

ReachOut Worcester

November 3-4, 2017 and February 2-3, 2018

OVERVIEW

ReachOut Worcester offers Greater Worcester-area youth (age 13 and up) and their leaders the opportunity to increase their awareness of the social issues and assets of urban communities like Worcester, while engaging in hands-on service with fellow community members.

During the 18 hour period, participants join ReachOut Worcester staff and Guides to offer food and “care packages,” but most importantly, a kind word and a listening ear to people in need. These activities are preceded and followed by times of sharing and reflection. After talking about next steps for them personally and/or as a group, participants also prepare to present their experiences in their home setting (worship service or other forum).

ReachOut Worcester is co-sponsored by the Worcester Area Mission Society (WAMS) and Worcester Fellowship, a member of the Central Association of the Massachusetts Conference of the UCC that is dedicated to ending isolation through pastoral care and nurturing community.

Registration Process

Registration will be closed, and a waiting list started, once we have 4 groups or 30 youth registered, whichever comes first. To secure your place at ReachOut Worcester, please submit a completed registration form and payment in full.

Fees

2 to 6 Participants: \$150 group fee plus \$45 per person, including adult leaders.

7 or more Participants: \$150 group fee plus \$35 per person including adult leaders.

These fees are directed toward:

- 1) Stipends for the Guides (adults who are currently experiencing homelessness and/or have experienced it in the past), supplies, and the ecclesiastical cross that each ReachOut Worcester participant receives at the conclusion of the program;
- 2) The vital programs that Worcester Fellowship provides for and with people in need. For more information on these programs and services, please see <http://www.worcesterfellowship.org/>

Cancellation Policy

30 days or more before the event: Full Refund

7 – 29 days before the event, we will refund \$25 for each cancellation*

Cancellation within 7 days of the event will not be refunded {Substitutions are welcome in lieu of cancelling.}

Scholarship

If the ReachOut Worcester fee would create a hardship for individuals or for your organization as a whole, please submit a request via email to mary@wamsworks.org explaining the situation, and requesting a specific amount of scholarship assistance.

Meeting

Groups interested in attending ReachOut Worcester are encouraged to contact Mary Robbins at mary@wamsworks.org to arrange an opportunity for you to learn more about ROW first-hand in your home setting. If needed, an orientation meeting for group leaders will be also be offered at WAMS (6 Institute Road, Worcester), shortly before the event.

Adult Leaders and Permission Slips

We recommend one adult leader per five or six students, urging that clergy, parents and outreach leaders may all be represented. If your school or church requires permission slips, please arrange to collect them for yourselves. We do not require permission slips. Church groups should be led by adults who have completed Safe Church / preventing abuse & sexual misconduct (youth) training, just as our staff has done.

Please see the following 2 pages for Packing List and Program Schedule

Packing List

Personal Items:

Participants should wear and bring warm, comfortable (and waterproof) clothing and footwear in preparation for possible extended outdoor time in bad weather.

Personal supplies should include toothpaste/ toothbrush, a sleeping bag, mat or air mattress, pillow and a hand towel. A small flashlight is also recommended. There are no shower facilities.

Please do not bring iPods, hair dryers, or other gadgets that might be lost or cause a distraction. If youth bring cell phones, please do not turn them on during the program.

Items to be brought By All Groups

- ⊗ Snacks and *caffeine-free* soda/juice for sharing on Friday night.
- ⊗ Enough soft pastries/ muffins/ bagels and juice to feed the number of people in your group plus 5 others (staff/ Guides) during breakfast on Saturday
- ⊗ Enough sandwich-makings, soda/juice, cookies, etc. to feed the number of people in your group plus 5 others (staff/ Guides) during lunch on Saturday.
- ⊗ 20 “care packages” -- Travel-size toiletries (e.g. shampoo, deodorant, lotion, Chapstick, toothpaste, toothbrush, shaving cream/ disposable razors, tampons**), new and/or gently used hats and/or gloves, and NEW white men’s’ socks.
- ⊗ Banner Makings – large piece of felt, dowel, buttons, felt paint, beads, etc., to decorate your banner, Glue gun or other glue.

** DO NOT bring aftershave or mouthwash containing alcohol.

Program Schedule

Friday Evening

7:00 pm Meet at All Saints Church, 10 Irving Street Worcester. Arrive having already eaten dinner. There is plenty of parking in the lot at the back entrance.

8:00 pm Program begins with an ice breaker activity, an introduction to Worcester Fellowship, and an overview of the ReachOut Worcester program. Guides then share their stories.

10:00 pm Intentional, prayerful walk through the center of Worcester led by ReachOut Worcester staff and Guides.

10:30 pm Meet behind City Hall; participate in a modified service in keeping with the Worcester Fellowship (Sunday afternoon) service format, either there or back at All Saints.

11:30 pm *Lights out and silence* (LEADERS – we count on you to monitor your group / urge their respect of this request. That said some may wish to bring earplugs).

Saturday

6:30 am Wake up, pack up and carry personal belongings and all food and other materials needed for the day to your car.

7:00 am Breakfast at All Saints / Final clean up

7:30 am Street Outreach

11:30 am Eat lunch while sharing reflections upon the ReachOut Worcester experience and Next Steps

12:00 – 1:00 Banner-making and prayer-writing

1:00 - 1:30 Sharing of Banners, Prayer and Closing Ceremony (distribution of Ecclesia cross to each new ROW participant (please be prepared to stay for 15 extra minutes to help with any final clean up).

Please note that it is IMPORTANT that everyone stay for the entire session. It is disruptive to have individuals or groups leave early, so please try to avoid this if at all possible. If you absolutely have to leave early, please notify us before your arrival.

Next Steps/ After ReachOut Worcester

1) Share the Experience:

All participants are encouraged to arrange to share their ReachOut Worcester experience in an upcoming worship service, youth group meeting, community forum, etc.

2) Learn More / Help to Educate Others

Worcester Fellowship ministers are available to preach in your church and/or to lead discussions about homelessness. We will often bring one or two members of our community. Please **email** office@worcesterfellowship.org to schedule.

The Worcester Area Mission Society Service Learning Program consists of online learning tools and hands-on programming. For more information see www.wamsworks.org.

3) Get Involved in Our Ministry

Worcester Fellowship invites churches, families, individuals, or small groups of up to 15 people to volunteer to make the lunch we serve before our worship each Sunday. We hope that your group will stay and join us for lunch and worship (if so, please bring extras). To sign up as a Lunch Provider, please **email** office@worcesterfellowship.org.

The Worcester Area Mission Society offers a variety of programs for you to make a difference. These include summer work camps in Worcester to develop quality rental housing; direct service opportunities with the Goddard Summer School program; and our Sustainable Massachusetts Initiative, which facilitates public policy idea-sharing aimed at reducing homelessness and poverty. For more information see www.wamsworks.org or email mary@wamsworks.org.

4) Get Involved in Your Community:

Every community has poverty, even if it's not as visible as it is in downtown Worcester. Look for ways to help in your own community.