

Service Programs

Contact Information:

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- ***Adopt an Angel/Giving Tree***

Each year Campus Ministries' Center for Service and Social Justice partners with a local social service agency to provide gifts to children and families in need. Staff, faculty, and students "adopt" a child for Christmas by providing gifts for the children from the service agency.

Volunteers can also choose to purchase a gift from the Giving Tree set up in the lobby of the second floor of the DeNaples Center, which are then donated to the [Catholic Social Services/Friends of the Poor](#) annual toy giveaway in our Byron Center in late December. Children attending the annual Community Christmas Day Breakfast at The University of Scranton also receive some of these donated gifts. Cost per gift: approximately \$20. The toy collection begins the second week of November and gifts are due during final exams week to Campus Ministries' Center for Service & Social Justice (205B DeNaples).

If you are seeking individual monetary assistance for the holidays, please refer to our [Community Assistance](#) page.

- ***Blood Drives***

Several two-day blood drives are coordinated each academic year with the American Red Cross. Clubs and residence floors are welcome to adopt a drive and handle publicity as a service project, in addition to recruiting donors before the drive. Please contact [Ellen Judge](#), Administrative Assistant, for more information. Volunteers wanting to serve as a canteen worker, escort, or student nurse must email our Red Cross liaison [Tiffany Brown](#) prior to the drive dates. Current drive dates are listed on Royal Sync and take place in the Long Center Lobby from 11am-4pm.

[American Red Cross Blood Donor Guidelines](#)

- ***Domestic Outreach Service Trips***

Domestic service trips take place during March Spring break and in May with organizations and programs that serve marginalized populations in locations throughout the United States. Please see our separate [web page](#) outlining information about these transformative service experiences.

- ***Easter Basket Drive***

Scranton community members make Easter Baskets for children in need (ages infants to 12). Approximate cost per basket: \$25. Baskets are due to Campus Ministries' Center for Service & Social Justice (205B DeNaples) the Friday prior to Easter break and should contain:

- A milk or white chocolate bunny
- Wrapped candies (no loose please), like a bag of jelly beans



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- A few toys that are age-appropriate (a stuffed animal, car, crayons, books, etc.)
- Easter grass
- A gift basket bag (\$1 at the Dollar Store) or cellophane

Baskets are donated to registered families at the annual Friends of the Poor Easter Food Giveaway. Look for event dates on Royal Sync.

- **EFFORT**

Students volunteering with EFFORT, or “Excess Food For Others Recovery Team,” recover non-perishable food, unspoiled perishable food, and surplus food inventory from Dining Services and other community partners which are then donated to those in need in the Scranton community. If you or your company would like us to pick up food donations or you are a student wishing to be a part of this organization, please contact [Patricia Vaccaro](#), Director of Campus Ministries' Center for Service & Social Justice.

- **End-of-the-Year Drive**

Items that students would normally discard at the end of the academic year are collected for and donated to area agencies. Donations are placed in boxes in all residence halls, the parking garage stairwells, and several academic buildings. We can even arrange for boxes for your off-campus apartments!

Why coordinate this drive?

The Drive allows our University community to contribute to recycling and sustainability efforts. It also allows our student volunteers to learn about many local community agencies that provide for the needs of poor and marginalized people in Scranton, which in turn contributes to the University's social justice mission. In 2018, over 4,000 pounds of items were donated locally, including 330 rugs and 260 pairs of shoes.

What do volunteers do?

Volunteers collect, sort, and distribute the donations. They remain on campus after final exams through Senior Week and stay in their campus housing with meals provided. Students must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct during their time with this program. Info sessions are held in the spring semester and an application will be available on Royal Sync.

What kinds of items are accepted?

We take almost everything, **but we DO NOT accept large furniture (including beds, couches, and living room chairs) and anything broken or dirty. No pillows, mattresses or mattress pads, or underwear.**

We **do** accept items from your:

- Kitchen – food (canned and unopened non-perishable foods), pots, pans, utensils, plastic containers (Rubbermaid, Tupperware, etc.), small working appliances (like microwaves, mini



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fridges, toasters, etc.), new and opened cleaning products, brooms, dustpans, working vacuums, leftover laundry detergent

- Closet – clothing (but only if in clean and good condition!)
- Toiletries – new and open shampoos, lotions, soap, all that stuff!
- School and office supplies - including books (new and used)!
- Household items and small furniture – bookcases, desks, tables, chairs, lamps, rugs in good condition; also sheets, towels, blankets, comforters – but please make sure these are clean!
- Miscellaneous stuff – sporting goods, games, movies, toys, clothes drying racks, bulletin boards, plants

Where do we donate the collected items?

- Friends of the Poor at both Jackson Terrace and Valley View Terrace community rooms, the [Leahy Clinic food pantry](#), [United Neighborhood Centers](#), [Keystone Rescue Mission](#), [St. Francis Clothing House and Food Pantry](#), and the [Community Intervention Center](#)
- We also hold a large rummage sale and donate all proceeds to the Domestic Outreach Service Trips to offset costs for students wishing to go on a domestic service trip.

- ***FIRST – First Years Involved in Reflective Service Together***

Forty incoming first-year students have the opportunity to participate in five days of service in the Scranton community immediately preceding Fall Move-In Weekend in August. FIRST was developed by Clare Strockbine '04 when a junior at the University. Types of service include working with elementary school children and a senior living community, as well as participating in an outdoor beautification project. All of the projects involve hands-on work. In the evenings, student volunteers stay at the University's [Retreat Center at Chapman Lake](#) as they reflect on their service through the lens of the Ignatian tradition and Catholic Social Teaching. A team of eight upper-class students lead FIRST with a staff mentor. Meals and reflections are included.

