awareness of human circumstances and differences that extend beyond the student's typical classroom experience; to increase understanding of the issues pertinent to the institutions with whom they work; to prepare students to work in fields associated to service.

Our slogan is: "I C-A-R-E!" which stands for the core values that we pursue: Community, Awareness, Respect and Empowerment. The Program presents many different service opportunities throughout the semester and students who meet the requirements will be awarded with an official Certificate of Participation. Joining the Program offers the possibility to identify personal, unique elements which the Community Service Program strives to cultivate by means of skill building and critical reflection.

### Service Learning

Service Learning - *Combining Fieldwork and Education*- offers internships in the humanitarian field through the Center for Professional and Continuing Education and Career Services; it has been conceived as a resource to deeply prepare students for a life of civic engagement, enhancing their career development by connecting educational goals with service to those in need.

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<sup>1</sup> Eyler, J. S., Giles, D. E., Jr, Stenson, C. M., & Gray, C. J. (2001). *At A Glance: What We Know about The Effects of Service-Learning on College Students, Faculty, Institutions and Communities, 1993-2000* (3rd ed.). Corporation for National & Community Service

## Objectives

The Community Service Program strives to prepare students to assume responsible roles within society as well as to bring the community together and meet the needs of marginalized populations by implementing the following objectives:

- Address community concerns in class and through hands on service
- Emphasize reciprocal learning and empowerment for all parties involved: students, affiliations, faculty, service- beneficiary and ultimately the community as a whole
- Emphasize reflective practice, critical thinking, and self- awareness
- Create a connection between service, classroom work and future prospects as professionals and citizens
- Create opportunities for students to act on their values and beliefs
- Guarantee a meaningful service experience



## **Incentives for Academia**

The academic component of the Program is fundamental to its success and fulfillment. It is crucial that the involved professors are satisfied with the students' learning process and that the content of the Program is in line with their personal values and beliefs.

The Community Service Program emphasizes reciprocal learning and empowerment for all parties involved.<sup>2</sup> The Program welcomes collaborations between professors and students for service based research projects to increase the understanding on complex issues in the community.

## **Benefits for Community Partners/ Affiliations**

The Community Service Program recognizes the key role played by the partner affiliations. The organizations with which we collaborate are the essence of the Program's existence. Amongst the benefits that we can offer to our partners are:

- Trained, international volunteers needed to achieve organizational goals
- Potential new perspectives for the organization's work
- Increase community awareness of key issues the organization works with
- Reach out to youth for future support
- Educate students and correct any misperceptions or stereotypes
- Help prepare today's students to be tomorrow's civic leaders
- Network with faculty, staff, students and ultimately John Cabot University

## **Benefits for Students**

The Community Service Program's intent is to prepare students to become future civic leaders<sup>3</sup> and raise awareness and understanding of diverse cultures and communities<sup>4</sup>. It encourages a multicultural and multi-perspective service education and intends to teach students about the context in which service is provided. The Program aspires to nurture a sense of social responsibility and global citizenship by helping build and enforce the following competencies and skills:

- Active Listening
- Critical thinking
- Collaboration and Interpersonal skills
- Diversity, Inclusion, Social Responsibility
- Effective verbal and non- verbal communication
- Ethical decision making and Problem- solving skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Leadership
- Organization and Coordination

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<sup>2</sup> Markus, G.B., Howard, J.P.F., & King, D.C. (1993). Integrating community service and classroom instruction enhances learning: Results from an experiment. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 15 (4), 410- 419

<sup>3</sup> Rutter, R.A. & Newmann, F.M. (1989). The potential of community service to enhance civic responsibility. *Social Education*, 53 (6), 371- 374.

