

Alternative Spring Break begins recruitment

Utsav Gandhi
CAMPUS EDITOR

It's that time of the year again. Providing memorable service learning experiences over spring break, the words "ASB" have become almost synonymous to any of the twenty-five items on the official IIT Bucket List. Every year, participating members have come back with lifetime memories, unique experiences, travel experience, strong friendships and the satisfaction of having spent spring break in one of the most meaningful and productive ways possible. Alternative Spring Break is a service oriented student organization wherein a group of students travels to a Habitat for Humanity build site somewhere in the country to work towards the mission of safe, affordable and decent living conditions for those in need. In the past few years the team has traveled to places as diverse as Georgia, Alabama, Texas and California; providing eye-opening experiences volunteering some fragile neighborhoods which needed the help they were receiving. Every experience has culminated in a retrospective meeting with the homeowner for whom the house was built, and the past two years the team has met a young, single mother-of-two working full time as a nurse and trying to go back to school to ensure a better future for her children; as well as a physically disabled gentleman (he also happened to be a White Sox fan) filled with joie de vivre, also trying to get back to school for mechanical engineering.

In the past few years around twenty five students have been able to attend the trips, making application a little more competitive every year. The trip is funded primarily by the Student Activities Fund and by team fundraising efforts, which is the reason why the team is picked so early on in the school year. The team takes a collective role in fundraising, trip logistics planning and thus uses the time to get to know each other. Application is open to everyone, regardless of school year, educational background, and no previous con-

struction experience is required (though civil engineers and architects tend to actively seek opportunities to get involved as they gain valuable insights supplementing their in-classroom learning experience). What Alternative Spring Break seeks is a strong passion for service learning, an ability to work in a diverse team environment, being proactive in fundraising efforts and active team participation.

The first step towards securing a spot on the team is to mandatorily attend any one of the following informational sessions, wherein the trip logistics will be discussed along with time commitments and fundraising expectations. All attendees will also be sent an on-line application link which will then lead on to further stages of the recruitment process. Meeting times are as follows: Sunday, August 25 at 8 p.m., Tuesday, August 27 at 12:50 p.m., Wednesday, August, 28 at 8 p.m., Thursday, August 29 at 12:45 p.m. and, Friday, August 30 at 12:45 p.m. All meetings will begin at Global Grounds Cafe located near the southern entrance of the McCormick Tribune Campus Center (MTCC) on IIT Main Campus and interested persons should look for an ASB executive member wearing an ASB shirt. IIT ASB can be contacted at asb.iit@gmail.com or the team page can be found on HawkLink. The organizational scrapbook detailing past trips can also be viewed to get a better idea of the experience at tinyurl.com/asb-reflections.

Social justice and homelessness are two issues we may not afford a lot of thought to everyday. We are fortunate to have homes and families to turn to when in need, including dorms that are paid for and which enables us to take advantage of the opportunities and education that IIT provides. But not just around the country (or internationally, where Habitat for Humanity works), but right here in the city of Chicago we are facing an increasingly acute problem of homelessness. To this effect, it remains a strong priority for ASB to set up service opportunities right here in the city as well.

To those who cannot commit to traveling far during spring break, ASB is also considering a local build option of working

alternative spring break

building homes. lifting dreams.

ready to help build brighter tomorrows?
learn more at any of our information sessions.

sun. 8/25 8:00pm

tues. 8/27 12:45pm

wed. 8/28 8:00pm

thurs. 8/29 12:45pm

fri. 8/30 12:45pm

all sessions begin at global grounds cafe (mtcc)
contact us at asb.iit@gmail.com

Image courtesy of Alternative Spring Break

with affiliate sites nearby in neighborhoods such as Pilsen, Chicago Heights, Champaign county, etc (eg:<http://www.windycityhabitat.org/>.)

This experience is as "alternative" as a spring break can get. Come check out what it's all about, and you'll be guaranteed to come out more enriched.

Chicago flowers flourish before fall



Photos by Nick Caldwell