

About Us:

[Catholic Volunteer Network](#) is a national member organization consisting of 150+ volunteer and mission programs. Programs serve internationally and domestically for various lengths of time and engage in a wide variety of service placements. Some common elements that make CVN member programs unique are orientation and job training, spiritual support, intentional community living, and ongoing reflection opportunities for volunteers. CVN supports our member programs through programmatic resources, recruitment assistance, and networking.

Our Work with Mental Health:

CVN member programs support volunteers over the duration of their service experience, from recruitment through completion. During their service, volunteers may be discerning future career/vocation, navigating student loan debt, adjusting to a new city and living situation, and engaging work around social injustices and systems of oppression. This can be a time of incredible growth, accompanied by high stress and anxiety. A majority of our volunteers also serve between the ages of 21-25, when they may be seeing an onset of a complex mental health condition (bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, schizophrenia, etc.).

Consistently, our member programs express a desire for increased training and resources to support their volunteers' evolving mental health needs. Interests range from:

- 1. Mental Health Warning Signs and Intervention/Referral Strategies**- What behaviors signal that volunteers' mental health may be at risk? At what point should program staff intervene? How can staff communicate their concerns to the volunteer, community, placement sites, sponsoring religious organizations, secondary resources, etc.?
- 2. Anxiety, Depression, and Substance Abuse** - How can program staff help de-stigmatize these mental health diagnoses and best support volunteers who are already actively managing depression, anxiety, and/or substance abuse? Should these topics be addressed in the recruitment process - if so, how?
- 3. Processing Trauma; Sexual Assault/Abuse** - How can program staff support volunteers that are processing a previous trauma, especially sexual assault or abuse? What would help volunteers navigate situations during their service experience that could be triggering (e.g. vicarious or secondary trauma, sexual abuse scandal in the Church, etc.)?
- 4. Wellness Practices for Volunteers and Staff** - What practices can staff implement to create an environment of overall health and wellness for volunteers? What program structures should be in place? What practical resources are available and accessible to staff and volunteers?

Project:

In the upcoming year, CVN is looking for a trainer to provide a three- or four-part online course on the topic of mental health for our community. The trainer will facilitate these online sessions and provide resources for the participants to access during the course. Participants will be staff members of volunteer and mission programs – with the possibility of extending the invitation to the staff of other partner organizations. Key outcomes for the course will be: Participants deepen their understanding of volunteers' mental health and wellness concerns, gain understanding of key warning signs and intervention strategies, and have access to resources needed to make some practical applications to their program structure and operations.

Familiarity with faith-based organizations and/or service programs is a plus, but not a requirement for this project.

While we do have some flexibility in the timing, ideally this course would take place in July-August 2020.

Catholic Volunteer Network will manage the marketing, registration, and communications elements of this project. Online sessions will be hosted on our GoToWebinar account. CVN will also record and archive sessions for future access by our members.

Proposal Submission Process:

To apply, please provide:

- A summary of your approach to our need, including a brief description of the session topics and additional resources that will be provided.
- Background information on the organization/individuals that will be responsible for the project.
- Budget (not to exceed \$5,000 total)
- Three professional references
- The submission should not exceed two pages in length

Please direct questions and proposal submissions to Katie Delaney, kdelaney@catholicvolunteernetwork.org. The deadline for submissions is COB April 20, 2020. We will respond to all applicants by May 15, 2020.