

SUSTAINING SERVICE-LEARNING: A Practitioner's Guide to Maintaining Long Term Programs

Sustaining Service-Learning was created by Kimberly Brantley, 2004-2005 Youth Engaged in Service Ambassador for the Points of Light Foundation and the Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service. Both organizations serve as continuous resources for all service-learning sustainability needs. Please visit both on the web at

www.pointsoflight.org
www.volunteertennessee.net

The content presented in this guide is based upon material gained from the Corporation for National and Community Service, Points of Light Foundation, CAMPAIGN CONSULTATION, Inc., Lions-Quest International, and the National Association of Partners in Education, Inc. Adaptations, opinions, or points of view expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the respective organizations.

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Sustainability is defined as the ability to maintain or increase program efforts by building constituencies, creating strong enduring partnerships, generating and leveraging resources and securing funding sources that are available over time.

-RMC Research Corporation, December 2002

Introduction

The purpose of this Sustainability Resource Guide is to provide all Service-Learning Practitioners with a collection of resources, ideas, and strategies appropriate for the long-term continuation of service-learning programs. There is a special emphasis throughout this guide to include the needs of service-learning practitioners who work with youth in an alternative setting.

Before beginning this guide, ask yourself the following question: Is my program worth sustaining? Am I passionate enough about my students, my community, and the needs that are being met to expend my time, my mental and emotional energy, and in some cases my own money to ensure that all youth are given the opportunities and support they need to become active, engaged, community-minded citizens, and leaders of tomorrow? If your answer is yes, then you are about to embark on an exciting discovery of how to maintain your service-learning program for the long haul.

Perhaps your program's grant for service-learning is coming to an end, or you are just beginning a service-learning program with your own resources; no matter your situation or experience in the field, this guide will be beneficial to you. In this guide you will learn how to assess your needs, understand how stakeholders are the foundation of your program's sustainability, and find information on the four strategies defined by the author to sustain service-learning: Implementation, Partnerships, Resource Development, and Media Management. This guide is designed to meet any or all of your sustainability needs. Please feel free to utilize it as a whole, recognizing the synergy between the foundation and strategies; or concentrate on the parts that are pertinent to your needs.

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Needs Assessment

The information in this section is adapted from
The National ASK to Sustain Institute,
CAMPAIGN CONSULTATION, Inc.

Assessing What You Need

Before you head off making strategic partnerships and looking for mega grants for your service-learning program, it is important to know specifically what you need for your program to survive. An example needs assessment worksheet is provided below, and a template for you to fill out is provided on the next page. Complete the needs assessment worksheet with the idea that your program is made up of discrete parts that can be funded or provided for by different entities. This will help you create a “diversified” funding base and makes your program less vulnerable to an ever-changing environment. Over the course of this guide, the term “diversified” will develop a clear meaning. Be sure to revisit the needs assessment worksheet often as you gain new ideas and insights on how to sustain your program.

Program name: Sunshine Alternative Center Service-Learning Program

Project Need Components	Items Secured	Funding Required	In Kind Service/Product Required
Part-time assistant	Happy Volunteer Center has an assistant that works 20 hours a week. They have offered to share her with us for 5 hours a week at their expense, plus she can utilize her work computer and office supplies for our needs.	\$7.25 an hour for 45 weeks at 15 hours per week = 4,893.75	Will need someone else to work 15 hours a week.
Training	Lions-Quest service-learning trainings are free to educators and community based organizations in Tennessee under the Lions Club International Foundation Core 4 Grant		
Transportation	Last year, Joyful Jimmy's Automotive donated a used 15 passenger van to the Sunshine Alt. Center	\$30 a week for gas for 45 weeks = \$1,350.00	
Tools			The owner of Goodies Hardware and Supply Shop had a daughter enrolled in the Sunshine Alt. Center a couple of years ago. They may be willing to donate some

			gardening tools to this year's nature project.
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Needs Assessment Template

Program name:

Project Need Components	Items Secured	Funding Required	In Kind Service/Product Required

Stakeholders: Foundation of Sustainability

The information in this section is adapted from *The National Ask to Sustain Institute*, CAMPAIGN CONSULTATION, Inc.; *Lions-Quest Skills for Action – Advisory Team Handbook*, a resource from Quest International; and *ideals: Creating and Maintaining Partnerships for Service-Learning Integration*, a resource from National Association of Partners in Education, Inc.

