



How Can I Help?

Spotlight On: Catholic Charities Service Corps, Experimenting with Online Recruiting

By: Alyssa Sickle, Catholic Volunteer Network Executive Assistant

If your program has a small recruiting budget and you feel you have little opportunity to travel to volunteer fairs, know that you are not alone in looking for inexpensive and convenient ways to reach new audiences of potential volunteers. Amy Vossen Vukelic, Director of Catholic Charities Service Corps (CCSC) in Buffalo, N.Y., is in just such a situation. Fortunately, she has found a gem in the job posting website Monster.com.

As the only full-time staff member working with a small budget, traveling to volunteer fairs or spending money on advertisements is a challenge for CCSC. Buffalo is a smaller city, but Amy is able to work with nearby campus ministers and service learning centers. She tries to post information about the program on as many college websites as possible. The volunteer profiles on the Catholic Volunteer Network website have also been helpful to her, and she finds them more convenient to use now that they are posted online.

The idea of adding a job posting site to their recruitment efforts initiated with former director Amy Fleischauer who tried the website Monster.com. They found the experiment such a success (CCSC has grown from four to ten volunteers in three years), that current director Amy Vossen Vukelic has continued to use the website in addition to the more common types of recruitment.

Like any form of recruiting, Monster.com and other similar job posting websites bring their own challenges as well as successes. Amy has found that using Monster.com brings you into a much more diverse pool of applicants than you might find in a Catholic or Christian environment. For example, Amy has enjoyed introducing the concept of long-term service to those who never considered it as a possibility.

“Our program seems to reach a population of young adults that may have never known of long-term service,” Amy comments. “Each year, there is at least one person who says that he or she wanted to do service, had no idea how to do it, and were pleasantly surprised to learn of it through a job posting site. Unlike the Catholic Volunteer Network member profiles or participants at Service Fairs [where applicants come looking for long-term service], the particular challenge I have experienced with the Monster applicants is that I spend a good amount of my initial conversations speaking of long-term service as a concept. Once they have applied and become volunteers, most of them come with the ‘job’ as their focus, thereby needing extra time to become open to our other pillars.”

However, it is a challenge that Amy has been glad to take on and see the rewards. She trusts that God has designs that are larger than a volunteer’s initial motivation. The most notable outcome

that Amy has seen in CCSC is that their program has become diverse in many ways, which promotes growth in Amy and the volunteers alike.

Starting your own profile on a job posting website

Several job posting websites exist where volunteer programs can post opportunities. Most have fees attached to different types of postings. Some cities and states also have websites specific to the area. Check out a few of these national sites to determine if any might be useful for your program:

- www.monster.com
- www.careerbuilders.com
- www.idealists.org
- www.jobsearchusa.org
- www.jobs.com

There are two general ways to use the job posting sites: by posting a program or by searching resumes. CCSC only posts jobs and follows up on resumes that are submitted to them. Their volunteers have said that they have found CCSC by searching for key words, such as “social justice.” Amy uses basically the same format as the profile on the Catholic Volunteer Network website, being sure to note any occupations they are looking for, such as teacher, paralegal, or human service worker in the listing.

The CCSC listing is explicit in saying that it is a faith-based opportunity. Being as specific as possible about areas such as stipends and living arrangements is important, since most people using the website are usually looking for a job as opposed to a volunteer opportunity with a modest stipend.

Amy also provides a link to their website so those interested can learn more about their program. Amy says that when speaking with potential volunteers, “I always ask the person if he or she looked at the CCSC website before sending the resume. If they answer ‘yes’ then I ask what excited or motivated them to send the resume. If the answer is ‘no,’ I know to start the conversation with an explanation of long-term service and intentional community.”

As she has seen numerous times, someone looking for a “job” might be intrigued when learning about a volunteer opportunity. As Amy puts it, saying that she mentions her program to everyone she can, “You never know who you might meet on this treasure hunt!”

To learn more about the work of Catholic Charities Service Corps, visit their website at www.ccservicecorps.org or look up their profile on Monser.com.