



*Exploring Vocation, Community,
Culture, and Lifelong Faith
Formation
with Rising High School
Juniors and Seniors*

Youth Application for
2016 STREAM
Youth Theology Institute
July 1-9, 2016

sponsored by

Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology
Virginia Union University
Richmond, Virginia

funded in part by a grant from

The Lilly Endowment Inc.

Virginia Union University



March 2016

Dear STREAM Youth Theology Institute Applicant,

Attached you will find application materials for the 2016 STREAM Youth Theological Institute to be held on the campus of Virginia Union University in Richmond, Virginia, July 1-9, 2016. This is the inaugural summer for this program, funded in part through a grant from the Lilly Endowment. We are delighted by your interest!

At STREAM Youth Theology Institute, we believe that there is a wonderful connection between what your interests are, who God created you to be, and your ability to transform the world around you. Just suppose your love for science, technology, math, history, or the arts are God-given gifts to be offered to promote social justice and the common good, in the future and now. As such, we gather approximately fifty rising high school juniors and seniors from this region and across the country for a life-changing nine-day experience exploring vocation, community, culture, and lifelong faith formation. Our goal is to help you explore your faith and discern where your gifts and passions meet the world's deepest needs in a supportive mentoring community where your views, talents, and insights are respected and encouraged.

So what does this look like? It's honest, complicated, and energizing as we live out our commitment to wrestling with what it means to be a person of faith in the midst of everyday life. We'll make it possible for you to engage in academic exploration, vocational discernment, cultural engagement, and community-building with a diverse group of other students your age, as well as Virginia Union faculty, current graduate and undergraduate students, and national and regional community leaders. You might find yourself exploring "Policy, Politics, and Prophecy" and engaging ideas about speaking truth to power. You might engage in dialogue with a Black Lives Matter leader around questions about the "Righteousness of Rebellion." You will have an opportunity to understand more about how money works through exploration of "Money, Materialism, and Social Entrepreneurism," and we will engage questions around "History and Hope" while celebrating Independence Day in historic Richmond (with a cookout and fireworks). Because we are a community rich in diversity, you'll learn about other people, and *learn how to engage honestly and respectfully with people* whose experiences, commitments, and perspectives are different from yours. You'll have opportunities to gather in celebration and worship and to share your unique gifts. And there will be time for relaxation and play, with activities like dance, basketball, arts and music, laser tag, and maybe even a little dodgeball.

Because the program schedule is so full, and because we emphasize the importance of building a community as part of our work together, we require that **all STREAM participants must be present for the entire program, arriving on July 1 by 4 p.m. and departing on July 9 around 4 p.m.** It's not possible for you to participate in other programs (e.g., music or sports camp, family reunions or parties, etc.) during the nine days of the STREAM Youth Theology Institute.

We know that this kind of opportunity is a choice for you, and that it limits other options for summer study or employment. We believe so strongly in STREAM that we make the program available to you at a fee far lower than it costs to host the program — **participants pay only the subsidized rate of \$500. Please do not let the cost of STREAM keep you from applying.** We will work with you, your family, home congregation, church association, or hometown to make it possible for you to attend.

Enclosed are the following application materials for the STREAM Youth Theology Institute:

- an **Application Form** for you to complete, which includes four essay questions, and
- two **Recommendation Forms** to be completed by adults who know you well, but are not related to you;

We'd prefer to receive all of your application materials in one package. Your recommenders should return the forms to you in sealed envelopes for you to send to us with your completed application form and essays. You may also email your materials to STREAMYTI@gmail.com with the forms scanned as attachments.

Applying has two parts: first **EMAIL YOUR INTENT TO APPLY NO LATER THAN APRIL 8** to STREAMYTI@gmail.com. Then complete the application and secure references - **ALL MATERIALS MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN MAY 1, 2016**. Please note that it is *your* responsibility to make sure that all of your application materials arrive here on time, so you may want to give a friendly reminder to your recommenders as the deadline draws near.