Who are Stakeholders?

A **stakeholder** is a person or group of persons (such as a community organization, parent, donor, school board member, etc.) who has a special interest in the activities, target population, and/or outcomes of a program.

When thinking of your potential stakeholders, ask the question: Who cares about the students/youth being served by this program? An example list of stakeholders is provided below. Fill in the blank spaces with important stakeholders not listed.

- You
- Youth/Students
- School or Agency
- Parents
- Community Partners
- Local Lions Club
- Non-profit Organizations
- Juvenile Court System
- Faith-Based Organizations
- School Resource Officers
- Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service
- Community Members
- Department of Education
- Department of Children Services
- Local Police
- Addiction Agencies
- Local Businesses
- Workforce Development Agencies
- Office of Rehabilitation
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As you look at sustainability from the perspective of the four strategies: Implementation, Partnerships, Resource Development, and Media Management, you will notice how stakeholders play a key role in each.

What Do Stakeholders Want?

People who have a stake in something need to be offered the opportunity to contribute their opinion or input into the following:

HOW THE PROGRAM STARTS...

- What is the vision for the program?
- Who is eligible to be apart of the program?
- How will the service be linked with learning?
- How can youth voice be insured?
- What needs can be identified in the school/agency and community?
- Other?

HOW THE PROGRAM EXPANDS...

- What funds, supplies or services are needed?
- Who could provide complimentary (in-kind) products or services?
- What is said about the program in the community?
- How is the program evaluated?
- How do we know the program is working?
- Other?

Giving potential stakeholders the opportunity to provide input, and using that input to make the program better, builds their support or “buy-in” for your projects and program. Since it would be nearly impossible and certainly time-consuming to gain input from every individual stakeholder, creating a **local advisory committee** is recommended to serve as a sample of the larger stakeholder population and is addressed on the following page. Each strategy of sustainability will emphasize how building opportunities for involvement from current and prospective stakeholders builds strong ties to potential community funders, community partners, and the community as whole.

Creating A Service-Learning Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee can be a key element in the success of your service-learning program. The Committee will typically be organized by you and be comprised of administrators, school staff or agency personnel, parents and/or other caregivers, community members, other important stakeholders and the students served by the service-learning program. This allows a sampling of your stakeholders to play a meaningful role in the program and provide genuine links between academic or community learning and real-world experiences. While you are responsible for the day-to-day activities of the program, the Advisory Committee is needed to provide leadership and support at all times and assistance at critically important points.

The main purpose of the Advisory Committee is to develop specific plans and strategies for effective short and long-term implementation of service-learning. Through its efforts, you receive the administrative and community support you need to implement the program, and the broader community becomes aware and appreciates young people's active participation in addressing local issues. The result is a partnership between the school/agency and community, with young people and adults working together to improve the lives of others. The next two pages provide templates of a meeting log and evaluation form to aid in conducting your service-learning advisory committee.

General Role of Advisory Committee:

- Identify school/agency needs
- Identify student needs
- Identify community needs
- Identify school/agency, student, community resources which can be used to address these needs, including potential funding sources
- Suggest service-learning projects that address these needs
- Develop goals and objectives for the service-learning program
- Help evaluate the service-learning initiative
- Serve as service-learning advocates in the respective segment of the community

General Responsibilities of Advisory Committee:

- Meet regularly to facilitate communication and support
- Help arrange for community members to do site visits
- Communicate with potential stakeholders
- Assist with celebration and recognition activities

- Expand the Advisory Committee when there are opportunities for new members to have meaningful roles

Procedures for Assuring Youth Voice within the Advisory Committee:

Some, if not all students should be members of the Advisory Committee. Allow all students in the program to conduct a needs assessment in their community and complete a personal inventory of their own interests. The information gathered through the assessments and inventories should be what leads all discussions the Advisory Committee has about student and community needs.

Service-Learning Advisory Committee Meeting Log Template

Meeting date and time:

People present:

Issue discussed:

Decision reached:

Action Planned:

Issue discussed:

Decision reached:

Action Planned:

Issue discussed:

Decision reached:

Action Planned:

Service-Learning Advisory Committee Evaluation Form Template

Name:

Affiliation:

Beginning and Ending Dates of Committee Membership:

What main responsibilities did you have as a committee member?

