

LV Alumni Survey FAQs & Responses

Staying Connected

- 1.1 I'd like to have a contact list of the LV alumni in my area for the purposes of connecting. Would that be possible?

*Being able and empowered to connect with fellow LV alumni is an important first step to strengthening our LV Alumni Association (LVAA). At the same time, we also feel a responsibility to protect the privacy of LV alumni contact information. For now, the best way to invite fellow LV alumni to reconnect is through a mutual friend or through the LV staff. If there is an alumnus/alumna with whom you've lost touch, please let **Peter (ptooher@cbconf.org)** know and we'll seek to reconnect you. If you would like to issue an invitation to all of the LV alumni in your local area, we invite you to ask **Peter (ptooher@cbconf.org)** to send out a targeted message to our alumni within the radius of a certain zip code. Together we can evaluate for the future new and more robust systems that will make the contact information of fellow LV alumni more readily available to you while still safeguarding privacy. To that end, your wisdom and suggestions as alumni are welcome.*

- 1.2 I think it would be great if we had opportunities to associate with the Brothers. I miss their advice, conversation, and overall presence in my life. Would that be possible?

*Great ways to reconnect with the Brothers include visiting a local Lasallian ministry, contacting and forming a relationship with a current LV who lives with Brothers, or rekindling a relationship you may have had with Brothers during your LV experience. Similar to reconnecting with an LV alumnus/alumna, if there is a Brother with whom you've lost touch, please let **Peter (ptooher@cbconf.org)** know and we'll seek to reconnect you.*

- 1.3 I enjoy the times when Br. Ed comes to Minneapolis and we gather LVs together. Those times are always very fun. Would it be possible to promote these types of gatherings?

One of the LV Staff's goals in the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Strategic Plan and our own staff goals is to make a concerted effort to engage alumni during our travel and site visits. In addition to simply gathering people together, our hope is that through these conversations and shared experiences we will be sowing the seeds for the LVAA to continue growing and developing into the future.

- 1.4 Availability has gotten in the way of some of my involvement in recent years and my participation in other events would be dependent upon dates, times, and locations. How can I stay connected?

As time passes since our own volunteer experiences and as we've observed time pass since the volunteer experiences of other LV alumni, one of the greatest challenges to staying strongly

associated are the seasons of life and higher-priority commitments that can affect one's availability and involvement. We do well to acknowledge this reality while continuing to call one another back to association through invitation. All of the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) initiatives are unlikely to reach every single LV alumnus/alumna; however, by offering a breadth and diversity of initiatives, we hope that something will align with the interests and availability of as many alumni as possible. Recalling that this is an organic movement, open to the Spirit of where each of us and all of us will lead it – if you have an idea, we invite you to share it with your fellow alumni or the LV staff and make it happen!

- 1.5 I'm located in an area of the country or the world in which there are no current LVs or LV alumni. How can I stay connected?

One of the LV alumni who responded to the survey contributed a perspective worth sharing: "Unfortunately I live in Northern MN and feel pretty disconnected from other Lasallians in MN. I would welcome the opportunity to use Skype or some other method to communicate with a current volunteer and would gladly travel (with my family or without) to a state or national alumni retreat or to work with current volunteers. Luckily I get to take several of my students on a service trip to Chicago each year and we work with the Brother David Darst Center and so I get to have ongoing communication and connection with a Lasallian organization and a Brother there."

*If you would like to mentor a current LV, please e-mail **Peter** (ptooher@cbconf.org) for more information. Skype and other technologies make distance less of an obstacle than in the past.*

The LVs also have online communities on Facebook and Twitter that enable connections to continue online.

If you are distant, but travel to a city or area with other alumni, reach out in advance.

LV Alumni can also collaborate from long-distance to plan retreats or reunions of LVs – the 2011 LV Orientation was planned with the help of an LV alumna living several hundred miles away!

