**Servant Scholar Applicants:**

Thank you for your interest in Mere Christianity Forum’s Servant Scholars program for the summer of 2018. Hopefully the enclosed information will answer many of your questions. Feel free to email or phone if you have additional questions and we will do our best to answer them in a timely fashion.

The Servant Scholars program is an innovative experience of integrating service, learning, and Christian communal living. The program aims to shape the character, faith, and vocational discernment of high-potential students through an intense experience of servant leadership linked with life in an intentional Christian community. The Servant Scholars will engage one another, faculty, clergy, non-profit directors and the Greenville community. We aim to accomplish these and other goals by having students dedicate themselves to living in Christian community, serving in internships at Greenville-based social service ministries and growing in the intellectual quest for faithfulness through a curriculum led by our staff and guest faculty from Furman University and the Greenville church and non-profit communities.

The 2018 Servant Scholars programs runs from Sunday, June 3rd through Friday, August 3rd.

**Please return this completed application by Noon on March 1, 2018 via email to** **rimes@faithreasontomfoolery.org** **and** **kristan@faithreasontomfoolery.org**

Best Regards,

*Rimes* *Kristan*

Rev. Rimes McElveen Kristan Pitts

Executive Director Graduate Intern

**Summer 2018 Servant Scholars Application**

**(Deadline for application is Noon on March 1, 2018)**

**I. Your Contact Information** Date Submitted\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Class Standing/Age:

Street Address:

City/State/Zip:

Mobile Phone:

**II. Questions**

1. What activities do you plan on being involved in during the summer in addition to life at Vista House and the internship you will engage in through the Servant Scholars Program?
2. What commitments or vacation do you have planned that would potentially conflict with the June 3rd through August 3rd timeframe of the Servant Scholars Program?
3. What is your intended major and/or concentration?
4. Briefly describe your academic interests:
5. What are your vocational goals at this point in discerning your future?
6. What special interests or hobbies do you enjoy?
7. What experiences of community, if any, have you had in the past? (For current VH residents, please comment specifically on your current experience and what you have learned or how you have changed and your decision to pursue being a Servant Scholar.)
8. Please provide any other information about yourself, past experiences, or your interests and abilities that may affect your involvement as a Servant Scholar this summer.
9. What particular strengths do you perceive yourself bringing to the Servant Scholar?
10. Have you ever been treated for depression, anxiety, or other mental or emotional difficulties? Are you currently in counseling or under the care of a psychiatrist or a psychologist or taking medication for related issues? If so please briefly describe how you think serving he under-resourced of Greenville and living in intentional Christian community will relate to those issues in your life.

**III. Essays** Please answer both on separate pages and attach to the application.

**Please read the entire description of the Servant Scholars Program for the summer of 2018** (attached).

1. Reflect in two pages or less your interest in participating in the program, what strengths you would bring, and what you would hope to get out of engaging in this unique living-serving-learning opportunity.
2. The Vista House Community is an “intentional Christian community.” In no more than two pages, share some of your thoughts about your own journey of faith, your own beliefs concerning Jesus, the Trinity, the Church, and your perspective on “thoughtful Christian faith.”

(If helpful, feel free to comment on the Nicene Creed, commonly considered the distillation of orthodox Christian doctrine, though this is not required. A copy of the Creed is attached.)

**IV. References**

* Personal/Character Reference (friend, employer, etc0

 Name:

Relationship to you:
Address:

Day Time Phone:

Evening Phone:

E-Mail:

* Religious/Academic Reference (professor, high school teacher, minister, etc.)

 Name:

Relationship to you:

Address:

Day Time Phone:

Evening Phone:

E-Mail:

* Additional Reference (professor, high school teacher, minister, friend, employer, etc.)

 Name:

Relationship to you:

Address:

Day Time Phone:

Evening Phone:

E-Mail:

**V. For Questions**

Please feel free to contact us at 864.834.2228 for any questions about this application. You are also invited to email us if you prefer

Rev. Rimes McElveen, MCF Executive Director rimes@faithreasontomfoolery.org

Kristan Pitts, Graduate Intern kristan@faithreasontomfoolery.org

**Return this application to both Rimes & Kristan via email.**

**NOTE: If you do not receive a confirmation of receipt within 24 hours, please call to confirm receipt of your application.**

**Deadline for RECEIPT of Application is noon on March 1, 2018**.

**Mere Christianity Forum’s Servant Scholars Program**

**Summer of 2018**

**What is the Servant Scholars program?**

The Servant Scholars program is an innovative process of service + learning + living. The program aims to shape young, high-potential persons in the likeness and character of Christ. The Servant Scholars will engage in an integrated experience of living in Christian community, serving in internships at Greenville-based social service ministries and growing in the intellectual quest for faithfulness through a curriculum and training course led by guest faculty from Furman University and the Greenville church and non-profit communities.