<sup>4</sup> Alt, M. N., & Medrich, E.A. (1994). Student outcomes from participation in community service (report prepared for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Research). Berkley, CA: MPR Associates

## **Training**

The Community Service Program gives great importance to training students prior to the volunteering experience. The training methods will vary between PowerPoint Presentations to individual or group sessions depending on the service opportunity. Trainings will focus on the following items:

- Definition of appropriate behavior on the field
- Definition of appropriate attire
- In-depth information on the affiliation the student will work with:
  - Goals and mission of the organization
  - Beneficiaries of the service
  - Expectations of the organization
- Definition of duties, responsibilities, and potential risks
- Problem Solving
  - How to behave in potential situations of risk
- Selection process for opportunities (Some require CV/ Resume and interviews with the directors of the organization)
- Definition of the type of supervision, feedback communication and evaluation
- Type of commitment and duration of experience
- Signing the liability form

## **Student Experience Evaluation**

Student feedback on service opportunities is fundamental for the sustainability of the Community Service Program. It may be conducted in different forms depending on the volunteering opportunity and needs of each student:

- One on one incoming and exit interviews and analysis of the experience
- Reflection & Evaluation Group Sessions on the outcomes of the experience:
  - Personal Outcomes: evaluation of personal growth
  - Social Outcomes: increased social responsibility & citizenship skills, greater understanding of different social, political, economic backgrounds and reduction of stereotyping
  - Learning Outcomes: impact of academic learning on service experience and vice-versa, application of knowledge to the *real world*

## **Recognition and Acknowledgements**

Acknowledging students for their devotion, commitment and hard work is amongst priorities of the Community Service Program. Recognizing the kind of dedication is an arduous and compelling task. Multiple levels of recognition have been identified for the Program.

### **Community Service Certificate**

The Community Service Program acknowledges students by giving them a Certificate of participation and completion of the Program that can be included in their international resume. This Certificate recognizes an individual's dedication to volunteer work while at John Cabot University as well as the awareness and fulfillment of the "I C-A-R-E!" motto of the Program.

Students who fulfill the following requirements receive the Certificate:

- Volunteer a minimum of 15 hours throughout the semester with one or more of the organizations that JCU is affiliated with
- Attend at least two Classroom Experiences

Classroom experiences are conferences, lectures, seminars, and workshops held by John Cabot University Faculty or external guest speakers from humanitarian organizations and are based on themes that revolve around social issues, volunteering and human rights. These are organized to urge students to reflect on and discuss social, political, and financial aspects that influence the communities in need with which we work. Moreover, some are also designed to encourage students to explore their own identity, actively learn about other social and cultural backgrounds, and reflect critically on service opportunities.

### **Service Cord**

The Service Cord is a recognition of a student's outstanding contribution to the field of Community Service. Graduating seniors who have extensively volunteered, going above and beyond the call of duty in the community throughout their time at John Cabot University, are awarded this cord. Requirements:

- Status of Expected Graduate
- The student must have completed requirements for the Community Service Certificate
- The student must have completed over 65 hours of unpaid volunteering work through the Community Service Program during their time studying at John Cabot University

### **Recommendation Letter**

Recommendation letters will be provided by the Director of Community Service upon request and completion of the Program.

## **Program Evaluation**

The Community Service Program highly values its periodical evaluation to constantly make sure that its practices and procedures are transparent, efficient, and sustainable. The Program strives to constantly improve itself and make sure that it meets the needs of students, that the Program is cost-effective, and to make sure it reaches its expected outcomes. Furthermore, the Community Service Program's objective is to ensure that students have a meaningful service experience that leads to maturity and further growth through reflective practice, critical thinking, and self-awareness.

