

**To: Student Leaders at Wartburg College**

**Re: IFYC's Faith in the Vaccine Ambassadors Project**

I invite you to join a cohort of leaders from across the country who are using interfaith cooperation skills to strengthen our national COVID vaccination effort and save lives.

Student leaders will work and serve in their home and/or chosen communities, particularly faith communities, throughout the summer months to advocate for and educate about the COVID vaccine. Vaccine hesitancy remains an issue in many of our communities, for many reasons, and we need you to leverage your existing connections to spread faith in the vaccine. As several national faith leaders have already acknowledged, lack of information isn't really our problem in 2021, lack of trust is. **I believe that you could be an essential bridge-builder in this pivotal moment for public health in the U.S.** Check out some of [these resources](#) that IFYC and the Religion News Service have put together to get you started thinking about the intersection of faith and the vaccine.

When you **become a Faith in the Vaccine Ambassador**, you will receive training from the Interfaith Youth Core about organizing, advocacy, effective communication, and vaccine science issues relevant to your community. **In return for your participation** in a five-hour training session in May, sustained work throughout the summer in your home and/or chosen community, bi-weekly Zoom meetings with me and our cohort of Wartburg College students, and bi-weekly written reflections/reports, all starting after the required IFYC training in May and concluding in September, you will receive \$1,500. Half of this stipend is paid directly to you after you complete the mandatory May training, and half is paid upon completion of the project in September.

**You have some freedom as to how you shape and organize your advocacy work this summer**, and it is a project that can be completed around summer jobs or other commitments. Your project might be a social media campaign, a series of small group meetings, one-on-one meetings with community leaders, a community forum, a Zoom webinar, and it is likely to be a combination of many things. You will have the opportunity to leverage your connections and skills to first discern your community's needs when it comes to increased participation in the COVID vaccine, and find creative and constructive ways to meet those needs.

I will serve as your faculty mentor and supervisor for this project, convening our cohort on a bi-weekly basis, and responding to your written reflections and reports individually. I will also seek to check in with leaders in the community sites with whom you work at least once, and whenever needed in order to best support your project.

**If you are interested, please let me know via email as soon as possible.** I need to submit the complete list of names, contact information, and W9's for our cohort before the end of April.

Once I receive your interest email, I will send you the W9 for completion, and will be in touch with dates and plans as they emerge! **I can only accept 20 students into this cohort, so please respond with your interest ASAP!**

This is an incredibly exciting and momentous opportunity for us to play a constructive role in upending the pandemic that transformed our lives in the past year. I look forward to being part of the solution with you.

*Caryn D. Risvold, Ph.D.*

*Professor of Religion*

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