

# OVC| JULY 2021

# PROGRESS



Updates on the progress of Orthodox Volunteer Corps



## A Pivotal Time

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"As a senior in undergrad, I considered many different post-graduate options .... [and] recognized that **my first year after graduation was a pivotal time that would set the tone for my future.**"

Margaret Hodson, a graduate of Georgetown University and soon to begin working at Deloitte as a Government and Public Sector consultant, recently shared with us her reflections on Orthodoxy and Service. "I wanted to choose an opportunity that would serve as a solid foundation and instill lifelong values and habits. **I was looking for a program that would help me discern my vocation through the lens of my faith.**" Since "there was no Orthodox year-of-service program, I decided instead to join the Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC)."

While JVC was a valuable experience, it did not "fully minister to my needs as an Orthodox Christian." Margaret had to be proactive in getting time off for Liturgy & Orthodox Easter and in finding Orthodox mentors. She longed to "share my year-of-service experience with other Orthodox young adults."

We agree with Margaret. **Orthodox young adults face a pivotal time. They deserve an Orthodox program dedicated to service and formation. That's why we're launching Orthodox Volunteer Corps.** Thanks for being on the journey with us!



Margaret Hodson

## Updates since our last newsletter!

**We received our tax-exempt approval from the IRS.** We can now accept direct donations through Paypal, Zelle, or check. *A huge thanks to the Assembly of Bishops for serving as our fiscal agent for those first months.*

### Fundraising is going well:

- We have raised over \$95,000 in cash & commitments from individuals & parishes!
- We got our first grant for \$15,000. We're grateful to the AHEPA National Housing Incorporation for their generous support.
- We recently applied for a grant from the Renaissance Fund, have meetings lined up with other Orthodox Foundations, and have held several meetings with a program officer at the Lilly Endowment with the goal of submitting a proposal this summer or fall.

**Thanks to numerous conversations with our board, donors, foundations, and other supporters, we have developed an expanded strategy to broaden our impact.**

- Our *Core Program*, which we have shared with you all, remains the same: full-time, 10-months and rooted in the four OVC pillars of Service, Formation, Community, and Church. We will have 6-8 participants in each city we target.
- Now we have added a new element: The *Roundtable Program* will be for young adults who are working or in school full time, but still want to engage with OVC. Roundtable Members (25-30 in each target city) will experience the same four-pillar curriculum but on a part-time basis and not live in communal housing.
- Finally, we will integrate the two programs, capitalizing on the unique strengths of each. One city at a time, we intend to develop a critical mass of Orthodox young adults to launch innovative, faith-imbued, sustainable projects that integrate service, church, and community.

## What's next? Here's what we're planning for the fall:

- **Public Launch of OVC.** We've been meeting individually with lots of partners; soon we want to host an event that shares this ministry with the larger community. Stay tuned.
- **National campaign to recruit** the best and brightest Orthodox young adults to join the full-time Core Program (first cohort to begin fall 2022).
- **Build a deep and wide network** with parishes and community members in Pittsburgh, where we will pilot both the Core and Roundtable programs.
- **Collaborate with other Orthodox organizations** to create service & formative opportunities for young adults, beginning this fall.



# How can you help?



## Pray

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We covet your prayers more than ever. In this work, we are continually humbled by our dependence on God. Please remember us and this work as you pray.

## Connect

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While we have made great strides in our fundraising and communication, we have further to go. If you know someone who should hear about OVC or could make a contribution, please let us know.

## Thank you!

We're so grateful to all of you for supporting us and this ministry in a myriad of ways. Thank you for all you do and for who you are!

With love in Christ,  
Michael Sider-Rose & Kyra Limberakis

[orthodoxvolunteercorps.org](http://orthodoxvolunteercorps.org)



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