

Students for a Fair Society

1235 University Boulevard
Steubenville, Ohio 43952
www.studentsforafairsociety.org

Thursday, August 30, 2012

To SFS Officers and Members, GEM participants, Host Communities, Franciscan University of Steubenville Administration, Alumni, Faculty, and Staff, and the Residents, Employees, and Servants of the City of Steubenville and Jefferson County, Ohio,

Re: Students for a Fair Society Guidance, Education and Mentoring

“Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you; and I will instruct you in the good and the right way” (1Samuel 12:23). These words echo in our hearts as we face young men and women in our region who endure, quite often through no fault of their own, a lack of education, sound morals, and aspirations grounded in the divine and perfect will of God.

In response to the Lord’s commandment to love our neighbor, Students for a Fair Society (SFS) seek out these youth, offering them what little SFS have in the name of Jesus. Meeting these persons on their own level of understanding and working to adjust to their subjective needs, SFS have established a program that yearns to share with these young success stories of the future a particular opportunity to grow and flourish for their own self-perfection and as future contributing members of society.

For the betterment of the common good, SFS’s Guidance, Education, and Mentoring program (G.E.M. or GEM for short) will take place at local sponsoring Christian communities. GEM will provide students, who are at an age where understanding and completing homework is crucial in their character development, basic Christocentric education assistance and/or mentoring. Having twenty-five volunteer students serve an hour and a half a week for 10 weeks of the semester would increase our commitment to solidarity with the city by 375 hours this Fall semester and 450 each semester after this one.

GEM volunteers can be called ministers as they would be attending to the needs of the youth, their families, and the community. In a similar fashion, GEM volunteers may be called Gems for, like the stones, they are precious and decorate the local neighborhoods with loving images of God our Creator. Likewise, the primary and secondary education students can be called both ministers, for by their very essence they serve the older volunteers in allowing them to grow in virtue, thus leading to their sanctification, and Gems, as they too are beautiful, valuable, and worthy of our efforts.

Life, for us is Christ. As we live we seek to be a Christ, serve Christ, and see Christ in all.

What follows is the GEM 'modus operandi':

GEM operates through Students for a Fair Society at Franciscan University of Steubenville without the explicit approval, endorsement, or encouragement of the University's faculty, staff, or administration.

Students for a Fair Society are led by a President and a Prime Minister who together work to fulfill the organization's Constitution. The GEM Coordinator ultimately works under and with the Prime Minister of Students for a Fair Society, per the Constitution. However, GEM will operate with great independence at all levels.

Each day during a week of service, a different Christian community will sponsor GEM. The Christian community will commit to sponsoring GEM on the same day of the week, every week, for ten weeks out of semester (and up to twelve for following semesters).

Group Leader - Ideally, each community will receive the same group of students each week, allowing for familiarity and relationship building. The particular group of students assigned to a Christian community will be assigned to the Christian community through the efforts of the GEM Coordinator. This same group of students will have within themselves, a leader, and a backup leader for when the leader is unable to fulfill his role. The leader will be the external voice of the group for matters concerning the group's involvement at the Christian community and will receive any reimbursements and distribute them justly and accordingly. If a reimbursement is intended to pay for transportation, the transporter shall receive the compensation. If a reimbursement for transportation must be split, it shall be done so with transparency within the group. If funds are received for GEM, they shall be forwarded publicly to the GEM Coordinator. If funds are received for the individual group at a particular community, the GEM Coordinator shall be made aware of such funds, and the individual group with its leader shall determine what to do with them. If there is ever a conflict, the group leader will be in charge of resolving it with the Christian community and the group. The group leader may decide to terminate ministry at their given location. Group leaders will forward all progress and concerns to the GEM Coordinator on a regular basis through a format that shall be established. All communication is to be considered internal and is not to be released without the proper SFS voting procedure taking place. Group leaders will serve as Volunteer Gems for all moments within the hour and a half they are present in the Host community, so long as the particular Group leader is not occupied in fulfilling Group leader obligations.

SFS GEMs – Volunteer Gems (or SFS Gems) are not required to hold any official relationship or membership with Students for a Fair Society to participate in this service activity. Volunteer Gems are asked to commit to each day of each week they are assigned to a Host community – nothing more, and nothing less. Volunteer Gems will find their own transportation in order to satisfy their commitment to GEM. Volunteer Gems are presumed to be students at the Franciscan University of Steubenville and are expected to conform and respect all of the University's student policies. Volunteer Gems are to assist the youth with their homework in a fashion that will ultimately lead

to the youth's sufficiency in self – that is to say, the end is for the youth to learn how to master their homework on their own, not only finish the task at hand. All the while, Volunteer Gems will be acting in the person of Christ in learning about the particular youth they are working with.

