



Amate House

About our Program



Who We Are

Amate House is the young adult service program of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago. Our program is dedicated to transforming the lives of young adults, and fostering leadership for the church and world. The name “amate” comes from the Latin imperative “to love”. Each year, we invite 18-20 participants to come to Chicago and put “love into action”. During their year with us, the fellows serve full-time at nonprofits and schools, live together in intentional community, and participate in a formation and leadership development program that encourages their personal, professional, and spiritual growth.



What sets Amate House apart from other service programs is the combination of programming and individualized support that fellows receive. Regular speakers, evenings of reflection, workshops, retreats, ongoing spiritual direction, and one-on-one staff support are hallmarks of the Amate House program. We aim to support and encourage our fellows to “make service a way of life,” to become more capable and compassionate leaders, to grow personally and professionally, and to make a stronger connection between their faith and their personal and professional lives. Amate House is also committed to diversity and inclusion. This is demonstrated in our ongoing work as an organization to be anti-racist, the programming and trainings the fellows participate in, and our tenant of social justice. For many of our alumni, the Amate House experience is foundational and indispensable. In a recent survey for our 35th Anniversary, we learned:

- 90% of our alumni work in helping professions (social services, education, religious/faith based work, medicine, or legal)
- 75% have earned or are pursuing a graduate degree
- 94% of our alumni agree that Amate House helped them become who they are today
- 96% of our alumni would recommend Amate House to others

Our fellows are the lifeblood of the program – they are passionate, enthusiastic, and dedicated. In this past year alone, the fellows completed over 50,000 hours of service and directly impacted the lives of over 20,000 Chicagoans. Since Amate House first opened its doors in 1984, over 800 participants have completed our program, providing service to nearly 200 agencies total.

Partners in Service

Each year, Amate House partners with schools, parishes, and social service nonprofits throughout the city of Chicago. We seek out organizations with a deep commitment to service and justice. In exchange for the services of a fellow, our partner sites pay a contribution of \$16,000, which allows Amate House to provide housing, food, transportation, health insurance, a living allowance, and ongoing staff support for the fellow communities. Our fellows work in a diverse range of fields, including:

- Teaching or assisting in classrooms
- After-school tutoring and mentoring
- Health education and outreach
- Social work and case management
- Hunger and homelessness outreach
- Legal aid
- Youth and campus ministry
- Service to the elderly
- Community organizing
- Nursing and physical therapy

Time and again, our site partners discover that Amate House fellows represent an outstanding return-on-investment. At a fraction of the cost of a traditional employee, our fellows make meaningful, impactful contributions. Our site partners consistently say that they would be unable to provide the same level of care and services to their clients without the work of their fellow. Most telling is the fact that so many of our sites have hired Amate fellows as employees after their year of service.

Fellows complete an extensive application and screening process with the Amate House staff before they enter the site placement process. During the matching process, sites have the opportunity to review resumes and conduct interviews of their own to ensure that a candidate is a good match for their organization. Both site and fellow mutually agree to a placement before it is finalized. Throughout the course of the year, our staff maintains a close relationship with each fellow and regularly checks in with site supervisors to make sure that the experience is a quality one for all parties. We boast a 95% retention rate of fellows over the past 35 years.

The best part about Amate fellows is their sincere desire for service, their loving attention to the clients we serve, and the “spark of life” they bring to the staff.

***Sr. Kathy Brazda, Former Executive Director
Taller de Jose***

Ultimately, the value of Amate House lives in the unique way our program successfully serves those in need, transforms the lives of young adults, and creates positive social change in the church and the world. In the words of one of our recent fellows, “Amate House has completely changed my life. I have become more compassionate and willing to serve in small but meaningful ways, I am less judgmental, and much closer to God.” We hope that you can join us and our fellows in our mission to put God’s love into action.



Amate House

Criteria for Fellow Service Sites

2021-2022

The criteria stated below were developed in light of the Amate House mission statement: "Amate House's mission is to develop young adult leaders into life-long social justice advocates who serve their communities while deepening their faith. Amate House aspires to build a more just and loving society through leadership development for the Church and the world.."

