

Baltimore *examen*

NEWSLETTER OF THE IGNATIAN VOLUNTEER CORPS BALTIMORE • APR 2018 • 1.1

Welcome to IVC Baltimore's Debut Newsletter!

A thrice-yearly update on the great work being done in Baltimore by Ignatian volunteers and our outreach partners.

We hope those of you who have lived in Baltimore a while appreciate the pun behind our newsletter's name. (For those new to the area, *The Baltimore Examiner* was a daily newspaper published for several years in the mid-2000s.) Given we are grounded in Ignatian Spirituality and will be providing you, our readers, with a recap of IVC goings-on and our hopes and plans for the future, we thought the name "*Baltimore Examen*" fit the bill nicely!

The Examen is the essential Ignatian prayer. St. Ignatius of Loyola calls us each evening to reflect upon our day and where God has been present to us, where we have been challenged, and to consider things we want to do for the greater glory of God. Our volunteers experience God every day, present in the blessings and challenges of working with those in need in our area, and they look forward in hope to doing greater things for their sisters and brothers.

In each issue of *Baltimore Examen*, we will highlight the mission of one of our outreach partners, and introduce you to the Ignatian volunteers who work at their site. We will let you know about upcoming events, thank our generous donors, and provide updates on available volunteer placements and partner news.

We will also feature a column on an aspect of Ignatian Spirituality we hope will enhance your own spiritual life and invite you go deeper with St. Ignatius. (This issue is, of course, about the Examen.)

We invite, welcome, and look forward to your comments and suggestions. Email Baltimore's Regional Director, Steve Eberle at seberle@ivcusa.org or call him at 410-752-4686.

We thank you for being part of the IVC community and hope you enjoy *Baltimore Examen*!

Events

Prospective Volunteer Information Sessions:

- Apr 22: 1 pm, St. Matthew's Catholic Church
 - May 1: 2 pm, St. Alphonsus Rodriguez
 - May 31: 7 pm, St. Matthew's Catholic Church
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- May 9: IVC Baltimore Monthly Meeting
 - Jun 11-13: Closing Retreat, Faulkner, MD
 - Jul 16-18: IVC National All Staff Meeting

Making a Difference in Baltimore

"Asylee Women Enterprise (AWE) helps women seeking asylum to rebuild their lives and their spirits. AWE provides transitional housing, companionship and community to asylum seekers by offering a safe and nurturing home, opportunities to connect within the larger community and each other."

Asylee Women's Enterprise (AWE) is the only organization in Maryland that primarily serves asylum seekers and survivors of torture. AWE focuses on companionship and mutual support as these women build a new life for themselves and their children in the U.S.

The seeds of AWE began in January 2011 when the Benedictine Sisters of Baltimore were asked to give shelter to a young, pregnant asylum seeker. Soon joined by individuals from eight Catholic women's religious communities, AWE was created as an organization.

Since those beginnings, AWE has grown significantly, becoming the largest provider of housing to asylum seekers in the Mid-Atlantic.

AWE offers holistic support for all participants, such as English as a Second Language, job readiness, linkages to medical and legal services, mindfulness activities, material assistance and opportunities to connect with the larger community and each other.

These services are critical since asylum seekers, particularly women and children, are especially vulnerable and are not eligible for public assistance and cannot work during the initial stages of their asylum process.

IVC is honored to support AWE and its great mission.

"Six years ago, we served a handful of women, limited by staff capacity and budget constraints as a fledgling organization. Over the last 3 years Ignatian volunteers have allowed us to grow and stabilize our programs. We now serve more than 200 women and children each year."

**Tiffany Nelms,
Executive Director,
AWE**

Art Raffle

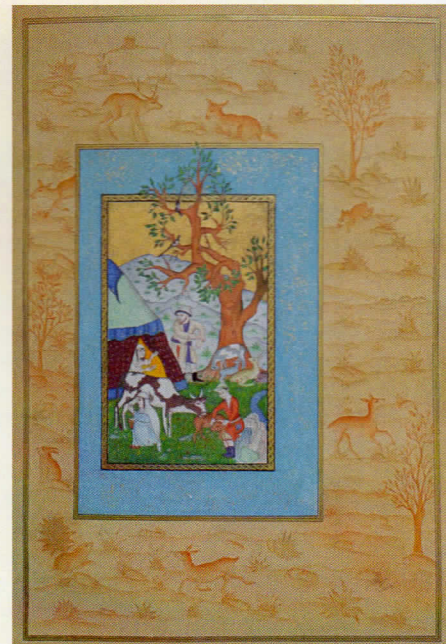
Asylee Spotlight

After making her way to Washington, DC, Sughra Hussainy learned about AWE and began to participate in its programs.

Sughra is an artist from Kabul, Afghanistan. She has happy memories as a young girl weaving carpets at home with her brother. Although her parents were illiterate, they encouraged her, her brothers and sisters to study. At the age of fifteen, Sughra was orphaned and left to care for her siblings by herself. Art became her solace.

Hoping to generate income to support her family, she began studying calligraphy and miniature painting at the Turquoise Mountain Institute. Sughra began to experiment with different patterns and combinations of traditional art elements, choosing her own paints, the paper and frames in which the artworks are displayed.

Now a promising young artist, her art has been showcased at several international exhibitions in the U.S., the U.K. and Afghanistan including "Turquoise Mountain: Artists Transforming Afghanistan" at the Smithsonian's Freer & Sackler Galleries of Art in Washington DC. during 2017 and in Thou Art: The Beauty of Identity by Studio Pause.



