



Frequently Asked Questions

The Ignatian Volunteer Corps (IVC) is a national lay Catholic organization that matches seasoned professionals aged 50 and over with charities and nonprofits seeking skilled volunteer services. We sustain the members of our corps with monthly support meetings, occasional retreats, and opportunities for one-on-one reflection in the Ignatian tradition.

Today, at 25 years old, IVC operates in 25 US cities and has over 650 service corps members working in over 325 organizations. Last year, IVC added three new cities – New Orleans, Albany, and Portland, ME - and we expect the number of cities and corps members to continue to grow.

More people 50 these days and older live healthy and active lives, and desire to “give back” for all they have been given. Our growing Currie Alumni Partnership for Service with Jesuit colleges and universities means alums of those institutions hear about IVC in alumnae communications and the unique opportunity IVC offers men and women over 50 who want to serve others.

How is IVC different from other service programs?

The most distinguishing characteristics of IVC are:

- the significant commitment of IVC service corps members, who are asked to commit to serve one or two days a week for ten months of the year,
- the care IVC takes in placing them where their skills and life experience can make an outside contribution to an existing organization in their community,
- the spiritual reflection program provided to service corps members by IVC.

What do you mean by “spiritual reflection”?

Spiritual reflection is the process of discerning where God is present or how to find meaning in your service. The elements of IVC’s spiritual support program are personal reflection (e.g. journaling), one-on-one reflection with a Spiritual Reflector, monthly meetings with other IVC service corps members, an annual book discussion, and three annual retreats or days of reflection per year.

Through this program, IVC service corps members enter into a community of support that sustains their service and encourages personal reflection on where God is calling them through their work in IVC and beyond.

Why is where you place a service corps member important?

IVC service corps members – after careers in business, law, finance, medicine, education, government – bring skills and life experience that organizations can leverage. For example, a retired GAO accountant created and maintains a bookkeeping and financial system for an organization that provides homeless meals and culinary training. Another service corps member with commercial real estate experience helps Habitat for Humanity find and acquire properties.

What are the qualifications for being an IVC service corps member?

IVC welcomes applications from persons who are

- Mature, typically 50 years or better;
- Available (typically 2 days a week, 10 months) to serve;
- Self-motivated, mature, and financially stable
- Open and flexible, thus suited for new and unexpected situations
- Drawn to serving people who are materially poor
- Willing to participate in IVC's spiritual reflection program
- In good physical and emotional health

What cost savings are IVC service corps members providing to their agencies?

In incurring the costs of recruiting, screening, placing, and providing spiritual reflection for service corps members, IVC helps assure that service corps members come back to their placements year after year. Today, 80% of service corps members have continued with their organizations for five years or longer. Partner agencies often rely on IVC service corps members to keep their doors open.

According to The Independent Sector's 2019 valuation of volunteer time, a typical volunteer saves his or her partner agency \$25.43 per hour, or \$15,258 in personnel costs annually. That metric most likely undercounts the value of IVC service work because of the breadth of experience and skill each IVC service member brings to his or her position. Nevertheless, applying the Independent Sector metric for typical volunteer work reveals that the 650 IVC service corps members across the country make a minimum economic impact of almost \$10 million dollars (<https://independentsector.org/news-post/new-value-volunteer-time-2019/>).

How is IVC financed?

IVC is financed through a combination of small stipends partner agencies pay to IVC (typically \$3000 a year per service corps member and totaling 42.6% of IVC revenue in 2018) and its own fundraising (57.4% in 2018). Our fundraising revenue comes from a mix of individual donors, foundations, support from Jesuit communities, annual events, and transformative gifts from major donors.

IVC members in service have increased 85% over the past five years and will continue to expand. To meet increased demand from partner agencies for service corps members, additional growth in the number of men and women seeking to be of service in their communities during their retirement years and find spiritual nourishment in doing it, and growth in the number of cities served by IVC, IVC seeks to raise \$3 million in additional funding through our IGNITE! Campaign. This will position us to sustain the level of growth we have been on, realize the mutual benefits of the Currie Alumni Partnership for Service with Jesuit Colleges and Universities, and build operational capacity in areas such as technology and communications and build a reserve fund.