What were your committee's main accomplishments?

In your opinion, what were the strengths of your team?

What changes in membership or procedures would you suggest to improve the committee?

In what ways, if any, are you willing to continue to contribute to the service-learning program?

Relating To Stakeholders

Now that you have identified your stakeholders and ways to utilize them, how will you relate your program to them and build necessary partnerships for sustainability? What will motivate them to want to give their time, abilities, and resources to your program as opposed to someone else's?

Developing a **Case for Support** will help you in your stakeholder support endeavors. It will take time and if nothing else will provide you with a logical frame by which to think about your program, and thus verbally relate it to others. The case for support will also be a great tool to hand out to potential community funders and partners.

Purpose of the Case for Support

- ▶ attracts support for the solutions your initiative wishes to accomplish
- ▶ builds consensus and stakeholder buy-in
- ▶ increases stakeholder commitment
- ▶ attracts volunteers to fundraise, be a part of the advisory committee, educate for public policy, etc.
- ▶ builds community awareness
- ▶ researches and collects valuable community attitudes
- ▶ tests your programs marketable readiness

Writing the Case for Support

- ▶ Write in the present tense as if your strategies are already a reality.
- ▶ Include distinctive and innovative projects. Give supporters examples, illustrations, and case histories of program success stories. ***(A great idea here would be to have the students develop a power point presentation, video, or brochure that presents the program and it's impact on them and the community in a unique way. In some cases this may serve as the only case for support a stakeholder may need. Be sure to feel out how much information is necessary to give a potential stakeholder.)***
- ▶ Keep the case simple and brief. Do not drown supporters in data. All statistics should belong in attachments.
- ▶ Highlight evidence of the planning involved in the program, mention the Advisory Committee. It shows prospects that the initiative is managed in a business like way.

- ▶ Be connected and specific...do not say: "Our program is a model of success." Describe how it is successful, and why it is a model.
- ▶ State your goals in positive terms and relate what the program is, rather than what it is not.

Attachments for the Case for Support

The case for support is preferably 3-5 pages. The following attachments may be added if they help reinforce the message.

- ▶ Student-developed power point, video, brochure, etc. that outlines the program and it's impact on them and the community
- ▶ Budgets
- ▶ Program and/or project plans
- ▶ Demographics
- ▶ Statistics (**Be sure to include national, state, and local statistics pertaining to service-learning. National statistics can be found at www.learnandserve.org, State and local statistics can be found by contacting Meredith Freeman, Learn and Serve Program Officer of TCNCS at Meredith.Freeman@state.tn.us.)**)
- ▶ Letters of Support from other partners
- ▶ Newspaper clippings showcasing your program
- ▶ Recognition Opportunities
- ▶ Photographs

Case for Support Outline

I. Mission – Describe why your service-learning initiative exists. (*A tool to help you create a formal, as well as conversational, mission statement is provided in the resource development section.*)

II. Achievements – Establish what service-learning is and describe past achievement. Explain it's relevancy to today's youth. Reveal how it is impacting the larger community.

III. Opportunity – Convey what needs the students or youth have. Incorporate logic and emotion.

IV. Trends Affecting the Opportunity – Demonstrate your knowledge and experience with the particular youth you work with.

V. Response to the Opportunity - Unfold the answer – how does service-learning respond to the needs of the students? The trends? Incorporate urgency.

VI. Needed Resources – Describe what you have and what you need.

VII. Role of the prospective donor or partner – Discuss how the donor or partner can help you, how you can help the donor or partner achieve his or her goals, and share possible recognition opportunities.

VIII. Summary – Describe how the support will meet the need and how success will be evaluated.

Stakeholder Success Tips

✦ Create stakeholder ownership

The more interested and involved stakeholders are, the more they will invest in your program or organization – Ask stakeholders to be apart of your Advisory Committee.

✦ Seek advice

In addition to time, money and donated goods, stakeholders can also give you their best thinking – a contribution that can be made by asking stakeholders to be a part of your Advisory Committee.

✦ Share Information

Interested and involved stakeholders know how what they do helps you fulfill your program mission and vision.