In appreciation of our supporters and volunteers, and in recognition of the contributions asylum seekers make in our communities, we are raffling this beautiful work of art by Sughra Hussainy. This original painting is crafted using traditional painting methods and materials. It is truly a unique masterpiece, signed by the artist. Raffle tickets are \$100 each, no maximum per individual.

Making a Difference at Asylee

Ignatian Volunteers Jan Allen, John Eckhart, and Chris Tucker work with the staff to provide women and children at Asylee whatever help they need.

Jan teaches the residents English as a Second Language. *"AWE plays a pivotal role in helping the women transition. The more we can focus on goals that challenge the residents, the more secure their emotional lives become and the more quickly positive perspectives inform their daily lives."*

John and Chris support the residents and staff through project work: taking the residents to appointments, increasing awareness in the community, and assisting on development and administrative efforts. John says of his experience at AWE, *"It is a privilege to be part of a community that embraces Jesus' invitation expressed in Mathew's Gospel: to feed the hungry and welcome the stranger."*

For God's Greater Glory

Elaine Ireland, IVC Baltimore's Spiritual Formation Associate, summarizes the Examen Prayer.

In 1534, when the Society of Jesus was founded, St. Ignatius and his fellow Jesuits found themselves inundated with service to the poor in Rome. Restful sleep and daily prayer time were in short supply. (Sound familiar?) The one prayer Ignatius insisted he and his brothers not abandon: The "Examen of Consciousness."

For Catholics, this sounds a lot like what we do before Confession. But the focus of the Examen is different; it's all about paying attention: "Where has God been present to me today? Where have I been present to God? Where have I missed or ignored God's presence today?"

Jesuits do this prayer a few times each day; I try to do a quick check-in at noon and then again at night. The Examen is not for judging or ruminating (although it can be a time to ask for forgiveness), but a time to learn how the Spirit speaks through our thoughts, feelings, and emotions. It also allows us to better accept the person we are, what gives us life, and what drains life from us.

As the Examen becomes a part of how we approach the day, it helps us choose options that will bring us God's true peace (which may not be the easiest option) and avoid choices that will challenge our peace in the long run. Give this simple, but life-changing prayer a try. You can download a step-by-step Examen prayer card at: <https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/19076/examen-prayer-card>

From Steve

On behalf of our volunteers, service partners, and the people we serve, thank you for your support of the Ignatian Volunteer Corps and its members in Baltimore.

As we launch this newsletter, I'm excited to share with you stories of Ignatian Volunteers and the real difference they make in Baltimore. As you know, IVC matches men and women with charities and nonprofits seeking reliable, committed volunteers.

Last year, IVC Baltimore's contribution to the community was valued by The Independent Sector at \$401,931. Many of IVC's service sites request multiple volunteers, an overwhelming confirmation of the power of IVC.

Thanks to your past benefaction, IVC Baltimore has more than doubled in size over the last five years. Today forty-two Ignatian Volunteers generously serve our community without counting the cost. IVC is growing fast and we need your help to keep up the pace. It costs the IVC Baltimore region approximately \$3,000 annually to support each Ignatian Volunteer for recruiting, screening, placement, retreats, monthly meetings, and spiritual direction.

More importantly, IVC volunteers allow our service sites to reduce overhead and steward their funding directly into programs that serve people experiencing poverty. **A \$3,000 investment in IVC Baltimore saves each of our service sites \$14,484 in personnel costs annually.**

I invite you to invest in IVC Baltimore. A gift of any size impacts our ability to place skilled volunteers with service sites around Baltimore. I encourage you to consider sponsoring one volunteer with an annual gift of \$3,000.

As a token of our appreciation, for each \$100 you donate to IVC Baltimore (postmarked by June 1st), your name will be automatically entered into a raffle to win the beautiful painting by Sughra Hussainy featured on page 2. (Donate \$3,000, have 30 chances to win!)

Most importantly, as a faith community, we rely on your prayers and offer you ours. Thank you for all that you do to keep IVC Baltimore strong!



Sincerely,

Steve Eberle,
Regional Director,
Ignatian Volunteer Corps
Baltimore

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Available Placements/Partner Events/Ignatian News

- Loyola Early Learning Center, Baltimore: *Teaching and Classroom Assistant*
- Catholic Relief Services, Baltimore: *CRS Parish Ambassador*
- Project PLASE, Baltimore: *Donation Transporter, Central Intake Worker, Medical Monitor, Veteran Representative*
- Jesuit Volunteer Corps, Baltimore: *Human Resources Specialist*
- Stella Maris Apostleship of the Sea, Dundalk: *Seafarer Assistant*
- ARC of Baltimore, Baltimore: *Developmental Disabilities Assistant*
- St. Peter's Adult Learning Center, Baltimore: *Program Assistant*
- Hosanna House, Sparrows Point: *Volunteer Resident Advocate*
- Catholic Charities Housing and Shelter Services, Baltimore MD: *Donation Coordinator*
- St. Elizabeth Nursing Center, Baltimore: *Pastoral Assistant*

- The Samaritan Women, Baltimore: *Financial Systems Assistant, Development/Donor Research Volunteer, Human Resources Compliance Volunteer, Teacher*
- Innovation Works, Baltimore: *Curriculum Development Coordinator, Coordinator of Community Partnership*
- Moveable Feast, Baltimore: *Registered Dietitian, Quality Assurance Volunteer*

For more details about the placements, come to an Information Session (dates listed on the front page) or contact Steve Eberle at 410-752-4686.

Partner Events/ Ignatian News:

- Immigration and Outreach Service Center's "Savor the World" Fundraiser: 5/5/18
- The Samaritan Community Movie Night Gala at The Charles: 5/21/18
- Franciscan Center Charity Golf Tournament: 7/18/18

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