The following items will be evaluated:

- Evaluate the appropriateness of resources:
  - Financial
  - Equipment/ Materials
  - Human Capital
- Hands-on volunteering opportunities
- Evaluate the level of participation:
  - Statistics will be provided on frequency and intensity of participation
- Evaluate if the student's learning process has been enhanced:
  - Awareness
  - Critical Thinking
  - Skills
  - Understanding
- Evaluate if the Program offers benefits and has a positive impact on:
  - Economic conditions
  - Environmental conditions
  - Social conditions

Methods of Evaluation:

- Budget Review
- Data collection from University database
- Group evaluation sessions
- Interviews
- Observation

## **Italy Reads**

Italy Reads is John Cabot University's community-based reading and cultural exchange program that began in 2009 with a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts for The Big Read Rome. The minimum time commitment expected is 6 hours during the semester for high school visits. This Program is under Academics and is administered by the Dean's Office.

### **Requirements:**

- Read the work of American literature selected for the year
- Register online at "Volunteer for Italy Reads", complete a brief, online training review
- Provide availability for visits to high schools in Rome and surrounding cities
- Reliably respect visits scheduled to high school classes based on the availability given

### **Who we cater to:**

Italian and international high school teachers of English and their students who have included the selected work of American literature in their academic program and are interested in engaging in discussions of and related to the work of literature. These students are also anxious to practice their communication skills in English with native speakers. This program offers a unique opportunity for JCU students to better understand the life of a student in Italy.

### **Participants:**

Groups of four to six JCU Italy Reads volunteers travel to high school classrooms with the aim of leading small group discussions. Volunteers are provided with ice-breakers, discussion questions and vocabulary lists to assist this activity.

## **Italy Reads Certificate of Recognition**

A Certificate of Recognition is given out to all students who commit at least 6 hours of their time to high school visits. This is a different Certificate from the Community Service Certificate of Participation

## Community Service Affiliations

### *Casa Famiglia Bice Porcu*

The Casa Famiglia Bice Porcu is a foster care shelter, located on via del Casaletto 400, that hosts children whose ages range between 0 and 18. Students can volunteer their time by providing assistance with childcare, preparing and hosting educational and recreational workshops as well as English classes.

#### **Requirements:**

- Basic knowledge of Italian
- Previous tutoring and/or childcare experiences

**Who we cater to:** Children from international and disadvantaged backgrounds.

### *Casa Internazionale delle Donne*

The International Women's House is a shelter, located just around the corner from John Cabot University, for women who have been victims of violence. The Organization offers a variety of services women ranging from art lessons to self-defense classes. Students volunteer their time by teaching English. Volunteering at Casa Internazionale delle Donne is an opportunity for mutual exchange and learning: by attending the classes, both participants (Students from Casa Internazionale delle Donne as well as JCU students) can gain knowledge of different cultures and personal experiences.

#### **Requirements:**

- Excellent knowledge of English
- Basic knowledge of Italian

**Who we cater to:** The level of English of the people whom attend classes is highly varied: there are both proficient and beginner level participants.

### *Centro Italiano di Solidarietà Don Picchi*

Centro Italiano di Solidarietà, created in the late 60's, is an association founded upon the desire to generate solutions and build a community of support for those dealing with difficulties. They offer a large array of services to the public such as treatment of drug abuse, mental health care, and family counseling among many others.

John Cabot University students can also volunteer their time by teaching English to middle and high school students who have learning disabilities.

#### **Requirements:**

- Meeting with Community Service Coordinator followed by an interview with the CeIS Director
- Weekly Commitment
- Intermediate knowledge of Italian
- Previous tutoring and/or childcare experiences

**Who we cater to:** Children who come from low income families, between 1 and 3 years of age, as well as elementary and middle school children with learning disabilities.

### ***Church of S. Lucia del Gonfalone***

Students are given an opportunity to work along with STAND, and volunteer at the Church of S. Lucia del Gonfalone, located on via dei Banchi Vecchi. Students can volunteer their time by helping distribute basic hygiene items, clothing and food.

#### **Requirements:**

- Weekly Commitment

**Who we cater to:** Homeless of Rome

### ***Comunità di Sant'Egidio***

The Community of Sant'Egidio was created in 1968 and is dedicated to charity in Rome as well as in many countries in Africa. JCU students can volunteer at a mobile soup kitchen that meets at San Bartolomeo on the Tiber Island. Students help prepare meals and then walk around the Trastevere neighborhood distributing dinner and talking to the homeless of the neighborhood.