✦ Tap into stakeholder networks

When people have a good experience as your stakeholder, they will help you win new stakeholders. They may have contacts you do not have.

✦ Know what motivates

Focus on what motivates the stakeholder to invest in your program and adapt to his/her changing interests, needs, and availability to maintain a long-term

relationship.

✦ **Show appreciation**

Stakeholders need recognition just like the students/youth do.

✦ **Do what you say**

Maintain integrity and accountability with your stakeholders.

Sustainability Strategy 1: *Implementation*

The information in this section is adapted from National Service-Learning Partnership, *District Lessons: Number Three*. "Use Research Knowledge to Advance District-Wide Service-Learning" By Dr. Shelly H. Billing, RMC Research Corporation

Overview of District-Wide Service-Learning Implementation

Teachers in many schools have adopted service-learning as a practice for teaching something of value, be it content knowledge and skills, personal responsibility and efficacy, civic responsibility and citizenship, and/or information about potential career pathways. Research and experience have shown that teachers who use service-learning as a strategy tend to embrace it passionately, feeling that it is a powerful teaching strategy that motivates students to become engaged in activities and school work and providing an experiential base upon which learning can and does occur.

So, this begs the question, how can service-learning be implemented in an educational environment that stresses accountability and evidence-based practice? Research suggests that building a strong, district-wide service-learning support system is the key. To grow the practice of service-learning within a school district, supporters must work on multiple fronts with a range of partners. This system will take years to nurture, but the long-term benefits are worth the commitment.

When a service-learning program is implemented in the school district, then funds for the program become a line item in the district budget, reflecting the fact that service-learning is a part of the mainstream educational delivery system, thus making your program easier to sustain. This is why implementation is included as the first sustainability strategy. The other strategies are most helpful when service-learning is not a line item budget in your county or school district, yet they are still just as important. However, line item or not, properly advocating service-learning to your peers, administrators, and community is great way to sustain service-learning long-term. The following pages will provide basic information on how to apply the research on service-learning and on instructional reform to four fundamental aspects of increasing district implementation of service-learning.

4 Fundamental Aspects

Make the Case Accurately

Ensure High Quality Practice

Pursue District Wide Strategies

Apply Existing Tools to Measure Progress

Make the Case Accurately

In promoting district-level support for service-learning, advocates must cite research findings correctly. Studies from sites across the nation generally confirm that high-quality service-learning leads to academic, civic, and personal/social development benefits for students.

An accumulating body of research shows that service-learning can have an impact on students' higher order thinking skills, civic skills and dispositions, and individual development, as measured by standardized test scores and other assessments of learning. For example:

- In Michigan, Pennsylvania, New Hampshire, and Vermont, students engaged in high-quality service-learning activities had higher scores in areas such as mathematics, English/language arts, and social studies relative to their peers who did not participate in service-learning. In
- Florida, Texas, and California students who participated in high-quality service-learning activities showed greater civic skills and knowledge of social and political institutions than nonparticipating "matched" peers.
- In Philadelphia and rural Colorado, students who participated in high-quality service-learning projects were shown to have fewer risk factors, became more "pro-social," had greater internal "locus of control," and showed more attachment to school and community than nonparticipating peers.
- The Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service has copies of evaluative work of service-learning practiced in Tennessee since 2000. Contact Meredith Freeman at meredith.freeman@state.tn.us for a copy of the evaluation reports.

Ensure High Quality Practice

District-level support for service-learning cannot be sustained unless the practice quality is high. Low-quality service-learning has little or no impact. Only high-quality service-learning experiences yield the kinds of student impacts that educators seek. According to recent studies, high-quality practice includes the following elements that enrich and deepen student learning.

