

STUDENT JOURNEY

So...we hear that you want to change the world?

You've come to the right place! Student journey is a group of adults who are passionate about helping the teenagers of Jackson live **the best version of life possible through Jesus**. Our adult leaders play important roles such as spiritual guides, truth tellers, dream releasers, and cheerleaders.

Student Journey is built on a pretty simple idea: **relationships**. We believe that a relationship with a caring, Christian adult can greatly influence the spiritual formation of a teenager. Chances are you're reading this packet now because you believe it as well. We will do many things at Student Journey, but relationships will be at the heart of them all.

Our adult leaders are the **most important part of Student Journey...period!** Without adults who have a deep love for God and a desire to see students **the best life possible through Jesus** we cannot succeed. Because of this reality, the quality of our adult team is very important. Please carefully read through this packet carefully and follow the instructions as you consider joining our team.

Student journey is a great place to invest your life! We are looking forward to meeting with you and talking about your hopes and dreams for this generation.

Together,

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Dream

Student Journey exists to help junior high, senior high, and college students live the best version of life possible through Jesus. We dream about changing the youth culture in Jackson through the love of Jesus.

Environments

We believe that one of our primary responsibilities is **to create environments (things, conditions, or influences) that lead students towards the best version of life possible through Jesus.** We have five environments:

EVENTS/TRIPS

At SJ, **we love doing something.** We are adventure seekers who are always looking for new experiences that bring us closer to each other and to God. Because we believe that everything in life is spiritual, we find meaning in ski trips, road trips, or mission trips, much like we do in worship or service.

We believe that **experience enhances relationships.** We also believe that **relationships are a great path towards formation.** So it looks like this:

(fun!!!) (Jesus!!!)
Experiences=Relationships=Formation
(deeper!!!)

We don't provide events and experiences to be a babysitting experience, or so that we can be the coolest group in town. We create experiences because we believe they deepen relationships, which quite often leads to spiritual growth in our students.

STUDENT JOURNEY (SUNDAY NIGHT)

Sunday Nights @ Student Journey is our **large group environment.** We gather on Sundays to **learn** how to live the best version of life possible through Jesus. Sunday Night is experiential, image-driven, participatory, and fun! We're always changing Sunday nights, so it never looks exactly the same, but it is consistently a safe place for students to meet Jesus. This part of our Sunday night lasts from 6:15-7:15

The main responsibility of any leader during this environment is to **be with students.** Beyond that, there are several ways you can be involved on Sunday night. For a comprehensive list, go to the "Roles" section of this packet.

MERGE GROUPS

Merge groups @ Student Journey is our small group environment. We meet every week to allow students to be **known and heard**. Merge groups offer students the opportunity to continue discussion around the topic of the night, while still creating space for relationship building. This part of our Sunday night lasts from 7:15-8:00. The groups are loosely aligned by grade and gender.

Merge groups leadership is a very, “hands-on” role for leaders. A merge group leaders is essentially a Pastor... these are **your students**. You will be investing in the same students every week. While you are in your group time each week, your main roles will be to **listen and facilitate conversation**. For more information, go to the “Roles” section of this packet.

THE ELEMENTS

The Elements @ Student Journey is our growth environment. For us at SJ, the Elements provide students with the opportunity to **take ownership for their own spiritual growth**. This, “self-directed” spiritual growth represents our ultimate desire for every student. The Elements is a series of options that will allow our students (with the help of a coach) to create a unique plan for spiritual growth. The options will be tasks, disciplines, habits or practices in four key areas:



SOUL: These options focus specifically on the **personal development** of a student’s spiritual life.



RELATIONSHIPS: These options focus specifically on the **relational development** of a student’s spiritual life.



CHURCH: These options focus specifically on the **church development** of a student’s spiritual life.



WORLD: These options focus specifically on the **global development** of a student’s spiritual life.

As an Elements coach, you will be helping students by meeting with them, answering questions, and guiding them on through the process. We believe that your commitment to them will be the ‘something’ that leads them to growing on their own.

Ele^ATE

Elevate is our student leadership team. Made up of juniors and seniors, these students help us model the way of Jesus for others. This group is held to a high level of accountability, and they are actively learning about spirituality and leadership. The group is open to any junior or senior who is willing to live up to the expectations.

Roles

So what are the expectations of you as a leader? **Love God and like students.** We need your life to live your life as a follower of Christ...and we need you to like teenagers!

