

Celebrating 24 Years of Service to Chicago

AMATE HOUSE

N E W S L E T T E R

The Young Adult Volunteer Program for the Archdiocese of Chicago

Fall 2007



Inspired by the social mission of the Catholic Church, Amate House supports and develops women and men rooted in faith, dedicated to service, and committed to building a more just and loving society.

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YEAR 24 OF PUTTING LOVE INTO ACTION



The 2007-2008 Amate House Volunteers pose in the North House backyard during Orientation.

Amate House welcomed 41 young adults this fall as it began its 24th year of volunteer service to the Chicago area. The Board Members and Staff are excited to be walking with these Volunteers as they spend a year focused on service, community and faith. This year's Volunteers come from as far away as California and as close as the Chicago suburbs. They have graduated from great universities, such as the University of Notre Dame, Northwestern University and the University of Dayton. They represent a diversity of backgrounds and areas of study including nursing, business, communications, sociology, anthropology, religious studies, education, biology, and many more.

The 31 full time post-graduate Volunteers were welcomed at a Commissioning Liturgy on August 5th at Amate House South (in the St. Maurice Church). Fr. Ron Hoye from DePaul University presided. The DePaul Vincent & Louise Volunteers were commissioned at the Student Welcome Mass at St. Vincent de Paul Parish on September 9th where the full time Volunteers were recognized as their mentors.

We hope that you will keep the Volunteers in your thoughts and prayers throughout this year!

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A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

“The little space within the heart is as great as the vast universe.” The 2007-2008 Volunteers illustrate this quotation for me every day. They have opened their hearts to their service sites, their communities and the Amate Staff, and they are well-prepared to answer the challenge that DePaul President Fr. Dennis Holtschneider posed at the DePaul Vincent & Louise House Commissioning Mass. He challenged the entire congregation to truly be Christian regardless of the price. Already I see the Volunteers rising to the challenge; please take the time to read their beautiful reflections on the Amate House tenets. It is the best way to understand the universe of truly Christian good they are doing.

Because of the Volunteers, Amate House’s Strategic Plan is coming alive. Claire Markham and Jenna Grush are teaching religion and running the service programs at Our Lady of Tepeyac and St. Gregory High Schools, as part of the Youth Initiative Program. I am very excited to see this program beginning, and hope that we can fill more Youth Initiative positions in the future.

Also exciting is that one year from now, Amate House will be 25 years young. The 2008-2009 Volunteers will make up the 25th year of service to the city and Archdiocese of Chicago. Plans are beginning to percolate, and I invite anyone who would like to be part of this momentous celebration to let me know. Please give me a call if you are interested in being part of the 25th team, or if you have input on how we can throw the greatest celebration ever.

Finally, as I look forward to the 25th Anniversary, I cannot help but look back and be grateful for the supporters who got us this far. You are part of the Amate House family, and it is because you shared that little space within your heart - whether through donations, dollars, lending a hand, or prayers - that we are able to celebrate so many years of service to Chicago.

Best wishes to you and your families as we enter the colorful season of autumn!

John Lucas

V&L House Volunteers Commissioned



The 2007-2008 Vincent & Louise House Volunteers in the St. Vincent de Paul Church, with Program Coordinator Pauline Villapando.

SUPPORT AMATE HOUSE!

It’s easier than ever to support Amate. Just go to www.amatehouse.org and click the ‘Donate Now’ button to make a secure, tax-deductible donation by credit card. You can even increase your impact by making an automated monthly gift!



Save the Date!
AMATE MAGIC
2008
 Friday, May 2nd
 Navy Pier
 Grand Ballroom

Please contact Chris Wagar if you are interested in joining the Amate Magic Committee or donating an item for the silent auction.

A Reflection on the Tenet of: FAITH by Kevin Krainz, North House

I decided to study philosophy and religion in college because the questions that these disciplines examined seemed ultimately important. “Who is God? Who am I? And what does a good life look like?” Exploring these questions was intellectually fascinating, but after being exposed to hundreds of contrasting viewpoints and doctrines, I found myself feeling a little less spiritual and a little more confused every day. It seemed that there were both merits and flaws to every philosopher or theologian’s argument, and it was hard to decide which of these was the “right” viewpoint.

In spite of my frustration, I found myself drawn to Catholic Social Teaching. Ultimately, my faith was not affirmed in the classroom, but rather in homeless shelters, AIDS treatment centers, and on the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. These are the places where I had “spiritual experiences” — where I encountered the best in humanity and felt intimately connected to perfect strangers. These are the places where I felt a one-ness with God and where I felt most alive. These



experiences made me want to continue to look for service opportunities in the year following graduation. I was looking for an environment that would allow me to continue to explore my faith and to be in the presence of others who were doing the same. My search led me to Amate House.

