

Name _____

Community Service Opportunities Around Ithaca Related to Poverty

Here are a few places where you might volunteer to help combat poverty, some involving direct charity and others aimed more at social action / change; there are many more, but this is a beginning. It can be tricky to find the right spot, so please email or call me if you want help. My contact information is at the end of this list.

1. **Loaves and Fishes** – This is a community kitchen that serves many, many people lunch and dinner. You could volunteer anywhere from 3:30 – 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday and/or Thursday. Call 272-5457. If you don't hear back, stop by and see if they need your help; it is located at 210 N. Cayuga Street in the back of the Episcopal Church. It is important to stay to eat so as to be part of the community and get to know others.
2. **Food Pantries** – There are *many, many* food pantries that help many working people take care of their families here in our community, from downtown to Danby to West Hill. One great place to help is the Caroline Food Pantry – contact Pat Brhel at 539-9928. (Pat is also the contact for the Brooktondale Community Center, which helps with other issues related to poverty besides only food, such as clothing drives, etc.) But you can find out about many other pantries by checking out - <http://friendshipdonations.org/pantry-schedule/> or contact me (Jon Raimon) at 279-4881 and I will help you find a pantry that works for you.
3. **Enfield Community Center** – home for a food pantry, community programs, and more. Contact Jean Owens at 273-5682. Center is located at 182 Enfield Main Road.
4. **Foodnet Meals on Wheels** feeds folks on a fixed economy, especially the elderly, by delivering meals to their homes. The agency is located at 2422 N. Tripphammer Road. Call 266-9461 to volunteer.
5. **Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services** provides support to those in need of moderate and low income housing. There are sometimes physical jobs, such as demolition and painting, but they may have office work and other tasks, too. 115 W. Clinton. Phone # 277-4500. <http://www.ithacanhs.org/>
6. **Community Building Works!** – This group builds green, affordable housing, locally and internationally, using volunteer labor. They have weekend shifts to help with building right downtown – contact Shelia Squire at ssquier@twcny.rr.com or at 227-1184.
7. **Habitat for Humanity** – this group builds housing for people who need it. There is an Ithaca High Club or you can also just contact the organization on your own -- Christy at 607 898-4148 or check out the website at <http://tchabitat.com/>
8. **Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga** helps folks in need in many ways, from supplying clothes to teaching about nutrition to helping recent immigrants. 272 – 5062. 324 W. Buffalo St. <http://www.catholiccharitiestt.org/volunteer.html>. This is GREAT place to volunteer, and they are very open to all folks; religion is not an issue.
9. **West Hill Community Garden at Linderman Creek** – gardens to help supply healthy food to people on low incomes and to bring the community together. (There is a similar garden

project in Caroline – see contact info that in #2). For the Linderman Creek garden project, contact Marnie Kirchgessner at 273-1721 Ext 136 or Mkirchgessner@town.ithaca.ny.us

10. **Ithaca Health Alliance** – helps provide health care to those without insurance; there may be fundraising or clerical (paper work) tasks that need to be done. <http://www.ithacahealth.org/>
11. **Southern Tier AIDS Program** – provides services to those with HIV / AIDS and education to prevent HIV / AIDS. They have annual fund raising events, as well great educational programs. 501 South Meadow Street (607) 273-6280. I included this because many people with AIDS / HIV are not on a solid economic footing.
12. **Cancer Resource Center** is an innovator in providing support to individuals and their loved ones facing cancer. Contact Sharon Kaplan at sharon@crcl.net or 277-0960 ext. 229. They have a huge fundraising walk / run in October; but there are ways to get involved in the spring, too. But if you want to focus primarily on poverty issues, one staff member, **Kerry Quinn**, works on outreach to people with cancer who are also struggling with economic issues. Kerryquinn3@gmail.com
13. **Temples, Churches and Mosques** – If you belong to a religion, there is a good chance your temple, church or mosque somehow supports those in need in your community. Just ask the people leading your congregation. If you do not belong to a religion, that is fine. As you see from this list, there are so many ways to volunteer.
14. **Red Cross** – the Ithaca branch of the Red Cross (including the club at Ithaca High) is a great place to volunteer; they help with disaster relief, homelessness (The Friendship Center), blood drives, and much more. 273-1900.
15. **Senior Citizens** – How does this relate to poverty? Many older people are on a fixed income and often live in poverty. Below I note places that especially help those who are both elderly and in tough economic circumstances. There are many nursing homes and living centers for senior citizens in Ithaca, as well as the Office for the Aging. Visiting makes a huge difference to older folks; in addition to just chatting, you can also play music, do artwork, and read aloud. Instead of listing all the nursing homes, I will highlight one, but know that you can contact me to help you find one closer to your home. **Beechtree** is a nursing home that helps people from all walks of life, including folks who cannot always afford some of the swankier nursing homes. It is right downtown on 318 S. Albany St. Contact Beth Coveney at bcoveney@beechtreecarecenter.org / 273-4166, ext. 118
16. **Tompkins Community Action** – human service agency that works on housing, early education such as Head Start, and more. <http://www.taction.org/> or 273-8816, 701 Spencer Road. Check out their website and see if a program interests you.
17. **After School Programs** - Many after school programs focus on kids in need. Some are listed below: Most schools and community centers have programs for little kids; this includes tutoring, playing, art, sports, etc. You can find your own way to help. You would be able to help from 4 – 5:30 p.m., as they wrap up the day. You can call the school or agency (#s in the phone book or on the Web), but if you have any trouble, please contact me at jraimon@twcny.rr.com or 279-4881. However, I will list a few just to get you started.
 - BJM Academic Plus Program – Marie – 274-2209
 - Enfield After School Program – Vera – 274- 2221

