2018 Upstate Institute Summer Field School Fellowship

**Title:** Promoting and Funding End of Life Care  
**Community Partner:** Abraham House in Utica, New York

*This project will give a student interested in nonprofit work and healthcare the opportunity to learn about fundraising, organizing volunteers and staff, managing events, publicity and social media.*

**Project Description:**
The Abraham House provides end of life care for terminally ill residents. The staff is small: the executive director is the only full time paid staff member, and is assisted by a part time office manager. A Fellow placed in this organization will have the opportunity to assist with and get involved in many aspects of running a small not for profit organization, including:

- developing an annual social media plan to increase online presence
- organizing and overseeing fundraisers and partnerships with locally owned businesses for donation drives
- creating digital stories about Abraham House from the perspective of family members, employees, and volunteers
- assisting the office manager with scheduling and communication needs of staff and volunteers
- working with staff to maximize profits and maintain consistency in the agency’s thrift store

**About the Community Partner:**
Abraham House offers guests a secure loving home without charge while providing physical, emotional, and spiritual support to the terminally ill. They also provide services to the families of guests completely free of charge. They do not bill for services or receive state or federal funding; they operate based solely on donations, fundraisers, and small community grants. Abraham House operates with the core values of compassion, respect and dignity at the heart of their mission.

**Required Skills:**
A Field School Fellow working with the Abraham House should be pleasant and personable. Strong communication skills are essential as well as the ability to represent Abraham House in a professional manner both in appearance and speech. A Fellow will be expected to be outgoing and conversational with people and employ appropriate social skills when dealing with the Executive Director, volunteer staff, and customers. Attention to detail is vital, as is a foundation of technological (computer) literacy. The Fellow should be able to utilize social media outlets in order to effectively promote Abraham House’s cause. Higher level thinking skills and the ability to function efficiently and independently on projects is desired, organization and responsibility are key, and multitasking is necessary. The Fellow should be pragmatic enough to handle logistics like scheduling and training, yet imaginative enough to come up with fundraising ideas. The ability to organize, meet deadlines and see initiatives through to completion is vital. A Fellow will be encouraged to ask questions for clarification or curiosity, and should have a willingness to function as a member of the Abraham House team. While the Fellow will not be providing direct patient care, someone with a healthy respect for death and the dying, as opposed to an aversion to it, is preferred.

In addition to taking a lead role in this project, the Fellow will also receive an all-encompassing experience in nonprofit operations. As a small organization handling the majority of business in-house, a Fellow will have the opportunity to assist with fundraiser development, donation tracking, newsletter creation, public relations and promotion at a level of involvement commensurate with the student’s competencies. The Fellow will be able to participate in the preparation that occurs before board meetings
and the reporting process that takes place during board meetings. It is Abraham House’s hope that a Fellow will take great pride and ownership in the role.

**Logistics:**
This is a full-time paid research position (35 hours per week) to last approximately 10 weeks, conducted under the joint supervision of the Upstate Institute and Abraham House. Gina Ciaccia, Abraham House’s Executive Director, will provide direct supervision, with support from Missy Biamonte, Office Manager. The Fellow will be working out of the Abraham House office in Utica, and out in the greater Utica community.

Field School Fellows receive a research stipend of $4500 plus reimbursement for any costs associated with transportation for this project. A car is not required for this project, but may be helpful. A Fellow will need a U.S. drivers’ license to complete this work.

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