#### **Requirements:**

- Basic knowledge of Italian

**Who we cater to:** Homeless and needy of Rome

### ***Croce Rossa Italiana***

The mission of the Italian Red Cross is to improve the lives of vulnerable people, both nationally and internationally, especially in the fields of relief, health, social care and youth. Students who want to volunteer at the Croce Rossa Italiana's Secondary Welcome Center are required to attend STAND meetings and trainings prior to volunteering.

#### **Requirements:**

- Basic knowledge of Italian

**Who we cater to:** Migrants

### ***EMATOS FIDAS- Blood Drive***

John Cabot University has established a great relationship with EMATOS FIDAS, Italian Blood Donors Associations Federation, which is located inside the Fatebenefratelli Hospital. Students have the possibility of donating blood at this Hospital and are accompanied by the Community Service Coordinator.

#### **Requirements:**

- Requirements for blood donation change frequently. Students must contact the Community Service Coordinator for the most update documents.

### *Grassroots Clean Up Days*

Grassroots is the environmental club at John Cabot University. One Sunday each month, students get together and clean the Trastevere area or local Roman parks. This volunteering opportunity is a great way for students to build a positive image of the University within our local community. For more information please contact [grassroots@johncabot.edu](mailto:grassroots@johncabot.edu)

**Requirements:** Interest in topics related to the environment

**Who we cater to:** The City of Rome

### *Istituto Leonardi Vaccari*

The Vaccari Institute is a public facility that hosts individuals with mental and physical disabilities. It is a unique structure where doctors are very friendly and where everyone is welcomed as a “guest” and not as a “patient”. Students who are interested in volunteering at the Vaccari Institute are accompanied on first visits by Dean Lanzone and the Community Service Coordinator. Students are able to volunteer in many different ways such as helping build arts and crafts for theater productions at the Institute, help translating documents from Italian to English, and assisting specialists in the “Special Aids Laboratory”, to playing with the children. This is a very serious commitment and a great opportunity especially for psychology and sociology majors, as well as for creative and serious students who want to commit their time to an important volunteering opportunity.

**Requirements:**

- Basic knowledge of Italian
- Weekly Commitment
- Interest in psychology, sociology, pedagogy

**Who we cater to:** Adults and children with mental and physical disabilities

### *L'ARCA*

L'ARCA, located by Ciampino, is a community made up of people with and without physical and intellectual disabilities who live together. One of the main goals at l'ARCA is to build lasting friendships within the community, as well as help those with physical and intellectual disabilities to be more independent. Volunteers are required to have beginners to intermediate knowledge of the Italian language.

**Requirements:**

- Interview with the Community Service Coordinator and visit the facility.
- Interest in psychology, sociology, pedagogy
- Weekly Commitment

**Who we cater to:** Adults with physical and intellectual disabilities

### ***TuttoBlue Arte e Sociale***

TuttoBlue Arte e Sociale is a small NGO that distributes breakfast in the Trastevere neighborhood. Students walk to Piazza Mastai, a short walk from Tiber Campus, and meet with volunteers from the RomAltruista Organization and hand out breakfast to the homeless and needy. Tasks include preparation and distribution of breakfast, as well as the organization and welcoming of guests.

#### **Requirements:**

- Proper attire

**Who we cater to:** Homeless of Rome

### ***Vo.Re.Co.***

Vo.Re.Co, located on via della Lungara, offers basic services such as food distribution to ex-cons and the homeless of the neighborhood. Students can volunteer their time by providing entertainment, and assisting in the distribution of food and other basic services.

#### **Requirements:**

- Basic knowledge of Italian
- Proper attire

**Who we cater to:** Ex-Cons and Homeless of Rome