To be considered for site placement, a site must be willing to provide or be committed to...

- **Full-Time Service:** Amate House fellows are expected to serve an average of 40 hours per week. Fellows should start work at their service sites on **August 16, 2021** and complete their service term on **June 3, 2022**.
- **Service to the poor or marginalized:** The site must serve a community that would benefit from the assistance of a fellow in providing its service or ministry. The site must clearly demonstrate its service to people at or below the poverty level or to a defined marginalized population. The site must also be working within Chicago city limits or in the adjacent suburbs.
- **Direct Service or Community Involvement:** The site must offer a placement and job description involving at least 80% direct service/ministry or direct community involvement (as opposed to clerical tasks). Direct service is activity that addresses education, health, public safety, the environment, or other human needs. Direct service means working directly with people (clients, beneficiaries, communities, etc.) to make a tangible impact. It can be outreach, case management, training, teaching, tutoring, mediating, cleaning, counseling, recruiting volunteers, completing administrative tasks that facilitate client care, preparing for class, coaching, listening, cooking, serving, providing health care, food or clothing. Fellows may also perform capacity-building activities as direct service that improve the organizational and financial capability of nonprofit organizations and communities to meet those local needs by achieving greater organizational efficiency and effectiveness, greater impact and quality of impact, stronger likelihood of successful replicability, or expanded scale. Examples of capacity-building activities include but are not limited to:
 - enlisting, training, or coordinating volunteers
 - conducting outreach & securing resources in support of service activities that meet specific needs in the community
 - conducting research, mapping community assets, or gathering other information that will strengthen the sponsoring organization's ability to meet community needs
 - developing organizational systems to improve efficiency and effectiveness (not clerical work)

Please note: as a program of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, Amate House fellows cannot distribute contraception or teach students or clients about how to use it.

- **Detailed Position Description:** The site must prepare and submit a detailed position description as part of the site application. This description shall identify a position title and general duties and responsibilities specific to the fellow at their site. Sites with multiple positions available must provide a detailed description of each position. It is expected that these position descriptions will not change significantly without consultation with Amate House and the fellow. If for some reason significant changes do occur to a position, the Amate House program formation coordinator must be notified as soon as possible.
- **Flexibility:** The site must be willing to be listed as a possible service option on the Amate House service site list and participate in the interviewing of potential fellows without a guarantee of having a fellow. Due to our site placement process, which requires that both the site and the fellow mutually agree to a placement, it is possible that a site may not receive an Amate House fellow every year.
- **Site Supervisor Orientation:** All site supervisors are required to attend an orientation meeting in summer 2021. At this meeting, Amate House program staff will present a calendar for the year (including dates that fellows will need to be excused from work), policies and procedures, and discuss best practices for supporting and working with the fellows.
- **Orientation/On-boarding:** A comprehensive orientation for the fellow must be planned and implemented by the site supervisor or other staff members upon the fellow's arrival in August. Onboarding should include introducing the fellow to their coworkers, orientation to daily duties and responsibilities, clarifying expectations for the year, reviewing any applicable organizational policies that the fellow will be expected to follow, instructions on how to request vacation and sick days, and discussion of any modifications to the original position description.
- **Supervision:** The site agrees to provide a direct supervisor who will provide ongoing support and development of the fellow. The site supervisor identified must be committed to the terms outlined in this document and be willing to work with Amate House staff in supporting the fellow and their experience in the program. Site supervisors are expected to meet formally with the fellow on an ongoing basis to discuss performance, concerns, needs, challenges, and goals. Amate House strongly recommends biweekly supervision meetings. For school sites that list the principal as the site supervisor, or any site that the listed site supervisor will not have time to regularly meet with their fellow, Amate House requires assigning an

additional teacher or staff mentor for the fellow. This mentor should be introduced to the fellow upon their arrival to their site.

