

CHRISTIAN  BROTHERS  
CONFERENCE  
LASALLIAN REGION OF NORTH AMERICA  
RÉGION LASALLIENNE DE L'AMÉRIQUE DU NORD

February 15, 2022

Dear Lasallian family,

We recently shared with you our difficult decision to bring the Lasallian Volunteers program to a close at the conclusion of the 2021-2022 service year. The intent of our first letter was to share our decision directly with you in a timely manner. Now, we are writing with additional information.

As Visitors, we are ultimately responsible for the Lasallian mission in the Region. While we continue to be grateful for the contributions of the LV program, we made this decision following considerable deliberation and a study by the management consulting firm Plante Moran focused on program stability and sustainability. Based in part on this study and our deliberations, these are the key considerations that brought us to the decision to close the program:

- The institutional circumstances that the program was designed to meet have changed. The program began as a grassroots effort to provide volunteer educators to support ministries in need. Today, many of those ministries are able to hire more permanent staff members, and the Districts have substantially increased investments in the mission and ministries to the poor.
- There are fewer Brothers' communities, and the Brothers are aging. This means fewer opportunities for LVs to live in community with Brothers and to benefit from the formation and support that we hold necessary to the LV experience. Over the years, the program has worked to adapt to this reality by establishing alternate community models for LVs and Partners, and for solely LVs. Over time, the additional time and resources needed to develop and support these new models required an evaluation of the program's ability to support these changes. As Visitors, we determined that these new models were not sustainable in the current structure of the program.
- We do not have the significant resources (personnel, finances, time, etc.) required to explore appropriate forms of community life, faith development and preparation for ministry that are so vital to the program. The Regional office, which includes the Lasallian Volunteers staff, would play a leadership role in any exploration required. It is currently undergoing changes in its staffing and leadership model to better support and give life to the mission in new and creative ways. With the timing of these Regional changes, we recognize that we are not able to make significant programmatic changes to Lasallian Volunteers that would honor the program, the LVs, prospective LVs, ministries or communities.

When Lasallian Volunteers started in the 1980s, it was part of a blossoming movement of Young Lasallians, young people who were passionate about the mission, who wanted to be a part of it, who wanted to contribute and make their mark on it. That movement has evolved over the decades and has made an indelible mark on the mission. We believe the movement of Young Lasallians and Lasallian Youth will continue to grow and inspire young people to join the mission, who, in turn, will continue to move the mission forward in new and creative ways.

As such, we have the deepest gratitude for the significant contributions that volunteers and alumni of the program have made—and continue to make—to the Lasallian mission. Over the years, we have witnessed how the formative experiences LVs have had in the program have shaped their lives on many levels, from discovering their vocation as educators to developing a commitment to the mission and becoming “forever Lasallians” to taking their experiences with them on their professional and personal journeys outside of the Lasallian family. We are also grateful to those

who have walked alongside the LVs, who have welcomed them into their ministries and communities, who have donated their time, talent and treasure to support the program, and who have found themselves changed because of the LV presence in their lives.

LV staff members, present and past, have done an incredible job in supporting and accompanying Lasallian Volunteers. They've adapted to the needs of the LVs over the years, worked with a variety of ministries and have helped to form "forever Lasallians." We are grateful for the work they have done to support the Lasallian mission and our vocation as Brothers. In fact, the staff continues to support prospective LVs who were exploring serving next year, along with current LVs who were discerning a second year of service. Prospective LVs have been encouraged to explore other opportunities within the Lasallian mission internationally, as well as with other U.S.-based Catholic Volunteer Network programs. If you are in the position of hiring a young educator who has served as an LV, we invite you to be in touch with the LV staff. We are sensitive to the impact our decision has on a personal level to current LVs, prospective LVs, LV alums and LV staff.

While the closing of this chapter on our Lasallian mission is one filled with sadness, we also recognize the importance of celebrating the impact of Lasallian Volunteers. Over the course of the next few months, the program would like to share your stories and experiences and invites LV alums, Brothers and Partners to celebrate the rich experiences they had through the LV program. An invitation to get involved will be shared in the next few weeks.

As we look to the future of the mission in RELAN, we look ahead with hope. We are confident that a spirit of innovation and service will live on as the legacy of Lasallian Volunteers and will inspire future endeavors that will embrace the program's creativity and zeal.

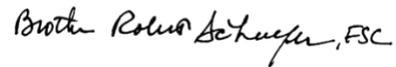
In the spirit of De La Salle,



Brother Donald Johanson, FSC  
Visitor  
District of San Francisco  
New Orleans



Brother Michael Fehrenbach, FSC  
Visitor  
Midwest District



Brother Robert Schaefer, FSC  
Visitor  
District of Eastern North America