When can first-year students apply? Incoming first-year students may apply when the Forms Packet is released from the Admissions Department, typically the first week in May. Space is limited. Participants are selected on a first-come, first-served basis. NO EARLY APPLICATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED and applications must be completed by the STUDENT. [Packing list for FIRST](#)

Cost: \$150.00.

- ***LEAP***

The Literacy, Education, Advocacy in Prison program (LEAP) is a weekly creative expression program for female inmates at Lackawanna County Prison. Scranton volunteers are needed to mentor and assist inmates in creative expression and reflection activities. Time commitment: 2 hours each week. The program, which runs for five weeks each semester, creates a safe, sacred space for inmates to express themselves. In her junior year, Laura Bopp '17 was inspired when attending the Ignatian Family Teach-In for Justice to do something about the injustices in prison systems. Her idea eventually developed into LEAP. Information sessions for those interested in volunteering are held at the beginning of the



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Fall and Spring semesters. Look for event dates on Royal Sync. Contact [Amy Fotta](#), Service Coordinator, with any questions.

- ***Pet Therapy – Canines on Campus***

Pet Therapy is a special biannual event to provide stress relief to students. Pets are therapeutic as they lessen depression, provide comfort, and decrease anxiety. Students spend time on Dionne Green within a fenced area to pet dogs belonging to peers, faculty, staff members, and alumni. Look for event dates on Royal Sync.

Requirements of pet owners:

- Dogs must be registered by their owners with Campus Ministries' Center for Service and Social Justice. Registration is on Royal Sync or on a Google Doc. Look for registration dates on Royal Sync.
- Proof of full vaccinations (including kennel cough) must be provided.
- Owners must sign a waiver of liability.
- Dogs must get along well with large crowds of people and other dogs.
- Dogs must be on leashes accompanied by their owners at all times.
- All participants must sign a waiver of liability to participate.

Student, Staff, and Faculty Participants:

Participants are limited to current University of Scranton students over the age of 18 and employees. Please bring your Royal Card to swipe in. Participants will also need to sign a waiver at the event entrance.

- ***Post-Graduation Service Opportunities***

Campus Ministries' Center for Service and Social Justice provides assistance to seniors in finding placement in one of many long-term service organizations in the United States as well as in the developing parts of the world after graduation. Please see our separate [web page](#) providing more information.

- ***Safe Trick or Treat in the University's Residence Halls***

In a partnership with Friends of the Poor and United Neighborhood Centers, local children are invited to the University to safely trick or treat. Our guests are escorted by student volunteers while resident students hand out candy right from their residence hall rooms. Student volunteers are also needed for a party hosted by our Student Government clubs in the Byron following the trick or treating with fun activities, crafts, and games. This is one of the University's highest-attended on-campus events, attracting hundreds of student volunteers, area children, and resident hall participants.

Volunteers in residence halls are needed to...

- Hand out candy (which will be provided at no cost to students)
- Decorate your floor
- Wear a costume yourself!

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Volunteers are also needed to...

- Escort a child on the trick-or-treat route through the residence halls
- Be a "buddy" with the child you escort at the party to follow
- Wear a costume yourself!

Student clubs are needed to...

- Host a table of crafts/games at the party in the Byron following the residence halls' trick or treating.
- Club members can come in shifts to assure all your members have a chance to participate. Supplies for crafts and games are the responsibility of the club.
- Wear costumes!

How do I volunteer?

- All volunteers must register on Royal Sync beginning October 1st. Registration closes on the Friday prior to the event at 12 noon.
 - RA's will work with volunteers from residence hall floors.
 - Clubs signing up for a table at the party must indicate the intended craft/game.

- ***Thanksgiving Feed-a-Family Program***

All the ingredients for a Thanksgiving dinner are provided to families residing at Valley View Terrace, a low-income apartment complex in Scranton. Students, staff, and faculty volunteers assemble bags for families with all the items needed from the turkey to pumpkin pie. Volunteers also help residents transport the meals to their apartments in the complex. The Thanksgiving Food Drive was founded in 2003 by Pete Cataldo '04 and Vinnie DiDonna '04, then juniors at the University. Wanting to give something back to the local community that had served them while they were students, they raised money by soliciting donations from fellow students and purchasing food to provide dinners for 50 families associated with the Feed a Friend Program of United Neighborhood Centers. Since then, the program has grown to feed over 225 families.

There are two ways to get involved:

- Make a monetary donation. Donations can be made directly [online](#). Select OTHER and write in *Thanksgiving Feed a Family Program*. Checks are also accepted made payable to "The University of Scranton" and mailed to Campus Ministries' Center for Service & Social Justice (*see mailing address at the beginning of this document*).
- Volunteer for the event. Register on Royal Sync beginning on November 1st.

- ***Volunteer and Post-Grad Service Fairs***

The *Volunteer and Service Fair* takes place each September in the DeNaples Center fourth-floor Ballroom. Local non-profit agencies come to campus to recruit volunteers for their programs in areas such as health and hospice care, children and youth programs, elderly services, social justice, food and housing programs, poverty, and homelessness. For more information or to request a table at the Volunteer and Service Fair, contact [Pat Vaccaro](#).



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The *Post-Graduate Volunteer Service Fair* is held in conjunction with the Center for Career Development's Fall Career Fair in September at the Byron Center. More than two dozen organizations will be available to answer questions about completing a year or more of service after graduation at locations both in the United States and throughout the world – like [Jesuit Volunteer Corps](#), [Capuchin Franciscan Corps](#), [Mercy Volunteer Corps](#), and [Good Shepherd Volunteers](#). Many different types of service experiences are available, giving students opportunities to serve and gain experience in their chosen fields. For more information, please contact [Cathy Seymour](#), Campus Minister for Social Justice. Look for both fair dates on Royal Sync.