

JV Resource Letter



God shows up in the “you-that-is,” not the “you-that-should-be.”

As we live into Lent and approach the 3/4 mark of a JV year, we as staff reflect on the continued efforts of our JVs: you show up each day to your service placements and the four values. The you-that-is continues to breathe life into those around you!

The Program Coordinators are beginning interview season with JV applicants, but that doesn't mean we're thinking of you any less. Please continue to reach out to us, whether via email, phone, or those joyous post-its accompanying your rent checks. Enjoy this resource letter and cheers to the approaching spring!

"Easter is the most profound holiday in the Christian tradition. Christmas was an after-thought ...the great writer Barbara Johnson said, 'We are Easter people living in a Good Friday world.' And I think that every year the world seems more of a Good Friday world. And it's excruciating, whether it's Syria, or whether it's your own best friends and their children who are sick, which is something that makes no sense when you think about a loving God. But it's a time when we get to remember that all the stuff that we think makes us of such value, all the time we spend burnishing our surfaces, is really not what God sees. God, he or she, loves us absolutely unconditionally, as is. It's a come-as-you-are party."

-Anne Lamott

Lent Reflection Guide

Enclosed in today's resource letter is a printed Lenten resource guide that your JV community may choose to use together.

#JVReflects

Jesuit Volunteers from JVC Northwest as well as JVC based in Baltimore are blogging for the Ignatian Solidarity Network! Blog posts offer reflections on our corps/core values. Read reflections from Ben Feiten (Tacoma, WA), Gus Hardy (Missoula, MT), Amanda Peters (St. Xavier, MT), Christine White (Wenatchee, WA), and Dani Xiong (Anchorage, AK): <https://ignatiansolidarity.net/jesuit-volunteers-reflections/>. Gus Hardy also had a feature article printed in this month's America magazine, a Jesuit publication. Read it here: <http://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2017/02/15/life-service-never-easy-having-autism-can-make-it-even-harder>. Way to go, Gus and our other JV writers!

Remembering Trayvon

Five years ago on February 26th, Trayvon Martin's extrajudicial murder catalyzed a generation of organizers and activists to take action for Black lives by ending gun violence and strengthening communities. Join in remembering Trayvon. You can find a digital toolkit for black and non-black POC organizers and activists here: <http://rememberingtrayvon.com/trayvontaughtme/>. You can also find a digital toolkit for white people here: <http://rememberingtrayvon.com/talkabouttrayvon/>

Creating Multifaceted Images of Muslim Americans

In a 2016 Pew research survey, 47 percent of U.S. people reported that they do not personally know a single person who is Muslim. Over the last several decades, mainstream U.S. TV shows, movies, and news reports show Muslims as violent male terrorists and oppressed female victims. To combat these harmful portrayals, University of Colorado at Boulder doctoral student Krissy Peterson has begun to document the many examples of how Muslim Americans are creating their own visual portrayals. This project takes a step to "shift the images" that are usually associated with Muslims. Check out her work at <https://kristinmpeterson.com/>.

Run for Office

Are you thinking what we're thinking? That **you** would make a charismatic and level-headed elected leader if you only gave us all the chance to vote for you? Well, a few resources exist that we'd like to highlight for you, to help you on your way. **New Politics** trains and supports national service alums (that will be you!) as they run for public office: <http://www.newpolitics.org>. **She Should Run** grows the talent pool of future female-identified elected leaders and is building a culture that inspires women and girls to seek public office: <http://www.sheshouldrun.org>. **Run For Something** strives to get more millennials on the ballot: <https://www.runforsomething.net/>. Note that **Bob Ferguson**, Attorney General of Washington State who has been in the news a bit recently, is an elected official who was once – like you are now – a Jesuit Volunteer with JVC Northwest [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Ferguson_\(politician\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Ferguson_(politician)).

Looking for a counselor?