This year, my housemates and I will serve others, we will be served by others, and we will share our lives with each other. We may not solve any great theological riddles, but we will hopefully come to a better understanding of what it means to believe, to love, and to treat others justly. It is my hope that even in our most difficult moments, the bonds we form with one another and with members of the community will be powerful enough to remind us that we are part of something much larger than ourselves and that God is truly with us.

A Reflection on the Tenet of: COMMUNITY by Jesse Weiler, Little Village

When riding the train to my new home town, there were many thoughts running through my head: What is this year going to be like? How am I going to like my job? What are my roommates going to be like? Sooner or later I started to forget about the service and what my life had in store for me. I began to focus on what my roommates were going to be like. It all comes down to this...I can’t do well at my worksite, observe the tenets of Amate House and concentrate on my own personal growth if I do not have the support to do so. That is truly one of the many treasures that Amate House has to offer.

I come from a large family, so I am used to living with a lot of people — ten of us total to be exact. So moving in with eight fresh new people didn’t seem to be that intimidating at first. But then it hit me. Suddenly we were making very important decisions together having only known each other for a little over two weeks. We were assigning house job titles, appropriating funds to different needs of the house, and trying to figure out how nine of us are only going to spend \$36 a month on gas for three vehicles. At that moment I was thinking that we should have gotten to know each other a little more before going through all of this. It’s tough trying to appease nine different appetites, nine different schedules and nine different interpretations of our tenets, but community goes way beyond choices. It’s about how we all envision service in our lives.

Service is the strongest bond we have at this point as a community. We are all in this together. Yeah we have different mindsets and mentalities, but we are all here to serve.



Ultimately, that is why we are all in this program. No matter what anybody tells you, dedicating a year of your life to serve the greater good is never easy, but having eight people in my corner helps to reassure me that this is where God is calling me to be right now.

One of the hardest aspects of living in my intentional community is the small percentage of men living in our house. Initially I didn’t anticipate this being a concern of mine. What guy is going to complain about being one of four men in a thirty-one person program? You gotta love your odds! As a senior in college I really started to embrace my spirituality and passion amongst other men. So coming here I only have three other men who know what I’m talking about, and two of them live way on the other side of the city. It’s going to be a struggle, but we grow as a result of our struggles.

Overall this is going to be a great year; each person in my Little Village community has something very special to offer. I truly believe that learning to live with people who have different viewpoints from my own will only help me to be a more open person. Too many times people — myself included — concentrate on the differences between beliefs or values. It isn’t the differences that help us become stronger as a community; it is the similarities. So to Jean, Claire, Rose, Sarah, Sam, Annie, Christina and Jaimee: thank you for all the future support you are going to give me throughout this period of my life. I know that God has put you in my life for a reason, and I already see an influence on my life because of each and every one of you.

MEET THE NEW PROGRAM STAFF!

ANNIE DEVINE *Program Director*



My name is Annie Devine and I am an Amate House alumna from 2003-2004. I lived in the Little Village community and taught 5th grade at St. Agnes Bohemia. It was a very challenging year for me and I struggled through much of it. In the end though, a lot of growth came out of it and it has taken me on quite an unexpected but wonderful journey.

I am thrilled to be here now as Amate House's new Program Director. I enjoy building relationships with our service sites and walking with the Volunteers through their experience of the year. I feel truly blessed that I get to work with these young adults as they discover what God has in store for them.

ROBERTA MUOIO *Program & Recruitment Coordinator*



My name is Roberta Muoio (you can call me Ro) and I am working this year as the Program, Recruitment and South House Coordinator. Last year I was a Volunteer in the North House and served at Marah's Permanent Housing, a program of Deborah's Place.

Doing a whole year of service has had a huge impact on me. As the saying goes, "I've been ruined for life". When the opportunity arose to work for Amate House, I jumped at the chance. It has been a joy to work with the Amate House Staff and the new Volunteers. Each day I learn something new from the Volunteers and my hope is that they will also be "ruined for life" after this year.

LISA WOLFF *Program & Recruitment Coordinator*



Beginning my first year with Amate House (2005-2006) was an exciting adventure. Little did I know that it would lead me to a second year with the program! Amate House is a wonderful program that I feel lucky to have stumbled upon. I found something I could put my whole heart and soul into and in return get back enough knowledge and compassion to sustain me and keep me wanting for more. When a position opened up on the program team I jumped at the chance to apply. I am now the Program, Recruitment and Little Village House Coordinator, and I'm so excited to have the opportunity to continue working with such a great organization!