- **Teachers and students plan together to create service-learning projects that are tightly linked to multiple state standards.** Since tests measure mastery of standards, the service-learning curriculum must address the relevant local or state standards. Planners must be intentional about standards from the beginning. For example, high school students who build a playground for elementary school students are likely to learn about geometry, safety rules, and architecture, but they will not learn writing skills unless writing is specifically built into the service-learning project. In this case, lesson plans could include students writing letters to local architects to ask for help in developing the blueprints; developing a presentation for parents to showcase the design; reflecting on the challenges addressed; and providing advice for others.
- **Students have direct contact with the people they serve.** Many people learn better when the content has a "human face." Relationships and dialogue promote greater understanding.
- **Reflection stimulates higher order thinking skills.** Reflection activities maximize learning when they foster students' analytical and critical skills and help them understand different perspectives of a problem or issue.
- **Students have choices and decision-making authority during planning and implementation.** Students need to know that they have some control over their own learning activities, including determining the community issues to address and the potential problem-solving strategies. As much as possible, teachers should support students' choices and help them develop ways to assess the relative merits of those choices. Students can then learn to work together to build consensus for their decisions. They can also reflect together on the consequences of their decisions for both the communities they serve and the participants involved in service.

Pursue District Wide Strategies

Service-learning advocates can draw upon an expanding body of knowledge about getting started or sustaining the use of service-learning practice in a school district.

Getting Started with Service-Learning.

- **Start small.** Educators who have adopted service-learning as a district-wide strategy have learned that success comes from taking small, critical steps from the bottom up and from the top down. Interested teachers and students can try service-learning on a small scale in a few classrooms, allowing them to learn from their successes and challenges. Meanwhile, service-learning supporters should build support among school and district leaders. These allies can be of great assistance to teachers and students and down the road will help in efforts to expand service-learning in the district.
- **Rely on teachers to spread the word and recruit other teachers.** Given their first-hand experience, teachers are some of the best advocates for service-learning. Peer-to-peer communication and mentoring can be influential, especially with teachers who value active learning strategies and are likely to find service-learning appealing.
- **Make results visible.** Demonstration and celebration are part of service-learning. Showcase service-learning projects publicly to help local stakeholders understand the results and their impact on the community, students, and teachers.

Sustaining Use of Service-Learning.

- **Provide ongoing professional development.** Teachers need practical information about high-quality service-learning that models the varied possibilities for curricular connections and student benefits.

- **Establish network and dialogue groups.** Peer-to-peer relationships within and between schools are important for accelerating quality practice and troubleshooting. Within networks, practitioners can share successes and challenges. Networks also help retain momentum and bring new supporters and practitioners into the fold.
- **Measure outcomes.** To show that service-learning is worth the time and effort, it is important to measure its benefits. Measurement will also show where improvement is needed. Service-learning supporters can use the tools described in the fourth section, or they can do a more formal evaluation of outcomes. Either way, evaluation typically serves to improve practice by clarifying what good practice looks like and what effects are being achieved.
- **Recruit students as spokespeople.** Students can be highly effective marketers for service-learning. They are testimonials to its transformative power. Have students tell their stories to the media, the community, district administrators, the school board, elected officials, parents, and others who need to know more about service-learning.
- **Seek supportive policies and regular funding.** Practitioners need administrative support. Including service-learning in district policies, budgets, and vision statements sends a powerful message about priorities and provides support.

Apply Existing Tools to Measure Progress

Careful use of existing assessment tools and resources can help improve and sustain service-learning practice. While increasing accountability, the information generated establishes a baseline for decisions about policy, professional development, funding, and staff. Two online self-assessment tools and a database of other research tools are available to assist in measuring progress:

- **Service-Learning Quality and Sustainability Self-Assessment Measure** provides a way to document school district improvement over time. Based on research as well as advice from state-level coordinators of service-learning, this tool allows the user to track service-learning quality and sustainability. It stores data for six data points, fall and spring of each year, and aggregates school-level data to the district level. District administrators can access the data at any time to review the overall district service-learning profile and assess areas of strengths and challenges. With this knowledge, education leaders can take steps to improve the practice of service-learning. (<http://www.slqualityindex.com/>)
- **Service-Learning Quality Self-Assessment Tool** provides a self-assessment on quality indicators related to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning developed by service-learning experts in the 1990s. Challenges revealed as a result of the self-assessment can be addressed by clicking on the "challenges" bar. Research syntheses, web-based resources, and sites where practitioners have met the challenges are summarized. (<http://www.servicelearningtool.com/>)
- **Compendium of Research and Assessment Tools (CART)** provides descriptions of over 500 measures of service-learning outcomes including self-efficacy, service-learning quality, civic engagement, pro-social behaviors, and other areas. CART includes 100 downloadable instruments and contact information to access other instruments. (<http://cart.rmcdenver.com/>)

Sustainability Strategy 2: *Partnerships*

The information in this section is adapted from *Building Effective Partnerships for Service-Learning*, a resource from Points of Light Foundation; and *ideals: Creating and Managing Partnerships for Service-Learning Integration*, a resource from National Association of Partners in Education, Inc.