We have **four specific roles** that we ask our volunteers to play in the lives of our students. Whether you are playing in the band, leading a merge group, coaching someone in the elements, sitting next to a student in worship, at a students ball game, or sending a text message; we want you to do these four things:

Spiritual Tour Guides

We want our leaders to be spiritual guides in the lives of our students. This stands in stark contrast to roles like, chaperone, babysitter, or crowd control. **A spiritual guide is an adult who helps students recognize the presence of God in their life.** This can look a bit like, “connecting the dots” between life and faith.

Truth Tellers

We value relationships, and we believe that **they are the foundation for ministry.** As relationships develop, we view the right to speak truth into the lives of our kids as a mark of success. **A truth teller is an adult who values truth over friendship.** Truth telling can look like tough conversations, encouragement, or simple reinforcement. Students need adults in their lives who love them enough to tell them the truth.

Dream Releasers

Teenagers carry dreams with them. These dreams are often locked away due to rejection, fear, or insecurity. **A dream releaser is an adult who helps students unlock the dreams and passions that God has designed them to carry.** This looks like valuing their ideas, acknowledging their passions as sacred, and helping them achieve their dreams.

Cheerleader

Many of our students do not have people in their lives that are consistently celebrating movement, growth, or other experiences. **A dream releaser is an adult who continually celebrates movement in the lives of their students.** We don't believe that you can encourage or celebrate with a student too much. Your role is to continue to remind them of who they are, who God is, and how much He offers them.

Jobs

In addition to the roles described above, there are specific jobs that are available for you as a leader. These jobs will allow you to focus on one area of ministry to our students (and maybe invite a student to join with you). We've categorized the jobs based on our five environments:

EVENTS/TRIPS

Event team: Plan, promote, administrate, and execute events and trips.

Fundraising: Research, plan, and execute events that raise money for SJ.

STUDENT JOURNEY (SUNDAY NIGHT)

The Vibe: Determine the look and feel of the lobby when students arrive. This includes greeting, picking music, deciding what is on the screens, and more. You will create an ethos that makes students comfortable.

Media: Work with the technical needs on Sunday Night including, lights, media, sound, video, and setup.

Band: Play music for our Sunday night gatherings. This includes one practice and one performance each week.

Worship coordinator: Provide administrative and scheduling support for our band.

Visitors: Welcome our first time visitors each week by spending a few minutes with them after the large group program.

Photography: Take pictures during all of our SJ gatherings.

Setup/Teardown: Help us set up and clean up our Sunday night space.

Prayer: Meet before SJ for prayer. Help us keep prayer as a high value throughout the week.

Food: Provide snacks/meals on a rotating basis for Sunday Night.

Teaching: Help plan and execute our large group teaching.

MERGE GROUPS

Merge group leader: Lead a small group of students weekly. This is a hands on role in which you will be building relationships with students.

Merge group administrator: Track our Merge group attendance and communicate with our Merge group leaders.

THE ELEMENTS

Elements director: Lead our team of element coaches and select options for each wave.

Elements coach: Offer feedback, encouragement, and challenge to students as they walk through the elements.

Elements administrator: Track our Elements participation and communicate with our Element coaches.

OTHER COOL STUFF

Beyond 1000: Select, promote, and execute our mission work within the city of Jackson.

Office help: Work behind the scenes / in the office doing administrative tasks.

Promotion: Help us create the SJ brand and SJ resources in a way that promotes our ministry.

Social Media / Web presence: Maintain our facebook/twitter/youtube and other web accounts.

Student Care: Help us celebrate and encourage our students through various means.

Counseling: Walk through training that will allow you to offer preliminary counseling to students.

Communication: Maintain our communication loops to students, parents, elders, and the church.

Information

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name _____ Today's Date _____

Address _____

Birthday ____/____/____ Anniversary ____/____/____

Phone # (Cell) (____) _____ (Home) (____) _____

Occupation _____ Employer _____

Work Status: __ part time __ full time __ student __ unemployed

Marital Status: __ single __ married __ divorced / separated

Education

High School: _____ year graduated: _____

College(w/major) _____ year graduated: _____

PERSONAL JOURNEY

Please use separate page to answer the following:

1. How did you start following Jesus?
2. What events in your life have impacted you spiritually?
3. How would you describe your spiritual journey now?
4. Describe a way that you have recently seen God alive and active in your life?
5. What people are important to you in your spiritual journey?
6. What do you do when you have a conflict with someone? Do you consider yourself good at handling confrontation? How do you handle confrontation?

7. Are there any special issues or concerns happening in your life right now that would have an impact in your commitment and involvement in student journey? (e.g. relationships, other commitments, etc.)