Finally, you can expect that this reality of our associative group will continue to be a topic of conversation and discernment – especially as the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) comes together and carries the voices of more LV alumni.

LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Initiatives

- 2.1 I think it is important to connect the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) with the LV Advisory Board (LVAB) as soon as possible. Are there plans to do this?

Exploring a leadership structure for the LVAA is one of the tasks that will begin this year within the

LVAA Strategic Plan. An initial idea worth exploring is the creation of an LVAA Committee with the Committee Chair holding a seat on the LVAB ex officio.

- 2.2 Has the LV cookbook ever been created? I got emails about it multiple times in the past and submitted recipes but never saw anything about the actual book.

*Yes, an LV cookbook was created under the leadership of Jillian Szczpaniak-Gillece, LV 03-05. We have one copy in the LV office, which we could make available electronically, or we can offer hard copies at cost. Please e-mail **Peter** (ptooher@cbconf.org) if you're interested.*

- 2.3 I would purchase LV swag, such as clothing, mugs, window stickers, etc. Can that be made available to LV alumni?

*We have made LV gear available to alumni periodically via e-mail announcements, most recently in the summer / fall of 2011. At present, the best way to inquire about LV gear is by contacting **Peter** (ptooher@cbconf.org) to inquire about inventories. Into the future, creating new LV "swag" could be done well with input from the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Committee and then made available to all via our website.*

- 2.4 What are some of the things that LV alumni are already doing to stay connected to the Lasallian mission and contribute to the program?

Survey respondents shared the following ideas and experiences: "I have spoken with potential LVs and encouraged them to serve." "I helped with the race in Memphis and many years ago in Philly." "I run a co-ed softball team that plays in a church league in New York City and I always try to recruit current and past LVs in the NYC area to play. The winner of the season chooses a charity to send a \$1500-\$2000 check provided by the league sponsor and I have made the Lasallian Volunteers my charity of choice."

Among the initiatives in the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Strategic Plan is the sharing and lifting up of successful ways LV alumni are staying connected and continuing to contribute to Lasallian Volunteers. While the forum for this sharing remains to be seen, this exchange can hopefully provide ideas and inspiration for other LV alumni to join or replicate in other parts of the country.

- 2.5 I think it would be great if we were notified each time there was an LV event in my area - or even within a 300 mile radius. I would still love to serve and I think you would be surprised at the people who would turn up. And even if we cannot attend each event, I would definitely contribute goods or monetarily. Would that be possible?

*If you are aware of a Lasallian or LV event in your area or region, and would like to inform other LV alumni within a certain radius, please e-mail **Peter** (ptooher@cbconf.org) as soon as you set a date for the event. While the LV Staff is judicious about when and how often they e-mail LV*

alumni, we are very open to sending a targeted e-mail to inform and invite LV alumni in your area to come together. Similarly, we strive to do this proactively as a Staff when we are aware of current Lasallian or staff-organized events.

- 2.6 I think it would be great if we had bi-annual service days at local Lasallian ministry sites. Would that be possible?

This is one of the ideas that we on the LV Staff may try to implement or catalyze in the first year of the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Strategic Plan, taking advantage of a city where there are many LV alumni, current LVs, and a service site with a strong Lasallian connection.

- 2.7 I think it would be great if we had local fundraising events, outings (such as sporting events), and retreats. Would that be possible?

In addition to invitations when LV Staff are in town, a goal of the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Strategic Plan is to develop local chapters of LV alumni who can carry forward local activities outside of the Staff's limited presence, and who are in touch with the realities of the alumni and offerings of the local area. The growth of many of these events – local fundraisers, social outings, and retreat – will likely correlate with the development of these empowered and supported local LV alumni chapters and/or Lasallian associative groups.

- 2.8 I think it would be great if we had an NCAA tournament pool with money going to the LVs. It would be a good way to connect with those former LV's from your year that realistically you are not going to call or see in person. Would that be possible?