Overview of Partnerships

In order to advance service-learning initiatives you must be able to work effectively with other organizations within your community. Effective partnerships between agencies, schools, businesses, government, civic organizations, juvenile court systems and residents for the benefit of the community are a vital part of youth service in America. Service-learning collaborations provide students with an increased confidence in their ability and show the community that young people can make valuable contributions. By working together, we can reach a larger population, avoid duplication of efforts, make better use of resources and deal more effectively and thoroughly with the myriad of problems faced by our young people.

Whether it is schools partnering with Volunteer Centers, community based organizations partnering with businesses, or after-school programs partnering with the nursing home, the potential for and productivity of effective partnerships are limitless.

Groups that excel in building collaborative relationships frequently comment that mastering collaboration has opened doors to new projects, new funding and new stakeholders and partners.

Like a piece of art, true collaboration is a long-term process, often going through many revisions as our environment and relationships change. However, there are a few techniques that will ensure the final masterpiece is ready for the gallery. Here are a few simple guideline, or techniques, to guide you as you form partnerships for service learning:

- Make sure everyone shares a commitment to a common vision, since some problems will surely arise.
- Put agendas and needs (personal and organizational) out in the open; agendas and needs do not need to be identical, but should be compatible
- Be sensitive to the needs, styles, and limitations of other collaborators.
- Involve more people at all levels; by involving more people at your organization and those with whom you collaborate you will improve the sustainability of the partnership.
- Maintain frequent and open communication
- Be sure everyone understands expectations especially concerning tasks and accountability

Types of Partnerships

It is important to realize that DiVinci did not paint the Mona Lisa the first time he picked up a brush. Since full collaboration is the most complex form of partnership, it may not be the best way to start partnerships among organizations that are unfamiliar with each other. For example, a school that has never worked with a community based organization may want to start a partnership by networking or coordination, which are simpler forms of partnership. Networking is simply sharing information for the benefit of both parties, while coordination includes a willingness to alter activities to achieve a common purpose. A slightly more ambitious form of partnership is cooperation. It builds on coordination by involving shared resources. Establishing these partnerships and personal relationships can prepare people and organizations to enter into strong true collaborations for service-learning.

Sorting Out Partnerships

<i>Type</i>	Description	Elements	Example
Networking	Sharing information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Low commitment, low risk • Separate 	Volunteer Center puts a teacher on a mailing of youth volunteer opportunities
Coordination	Sharing information and altering activities for mutual benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Low commitment, low risk • May be joint, may be separate 	Two agencies planning schedules for service projects so they build off of one another and are not competing for volunteers. May schedule joint activities
Cooperation	Sharing resources, as well as information and altering activities for mutual benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Higher commitment • Work together 	No one school can hire a Service-Learning Coordinator, so two schools hire a Service-Learning Coordinator to find service opportunities for students at both schools
Collaboration	Sharing resources, information and altering activities to enhance the capacity of other partners for mutual benefit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open • Very high commitment • Work hand-in-hand • Seek joint funding 	School and multiple agencies form a collaboration to engage your people as leaders. Then new collaboration gets a grant to fund youth led projects with sponsoring agency.

Partnership Starter Questions

The following questions can help you start conversations about partnering with schools, agencies, businesses, etc. Remember it will also be important that you provide answers to these questions to potential partners.

- What experiences have you had in community service or volunteering? What impact has that had on you?
- What experiences has your organization had working with students?
- Why are you interested in this partnership?
- What do you think is the most important reason for involving students in service-learning?
- What is one thing you hope students would learn about the community or society?
- What are the major challenges to providing services to community?
- What is one dream you have for those served by your agency?
- What do you hope service-learning will accomplish at your organization?

