

This month, 63 students spent their spring breaks positively contributing to several communities along the East Coast. During the week of March 6-10, students traveled to Baltimore, MD; Georgetown, DE; Immokalee, FL; Norristown, PA; Trenton, NJ; and Washington, D.C. as part of the College's Campus Ministry Office's SEND Service Immersion Program.

SEND, which was established in 1986, provides students—who are accompanied by faculty, staff and alumni—the opportunity to directly impact communities through volunteer work. SEND participants bond with fellow peers, faculty, staff, and alumni while working side-by-side to rebuild neighborhoods, gain new cultural perspective, and engage in prayer activities that reflect on ideals rooted in the Assumptionist tradition. This spring, SEND partnered with organizations like Catholic Charities, Habitat for Humanity, and Ministry of Presence sites.

"Our hope for the students participating in SEND is that they begin to view service as an opportunity to build relationships with others in ways that recognize our shared human dignity and call us to a life of faith in action," said Vincent Sullivan-Jacques, assistant director of Campus Ministry and director of volunteer outreach and community engagement.

Students participated in the following SEND trips during their break:

- In Baltimore, MD, students spent the week rehabbing houses in West Baltimore neighborhoods of the city with Habitat for Humanity of the Chesapeake. Students also had the opportunity to serve at the Catholic Charities organization, Jenkins Community Center—which, according to the website, is Maryland's first senior community to offer options to low and moderate income individuals for independent living, assisted living, skilled nursing care, rehabilitation, and medical day care. In addition to the volunteer aspects of the trip, students learned about Catholic Social teaching from Catholic Charities organizations and visited many cultural destinations in Baltimore.
- In Georgetown, DE, a group of students spent the week building homes for Habitat for Humanity (HFH) of Sussex County. According to the website, HFH Sussex County is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian organization dedicated to eliminating substandard housing and homelessness and to making adequate, affordable shelter a matter of conscience and action. Their ministry was founded on the conviction that every man, woman, and child should have a simple, decent place to live in dignity and safety.
- In Immokalee, FL, students spent their week rehabilitating houses with Habitat for Humanity of Collier County and interacting with the young children at the Guadalupe Center, an organization dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty and improving life for families in the community. Throughout the service week, students learned about the various social justice issues involved with migrant farm working through action with the Student Farmworker Alliance, which, according to the website, works to cultivate student and youth leadership working to build a vibrant Fair Food community across the nation.
- In Norristown, PA, students spent the break rebuilding homes for Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County. Students also shared meals, prayers, and stories with the Religions of the Assumption sisters in Philadelphia, as well as spent time working with the Catholic Charities of Norristown Food Pantry, which is dedicated to helping community members in need of food assistance.
- In Trenton, NJ, students participated in a retreat facilitated by an organization called FaithJustice. Students served at a social justice education center, which, according to their website, provides a transformative experience of faith in action, builds community, serves those in need, educates for justice, and empowers people to change the world. They also spent time helping strengthen the local community by volunteering at the Trenton Area Soup Kitchen; Visitation Home, a faith-based community dedicated to helping disabled adults; Carolyn Stokes Preschool; and UIH Family Partners, an organization that empowers fathers.

- In Washington, D.C., a group of students spent the week working at Bethlehem House, which, according to the website, is a welcoming community for persons with intellectual disabilities. They also served people struggling with homelessness at S.O.M.E (So Others Might Eat)—an interfaith, community-based organization that exists to help the poor and homeless of our nation's capital—and at Capitol Hill Ministry Street Outreach, which its website explains as an organization that works to build personal relationships with the chronically homeless individuals in the area.

- In Washington, D.C., a second group of students gained a deeper appreciation of the gifts that all people bring to their communities while staying at the L'Arche Greater Washington, D.C., Community, which, according to the website, is an inter-denominational Christian community that welcomes people of all backgrounds to share life together. Here, students participated in the community life that is centered on four communal homes and the 16 members who have intellectual disabilities.

During winter break, students traveled to and participated in SEND trips in Baltimore; Tuscaloosa, AL; Camden, NJ; and Guayaquil, Ecuador. The SEND Immersion Program instills in each participant a mission to serve, which is at the core of Assumption's foundations in the Catholic Tradition. For more about Campus Ministry, visit http://www.assumption.edu/campus-life/campus-ministry .