Please use this address: (or scan and email your application to STREAMYTI@gmail.com)

STREAM Youth Theological Initiative
Dr. Denise Janssen, Director
Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University
1500 N. Lombardy St.
Richmond, VA 23220

Students admitted will be accepted to the program on a rolling basis as applications are received. If admitted, you will have **two weeks** to confirm in writing or by email your intention to participate in STREAM and send the \$100.00 non-refundable deposit. If you later choose not to attend STREAM, the deposit cannot be refunded. The remaining payment of \$400 toward the total program cost of \$500 is due by July 1, 2016. **Scholarships are available** – please don't let money keep you from applying. Let us answer questions about the STREAM Youth Theological Initiative or the application process: by phone 804.257.5805 or email STREAMYTI@gmail.com

Peace,

Dr. Denise Janssen
Director, STREAM Youth Theology Institute 2016
Assistant Professor of Christian Education, School of Theology



2016 STREAM Youth Theology Institute
Application
PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

Name _____
last first middle preferred

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (____) _____ Email Address _____

Gender ___ female ___ male

Date of birth _____ Place of Birth _____
city state (country, if not US)

High School _____
name city/state

Last grade completed _____

Church Name _____
denomination

Pastor _____
street address city, state, zip code

Pastor's Phone (____) _____ Pastor's email _____

From what part(s) of the world do you trace your *predominant* ethnic heritage?

___ Africa ___ Asia ___ Caribbean Islands ___ Central or South America
___ Europe ___ Middle East ___ North America (American Indian or Alaska Native **only**)
___ Pacific Islands Other (please specify) _____

Name(s) of parent(s) or legal guardian(s) _____

Hobbies or special interests: _____

How did you hear about the STREAM Youth Theology Institute at Virginia Union University (e.g., minister, teacher, etc.)? Please list individual names if applicable.

Are there other youth you believe we should be sure to invite next year? If so, please tell us their names, addresses and their CURRENT grade(s) in school:

RECOMMENDATIONS: *Two* letters of recommendation are required as part of your application. Choose adults who know you well and who are NOT members of your family. At least one of your recommenders should be someone who can comment about your church or faith community involvement. Please list below the names, phone numbers, emails, and addresses of the persons who will complete the recommendation forms.

Name: _____ Phone (____) _____

Address: _____ Email _____
street address city, state, zip code

Name: _____ Phone (____) _____

Address: _____ Email _____
street address city, state, zip code

QUESTIONS: The STREAM Admissions Committee members are interested in learning more about you. We want to know what sparks your imagination, what you are passionate about, what questions intrigue you, what gifts you sense you have. We would like you to write a brief response to **each of the first three questions** below, **and one of the two questions listed under #4**. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers, so please just try to answer honestly and thoughtfully.

Each response should be 250-300 words (about half a page, single-spaced). Please type your responses, and be sure to put your name on each page.

1. What do you consider to be important about yourself that others might miss (e.g., convictions, qualities, feelings, spiritual or religious commitments)?
2. What interests you most about STREAM Youth Theology Institute, and why do you want to attend? What kinds of questions about God, God’s involvement in the world, or faith would you like to explore at STREAM?
3. Describe a time when you went “outside your comfort zone” (e.g. visiting a strange or different place, trying something new, encountering a person or people different from you, reading a book that challenged your thinking, etc.) How did you respond at the time? What do you feel or think about it now?
4. **CHOOSE ONE:**
 - A. What have you done in the past year that you really care about, and why is it important to you?
 - B. How have your experiences or thoughts about God shaped your commitments or your understanding of the world?

I certify that all of the above information is correct to the best of my knowledge, and that the enclosed essays are my work alone. In order to participate in the STREAM Youth Theology Institute, I understand that I must fully participate from July 1–9, 2016, and I agree to abide by the honor code and behavior covenant. If I am accepted as 2016 STREAM Youth Theology Institute participant and choose to attend, I agree to invest myself fully in the experience, open to new people, ideas, and activities.

Signature of applicant: _____ **Date** _____

I certify that I give permission for my son/daughter to apply to the STREAM Youth Theology Institute. I give my permission for photographic and video images of my son/daughter to be used in program materials and social media by STREAM and Virginia Union University. I agree that I will support the participation of my son/daughter in the STREAM Youth Theology Institute which includes uninterrupted attendance from July 1-9, 2016.