- **Workspace.** An adequate workspace must be identified at the school or organization where the fellow serves.
- **Site Visits.** The site supervisor and fellow should be available to meet twice a year with an Amate House staff member. These meetings provide an opportunity to reflect on the fellow's experience of service, and ensure that the fellow is receiving adequate support.
- **Professional Growth/Leadership Development:** The site must show an interest in providing opportunities for the personal and professional growth and leadership development of the fellow.
- **A Financial Commitment:** The site must be able to pay a site contribution in exchange for the services of a fellow. These contributions assist Amate House in providing housing, food, health insurance, and other resources for our fellows. Standard site contributions are \$16,000 per fellow, per program year. If your fellow has an advanced/skilled degree (i.e. R.N., Physical Therapist, L.C.S.W.) the site contribution is \$19,000/year. For fellows with scheduled remote hours, there is an additional \$100 work from home fee. This fee covers expenses such as office supplies, printing, and improved Wi-Fi quality.
- **Amate House Commitments:** In addition to full-time service, fellows live in intentional community and participate in faith formation throughout the program year. These commitments include weekday community dinners, Wednesday evening community nights, fall and winter retreats, and three in-service days throughout the year. Sites are expected to work with their fellow and the Amate House staff to ensure the fellow's full participation in the program experience, including early dismissals or excused absences when necessary. A full calendar of commitments will be provided to sites prior to the beginning of the program year so that sites can plan accordingly.
- **Work Hours.** Amate House fellows are expected to serve an average of 40 hours per week. Evening hours extending past 7:00pm should not occur more than once per week. Due to the weekly community night commitment, fellows are expected to arrive at their home no later than 4:30pm on Wednesdays. Additionally, fellows should not work more than one weekend per month, and for those sites that require regular weekend hours, a fellow should not be required to work more than one day per weekend. If a site requires the fellow to work outside of these parameters, it should be clearly expressed in the position description and during the fellow interview.
- **Vacation/Sick Time.** The site must allow the fellow 10 days of vacation and three sick days (13 days total) during the service year. This may coincide with preexisting breaks (such as Christmas vacation for schools). Amate House asks that the fellow not be granted more than 13 days off total, regardless of the organization's policies; sick days are only used for illness and cannot be transferred to vacation days. Supervisors should notify their fellow at their orientation of the policies of the organization for requesting vacation time or reporting sick time. The site assumes the financial risk if the fellow, for medical or personal reasons (death of an immediate family member), be absent for more than the allotted 13 days. Fellows should not be expected to use vacation days for the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, and Memorial Day. If the nature of the site's work would require the fellow to work any of these holidays, that expectation should be communicated during site interviews.
- **Transportation:** Amate House provides fellows with transportation via Amate House vehicles, carpooling with other Amate House fellows, or monthly CTA passes. The site must reimburse Amate House for use of Amate House vehicles for work purposes at the current federal reimbursement rate (ex: travel within the course of the work day to a meeting or different site). This does NOT include transportation to and from work. Sites must also reimburse Amate House for a fellow's regular use of Amate House CTA passes within the workday (ex: traveling via bus or 'L' to another work site within the work day). Again, this does NOT include transportation to and from work. Please note that Amate House strongly discourages fellows from transporting clients. If this is necessary, the site must collect signed permission slips for any children under 18.
- **Conflict Mediation/Termination:** After a fellow and site have signed their respective agreements, a fellow's decision to quit that site or a site's decision to terminate a fellow must be done in consultation with the site supervisor and the Amate House program formation coordinator. The fellow and site supervisor are expected to make a good faith effort to resolve conflicts directly, if they arise. If necessary, the Amate House program coordinator will attempt to mediate any conflicts that persist, working toward an agreeable resolution for all parties involved. In the case of a fellow-site relationship that is terminated for any reason, it is expected that a pro-rated site contribution will be made to Amate House for the service rendered up to the point of the termination.
- **COVID-19:** Amate House has made a number of adjustments to minimize the risk to our fellows and the communities they serve including smaller living communities, regular testing of the fellows, hybrid programming, and limiting CTA use. We have detailed protocols outline for the fellows in the event that someone is exposed to COVID-19 or tests positive for the virus. The protocols are regularly updated to stay current with the CDC's recommendations.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Amate House is committed to anti-racism, diversity and inclusion, and expects our site partners to share these values.