This is one of the ideas that we on the LV Staff may try to implement or catalyze in the first year of the LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Strategic Plan, targeting alumni to lead the organization of tournament pools within the various districts of the region. The event could also have the potential to promote fundraising for the program, inviting a monetary donation to the LVs in place of an entry fee.

- 2.9 I think it would be great if we had job, networking, and professional development opportunities through the LV Alumni Association (LVAA). Would that be possible?

Leveraging the LV Alumni network to promote jobs, networking, and professional development opportunities is something that already takes place, often informally. The LV staff has periodically sent e-mails with job postings to LV alumni in the past. In order to be respectful of e-mail quantities and expand these offerings, an alternative could be to take advantage of the social media capabilities on LinkedIn to create an LVAA group that would feature an always accessible job bank, networking opportunities, and pool of professional development resources. As a result of the feedback on this survey, exploring the capabilities of LinkedIn will be annexed as an initiative

within the LVAA Strategic Plan within the next 1-2 years.

- 2.10 I think it would be great if we could offer continuing formation for LV alumni, similar to the Lasallian Leadership (LLI) and Buttimer Institutes. Or national retreats and periodic reunions for LV alumni. Would that be possible?

Continuing formation, national reunions, and retreats have the potential to be quite powerful, and like many things within the Lasallian world, can be done well by partnering with the experiences, dreams, and initiatives that other Lasallian institutions are also pursuing. At this time, the most prudent course of action seems to be to share these desires with the Christian Brothers Conference that leads formation programs such as LLI and Buttimer – and to offer these visions and opportunities for an LV Alumni Association (LVAA) Committee to consider and plan, with support from the LV Staff.

Practicality

- 3.1 I've participated in all of the proposed ideas over the years, but there was never enough time to do them well.

Lasallian Volunteers is well described as an “ever-expanding movement.” Notice how this contrasts with being solely a one or two year volunteer experience. Our LV experience does not end and we are not stripped of being Lasallian Volunteers on the last day at our service site, or when we say our goodbyes to the building that was the home of our community. As such, we have a call to remain connected to and invested in one another.

As a Staff, we are mindful that a lack of time and resources has stifled some of these efforts in the past. Mindful of that reality and other scarcities that exist, the LV Staff and Advisory Board chose strategically to expand the staff to five people – one of whom is responsible for alumni outreach and enables the rest of the Staff also dedicate time and energy to alumni initiatives.

All of this is a process and part of the growth that characterizes a vibrant, “ever-expanding movement.” At this moment in time, your participation and your voice as LV alumni are particularly relevant and needed. We invite you to be the hands and feet, the hearts and minds that make this vision a reality.

- 3.2 I have offered my support in the past in many ways, but after being turned down, hearing about events in my area after they occurred, and receiving a less than welcoming response, I stopped trying. I truly miss the Lasallian community, but would be cautious about getting involved.

Feedback like this really calls us to task as members of the LV community – both from a staff perspective and a fellow alumnus/alumna perspective.

From a staff perspective, we see that there is a longing to remain connected and continue strengthening the bonds and growth that takes place in community. We're making alumni engagement a priority and dedicating unprecedented time and resources in order to give it the attention and care it deserves.

From an alumnus/alumna perspective, we see that our fellow alumni wish to associate with us. If we too feel inspired to carry forward and promote this association, we can act by... praying for and learning about the work done by LVs currently... by leading or joining a local Lasallian associative group... by carrying the awareness of our fellow Lasallians with us and inviting them to join us as we build community in personal, family, professional, and spiritual lives... and many other ways that the Spirit may speak to you.

As noted before, the vision of Lasallian Volunteers is to be an "ever-expanding movement" that only adds people to it, and we hope that anyone who feels cautious or marginalized in the past will take up this invitation to reconnect – and if not on this invitation, then on the future invitations that will be offered or a standing invitation that endures.