

Saint Meinrad Day of Service

Site Coordinator Duties

Thank you for your interest in helping out with the Saint Meinrad Day of Service! The success of your local Saint Meinrad Day of Service program will depend on many factors, but having a local volunteer who is willing to take on a leadership role is perhaps the most critical. Following is a general overview of the tasks involved in managing the Saint Meinrad Day of Service in your community.

1. Investigate possible service sites

Talk to local classmates and friends to solicit ideas for a local non-profit or church that might be a good site for a Saint Meinrad Day of Service activity. Previous site coordinators have found that connecting with organizations where an alumnus is actively involved as a staff member or volunteer to be very helpful.

Make sure to ask about age restrictions and other limitations. When searching for sites in your area, remember that weather in March can be unpredictable. It may be better to plan a project indoors where participants will be working directly with others such as serving in a soup kitchen or other indoor projects such as painting. If you need any help locating a site, feel free to contact the Alumni Office as they can connect you with other alumni or friends in your area that can help you in this process.

2. Select service site

You may be working with a committee or other group of interested alumni or friends as you plan the Day of Service and thinking about options for a service site as a group can be helpful. It also helps to create a broader sense of ownership for the activities of the day. Aspects to consider include the number of participants you expect to be involved; the range of activities available for diverse skill and activity levels (be sure to think about projects that are kid friendly as well as those that are less physical for older alumni); and logistics such as ease of transportation and parking at the site.

3. Work with service site staff regarding project details and submit project details to the alumni office

Ask the director of the potential agency or site partner to come up with a detailed scope of work, a list of any pertinent materials, and the hours of service desired. The commitments can range from 2-4 hours of work to an entire day. Once you have the scope of work you can determine volunteer capacity and any materials you will need to bring to execute the work. Then discuss this information with Christian Mocek, Director of Alumni Relations at cmocek@saintmeinrad.edu or 800-682-0988 so the information can be shared on the website.

It is advisable to do an in-person, on-site run through of the scope of work within one or two weeks of the event. Check to see if there is an appropriate area where the Saint Meinrad group can meet to sign in for the day and get their Day of Service nametags and t-shirts when they arrive on-site.

Remember, prayer is an integral part of the Saint Meinrad Day of Service. It is suggested that volunteers gather in prayer before work begins and, if possible, after the work is completed.

4. Develop a plan for snacks and/or a meal during your project

We know that funding your Day of Service program can be a challenge, but be creative to see if you can find a way to provide water and inexpensive snacks to the volunteers. Perhaps an individual or organization would be willing to support the day in this way. Sometimes the hosting organization makes refreshments available as well.

In addition, we suggest creating a plan for a meal if your project takes place over a meal time. Again, be creative in your search for individuals or organizations that would be willing to support your project in this way. As a final option, if you are unable to secure funding for meals and/or refreshments, you will be able to submit your receipts to the Alumni Office for a full reimbursement. Previous site coordinators have worked with local sandwich shops to provide inexpensive boxed lunches to their volunteers.

When providing refreshments and/or a meal to your volunteers, ensure there is a space for them to gather, eat, and enjoy a small break from all their hard work!

5. Assist in recruiting volunteers for your site and other sites

Similarly, you and your committee, if you have one, should also help in volunteer recruitment. Spread the word to your Saint Meinrad friends, advertise in your local community ...be creative! Encourage those you know to register for the Saint Meinrad Day of Service at alumni.saintmeinrad.edu (the registration page will be live in early January).

6. Send out a final confirmation to the registrants for your site or sites

The Alumni Office will send you a list of those who have registered for your site with the needed contact information. Registrants need to get a local confirmation from you, and we suggest the following be included: a thank you from you, confirmation of the site for which they registered, the address for the site, directions, parking information (if applicable), what to wear and/or bring, the time and location of where they should meet to register and get their assignment, and, for outdoor sites, what to do if it rains on March 11th. The message should also include a contact name and number for that site on the day of (generally the site coordinator for that site) and contact information for the person sending the email, if different from the coordinator.

7. Field day of service questions from participants from now until the day is done

Since the name of the site coordinator will be listed on the Saint Meinrad Day of Service webpage as the contact for your site, registrants may be in touch with that person to ask specific questions or to clarify information. If a registrant needs to change or cancel their registration, they should contact the Saint Meinrad Alumni Office at alumni@saintmeinrad.edu or (800) 682-0988.

8. Organize alumni and friends on site on March 11th

Please plan to arrive early at your site on March 11th and stay until the work is done. You have already been in touch with the agency supervisor about your registration location and hopefully have arranged for a table or other area where you can check in your volunteers. The Alumni Office will provide the needed check-in materials. In addition, arriving early will also give you the opportunity to prepare a space to gather in prayer.

When you arrive, make sure to post any signage or entrance information, and/or have another volunteer greet participants and help direct them to the registration area.

Before you begin, it is suggested to you take a moment to talk with the group (either before or after you gather in prayer). You, or a member of the organization's staff, can take a few minutes to describe the mission of the organization and perhaps the work that the group is to do as well as what that work will mean to the organization and the clients served. This is also an opportunity for you to introduce yourself and the agency staff, and have the volunteers say their name and perhaps Saint Meinrad affiliation or other information that will help the group to get to know each other a bit before the work begins.

Then, direct participants to jobs or refer them to an on-site agency person who can direct them to work. Be sure everyone has a job to do!

Plan to have someone take pictures and/or video. Pictures will be used in many ways including emailing them to the participants after the event, posting them on the Saint Meinrad Alumni Facebook page, using them in the quarterly *On the Hill* newsletter and in promotions for next year. You can submit photos to alumni@saintmeinrad.edu.

9. If possible, develop a rainy day plan

If your site is an outdoor site, discuss the rain plan with the organization contact. Often the work goes forward unless it is pouring rain, but in this case your no-show rate is fairly high. March weather can be very unpredictable so it may be best to plan something that will be indoors.

If you have questions about serving as a coordinator for the Saint Meinrad Day of Service in your area, please contact Christian Mocek, Director of Alumni Relations, at cmoczek@saintmeinrad.edu or (800) 682-0988.