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Students volunteer for "alternative" spring break trips

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Students volunteer for "alternative" spring break trips

Dozens of Dominican students volunteered to spend their spring break in 2015 studying and learning in a variety of locales from Yakima to New Zealand.

Nineteen students in Vania Coelho's BIO 3505 International Field Biology class in the [Department of Natural Sciences and Mathematics](#) flew to New Zealand where they studied species and preservation. Their 12-day trip featured exploring stunning flora, fauna and diverse ecosystems of New Zealand's south island and a glacier walk at Fox Glacier in the Westland Tai Poutini National Park. Associate science professor Roland Cooper was another Dominican faculty member accompanying students.

Meanwhile, [Campus Ministry](#) sent nearly 40 students on [service trips](#) for alternative spring break. Lianni Castro, assistant director of Campus Ministry, led a group of 15 students to help build houses and relationships in the state of Washington with students from other colleges and universities. Dominican partnered with Yakima Valley Habitat for Humanity for the fourth consecutive year.

At the same time Sister Christina Atienza led another 13 students to LaBamba in Tijuana, Mexico affording them an opportunity to volunteer their time to build and repair shelters and cook and serve food. They visited local jails and orphanages, carrying out a mission created by Father Robert Haberman, who traveled to LaBamba 35 times.

The LaBamba-bound Dominican students recently raised \$142.40 through a pair of fundraising bagel sales in Guzman Hall. They donated those proceeds to support two missions in Tijuana -- Casa de los Pobres and Mission Esperanza.

Another group of seven Dominican students traveled to Occidental to participate in Caritas Creek, an outdoor environmental education program. They acted as cabin leaders for junior high school students participating in hiking, campfires and community building.