

Teen Interfaith Leadership Council Of Santa Clara County

Mission Statement

The Teen Interfaith Leadership Council seeks to engage and inform teenagers about issues of social justice through acts of charity and advocacy. The Council will consist of Sophomores, Juniors and Seniors (who have already been involved previously) from various religious traditions. The Council will engage in meaningful service, interfaith dialogue and advocacy activities that address issues of poverty and social injustice while promoting the common good in Santa Clara County. The emphasis will be on mutual respect and understanding and interfaith dialogue will be emphasized, not conversion.

The Council Core team will consist of approximately 10 teens from Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Catholic/Christian or other religious backgrounds. The Core Team will be recruited in the Spring. The term for the Council will be July through April-May and meet once a month.

Formation Experience for Core Team

The TLC (Teen Interfaith Leadership Council) will participate in an annual retreat/immersive experience in New Mexico for five days. This immersion experience is intended to create community and to foster interfaith understanding, while performing meaningful service. The formation experience will focus on the Native American culture in New Mexico with special emphasis on service, interfaith dialogue, and discovering shared religious values regarding faith and justice.

Formation Immersion Experience: July 26-July 30th, 2012

Cost: \$450 (50% of actual cost) Includes airfare, housing and food. Northern New Mexico is one of the most culturally distinct areas of the United States. It is the home of both ancient Native American communities and towns founded by Spanish settlers long before the inception of the United States. The group will travel to Northern New Mexico and will learn about the ancient Indian Pueblos there, We will also work on an organic farm and contribute to land and cultural restoration efforts in local communities. The Teen Interfaith Youth Council will be joined by approximately five (5) members of the Shinnyo-en Buddhist order from various parts of the country. They are also part of the grant which will pay for half of your fees for this trip.

This trip is a partnership between the Shinnyo-en Buddhist Temple, the Shinnyo-en Foundation, and the Interfaith Council on Economics and Justice and Working Partnerships.

Who can apply?

Current High School Sophomores and Juniors may apply. Your religious leader must recommend you and he/she will certify that you are a member in good standing in your religious tradition.

What am I applying for?

1. You are applying to be a member of the Teen Interfaith Leadership Council. This Council will consist of approximately 10 teens representing diverse religious traditions including but not limited to, Hindus, Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and Jews. Our goal is to have two teens from each religious tradition.
2. As a member of this Council you will:
 - A. Attend an orientation the day before the five-day immersion experience in July and then attend the immersion experience in New Mexico
 - B. Make a commitment to meet once a month during the school year as a follow-up to the trip during the months of September thru April/May.
 - C. Be an active participant implementing the mission of the Council.

Criteria for Being Selected (these should be highlighted in your app. essay)

- A. Strong commitment to social justice
- B. Interested in learning about other religious traditions
- C. Well balanced with academic achievement and extra-curricular involvement
- D. Recommended by religious leader
- E. Parental Permission
- F. Knowledge of and active participation in one's own religious tradition

What are the deadlines for submitting applications?

First round of applications due on or before January 15th, 2012. Later applications accepted on a first come first served basis for any remaining spots.

When will the participants be chosen?

You will be notified of your status within two weeks after your religious leader turns in your application with their recommendation.

How can I find out more information?

E-mail Deacon Steve Herrera at Steveph@aol.com or call 408-832-7666.

**Teen Interfaith Leadership Council
Of Santa Clara County**

(please print clearly)

Applicant's Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Age _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Email: _____

High School _____

Year in School (circle one) Sophomore Junior

Religious Tradition: _____

Religious leader recommending me:

Name _____ Phone _____

Email: _____

Extra-Curricular

Describe extra-curricular activities you have are/or have been involved in and shown leadership. Please explain with examples and indicate how long you were involved.

Course Load

Please list the classes you anticipate being your most challenging and time consuming:

Given your course load and other activities, assess your ability to make a commitment to participate in the Council for a year. Please give specific examples of how you will balance your responsibilities and your plan to enable full participation. _____

Involvement in Religious Tradition

How involved are you in your religion? (circle one)

(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)

Do you feel comfortable discussing your religion with others?

(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)

Are you open to sharing and listening to other peoples' religion with a respectful attitude?

(low) 1 2 3 4 5 (high)

General Questions

Summarize your religion's teachings about how to make the world a better place to live.
(for example, in terms of service, justice, charity, etc.) _____

Describe what, if any, exposure you have had to other religious traditions and what you valued about that. _____

What do you think are the biggest social problems that exist in Santa Clara County? (San Jose and the surrounding area) _____

My Gifts and Talents

What special gifts/talents do you have? For example can you create and maintain a Facebook Group page? Do you shoot and edit video? Do you play a musical instrument? Etc. Don't be shy! Brag about yourself! _____

Please describe why do you want to be a member of the Teen Interfaith Youth Council? *You may submit a typed response attached to this application.*

Parent Section

We give permission for our (my) son or daughter to apply for and participate in the Teen Interfaith Leadership Council. We understand that there will be an orientation the day before the five day immersion trip and that he/she will be making a commitment to attend a Council meeting once a month during the months of September thru April/May.

Signed: _____
(parents signature)

Date _____ Phone _____

I understand that I will have to submit a medical insurance card prior to the immersion trip.

Recommendation by Religious Leader

Name _____ Phone _____

Religious Affiliation _____ E-mail _____

Recommendation for (name) _____

This young person is applying to participate in the Teen Interfaith Leadership Council. Your submission of this application and your recommendation are the main factors in acceptance of this young person. In order to help you choose and recommend the best candidates we would like to make these recommendations.

We are searching for emerging teen leaders in your faith community. The best candidates are young people who have a good knowledge of their beliefs and have demonstrated good leadership skills and are open to engaging in interfaith dialogue and service with young people of diverse religious backgrounds.

We are also seeking young people who can work well in a group to achieve a common goal. We are seeking young people with a passion for their own religious tradition who are also very concerned about seeking justice for others and who have a desire to serve others through acts of charity and acts of justice.

We appreciate your thoughtful comments about this young person.

Write your comments below or submit a typed letter of recommendation along with the completed application. For additional information please contact Deacon Steve Herrera at steveph@aol.com or call 408 832-7666 anytime. You may mail this packet to:

Deacon Steve Herrera
1564 Glencrest Court
San Jose, CA 95118

Recommendation for: _____
