

Detroit Catholic High School Students Spend Their Winter Break Learning and Serving with International Samaritan

Detroit students are serving in Honduras and Jamaica this week.

DETROIT, MI, UNITED STATES, February 18, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Detroit Catholic high school students are spending their winter break this week learning and serving with [International Samaritan](#) in communities next to city garbage dumps.

Twenty-six young women from Marian High School arrived in Honduras yesterday, and eight young men from the University of Detroit Jesuit High

School are in Jamaica. While the two groups of students are serving more than 700 miles apart, they're both learning about children and families who live next to city garbage dumps.



In Riverton, Jamaica, Tavian Jones of International Samaritan explains the challenges of living and working in a community next to a dumpsite.

“

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Daniel Piaskowski, Detroit Jesuit High School

In Honduras, students are visiting the communities next to the city dumpsites in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, and Tegucigalpa, Honduras. In Jamaica, it's the Riverton City dumpsite near Kingston. In all three sites, children and families pick through trash to collect recyclables and earn money for their basic needs.

“The students will learn that people who live and work in garbage dumps make an average of \$5 a day, and their average life expectancy is only 35 years due to disease, malnourishment, violence, and accidents at the dumpsites,” said International Samaritan’s President Mike Tenbusch. “Daily existence in the dumpsite is marked by physical and mental health challenges, limited access to clean water and proper sanitation, pervasive stress, and barriers to education, adequate shelter, healthcare, and proper nutrition.”

Through International Samaritan's [holistic scholarship program](#), children and young adults in these communities have a path out of poverty. International Samaritan Scholars are in school studying and picking future careers instead of picking through trash at the dump.

American school groups have the opportunity to form partnerships with these communities and raise funds to support scholarships through International Samaritan's [Learn, Serve, Grow](#) program. Then, during a trip, the students meet each other in person, volunteer with community service projects, and find time to just be kids and play games together.



Students from Marian High School are serving in Honduras again this winter break, learning about the lives of children and families who live next to city garbage dumps. (Photo from the 2024 winter break trip.)

"To truly love and serve others, we must start by building relationships," said Daniel Piaskowski, the Campus Ministry and Service Coordinator at the University of Detroit Jesuit High School and Academy. "International Samaritan's Learn, Serve, Grow trips provide our students the opportunity to truly enter into relationships with young people who, although they come from a very different background, are still very similar to our students in many ways."

Sheila Geary, a theology teacher at Marian High School, agrees. "Our many trips with International Samaritan have led to love for our Central American brothers and sisters," she said. "After our time with them, we return to continue our experience with a deeper understanding of poverty, immigration, and our responsibilities to our global family."

The views of students from both countries are broadened after the Learn, Serve, Grow trips.

"Seeing the impact these trips have on our Samaritan Scholars is my favorite part," said Renate Krings, International Samaritan's Program Manager based in Guatemala. "I see the students come out of their shells. The scholars in Honduras and Jamaica are excited to share their stories and meet the people who are coming to see them."

"This is not your typical service immersion trip," said Tenbusch. "We know from 30 years of experience that these trips change the lives of people who go, so we only invite schools, churches, and families to join us who are interested in giving a life-changing opportunity in return for the friends they make there."

To help Samaritan Scholars on their journey out of poverty, partner schools and churches in the

U.S. commit to raising money to fund scholarships, typically \$30,000 a year to support ten young people with a holistic scholarship. Holistic scholarships include school fees and supplies, academic tutoring and mentorship opportunities, food for the scholars and their families, and basic health and wellness programs.

International Samaritan currently supports 950 Samaritan Scholars in Central America, the Caribbean, and East Africa. To learn more, visit [intsam.org](https://www.intsam.org).

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