

Notre Dame-AmeriCorps looks to the future at Baltimore conference

By Catholic Review Staff

More than 300 Notre Dame Mission Volunteers-AmeriCorps (NDMVA) members from 18 states braved the Baltimore cold Presidents' Day weekend to celebrate the past and plot the future of the service organization.

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur founded the Baltimore-based Notre Dame Mission Volunteers to promote literacy in 1992. Three years later, they began their partnership with Americorps, commonly referred to as the "domestic Peace Corps." During the NDMVA mid-year training conference, volunteers shared their service experiences, participated in development workshops and heard from Tim Miller, chief of external affairs at the federal Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees Americorps, and Sister of Notre Dame de Namur Katherine Corr, executive director of the Notre Dame Mission Volunteers.

Miller shared how the service organization has helped 585,000 underprivileged Americans with their literacy and education needs since 1995. He noted that 85 percent of the students NDMVA volunteers work with advanced a grade level and developed a more positive outlook on education and learning.

Baltimore, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. are among the cities, according to its website, where the organization uses education to assist the poor in their "struggle for human dignity, self-esteem and self-determination."

Volunteer Will Chinn shared how he helped to build the confidence of one student at Adventure Central, the after-school program in Dayton, Ohio, where he served.

"That's why we are here," Chinn said of learning that a student, who originally told him that she 'couldn't do it,' had raised her math test grade from a D to a B. "It is amazing to see the work you're doing come to life."

To apply to become a volunteer, click here.

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