

Ferncliff Young Adult Volunteer(s) - Disaster Response

The Ferncliff “Disaster Young Adult Volunteer(s)”:

Ferncliff Camp and Conference Center, Little Rock, AR is collaborating with PDA and 2nd Presbyterian Church, Little Rock to sponsor and house from three to five Young Adult Volunteers (YAVs) each year. One or two of the YAVs will focus on disaster ministry; the others will work specifically on eco/sustainability and gardening/food justice.

The Disaster YAV positions fall under the office of the PDA Associate for Disaster Response. The local site mentors/trainers/supervisors are PDA National Response Team members. For their overall experience, the YAVs are under the supervision of the Little Rock Site Coordinator.

General Responsibilities of the Disaster YAV:

Collaborate with PDA staff, volunteers, and partners in the ministries of One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) and Compassion, Peace, and Justice, support domestic and international disaster response, including communication and social media outreach, and disaster preparation and education.

Specific Responsibilities Include:

1. Working alongside Ferncliff staff and volunteers in managing the Disaster Assistance Center. The YAV oversees volunteer work groups and receives, processes, and dispatches shipments of Church World Service gift-of-the-heart kits and flood buckets for disaster sites.
2. Assisting national and international program associates and assistants in the implementation of specific disaster responses, which involves occasional deployments to disaster recovery sites. The Disaster YAVs also attend the annual meeting of the PDA National Response Team.
3. Assisting in local long-term recovery efforts that are located near enough to Ferncliff. Regularly in 2014-15, the YAV has attended meetings and assisted with activities of a long-term recovery group in response to a 2014 tornado.
4. Developing training tools for camps, churches and mid councils. For example, the 2014-15 YAV has developed a disaster response simulation game, which can be used by campers and other youth and adult groups.

5. Supporting staff and National Response Team volunteers in providing training events for synods, presbyteries, and congregations and research information that will be helpful to individuals and groups who are being deployed.
6. Providing support services for PDA national office as requested by the PDA Associate for Disaster Recovery and interpreting the ministry of PDA and OGHS to congregations and groups in Arkansas.

Housing:

The YAVs reside in the YAV house at Ferncliff, a 2-bedroom/2-bath house with laundry, kitchen and two living rooms. The house can accommodate up to five volunteers.

Compensation:

The YAV group receives a food allowance. When they are involved with special groups, the YAV's eat in the Ferncliff dining hall. For the most part they work together to prepare their meals although they typically have a lot of community meal support. Each YAV has medical insurance coverage and can use a Ferncliff vehicle as needed for local chores and presentations.

Other Features of YAV Service at Ferncliff:

A site coordinator oversees the work and group activities of all the YAVs; he or she maintains a close relationship with the YAVs individually and as a group. In addition, two spiritual directors arrange monthly meetings with individual YAVs.

The PDA mentors put the YAVs in touch with local disaster response organizations, such as the Presbytery of AR Disaster Preparedness and Response Committee, the AR Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (ARVOAD), and any local long-term recovery groups. The mentors also lead some training for the YAVS and alert them to webinars and other available training opportunities.

While the Disaster YAVs spend most days doing disaster-specific work, they devote one day a week to working in and learning about the Little Rock community. Some of the community outreach work is organized by 2nd Presbyterian Church; other community activities are organized and planned by the YAVs themselves. 2nd Presbyterian Church also provides a worshipping community for the YAVs.