

## Lehigh Valley Youth Interfaith Program Overview

**Purpose:** The purpose of this program is to create a unified interfaith community within the Lehigh Valley through the education of our children.

**Program Layout:** The program will consist of four major parts designed to build empathy and leadership within each student of the program.

- **Demographics:**
  - 25-40 high school aged youth (13-18)
  - 5 faiths: Muslim, Sikh, Baha'I, Jew, Christian, and any other interested religions
- **Meetings:**
  - **Introductory Meeting:** Parents are required at this meeting as it will involve the dispersal of itineraries, rules to respectfully observe at each place of worship, and student responsibilities. The meeting will start with a brief introduction by core team members and then the students will break off into groups where they will come up with a mission statement for the program. Five keywords will be given to each group and they will have 10 minutes to create a mission statement. At the end, each group will present and then the whole group will vote for their favorite. After the activity, we will go over the aforementioned information.
  - **Rotational Meetings:** Students will present their presentation on their religion. The topic and format of the presentation will be left to their discretion. The presentations are required to be approved by an adult mentor. These meetings will take place once a month at each house of worship and will accommodate the schedule of each house of worship.
- **Extracurricular Activities:**
  - **Journals:** Students will be given journals at the Introductory Meeting and will be required to journal about their experiences with the program. Topics can vary so long as they have a connection to the program. These journals will serve as a physical manifestation of their human and spiritual growth. Journals will be displayed at the commencement ceremony as well as on an online blog open to the public. It is important to note that the online blog will not contain the names of the students to preserve privacy.
  - **Social Media:** Students will be permitted to own and post on social media accounts related to the program. The inclusion of social media serves to recognize the importance of it in their lives but to, again, instill in them responsibility of serving as ambassadors to their faith and promote the message of interfaith. We will serve as moderators on these platforms to monitor content.
- **Day of Service:**
  - **Purpose:** To symbolize the world's religions unifying for the common good of the community.
  - Twelve community service organizations have allowed me to compile their service activities in to a list that the students will choose from to pick their day of service activity.
  - The students will have adult supervision, as all sites require this for youth to serve.
  - Meals will be provided and will be vegetarian to accommodate dietary restrictions.
- **Commencement Ceremony:**
  - **Purpose:** To commemorate the bravery and leadership shown on behalf of the students who participated in the program.
  - This is a celebration, which parents will be asked to attend, to recognize the efforts of the students. Certificates will be presented as well as their journals displayed to show their unique journeys in the program.
  - Will also include a photo slideshow of the memories formed throughout the program cycle.
- **Contact Information:**
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