

NEWS RELEASE

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Saint Mary Students Dedicate Spring Break to Helping Others

Eight USM Students head to Kentucky March 19-24 for Spring Break "Work Fest"

(Leavenworth, Kan.)— Spring break is typically a time for students to rest, relax and prepare for the final stretch of the school year. While some students head home or to remote beaches for the week-long break, eight University of Saint Mary students are set to take the road less traveled—a road that will lead them to "Work Fest" in rural Kentucky, where they will donate their time to help improve the lives of others.

The eight students, namely Joni Aukerman, Vanessa Campagna, Ben Grubb, Brenton Jayatilake, Zach Logan, Rebecca Muder, Angie Shehan and Jeff Swanson, set out on March 19 to help people in the Appalachian Mountains living in sub-standard housing. The students will assist with home repairs and even complete home construction every day they are on the project. Sub-standard housing is a major issue in rural Kentucky. Many residents live in dilapidated homes without running water, heat or proper insulation.

For Kate Fagella-Luby, director of Campus Ministry at Saint Mary, the Appalachia Project is well worth the time and effort. This is USM's third consecutive year involved with Work Fest. "One of the biggest problems in rural Kentucky is people living in substandard housing. We go and try to help alleviate that problem," she said. "It's amazing to be on a trip and watch students grow like this. It's really, really powerful. It's great to see the relationships that can develop even in just a week. The people that are being helped feel so grateful for all the assistance. I think it gives them a lot of hope."

Work Fest is sponsored by the Christian Appalachia Project, which strives to recruit college student-groups from around the nation to donate their spring break time to the construction and repair of homes in Jackson County, Kent. Since all colleges have different spring breaks, Work Fest lasts essentially the entire month of March. At any given week, there are approximately 100 college students from around the nation helping with the project.

Funding for a trip like this is not always easy. In fact, all eight USM students had to raise funds for the trip. While raising the funds has been anything but simple, two area businesses have stepped in to lend a helping hand. Both area Pizza Hut locations started fundraiser night, March 10, where 20 percent of proceeds purchased were donated to the Saint Mary Appalachia alternative spring break trip. To get the 20 percent donated to the project, all people had to do was specify they want their proceeds to go to the project by filling out and turning in a simple ticket at the time of purchase.

In addition, the University of Saint Mary is having a drawing to win a one-night stay for four at the Great Wolfe Lodge located in western Wyandotte County. The lodge donated the package plus four passes to the water park. Tickets can be purchased to enter the drawing for just a \$1 or six tickets for \$5. The drawing will be held at 11:45 Thursday, March 17 in Saint Joseph Dining Hall, University of Saint Mary, 4100 S. 4th Street, Leavenworth. Being present is not necessary to win.

To purchase a Great Wolfe Lodge drawing ticket or to learn more about the alternative spring break trip, call 682-5151 extension 6146.

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