

OVC | JUNE 2024

PROGRESS



Updates on the progress of Orthodox Volunteer Corps



Coming to a close...again...

We are nearly finished the second year of programming at OVC. Thank God for the 7 full-time and 25 part-time Corps Members who committed 10 months of their lives to service with our most vulnerable neighbors. Here's a quick look back on the year.

Highlights in the Rear View



»»» SEPTEMBER

Seven young adults (from TX, FL, MI, MN, OH, and PA) began their year of service.

OCTOBER <<<

We launched our new part-time program (OVC Reach) of monthly fellowship, reflections on faith, and service opportunities in Pittsburgh.



»»» JANUARY & FEBRUARY

We piled into the parish van and held our midyear retreat at St Basil Academy.

We received more applications than we can accept for our two fall 2024 locations.

MARCH <<<

A group of Orthodox young adults from Toronto visited our Corps Members in Pittsburgh to swap stories and strategies of faith and service.



»»» APRIL & MAY

During weekly seminars, we explored the context of service—with sessions on education, ecology, and personal finance with guest speakers from across the country.



Moments of Surprise



One of our seminar speakers earlier this year reminded us to keep on our toes, because God is the “Lord of Surprises.” Here are a few of our surprises:

- Sudanese refugees show up to the placement of a Corps Member who happens to speak Arabic. His translation got them groceries for the week.
- During a low moment at placement, a Corps Member received a hug and in that moment something more: a whiff of Myrrh that she once smelled from a streaming icon.
- An atheist offered help to a Corps Member who was preparing a chapel reflection.
- During an outbreak at a drop-in shelter, a Corps Member made a discovery: He could absorb the anger and diffuse the conflict.
- If you lose your life (say, by giving a year of service on the very margins of society), you will find it.





Reflections from our Community



From our Part-Time Program Participants:

- “OVC has created a consistent way for me to give back.”
- “OVC has taught me to be more selfless and to think of others.”

From our Full-Time Program Participants:

- “OVC has helped me feel much closer to God in a way I never expected or experienced before.”
- “I learned to encounter Christ in the people I encountered at my service placement.”



From our Placement Supervisors:

- “You are leaving a big hole; you helped our organization advance.”
- “What are we going to do when our Corps Member is gone?!”



Corps Members have directly served over 420 people on average each week—children, young adults, and seniors; those without shelter, medical care, or good schools; neighbors who were hungry, thirsty, or naked. And this service has been deep—month after month of building relationships with the same people, learning from each other, and participating in God’s transfiguration of the world.

They offered their lives on the front lines of service four days per week for 10 months—collectively over 9,000 hours.



Up Next for OVC!

Stay tuned this summer for our intro series to the 2024-25 cohort!

We are thrilled to welcome 14 young adults to the full-time program—7 in Pittsburgh and 7 in Boston—and will be featuring them on our social media and Youtube channels. Please keep them in your prayers as they prepare for their year of service with OVC.

GRATITUDE

Thanks be to God for it all. And thank you. For your prayers, your encouragement, your support. We abide in the realm of gratitude.

With love in Christ,
Michael Sider-Rose & Kyra Limberakis