Should the time and circumstance allow, a youth and young adult may find themselves in what becomes a developing mentorship. After guidance has been provided, a lasting mentorship could take place. Serving as a constant light, reflecting and pointing to the Light of Christ, Volunteer Gems may, without shame, offer discussions pertaining to holy things and relating to sacred scripture. While most Volunteer Gems are Franciscan University students, and most Franciscan University students profess Catholicism, the Volunteer Gems are not ordered to go beyond the circumference of Ecumenism. However, should discussions lead to learning more about particular denominations, no Volunteer Gem should become anxious when discussing their own faith, as long as it does not violate either of The Commandments. Unless it is for an end of the year GEM activity, no Volunteer Gem should provide food nor drink to any youth. As one would expect, the use of foul language, technological distractions, impatience, and the lack of love will not be tolerated.

In the event of a volunteer GEM acquiring knowledge of a young GEM's abuse or suspicion of abuse, that volunteer GEM is required to report such knowledge to the Group Leader who will then verbalize the abuse or suspected abuse to the Host Supervisor in private, as well as hand in a written report to the Pastor of the Church or Leader of the Faith Community.

Host Community – At the time of GEM's formation the following have decided to commit themselves and their resources to becoming a Host community: First Church of the Nazarene, 511 Woodlawn Road, Second Baptist Church, 717 Adams Street, Second Chance Ministries COGIC, 255 South Third Street, the Tower of Power Church, 1320 Maryland Avenue, and the Urban Mission, 301 North Fifth Street, all in Steubenville, Ohio. Which communities of faith will serve as Hosts in the future is to be decided by the GEM Coordinator in conjunction with the good of SFS and the region being served.

The Host community will provide access to a room or hall on their property for at least an hour and a half day, one day a week, on the same day every week that follows for the remainder of the semester. For the Fall semester of 2012, the commitment is to fifteen hours for ten weeks. The Host community shall donate one dollar of U.S. currency to the group they receive for each day the group is present in order to compensate the transporter of the group for costs – the transfer of funds shall take place at the beginning of each day GEM activities take place. The Host community shall donate an ample supply of water and healthy snacks for all GEM participants each day that GEM activities take place.

The Host community shall provide at least one ministry or pastoral affiliated member to supervise the GEM event each day for the entire duration of GEM activities. The Host community's supervisor shall be left with the ultimate responsibility of all participants' safety and their return to the proper parents or guardians. The Host community shall participate in advertising for GEM's activity at all locations and will properly advise all interested parties that GEM is not intended to

substitute for the time needed for building healthy and strong families. Moreover, GEM is not an afterschool care center – this too shall be made obvious in any and all advertisements for GEM. The Host community's supervisor shall be responsible for obtaining the name of each GEM participant, their Church affiliation, if any, the name(s) of the parent(s) and/or guardian(s), and two phone numbers where the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) can be reached during and after GEM activities. The Host community's supervisor shall take upon themselves the responsibility of removing any threat to the safety and wellbeing of all GEM participants, especially when asked to do so by the GEM group leader.

The Host communities, with SFS, and SFS GEM may collaborate in expanding GEM and producing end of the semester activities for the participants on an individual or collective basis. The GEM Coordinator shall inform the Pastor or Leader of the Christian Faith Community of when a required pre- and post-Semester meeting will take place in order to discuss this 'modus operandi' and evaluate the activities that have taken place, respectively. The Pastor or Leader of the Christian Faith Community shall, at least once per calendar month in which GEM activities are functioning on their premises, present themselves for a minimum duration of thirty minutes in order to first, co-supervise with their Host Supervisor or relieve them of duty for that given time, second, participate in GEM activities and third, learn about GEM and develop relationships with GEM participants.

Young Gems – We direct our attention and our hearts to the youth who shall participate in GEM. These young gems shall be the subject of Christian Charity at all times and in all respects. Young gems shall be advised to direct all concerns to the Host community's supervisor. Young gems shall not introduce foul play or undue distractions to any location where GEM activities are taking place. Young gems shall be respectful towards themselves and to the rest of creation. Young Gems shall have the proper school supplies needed to obtain homework assistance, and if possible, remain in a state of proper hygiene at all times.

May GEM flourish and be actualized without impediment. May it be funded spiritually and financially by Host communities, local families, and through SFS. May it be successful in sharing the Gospel and in sanctifying all participants.

For the glory of God our Father and good of man our brother,

Host's Name and Pastor

Kelly J. Eberhart
Coordinator, GEM

Joseph Antonello
President

For more information and for a copy of this GEM 'Modus Operandi' visit:
www.studentsforafairsociety.org/gem