***Service***

The Servant Scholars will intern for approximately 35 hours a week for 10 weeks in their particular ministry context. These internships are specifically intended to make an immediate impact in the lives of poor persons living in Greenville County. The interns are also asked to make a difference in the organizational strength of the agency they will serve through the specific project(s) they coordinate or are responsible for during their internship. The placements will provide firsthand experience for interns to work with persons living in poverty and to interact with people and organizations dedicated to the alleviation of suffering for the impoverished. Our hope is that the Servant Scholars will continue to build on these experiences by dedicating themselves throughout their lives to the reduction of suffering of poor persons in their communities.

***Learning***

In addition to the 35 hours a week of internship work, the Servant Scholars will spend an additional five hours a week in coursework and community building experiences. In coordination with on-site learning in the internships, the Servant Scholars will learn about and reflect on the theological, sociological, political and economic complexities of poverty. There will be books and periodicals assigned for reading in preparation for the weekly discussion over a meal and during the class. Each weekly meal and class will be facilitated by a Furman faculty member, a leader from a church or non-profit, or the staff of Mere Christianity Forum.

***Living***

The Servant Scholars program will encourage the interns to process their on-site learnings with their site supervisor. The pairing of service and learning has become a hallmark of successful college internships. However, the Servant Scholars program adds an additional layer to the “service-learning” model by connecting the two with living in intentional Christian community. Not only will the interns be learning at work, they will also be learning together “at home” by reading and reflecting on the content of their coursework amidst a life of prayer and Christian community.

The Servant Scholars will live at the Mere Christianity Forum Vista House in a covenant context of intentional Christian community marked by regular communal prayer and worship, table fellowship, hospitality ministry to guests, and stewardship of the organic garden. The weekly rhythm for the Servant Scholars will include meeting for morning communal prayer and worship, dining at least once each week together and embodying the covenant of living in Christian community with one another. In addition to their responsibilities of living according to the covenant and working in their internship, the residents will serve Vista House guests with Christian hospitality, maintain the organic garden and build relationships with other residents as part of their experience of living in intentional community.

**Number of people we expect to serve:**

Over the course of the summer the 8-10 Servant Scholars will work at least 3,150 collective hours for 8- 10 different social service ministries. Each of these ministries will serve between 30 and more than a thousand clients so it is difficult to accurately estimate how many of these clients the 8 interns will directly serve. However, each of the interns will lead or co-coordinate a specific segment of their particular agency’s ministry and they will have direct contact with clients on a daily basis. This is part of our agreement with the agencies.

**The client group we expect to serve:**

All of the agencies work with poor and needy persons of Greenville County to alleviate suffering through either housing, food, clothing, financial assistance, education, childcare, skills training, counseling, and/or mentoring. All of the clients we expect our interns to serve will be among the poor and needy in Greenville. Some of the interns will relate primarily to women, others to children, some to teens, and still others to adult men. Together, the Servant Scholars will have exposure to the full range of ages and backgrounds and needs of poor persons in Greenville. If you are interested in working with an agency not already a part of our program we will be happy to help arrange a partnership, just let us know what agency and we will begin that process.

**What agencies would be served?:**

All of the agencies below have had interns in the past and would welcome an intern this summer:

Triune Mercy Center

United Ministries

Miracle Hill/Greenville Rescue Mission

Greenville Free Medical Clinic

Safe Harbor

Frazee Center

Foothills Family Resources

Project Host

A Child’s Haven

YouthBase

Saint Francis Bon Secours Community Missions

Shriners Children’s Hospital

Nasha Lending

Mill Village Farms

Soteria CDC

Hispanic Alliance

Greenville Literacy

 **Others agency placements are possible upon early initiation by students or MCF.**

**Purpose of the Servant Scholars Program:**

**First**, in the midst of an economic crisis in the world, our local social service agencies are often responding to an increasing need with decreasing resources. We want to support these agencies by providing highly motivated and effective interns to help the agencies meet the increased needs of the clients they serve.

**Second**, to create an environment for young disciples to become more faithful followers of Christ through an innovative service-learning-living model.

**Third**, to provide a tangible, first-hand experience for the Servant Scholars to serve poor and under-resourced people in their community and to “put a face on poverty.” Through these internships they will encounter poverty first hand rather than as an abstract concept they merely study.

**Fourth,** to lay the groundwork for these disciples to become servant leaders who integrate the life of faith with their quest to serve the poor and needy in the world by making full use of their resources of intellect, influence, abilities, and possessions.