We know a JV year is destabilizing and can bring up a lot of difficult things to grapple with. Here are suggestions to find affordable counselors to connect with either in your locale or over the phone:

Local crisis lines. If you are thinking of harming or killing yourself, please call 911, or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255. Your JV handbook lists national 1-800 numbers (hotlines or lifelines) you can call to talk through mental health challenges you or your community mates may be facing. Many states and counties have state, county, and local crisis lines as well. Your PC will also have the local crisis line for your county – the crisis line can fluidly connect you to 911 services as well, if needed. Please tell your PC if you or a community mate is hospitalized for any reason.

Many JVs turn to their Program Coordinator first. This is a great idea for support and to talk through your options, and all PCs are ready and willing to listen to any mental health concerns you have. In most cases, your PC won't be able to identify a specific counselor for you, but they can listen to you, brainstorm with you, and offer suggestions if you get stuck.

PCs may have a list of counselors that past JVs in your locale have seen, or who waive the co-pay. As mentioned above, they will have the local crisis line in your area.

Additionally, PCs can – crucially – hold you accountable. If you say you'll research your options this week, your PC can ask you next week whether or not you were able to find someone who will work for you. Note that it's really helpful for PCs to know whether you are in need of counseling and whether you are actively seeking or seeing a counselor.

Look into your insurance benefits. What, if any, mental health benefits does your health insurance offer you? Does it cover counselors in your area/state? You can probably log on to your health insurance website or call the 1-800 number on the back of your card to learn about your benefits.

See your primary care doctor. If you don't already have a primary care doctor, please establish one in your locale so that when you get your first sinus infection or stomach flu, you are not having to research them in between trips to the bathroom! Primary care doctors are on the front lines of mental health care and may be able to refer you to a counselor who will meet your needs. Additionally, if you wonder whether you are in need of antidepressant medications, a primary care doctor can assess this.

Search online. For example, Psychology Today's website has a database of counselors (Google "Psychology Today therapist finder") which you can search by your location as well as by your insurance (once you type in your zip code, for example, select your insurance carrier in the list to the left). Another helpful tool is Open Path, a website that allows you to search for counselors who charge between \$30-50 per session (<http://openpathcollective.org/>). Local 211 services also may be helpful.

Ask at your placement. If your agency has social workers or counselors on staff, you may ask whether they can refer you to someone who can counsel you, potentially someone who accepts payment on a sliding scale. Not all JVs feel comfortable discussing their own mental health at their placement, so this may not feel like a good option for you. Rest assured that social workers and counselors on staff will not judge you for needing their help, or help from their peers. We have had agencies offer in-house counseling support to JVs free of charge as part of self-care.

Make adjustments. Finally, once you have found a counselor, assess how helpful the sessions are going for you. If you aren't loving your counselor, it's absolutely okay to ask to be referred to someone else – or to start your research over again. With many different kinds of approaches, personalities, and styles, it is important that you find a counselor that fits you, your needs & goals.

Good luck! Here is a link to an article from Psychology Today about how to find the right counselor for you: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/freudian-sip/201102/how-find-the-best-therapist-you>. Please overlook that the author disdains

Ruined Readers Book Club

JVC Northwest organizes book clubs all around the country, and each book selection focuses on one of our values. Our first selection of 2017 is social-justice focused: *Strangers in Their Own Land* by Arlie Russell Hochschild. Hochschild, a sociologist at the University of California at Berkeley, "embarks on a thought-provoking journey from her liberal hometown of Berkeley, California, deep into Louisiana bayou country—a stronghold of the conservative right. As she gets to know people who strongly oppose many of the ideas she champions, Hochschild nevertheless finds common ground with the people she meets—among them a Tea Party activist whose town has been swallowed by a sinkhole caused by a drilling accident—people whose concerns are ones that all Americans share: the desire for community, the embrace of family, and hopes for their children." If you would like to participate in the book club, or create one with your JV community, you contact Sarah Jones sjones@jvcnorthwest.org for more info. We also have a Google-able **JVC Northwest Goodreads** bookshelf that you can check out online!