SPOTLIGHT ON A SERVICE SITE: GOOD COUNSEL TEEN CENTER BY KATHLEEN GOULD, SOUTH HOUSE

My first day of work at Good Counsel Teen Center was the night of their annual carnival. As I walked the six blocks from Amate South to Good Counsel, I felt like I was walking into a whole new world: the start of my service to the McKinley Park community. As I walked, I realized I had no idea what to expect. I didn't have much time to contemplate my hopes and fears because I was soon thrown into the hustle and bustle of the carnival.

Jim Kozy is the director of the Good Counsel Teen Center. He also serves on the Amate House board of directors. Amate House and Good Counsel have been connected for many years, not only because of Jim Kozy, but also by the mutual focus on service to the McKinley Park community. I asked Jim how the connection to Amate House has been significant to the mission of Good Counsel. He replied that the Amate House Volunteers invigorate the Good Counsel program year after year with the enthusiasm that comes with devoting a year to service. He also stated that the Amate House connection has been a personal inspiration because the year of service the Amate House Volunteers do is an example of living out the Christian faith. When asked why service is so important he quickly stated, "It gets things done! That's how ministry works." Service is vital to the Teen Center. Amate House brings the needed help, enthusiasm and dedication to keep the Center running.

Rebecca Bunn, an Amate House South Alumna from 2006-2007, has stayed on at Good Counsel as a staff member. She said one of the



*Amate House alum Rebecca Bunn
and Volunteer Kathleen Gould
with Site Supervisor Jim Kozy*

reasons she picked Good Counsel as her work site is that it had the same focus as Amate: a Christian perspective on service. As her year of service progressed, Rebecca said she started to see her work at Good Counsel as a job instead of service. In these times she reflected on how the Amate retreats and the community nights really helped her to hone in on her service-centered purpose for the year. By the end of the year, Rebecca said she realized how much service at Good Counsel and as a community member at Amate House had changed her for the better. She said Amate House

enabled her to serve a community that she would normally not be exposed to which helped her to see the world in a different way. Even though her year at Amate House is up, the service she does at Good Counsel continues to shape her and change her for the better.

I have only been a part of the Amate community for a little over a month and a part of Good Counsel for three weeks, but I can already see my life changing. Like Rebecca, I am serving a community that I would not ordinarily be exposed to. At first, I was really concerned with what I had to offer this community that I had little in common with, but I have noticed that the longer I'm here, the less I use the word "I". Service is not what "I" have to offer; service is about becoming part of the community and working together for the common good.

With the help and support of Amate House, I will continue to live among, love and serve this community.

VOLUNTEERS BEGIN WORK AT TWO NEW SERVICE SITES

The Cara Program helps motivated individuals affected by homelessness and poverty transform their lives and achieve real and lasting success. The staff at Cara offer a spectrum of services, including life-skills and professional skills training, industry certifications and job placement. They also have a social enterprise, Cleanslate, which provides on-the-job training and transitional support services to individuals with significant obstacles to employment. Volunteer **Lucie-Ann Chen** serves as an intern with the Cara Program where she interacts with students on a daily basis, assists with online job searches, and teaches computer classes.

“Working as an intern with The Cara Program so far has been an amazing experience for me,” Lucie-Ann says. “The work is difficult and at times frustrating but whenever we are able to help a student find a job placement in a field that they are passionate about, it makes all the hard work worth it. These are adults that would not normally be hired given their backgrounds but going through The Cara Program helps them to reevaluate themselves and their lives and really gives them the training and skills they need in order to find jobs and long-lasting success.”

Sarah’s Circle is an agency that offers daytime supportive services in a welcoming, safe refuge for women who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless. They work toward ending homelessness by providing options, services and advocacy, and meeting the needs of the women who come through their doors. **Monica Potticary** is serving there as a case manager and program coordinator. She works individually with the women and also helps to develop monthly programs to educate the women and get them more actively involved at the shelter and in their surrounding world.

“My experience has taught me more than I could have imagined,” says Monica. “I have met so many strong women who have survived some unthinkable atrocities. They have opened my eyes to the necessity of my work and the work that Amate House does. Sarah’s Circle serves as a daily reminder that, as someone with the means and ability to help others, I am truly called to serve God’s people, specifically often-overlooked women.”