**How will the Servant Scholars be matched with the internship contexts?**

The matching of interns with their agency/context can be self-initiated but will primarily come through reading a description from the agencies list of needs and an interview with our Staff. Interns will have an opportunity to express preferences. Agency supervisors will submit a one-page description which will include the general responsibilities of the intern and what type of experience, demeanor, maturity, and theological interests may be preferred in an intern.

**Who would be eligible to apply?:** Rising sophomores, juniors, seniors, and recent graduates at Furman University.

**What is the cost of the Servant Scholars Program?**

The total cost for each Servant Scholar is approximately $3900 per student, which covers housing, some meals, books, periodicals, faculty and other guest speakers, and a stipend ($1,000) for working in the internship. The Servant Scholars program has applied for grants to support the total cost for each Servant Scholar and we anticipate having funds to support at least a portion, if not the majority of the cost of the program for each Servant Scholar. The students are encouraged to apply for Furman Advantage funding to guarantee their expenses are met (Furman Advantage deadline is March 1st). Also, if a student is a member of the Poverty Studies Concentration additional funding may be available if they want the internship to satisfy the required internship for their Concentration. All funding issues will be worked out on an individual basis to meet the needs of the internship and the intern. *Don't let funding be a deterrent from participating in this program. We will help you find a way to make it work.*

**What is involved in the application process?**

Any student applying for the Servant Scholars program will complete a written application and submit two essay questions listed on the application concerning their interest in participating and provide at least three references. Students whose written applications are approved by the staff of Mere Christianity Forum will then have an informal “in-person” interview of approximately one hour for final consideration. After all applications have been reviewed and appropriate applicants interviewed, the finalists will be named and invited to participate by the staff of Mere Christianity Forum.

**Evaluation Process:**

There will be an “exit interview” of all interns, site intern coordinators, and guest faculty/leaders to evaluate to overall effectiveness of the Servant Scholars program at achieving its four objectives.

Each Servant Scholar will provide a written evaluation of themselves, their site, and the program. In addition to this written evaluation there will be a closing orientation or “debriefing” about the entire experience as a group with the opportunity for the Servant Scholars to reflect together about the transformation they have witnessed in their internship contexts, in their communal life at the Vista House intentional Christian community and in themselves, and there will be an opportunity to make suggestions for future years.

Site coordinators, in their written evaluation of the interns, will be asked to describe the value the interns added to their ministry context, the transformation they witnessed in the intern generally, as well as the scope of their work with the social agency. The site coordinators will also be asked to explicitly describe the measurable impact the intern contributed to the mission or ministry of the particular agency they served as well as the direct impact on clients served by the agency.

**General Vista House Policies**

**I. Guests**

* Residents hosting guests should be sure to introduce them to the rest of the community. This means: alerting the rest of the community in advance of an overnight guest, introducing the guest to each community member, and letting your guest know about Vista House, and its purpose. Residents and their guests should also be sensitive to such issues as noise, exclusivity, and possible roommates’ concerns.

**II. Substances**

* Residents must recognize the possible effects of the consumption of alcohol upon the community and Vista House. Therefore, consumption of alcohol is limited to those residents and guests above the legal drinking age, and should be limited to meals and other SMALL group gatherings. Prior approval by the MCF, Inc., Board must be obtained for alcohol consumed during larger gatherings or parties. Intoxication and sharing alcohol with underage persons are unacceptable.
* The smoking of tobacco is restricted to the outdoors. Consumption of ALL illegal substances on the Vista House premises is strictly prohibited, to include underage consumption of alcohol.

**II. Relationships**

* Romantic relations, or actions that could be interpreted as romantic/sexual, between community members are prohibited while living in community with one another. Residents can pursue alternative housing in the event they intend to pursue a relationship with one another.
* When outside romantic relationships are brought into the Vista House these interactions should be conducted with the utmost respect for Vista House, MCF, and the fellow community members. For instance, this means significant others should stay (alone) in the guest room. Likewise it is the expectation of MCF that Vista House residents will conduct themselves according to similar practices outside of Vista House as emissaries of the community.

**III. Community Responsibilities**

* Residents will participate in weekday communal prayer.
* Residents will share weekly chores needed for Vista House, consisting of about 2-4 hours a week.
* Residents will participate in fall and spring clean-up days, on designated Saturdays, all day until 5pm.
* Set up and attend the weekly dinners at Vista House.
* Communicate community needs and developments to the MCF Student and Executive boards.
* Residents will conduct themselves according to the habits and practices traditionally associated with Christian virtues.

**IV. Miscellaneous**

* Pets are not allowed.
* Firearms Policy- we are a firearms free zone at Vista House. If guests come to visit, they are allowed to keep firearms in their vehicle if they have a proper permit to carry it, but they are not allowed otherwise on Vista House grounds or inside the house.
* The community is not authorized to alter these or other Vista House policies without the approval of the MCF Executive Board.

**The Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, light from light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father [and the Son],
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.