CATHOLIC EXTENSION

Building Faith | Inspiring Hope | Igniting Change

Young Adult Leadership Initiative

Catholic Extension has partnered with Catholic universities to offer grant opportunities to young leaders aspiring to serve the Church in mission dioceses. This program enables students to gain hands-on pastoral experience while pursuing a master's degree in graduate theological education.

Mission dioceses will have the opportunity to nominate their "best and brightest" young leaders to pursue a Master of Arts in Religious Education, Theology or Pastoral Ministry from one of Catholic Extension's partnering universities, including Boston College, Fordham University, and the University of Notre Dame. In this master's degree program, students will spend part of each summer taking intensive courses on campus while working in the diocese in a supervised pastoral ministry position for the remaining part of the academic year. Students also must complete courses online throughout the year. The duration of the program varies by academic institution and ranges between 2.5 yrs and 3.5yrs, as noted below:

University of Notre Dame
Degree offered: Master of Arts in Theology.

Two-and-a-half-year degree program, including 3 summers. Students take intensive summer courses for six (6) weeks at Notre Dame's campus in South Bend, IN.
36 credit hours to earn degree

Fordham University
Degrees offered:
Master of Arts in Religious Education with a concentration in Youth and Young Adult Ministry
Master of Arts in Pastoral Care.

Two-and-a-half-year degree program, including 3 summers. Students spend ten days (10) each summer, taking intensive courses at Fordham's campus in the Bronx, NY.
36 credit hours to earn degree

Boston College
Degree offered: Master of Arts in Theology and Ministry.

Three-and-a-half-year degree program, including 3 summers. Students take intensive summer courses for six (6) weeks at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry in Boston, MA.
48 credit hours to earn degree

****Note:** The degree program at BC involves 33% more coursework and 1 additional year of study compared to other universities.

If the BC degree program is your number one choice, please contact Catholic Extension prior to submitting your request (contact info on page 3.)

At the conclusion of the degree program, the diocese (or sponsoring parish where the student ministers) will be given the option to hire those graduates who are *not already* employed in a permanent position, for which Catholic Extension would contribute an incentive grant of $10,000 toward their first year's salary.

Key Outcomes:

1) Young and academically educated lay leaders who can serve the diocese and bring creative and uplifting pastoral energy to areas where resources are scarce.
2) Through cost-sharing, there is minimal financial impact to both students and diocese.

Expected Contributions:

PARTICIPATING DIOCESE:

1) Dioceses identify and nominate students who are:
   a. Young adults (ideally age 25-35) in good academic standing, committed to and currently serving their diocese or parish community, who qualify for graduate-level education;
   b. Have a strong history of service or otherwise have built a relationship with the diocese;
   c. Have knowledge about the communities they serve and their unique cultural gifts; and
   d. Demonstrate the level of maturity and commitment needed for their assigned pastoral work

Diocese will:

2) Nominate one or more students to participate in this program.
3) Gather students with key diocesan leaders and the Bishop at least once a year, to foster collaboration and guide the formation of the student.
4) Provide meaningful pastoral and encounter opportunities and pastoral mentorship for the students during the degree program.
5) Provide assistance in identifying comfortable and safe housing for the student.
6) Diocese (or sponsoring parish) will contribute 100% of the pastoral supervision, and 33% ($5,000) of the student's annual stipend (if the student is not already employed full-time by the diocese).
7) Provide annual progress evaluations with quantitative and qualitative information, highlighting major pastoral accomplishments of students.

CATHOLIC EXTENSION:

1) If the diocese can meet all the above requirements, Catholic Extension will commit a maximum of 60% tuition, 100% of on-campus room and board, and travel. If the student is not already employed by the diocese but will be a full-time intern for the duration of the program, Catholic Extension also provides 66% ($10,000) of the annual ministerial stipend, as well as a $2,500 housing subsidy.

2) If the diocese seeks to employ the student who has been interning after graduation, Catholic Extension will contribute $10,000 to the graduate's first year of employment.
3) Catholic Extension will take primary responsibility for communicating this opportunity to the dioceses it serves.
4) Catholic Extension reserves the right to suspend a student's scholarship at any time due to poor overall academic performance.

STUDENTS:

1) Must be eligible for admission to the university, maintain a GPA above the minimum standards of the institution, and comply with all other ethical and academic requirements of the university throughout the duration of their studies.
2) Complete the program within the elected institution's timeline.
3) Cooperate with Catholic Extension's marketing team when interviews are requested.
4) Pay for 100% university application and exam fees, books and supplies, and health insurance (if not provided by diocese).
5) Are willing to live in community with other students.
6) Are willing to serve in places where they are assigned to by the diocese, which include the most under-resourced communities of the diocese.

UNIVERSITY:

1) Provides a minimum of 40% of tuition to students in this program
2) Is responsible for screening and admitting students, and reserves the right to dismiss students who fail to meet the university's academic and ethical standards
3) Provides high quality education to students, which is pastorally relevant to the students' present and future ministry

*Admission to the program is based on review and approval by Catholic Extension and the participating academic institution.

For more information, or for questions related to the Young Adult Leadership Initiative, please contact Verónica Ávila, Manager of Mission Programs, at 312.795.5128 or vavila@catholicextension.org.

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Partnership Agreement

I have read the Terms and Conditions of the Partnership Agreement and agree to uphold my individual commitment as an active partner in the Young Adult Leadership Initiative.

Click here to enter text.

Diocesan Representative First and Last Name Signature and Date

Click here to enter text.

On-Site Supervisor/Mentor First and Last Name Signature and Date

Click here to enter text.

Student First and Last Name Signature and Date