

Young Adult Volunteer Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Young Adult Volunteer program?

The Young Adult Volunteer (YAV) program is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) which sends young adults, ages 19-30, into a year of service at one of over 20 partner sites in the United States and around the world. YAVs begin their service in late August, beginning with a week of Orientation, and return in late July or early August of the following year.

When is the application due?

Early Decision: December 1, 2015

Round 2: February 1, 2016 (National and International)

Round 3: April 1, 2016 (National Only)

Last Call: June 1, 2016

What does it cost?

It costs the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) an average of \$22,000 to send a YAV for a year of service. Of that total cost, the PC (USA) covers more than three quarters. YAVs commit to fundraising a minimum \$3,000 (National) and \$4,000 (International) to contribute to the cost of service.

Fundraising is most often done through the support of the volunteer's home congregation. Many also raise support through Presbytery's, Synod's, campus ministries, family, friends, mentors, etc. *Gathering a community in support – both financial and spiritual– is a great way for volunteers to connect their congregations, family, and friends to their experience. Through newsletters, blog updates, social media, and pictures, volunteers are able to stay in contact with their sending communities, recognizing that the experience is about more than one individual or experience.*

Do I get paid?

One core value of the YAV program is simple living, and since this is a volunteer position, no, volunteers are not paid. However, costs associated with the program, including room and board, transportation, health insurance, and a basic living stipend are covered in the program. This is designed to have YAVs live at an economic level similar to the community they are serving.

What about my student loans?

The YAV program does have a program to help cover the costs of student debt called the Season of Service Student Loan Assistance program. Candidates may find out more by visiting www.pcusa.org/ssla.

What about health insurance?

The YAV program requires all participants to have basic health insurance. While many candidates remain under their parents' coverage, coverage is provided if this is not possible.

Can I pick which location I go to?

The matching process is one of mutual discernment, which means listening to the internal call of the individual applicant, while also recognizing the external call that comes from World Mission, the YAV office, and our site coordinators. Applicant site preferences are taken into account, but are not the only factor in determining placements. Generally, the more open a candidate is to serving in a variety of sites, the more successful her/his application will be. To see a listing of all 22 of our sites, see our website at www.youngadultvolunteers.org

What are you looking for in an applicant?

- Age 19-30
- A commitment to serving in culturally and religiously diverse contexts
- Openness to exploring and deepening one's faith in the context of community
- Flexibility, curiosity, patience, and a sense of humor!
- Emotional health and resilience
- The ability to adapt to uncertainty and ambiguity and a desire to simply "be" with people and with God
- Willingness to learn a new language and the courage to make mistakes!

What is housing like?

Each site is a bit different. YAVs may live with host families, with other volunteers, or sometimes on their own (within a host community). It is important to speak with site coordinators about the housing possibilities in their particular location.

Where will I serve?

Young adults serve in a variety of areas. Volunteer interests and skills are taken into account when discerning site placement. All placement sites provide opportunities for the volunteers to confront issues of poverty, racial privilege, economic disparity, globalization, and women's issues. A year of service through the YAV program helps the volunteer to think more critically about their own identity, God's work in the world, and their place within it all.

Do I need to know a second language?

Speaking a second language will be helpful in many of our sites, both nationally and internationally. Please note your language abilities on your application.

Do I have to be Presbyterian?

No. While 80% of our participants identify as Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), this is not a requirement. We do ask each applicant to provide a church or worshipping community support form to show their involvement at the local faith level.

Need more information? Please contact Emily Miller at Emily.miller@pcusa.org or 1-800-728-7228 x5300, or see our website at www.youngadultvolunteers.org