- Greater Ithaca Activity Center – Jenna – 272-3622
- Caroline After School Program - 539-7422
- West Village 4-H Program (great one and really needs folks this spring) – Matt at Cooperative Extension – mry7@cornell.edu / 272-2292
- Advantage After School Program Boynton and Dewitt Middle School 273-8816 ext 102 – through TC Action
- Belle Sherman After School Program - Terra – 274-2206, especially if you wish to work with ESL students

18. **Family Reading Partnership.** The FRP promotes literacy and a love of reading for the whole community. They have a big book fest in the fall but other events and ways to get involved during the whole year. Contact Katrina Morse at 277-8602. This links to poverty because literacy is critical to doing well in school and all that flows for that in terms of jobs, economic security, college, and so forth.

19. **Drop In Children’s Center** – help with pre-school age children, especially after school. Ask for the volunteer coordinate at 272-7117. You do need finger prints for a childcare background check, but this done free. The need is great, especially from 4 – 5:30.

20. **Tompkins County Immigrant Rights Coalition** – working to support the rights of immigrants and immigration reform. <http://tcirc.wordpress.com/> This is a fairly new group and they are working hard to reform national laws, as well as helping individuals here in our community.

21. **Prison Express** – This links to poverty because most prisoners come from impoverished or tough economic backgrounds. This is a program set up to help prisoners remain connected to what they call the “free world” and to do their best to better themselves through reading, art, poetry and simple human contact. The program helps to send books and letters to prisoners throughout the country, as well as provide newsletters about topics important to them. Tasks include typing in poetry, packing books, corresponding with prisoners (with parental approval), creating newsletters, and more. It is located at Cornell’s Anabel Taylor Hall in the Durland’s Alternative Library. The contact is Gary Fine: 255-6486 or gmf5@cornell.edu

22. **OAR** - Opportunities, Alternatives, and Resources of Tompkins County Inc. This group supports people who are incarcerated here in Tompkins County. 518 W. Seneca Street, Ithaca, NY 14850 Phone: 607-272-7885. <http://www.oartompkins.com/>

23. **Southside Community Center** offers program on everything from nutrition to computers; they have many programs for little kids, but also a food pantry, cultural programming, music education, and much more. There is particular focus on celebrating the African American culture; all are welcome. 273-4190

24. **The Village at Ithaca** – supporting equity in education here in Ithaca. Great place to get involved. <http://www.villageatithaca.org/> This is a great organization that combines hands on work, such as tutoring, with political efforts and raising awareness.

25. **SIFE Program** (Students with Interrupted Formal Education) has great after school settings at West Village and Belle Sherman. Many of the students are from other countries and

English is not their first language. West Village contact is Matt Yaeger - mry7@cornell.edu; Belle Sherman contact is Suzie Schlough -- scs45@cornell.edu.

26. **Worker's Center** – supports the rights of workers through political action, like petitions, and raising general awareness. 115 The Commons – 269-0409. You need to be persistent because they have few staff, but it is a great place to help if labor issues matter to you.
27. **Multicultural Resource Center** – this organization promotes understanding among groups from different cultures; they sometimes have projects and events where you might be able to volunteer. Contact Liz or Audrey at 272-2292. This links to poverty to the extent that bias, racism, and social class are often intermingled.
28. **Hunger Action Network** - is a statewide anti-hunger coalition that combines grassroots organizing at the local level with state level research, education and advocacy to address the root causes of hunger, including poverty. <http://www.hungeractionnys.org/> This involves lobbying and other political action. You can also check out frag.org, which provides information on national campaigns to fight hunger and poverty.
29. **Big Brother / Big Sister Program** – If you are staying around Ithaca for a few years, this is a profound way to make a difference in a child's life, and the children often come from tough economic circumstances. It is a huge responsibility. 273-8364.
30. **Women's Opportunity Center** - The Women's Opportunity Center is a local non-profit organization dedicated to helping women and men overcome obstacles to gain employment. Volunteer opportunities include clerical work, sales in their used clothing store, help on computer classes, etc. (607) 272-1520 or drop an email to info@womensopportunity.org
31. **Use your own passion / skills** – you can offer your skills for fundraising, teaching (e.g., guitar, painting, etc.), creating murals about economic justice, and so on. If you want to brainstorm on finding your own path, just email or call. See below.

If you feel stuck and want guidance, I can try to help. Please contact me (Jon Raimon) at jraimon@twcny.rr.com or 279-4881.