



**COTTER**  
SCHOOLS

WHERE STANDARDS, VALUES, *and you* MATTER

1115 WEST BROADWAY  
WINONA, MN 55987 USA  
PHONE: 507.453.5000  
WEB: COTTERSCHOOLS.ORG

October 4, 2019

Dear 9th-12th grade Cotter families,

My name is Marisa Corcoran and I am the Campus Minister at Cotter. One of my favorite responsibilities of my job is to accompany high school students on service trips! The trips are a great opportunity for students to go out of their comfort zone, grow in their understanding of different cultures and have fun while learning and serving.

There are two different ways for high school students to participate in our service trip opportunities. Students can attend a weekend urban plunge during the school year or a week-long summer service trip (or both!).

A **weekend urban plunge** is typically Friday morning to Sunday afternoon and takes place during the school year. Students miss school on Friday but learn in immeasurable ways outside of the classroom. On an urban plunge, we travel to Minneapolis. One can expect to volunteer at local non-profits, learn more about the injustices and poverty within Minnesota and the world, and have fun with their classmates. Volunteer sites vary each time, but typically we package food at Feed My Starving Children or Second Harvest Heartland, serve a meal at a homeless shelter or soup kitchen, and help at area non-profits, based on the need at the time of our trip.

An urban plunge costs \$125 per person. Included in the cost are lodging, transportation, food, and a Cotter service trip sweatshirt. We are housed at a retreat site or a church.

A **summer service trip** is typically a weeklong trip, from Sunday to Saturday. These trips take place during the summer, in mid-late July or early August. On a week-long summer trip, students travel to a midwest state (usually within a day's drive of Winona); They typically share the week with 1-2 other schools from the United States so students make friends from other schools and states! One can expect to volunteer each day from 9-3pm at local non-profits; The service experiences will depend on the need, but could be working at a Boys and Girls Club, doing home repair, serving meals to the homeless, etc. On a summer service trip, students also go more in-depth about the injustices of the area we are serving in, as well as a greater emphasis on how faith is tied to service and justice. The last few summers we have served at Jerusalem Farm in Kansas City, Missouri and Benton Harbor, Michigan.

A summer service trip costs \$300-500 per person (depending on the state/location). Included in the cost are lodging, transportation, food, and a Cotter service trip t-shirt. We are housed at a retreat site or a church.

**What Cotter students say about service trips:**

Over 2,100 students have participated in Cotter service trips since 1995. Some past and present students share their thoughts on service trips:

*"This trip taught me so much about living my life through service. I have realized that a simple life of service is the happiest way to live. That you never really lose anything in simplicity, you only gain much more!.. GF*



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"It was an amazing, fun and eye-opening experience where I got to meet new people. This experience made me feel lucky to have the life I have." FF

"Service trips have been one of my favorite parts of high school. It was easier to be myself and be fulfilled in the service of God and others." CD

In order to help us plan our trips, please complete this "SERVICE TRIP INTEREST survey no later than Friday, October 11.

**How to register:**

Registration information will be available beginning on Monday, October 15. If you plan to register for a trip, your registration form and deposit are due on Tuesday, October 23. The registration form will be found on the "Faith and Community" → "Service" portion of the Cotter website. There will be more information about the dates and logistics of this year's service trips on the registration form.

I firmly believe that service trips can open doors to a new perspective and connect us with those different from us! Please take time to consider if you'd like to participate in a trip. We will reopen registration again in January if all of the trips aren't filled this fall. Adults are needed as chaperones, too (no charge for adults to attend!). Email me if you're interested in chaperoning a trip.

As always, please contact me with any questions. I can be reached by phone, by email or in person most days from 7:45am-3:45pm in my office (Room 210 on second floor of St. Teresa building).

Thank you,

*Mrs. Marisa Corcoran*

507-453-5000, ext. 5094

