

Impact Report

SISTERS INSPIRE

APRIL 2021 TO JUNE 2023

GOAL

The comprehensive approach of Sisters INSPIRE seeks to address urgent needs among ministries of Catholic Sisters and Sisters-sponsored volunteer programs of Catholic Volunteer Network. Sisters need to expand their ministerial capacity and scope while integrating community-based, scientifically valid measures. This will help them evaluate growth in order to inspire the next generation of leaders and to have maximum, lasting impact on the field of human development.

GROUNDING ASSUMPTION

Racism is a health and educational crisis.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Strengthen Sisters-sponsored volunteer programs' contributions to positive outcomes in education and health-care in under-resourced communities through comprehensive staff and volunteer training and support focused on racial justice, equity, and community impact.

Elevate and strengthen Sisters' influence in the field of faith-based service by convening a Sisters Leadership Cohort of 2-3 Sisters-sponsored service programs modeling innovative racial justice, equity, and MEL (monitoring, evaluation and learning) practices.

IMPACT SNAPSHOT

10

program leaders and coaches

86

participants in anti-racism training convened by CVN

400

people engaged in Group Concept Mapping

Transforming our Faith-Based Service Programs through education, valid data, and immersive experiences

With funding from the Conrad Hilton Foundation, CVN:

- piloted a cohort of three Catholic Sisters-sponsored CVN member programs focused on:
 - **disrupting white dominance** in faith-based service programs,
 - developing **interventions that increase** community leadership and volunteer diversity
 - and **uplifting models** of faith-based service rooted in racial justice and community partnership.
- partnered with **Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing & Training** in 2020-2022 to offer implicit bias and anti-racism training through 5 cohorts with a total of 86 participants.
- hosted "Re-Imagine Transformation," our **2021 Virtual Conference**, invited CVN members to respond to pressing challenges of racism and inequality in faith-based service through mutual learning, reflection, and visioning.
- initiated in a data-driven "**Group Concept Mapping**" process in 2021 engaging over 400 stakeholders to reflect on faith-based service and justice. These shared priorities emerged and now serve as a compass for our anti-racism work:
 - **Ensuring access** to service for all
 - **Broadening recruitment** beyond 4 yr colleges
 - **Supporting anti-racist and inclusive practices** in recruitment & volunteer community
 - **Recognizing and eliminating systemic racism** in our organizations
 - **Increasing the voices** of those we serve in programs' Boards and leadership roles
 - **Designing programs** that center the communities served and promote local leadership
- convened "Re-Imagine Together," our **2022 In-Person Conference**, and invited CVN members to experience transformational healing through community mental health practices and spiritual discernment immersive experiences.



SISTERS' PROGRAMS AND COLLABORATING PARTNERS INCLUDE:

Loretto Volunteer Program
(now Loretto Justice Fellowship)

Vincentian Mission Corps
(now Vincentian Encounter)

St. Joseph Worker
Program (Minnesota)

Crossroads Anti-Racism
Organizing and Training

Bleasdale Education &
Research Consulting

Ministry Leadership Center

Because of your support...

Our successes reduce white dominance
in our programs and relationships!



New models of service:

- Loretto Justice Fellowships, which partners with the University of Texas-El Paso (UTEP) School of Social Work, UTEP's Law School Preparatory Institute, and local social justice organizations to provide student volunteers with part-time, paid internships.
- Vincentian Encounter, virtual space gathers former volunteers and other young adults into engage their faith through more actions of justice. The underlying questions are: What does collective liberation look like? How do we build the kin-dom of God? Their explicit anti-racist training engages the question: How do we live desegregated lives?



Expanding cohorts to more member organizations, establishing Communities of Practice

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, and Liberation (DEIBL) training
- Assessments & Evaluation
- Spiritual and Organizational Discernment



Sharing our process and coaches with more member organizations

- we are hosting an evening with adrienne maree brown, author of *Emergent Strategies* (the book and framework Sisters INSPIRE used for our group process), as a follow-up to our annual conference, "Revolutionizing Community"
- Jane Bleasdale of Bleasdale Educational & Research Consulting and Kathryn Racine of Rooted Ventures (formerly of MLC Group) will offer a coordinated service to our membership as primary experts in the areas of DEIBL, Assessment, and Evaluation that will spark our coordination and launching our "Communities of Practice"



Leveraging Sisters INSPIRE with this IDEA: Organizational Focus on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access

1. Secure funding that centers social and racial justice in faith-based service

- Build on AmeriCorps Strategy: apply to EAP (Education Award Program) grant, consider State planning grants (\$80-\$100k)
- Secured/ing funding from SC Ministry (\$20k), The Koch Foundation (\$15k pending), and The Raskob Foundation (\$5k)
 - Activities with these funds will build capacity of 75 CVN member programs to increase volunteer engagement from historically underrepresented communities, remove barriers to faith-based service, and increase diversity, equity, and inclusion through training & communities of practice

2. Sustain member services, anti-racism training, and communities of practice

that increase inclusion, diversity, equity, and access through interventions (assessment, evaluation, risk-taking), innovations, and new models of faith-based service

- Build a faculty of experts in content areas including, but not limited to: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging, Liberation and Justice, Mental Health, Spiritual Direction, Design Thinking, and Management & Leadership, Organizing & Advocacy to support the transformation of our field

3. Engage partners and stakeholders to invest in the network through fees for service

- Develop categories similar to membership to identify key parties involved in addressing the harm in faith-based service programs (i.e. webinars for college personnel, high school administrators, short-term immersive experiences for member programs and their alumni highlighting the local relationships developed by each and possible ways to leverage collective advocacy efforts



Questions? Contact jsideco@catholicvolunteernetwork.org



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