LEGAL AND LIFESTYLE

In caring for students, we believe it is our responsibility to seek an adult leadership community that is able to provide healthy, safe, and nurturing relationships. Please answer the following questions accordingly. Your responses are confidential and will not necessarily exclude you from leadership. Any special concerns can be discussed individually with Ben Redmond.

Are you using illegal drugs? _yes _no

Have you ever gone through treatment for alcohol/drug abuse? _yes _no
- If yes, please explain

Have you ever been arrested and /or convicted of a crime? _yes _no
- If yes, please explain

Have you ever been accused or convicted of any form of abuse? _yes _no
- If yes, please explain

Have you ever been a victim of any form of child abuse? _yes _no
- If yes, would you like to speak to a pastor?

Have you had any sexual relations/interactions with a minor? _yes _no
(physical, online, or other) - If yes, please explain

Are you willing to go through a background check? _yes _no

Is there anything else in your past we should know? _yes _no
(If yes – please explain)

MINISTRY

How long have you attended Westwinds?_____ Are you an owner? _yes _no

What are your strengths and how would you use them at SJ?

STUDENT JOURNEY

List the dates and activities of other ministry experiences working at a church.

Why do you want to do youth ministry?

Is there anything about this opportunity that really makes you uncomfortable?
(Please be honest!)

What are some of your expectations of the Student Journey Pastors?

The information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge. I, undersigned, give my authorization to Westwinds Community Church, Student Journey, and all its representatives to release any and all records or information relating to working with minors. Westwinds Community church may contact my references and appropriate government agencies as deemed necessary in order to verify my suitability as a volunteer with minors. I understand that the personal information in this application will be held confidential by the professional Church staff.

Signature: _____ Today's date: _____

HOW TO JOIN THE LEADERSHIP COMMUNITY

1. EXPRESS INTEREST

There are two ways to express interest. You may stop by the Portal (located in the Westwinds lobby) and let them know that you're interested in Student Journey. You may also contact Ben directly (ben.redmond@westwinds.org).

2. INITIAL MEETING

After you have expressed interest, someone from the SJ team for a meeting will contact you for a meeting. This meeting will be a chance for us to hear your story, and for you to ask questions.

3. FILL OUT APPLICATION

The application is found on pages 8-10. The application protects both Student Journey and its volunteers. This portion will include fingerprinting and a background check.

4. OBSERVE PROGRAMS

This step gives you the opportunity to visit Sunday night without having expectations or responsibilities placed on you. You will be placed with a leader for the night, and they will guide you through the evening. During this visit you will meet students, and write questions and thoughts for an upcoming meeting. Observing can often be overwhelming or uncomfortable (students don't typically go out of their way to make you feel welcome until you get to know them.) This is a natural feeling and we encourage you to continue observing.

5. FOLLOW UP MEETING

After you've observed for two weeks, we'll meet again. This meeting will allow us to talk about a specific role for you within the ministry.

6. LEADER ORIENTATION

After your follow up meeting, you will participate in a leader orientation. This will help you get a clear picture of SJ's mission, as well as our expectations of you as a leader.

7. PARTICIPATE IN 90 DAY CHECK UP

After your three-month mark, you will meet one of our SJ Pastors to evaluate your feelings and perceptions of your involvement. Throughout the year we will continue to evaluate your ministry involvement in order to adjust your role to better fit your style, personality, and passion.

CONGRATULATIONS! YOU'VE MADE IT THROUGH THE PACKET!

I know it seems like a lot of information, but through this "process" you will earn valuable information to make your transition into Student Journey much easier. We hope you will continue on and complete the application.

If you have any questions, or would like additional information, please contact Ben Redmond at ben.redmond@westwinds.org or 517.750.1111 x21

What is Student Journey?

Student Journey is the junior high + senior high + college community at Westwinds Community Church in Jackson MI. SJ is not an organization, but rather a movement seeking to lead students towards the best version of life possible in Jesus. Student Journey is the lives of many rising up as one. We are rising up for what matters and we're rising up together. We see ourselves as tour guides, dream releasers, truth tellers, and cheerleaders, for this generation.

We believe that each student has a role to play in the story of God as it unfolds, and that belief motivates us to seek caring, appropriate relationships with the youth of our city.

Our story can't be understood by reading our values and beliefs. Instead, those wishing to know more must simply join with us and experience what we hope to become.

To learn more about Westwinds, Student Journey, or Ben Redmond, please visit www.studentjourney.info