Amate House

Site Interview and Placement Process

2021-2022

Service site applications are due January 15, 2021. Please submit application and job description in Microsoft word document format (.doc) to kcashman@amatehouse.org.

Once a fellow completes the Amate House portion of the interview, we begin the site placement process, which will occur on a rolling basis. Most fellows move through the complete process in two months. We anticipate the majority of the site interviews will take place from February 1- May 31, with the process continuing until all fellow positions are filled. Due to the nature of our placement process, we cannot guarantee that every site partner will have a fellow.

Please see below for an outline of the site placement process:

Potential fellows apply to Amate House	Fellow applicants submit a written application, provide references and are interviewed by Amate House staff. After they complete this application process they are notified of their status (accepted, waitlisted, or denied.) Those who are accepted will receive a list of available sites that fit their interests and skills.
Fellows select three sites they are interested in working with	Applicants will review the job descriptions provided by the site partners. They will then select three sites they are interested in interviewing with. Amate House staff will connect the fellow with the site supervisor by email to schedule an interview. Sites will be provided with the applicant’s resume and personal statement before the interview. In the past these interviews happened in person or over zoom. However, in light of COVID-19 we have moved to an entirely remote interview process.
Site partners interview the potential fellow	Applicants will interview with the prospective site supervisors. This interview is a time for the site supervisor to evaluate the candidate as well as share information about the position and the organization itself. (See “Suggestions for fellow Interviews” handout for more information.)
Applicants communicate site preferences to Amate Staff	After the applicant has interviewed with all three sites they are interested in, they will discuss their site preferences with Amate House staff. The applicant will be asked to rank their first, second, and third choice for placement.
Sites give feedback to Amate staff on the applicant	Amate House staff will reach out to the site supervisors after discussing the applicant’s site preferences. Sites will also provide feedback to Amate House regarding their impressions of the potential fellow. If either a site or an applicant objects to a potential match, that option will be removed from consideration. If the site would like to have the applicant as their Amate House fellow, Amate House staff will extend the offer to the applicant.
If the fellow and site agree, the fellow is officially placed with the site partner	The applicant is given about three business days to decide if they would like to accept or decline the site placement offer. Once the applicant decides, Amate House staff will be in touch with the site partner. If the applicant accepts the offer, the fellow’s service site will be notified and a site financial agreement will be sent. If they decline the offer, the site’s position will remain open for other Amate House applicants.

The rolling application process can make this timeline seem unpredictable. We will be working diligently to find the best candidate for you. We also recognize the important of knowing if you will have a fellow. Throughout this process we will work in a in a timely manner to move fellows through our process and update you on applicants that have expressed interest in your site.

Due to the nature of our site placement process, we cannot guarantee that all sites will receive a fellow.

Amate House fellows will begin work on August 16, 2021 and end on June 3, 2022.
 If you have any questions about the site placement process, please don’t hesitate to contact
 Katie Cashman at kcashman@amatehouse.org or call the office at 773.376.2445.



Amate House

Suggestions for Fellow Interviews

2021-2022

In response to a few requests from our service sites, here are some recommendations for your site interviews with our Amate House fellows. They will be screened first through an extensive interview process with the Amate House staff. In these interviews we are looking for leadership abilities, interpersonal skills, and their interest in living out our values of faith, community, service, stewardship, and social justice. Site interviews are your opportunity to assess if the fellow has the professional skills needed to be a good fit for your organization. It is good practice for them as young professionals to be interviewed at their service sites as if they were applying to be a regular employee.

Prior to your interview, you will receive the following materials from Amate House:

- The fellow's resume
- The fellow's personal statement from their Amate House application

If you wish to request any additional materials, such as a writing sample or college transcript, please indicate this in the placement information section of your site application.

Communicate your mission, your work culture, and how they will contribute to your work.