YOUTH INITIATIVE VOLUNTEERS BEGIN TO SERVE COMMUNITY

Amate House Youth Initiative: We also have placed two of our Volunteers in new positions that are the result of collaboration between Amate House and neighborhood schools and parishes. **Jenna Grush** and **Claire Markham** are both serving as service coordinators & campus ministers at their respective sites, **St. Gregory the Great High School** and **Our Lady of Tepeyac High School**. In addition to some classroom duties as religion teachers, they are also coordinating service experiences for students and providing opportunities for reflection on that service. Our hope is that this collaboration will help to bring the tenets of Amate House to youth around the city.

“Two of the most notable things I have done thus far would be planning the first two masses of the year, and developing a formal service learning program for the students and defining criteria for service requirements,” Jenna said, when asked to describe her experience so far. “Throughout the year I will plan and co-teach units on service learning in religion classes, supervise and coordinate service opportunities, track service hours, chair the retreat committee and work with The Perfect Peace retreat team to plan one retreat for each class and two for the seniors, plan an all school service day, work in the Learning Resource Program providing one on one tutoring for students, and various other tasks.”

“The Youth Initiative position at Our Lady of Tepeyac High School—which has me teaching three religion classes, overseeing the students’ required service, acting as campus minister, and working with other employees in the Archdiocese planning a possible peer ministry program for our high schools—offers me incredible challenges and affords me wonderful opportunities,” says Claire. “Working with the girls at Tepeyac, as a teacher or campus minister, opens my eyes to the trials they are undergoing and the strength they embody; even though they are the students, I am inspired by them every day to live a life of service more and more fully.”

Prayers and Intentions

Please remember to pray for all Amate House Deceased Benefactors and Our Fallen Soldiers along with:

In Memory of:

Mary Bliss	Deb Kline
Lillian Bochenek	Jean LaFrano
Walter Bulanda	Kelly Marie Lillwitz
Romeo DiCiccio	Lillian O'Brien
Lucille Geske	Marion Schroeder
Robert Haney	Philip St. Aubin

Please also pray for the following special intentions:

For Improved Health of:

Thomas Clement
Michelle Devine
Susie Kilayko
Mary Wolff

In Honor of:

Carol Conboy - Birthday and Retirement
Paul Fullmer
Phyllis Marciniak
Robert Pasin - Birthday

The Kelly Marie Lillwitz Memorial Fund

Friday, June 8, 2007 Kelly Marie Lillwitz, daughter of Anne Marie and Larry was stillborn weighing 4 lbs. 6oz. Her little heart had stopped beating in the morning while Anne Marie was in labor. Their parish priest had been in to bless mom and child, and shortly after that they could no longer hear Kelly's heart beat. She had lots of black hair and a perfect little face. In order to keep the memory of Kelly alive Anne Marie and Larry Lillwitz have established with Amate House the "Kelly Marie Lillwitz Memorial Fund".

Anne Marie (Emmons) and Larry met as Amate House Volunteers in 1991-92. On May 5, 2006 Anne Marie and Larry were presented with Amate House's Founders Award, given annually to Amate House alumni who continue to live out the ideals of Amate House — faith, community, service — in their life and work.

For more information about the Kelly Marie Lillwitz Memorial Fund or to set up a memorial fund in a loved ones name call Amate House 773 376-2445.

Amate House Wish List

DVD players
VCR
12 passenger vans
cars
vacuum cleaners
kitchenware
beds
lawn furniture
grills

AMATE HOUSE 25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!!!

Amate House's 25th Anniversary year will begin with the Commissioning of our Volunteers at Mass on August 3, 2008, and will culminate at Amate Magic on May 1, 2009.

We are beginning to plan now! We value your insight and input on our history and past endeavors as we brainstorm ways to celebrate. If you are interested in being part of the 25th Anniversary Committee please contact Chris Wagar at cwagar@amatehouse.org or 773 376-2445.

Remembrance Cards

Give a gift in memory or in honor of a loved one, or for a special occasion.

Contact Chris at the Amate House office 773 376-2445 for a packet of cards to be used throughout the year for memorials or celebratory occasions.

YES! COUNT ON MY SUPPORT FOR AMATE HOUSE!

Please accept my tax-deductible contribution to support your work:

___ \$1,000 ___ \$500 ___ \$100 ___ \$50 ___ \$25 ___ Other: ___

- ___ I am interested in learning more about the FRIENDS OF AMATE HOUSE SOCIETY
___ Please charge my credit card (Visa or MC) for my donation
___ Please contact me about Planned Giving, Matching Gifts, or other giving opportunities

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Name: _____ Email: _____

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