Signature of parent or guardian: _____ **Date** _____

Your complete application must be received by May 1, 2016. Email to:

STREAMYTI@gmail.com

CHECKLIST: _____ Completed Application Form with applicant and parent/guardian signatures
_____ 4 essays _____ 2 recommendations _____

Admissions decisions are made and participants notified as applications are received. Feel free to email with questions as you prepare your application: STREAMYTI@gmail.com.



Name of Applicant: _____
Last First MI

2016 STREAM Youth Theology Institute

Recommendation Form

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

TO THE APPLICANT: Complete the top portion and give this form to an adult who knows you well and is not a family member. Once the adult has completed the remainder and returned the form to you in a sealed envelope, return the form with your application package no later than May 1, 2016.

APPLICANT'S WAIVER OF RIGHT OF ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT: I hereby freely and voluntarily waive my rights of access to any information contained on this recommendation form or attachments, and agree that the statement shall remain confidential.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

TO THE RECOMMENDER: The person named above is being considered for admission to the STREAM Youth Theology Institute at Virginia Union University. During this nine-day residential program, we gather approximately fifty rising high school juniors and seniors from across the region for STREAM, an exploration of vocation, community, culture, and lifelong faith formation. Our goal is to help them explore their questions about God and the world, and discover new questions and perspectives in a supportive, mentoring community where their views, talents, and insights are respected and encouraged. The intense nature of the STREAM Youth Theology Institute requires emotional stability, curiosity about God and faith, and an ability to think critically. Please make your comments both candid and substantively significant. You may attach additional pages if necessary. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Dr. Denise Janssen, 2016 director, at STREAMYTI@gmail.com or 804.257.5805. **Please return the completed form to the applicant in a sealed envelope, after signing the envelope across the seal.** We appreciate your assistance. Please print or type.

1. How long and under what circumstances have you known the applicant?

2. Describe the applicant's involvement in his/her church, community, or school, paying particular attention to her/his interest in religious, theological or social issues, and the maturity of his/her spiritual development.



Name of Applicant: _____
Last First MI

2016 STREAM Youth Theology Institute

Recommendation Form

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE

TO THE APPLICANT: Complete the top portion and give this form to an adult who knows you well and is not a family member. Once the adult has completed the remainder and returned the form to you in a sealed envelope, return the form with your application package no later than May 1, 2016.

APPLICANT'S WAIVER OF RIGHT OF ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT: I hereby freely and voluntarily waive my rights of access to any information contained on this recommendation form or attachments, and agree that the statement shall remain confidential.

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

TO THE RECOMMENDER: The person named above is being considered for admission to the STREAM Youth Theology Institute at Virginia Union University. During this nine-day residential program, we gather approximately fifty rising high school juniors and seniors from across the region for STREAM, an exploration of vocation, community, culture, and lifelong faith formation. Our goal is to help them explore their questions about God and the world, and discover new questions and perspectives in a supportive, mentoring community where their views, talents, and insights are respected and encouraged. The intense nature of the STREAM Youth Theology Institute requires emotional stability, curiosity about God and faith, and an ability to think critically. Please make your comments both candid and substantively significant. You may attach additional pages if necessary. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Dr. Denise Janssen, 2016 director, at STREAMYTI@gmail.com or 804.257.5805. **Please return the completed form to the applicant in a sealed envelope, after signing the envelope across the seal.** We appreciate your assistance. Please print or type.

1. How long and under what circumstances have you known the applicant?

2. Describe the applicant's involvement in his/her church, community, or school, paying particular attention to her/his interest in religious, theological or social issues, and the maturity of his/her spiritual development.

3. Please comment on the applicant’s creativity and openness to new ideas, including curiosity, independence of thought, and ability to explore and communicate ideas within a context of diverse perspectives.

4. What are the applicant’s typical ways of relating to others (peers and adults), responding to stress, and means of resolving conflict?

5. What makes this applicant unique?

6. Other comments?

Name: _____ Phone: (____) _____

Address: _____
street address city, state, zip code

Occupation: _____ email _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

**Please return this form to the applicant IN A SEALED ENVELOPE,
after SIGNING THE ENVELOPE ACROSS THE SEAL.**