Information to Communicate During the Interview

Job duties: Fellows are most interested in knowing what their duties will be and what their work life will look like on a day to day basis. This can be difficult to explain at some service sites due to the nature of the job. We find it helpful to have them talk about this with an employee or Amate House fellow who is currently in the position or in one similar to the placement they are interviewing for. It is important to let the fellow know the degree of flexibility, autonomy, and self-direction involved in the position. Will the fellow be expected to fill in for other employees who are absent? Will the fellow have some choice in their work duties and how they accomplish them? Will the fellow be working independently most of the time or will they be doing a lot of collaborative work? It's important to clearly communicate the needs of your organization and its work style to the fellow.

Vacation policy: Amate House's vacation policy is that a fellow receives 10 vacation days and 3 sick days (13 days total), but your organization determines how those are taken. Please communicate what your policy is to the fellow. For example, schools have a set vacation time so fellows may not be able to take vacation days whenever they want.

Holidays: Amate House policy states that fellows should not be expected to use vacation days for the following holidays: Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's Day, Easter, and Memorial Day. If the fellow would be required to work any of these holidays due to the nature of the site's work, please communicate this in the placement information section of the site application, as well as the interview. Fellows working the above-listed holidays should be granted compensatory time off.

Work schedule: The position should be approximately 40 hours a week, Monday-Friday. If their position requires them to work one night a week (past 7:00pm) or on occasional weekends, make sure that is communicated during the interview. (Please note: fellows are expected to arrive home by 4:30pm on Wednesdays for community night.) If there are work from home hours, if the position is considered "essential", or if there are any other changes due to COVID, explain those expectations to the fellow.

Support systems: Explain to the fellow who will be supporting them in the work and how...is there a direct supervisor that they will be meeting with regularly? Will they be collaborating extensively with other co-workers or administrators? If they are working in a school, who would be their mentor?

Opportunities for professional growth: If there are opportunities for professional development (workshops, in-services, trainings, etc.) let the fellow know about those. Many of our fellows are excited and interested in developing their work skills and learning more about the field they will be working in.

Some Suggested Questions

Some suggested questions are listed below, divided into different skill categories. While it certainly is not required that these questions be asked, we do find it helpful to address these skill areas when interviewing a fellow for a full-time service placement.

Motivation

- Describe the work environment or culture in which you are most productive and happy.
- What do you look for in a supervisor? What type(s) of supervision best complements your working style?
- What goals, including career goals, have you set for your life? What goals do you have for your own professional development?
- How would you define “success” in your work? In your work, what must be present for you to feel as if you are successful at what you do?
- Describe a work situation in which you can demonstrate that you motivated another person?

Teamwork

- Give an example of a successful project you were part of. What was your role? Why was the project successful?
- What actions and support, in your experience, make a team function successfully?
- Have you been a member of a team that struggled or failed to accomplish its goal? If so, what assessment did you make of the reasons for the failure?

Leadership Ability

- During your work experiences over the past few years, tell me about a time when you demonstrated that you have leadership ability and skill.
- If I were to ask your reporting staff or your peers to comment about your leadership style, your leadership strengths, and your leadership weaknesses, how would they respond? What would this discussion tell me about you as a leader?

Interpersonal Skills

- Tell me about a time when you had to work closely with a coworker whom you disliked or with whom you had trouble working. What did you do to make the relationship work so that your work projects or tasks succeeded?
- Tell me about a time when you disagreed with the actions or decisions of your manager or supervisor. How did you approach the situation? Was the situation resolved to your satisfaction or did nothing change?
- Describe a conflict you were involved in at work. How did you resolve the conflict? What happened next with that coworker or team?
- During your work experiences while attending college, tell me about a time when you demonstrated that you have the ability and desire to work effectively with your coworkers.

Communication

- Rate your communication skills on a scale of 1 to 10. Give me a couple examples from your past work experiences that demonstrate the selected number is accurate.
- Give me an example, from your past work experience, about a time when you were part of a project or team and you never knew what was happening with the other action items or participants. How did you handle this situation?
- When you have had a boss, in the past, who fails to adequately communicate with you, how have you handled this?