

Appalachia Service Project Trip

June 28 – July 5 2025

GROUP LEADER (Adult) INFORMATION

please read carefully before signing up for the trip!

Since 1978, the high school youth group (SPF) at Greenfield Hill Congregational Church has participated in the Appalachia Service Project, which brings together youth from all over the country to do home repair for families in need in Central Appalachia.

But without enough adults to accompany them, this life-changing experience of service will not be possible for our kids! ASP requires two leaders for every work crew of five youth. With 235 youth on this year's trip, that's 94 adults. **If you have a heart for others, the desire to make a difference, and a week to give: we need you!** (FYI. ASP requires group leaders to be 19 or older.)

Background: In 1978, GHCC chose the Appalachia Service Project to work with because of its unique combination of several elements: valuing of teens and their ability to contribute this world, action-based Christian spirituality, and deep compassion for the impoverished people of our country. (visit www.asphome.org to learn more about ASP's history and values) As adult participants with ASP, our role is to empower teens to do God's work, to uphold and model the 'faith in action' values of ASP.

What you are about to do will not only make homes in Appalachia warmer, safer and drier ... but will enable teens in our community to grow in service, compassion and caring ... and enable you personally to build relationships – with others and with God -- in ways that you may not expect.

If you are interested in the 2025 trip –here's what to do next:

First, and very important: read through the 'Expectations' below. Know what you're getting into! Make sure that the tasks (and joys!) of an adult group leader sound like something you can do and would enjoy doing!

Next: If you're "in" – please email Alida to request the link to the required online registration process (award@greenfieldhillchurch.com) . If you are new to ASP, we will also schedule a time to talk together about the trip.

EXPECTATIONS FOR ADULT LEADERS:

Before the trip

Attend an Adult leader orientation sessions (absolutely essential – please prioritize!). These will be offered in May/June of 2025.

Comply with all Safety/Abuse Awareness requirements: This includes a background check for all adult participants, as well as Abuse Awareness training that must be completed (there will be in-person and online options). These are required by ASP, JMU, and Greenfield Hill Church!

During the trip

Overall: ASP Group Leaders don't have to be stern disciplinarians ... but we *will* be counting on you to help us make sure the week runs well for everyone. We count on our adults to be people who will offer interest, support and friendship to the kids, who make sure things at each worksite are going as smoothly as possible, who will ensure that the kids are following ASP's expectations and rules, and who will lead by example—by being a part of the work that goes on and by sharing your enthusiasm.



One important note: there is no drinking on the ASP trip. This is a dry week for all participants, for myriad reasons: For safety, for ASP's relations with the communities, for what we are modeling to our youth!

Specifics:

Your work crew: On the trip, **you and your assigned partner** will be overseeing and encouraging a work crew of five youth. These crews are put together by me (Alida) in early June, with each crew being a mix of kids from different grades and schools who do not already know each other well. The two leaders will be providing **leadership on the work site** by organizing the tasks to be done, and ensuring everyone has meaningful work to do! **The work day is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Safety and Supervision: At all times on the trip, from departing the church until our return, you will be responsible for the shared oversight and supervision of all our teenagers. This includes sharing sleeping quarters with the kids. It also means ensuring that they are staying safe at all times – which means everything from making sure they're not leaving the work center alone, to not allowing them to engage in risky behaviors like cliff-jumping at the local swimming hole!

Driving: **Adults will be expected to help with driving**, either a minivan or a 15-passenger van (note that leaders who are under 25 are not able to drive our rental vans). You and your partner

will be responsible for a vehicle with 5 youth in it ... so a comfort level with driving is essential. There is quite a bit of time on the road especially on June 29 and July 6!

Note: Since Covid, it has been more challenging to rent all our vans as we did in the past, so we will depend on a large number of loaned vehicles – if you have a vehicle that seats 7 and would be willing to bring it along, we would welcome that!

Full Participation: All volunteers (youth and adults) are expected to participate in the ASP programs, including meals, chores, meetings, evening gatherings, etc. It's the ultimate friend-making, group-bonding experience!

Abiding by/modeling ASP's rules and expectations: At all times on the trip, from departing GHCC to return, adult leaders are expected to abide by the expectations, rules and regulations adopted by ASP for all volunteers. These can be found online at:

<http://resources.servicenetwork.com/AppServ/GroupLeaderResources/RequiredReadingAll.pdf>

All adults will have a criminal background check done by the church (you will receive a release request from Praesidium, our background check company)

Financial expectations: As the trip has grown ever larger, so has the effort required to pay for it. For each adult or youth participant, ASP charges us \$375. So, we do ask adults to donate some or all of that fee as is possible – we know that circumstances vary from person to person. You can access an online payment link at greenfieldhillchurch.com/giving

I know -- it sounds like a lot of rules and requirements!

***But what you also need to know is:
this trip is as much fun for the adults as it is for the kids, and adults
come home with new friends and incredible memories in the same way
as the kids do!***