Benefits of Service-Learning Partnerships

- Accomplish work together that would be difficult or impossible to accomplish alone.
- Build a shared sense of commitment and responsibility throughout community
- Ensure that everyone who is touched by the service is represented in the leadership, planning and implementation.
- Avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts among agencies
- Offer opportunities for people to learn from each other and share resources.
- Contribute to rebuilding healthy, caring communities.

<p style="text-align: center;">Establishing Effective Relationships</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Know your objectives. Before contact, build a solid base. 2. Be able to articulate your goals, your service objectives and your learning expectations. 3. Know your students. What types, their range of interests, their limitations, their talents. 4. Know your resources. Can you provide PR, transportation, duplication? Remember, simple details loom large to agencies 5. Know agencies and their programs. Understand their structure, their mission, and their activities at least well enough to ask informed questions. 6. Make a strong effort to involve others in approaching agencies and to use them in an ongoing way for program implementation. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Checklist for Successful Partnerships</p> <p>IDENTIFY POTENTIAL PARTNERS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schools - Youth Service Organizations - Nonprofit Organizations - Juvenile Court System - Businesses - Recipients of Service - Individuals - Others <p>SET UP A LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE</p> <p>IDENTIFY NEEDS WHICH ARE OF MUTUAL CONCERN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do a needs assessment of the community with students and agency representatives. <p>DETERMINE INDIVIDUALS WHO WILL SERVE AS PRIMARY LIAISONS IN THE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assign student coordinators - Visit agencies ahead of time <p>NEGOTIATE AND AGREE UPON DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recipient of Volunteer Services - Student/Youth Volunteer - Nonprofit Organization - Educational Institution - Others <p>NEGOTIATE AND AGREE UPON EXPECTATIONS FOR THE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recipient of Volunteer Services - Student/Youth Volunteer - Nonprofit Organization - Educational Institution - Others <p>DETERMINE BEST METHOD FOR ON-GOING COMMUNITY AND EVALUATION</p> <p>PERIODICALLY, REDESIGN RELATIONSHIPS BASED ON CHANGING NEEDS AND CIRCUMSTANCES</p>
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Facilitating Partnerships

Now that a partnership has been created between you and another entity, are there external stakeholders who should play a role? YES! Listed below are descriptions of how external stakeholders should have a role in the service-learning partnership.

School Board Members

Boards of Education set policies and priorities for the school system. Administrators are charged with the responsibilities of implementing these policies during a fixed period of time such as a year, three years or five years. Identify those school board members who have interests and a history in community involvement programs. If a school board policy does not already exist regarding service-learning partnerships, then make sure the board member is aware of the need to support the effort. **Ex.** Invite this board member to a service project where two organizations have partnered, for instance, a classroom and a local non-profit.

District Administrators

It is obvious that the school district superintendent or assistant superintendent must be informed of the potential service-learning partnership. Their support is essential to the partnership's success. What may not be obvious is that other central office administrators may already have some partnership efforts under way. They may feel that is their responsibility to develop partnerships with the community. For example, there may be a central office adopt-a-school coordinator, volunteer coordinator, vocational education director, community education director, adult education director, public relations director or others who already are involved in some element of partnership efforts. Your task is to seek out these individuals and recruit their involvement. **Ex.** If such person exists, have them be a liaison or at minimal kept in the loop between you and the organization you are seeking to partner with.

Principals

The principal of each school has overall responsibility for programs and projects operating in that school. Most school districts and schools determine their educational priorities for the year well in advance (Improving basic skills or working with at-risk or delinquent students, for example). Principals need to be informed early that a service-learning partnership is a mechanism which can help them reach their existing goals and objectives. **Ex.** Encourage your principal to attend a free Lions-Quest training with you.

Teachers

Teachers are often the last to learn of new initiatives in a school, despite the fact that they are the people who will have to make it work. Teachers may view the utilization for external community resources as added work, or even a threat. Helping them to understand the potential benefits of a partnership to them and their students is important. Service-learning is an effective tool that will enhance the teachers' ability to reach and teach their students. As their awareness grows, the teachers will embrace, rather than resist, the new initiative. **Ex.** Ask a fellow teacher to assist with a service-learning project that involves working with a partner. With out you being pushy, the teacher will see for his/herself the benefits of service-learning and partnerships.

Staff

Staff are often ignored in a partnership. But, secretaries will answer phones and questions and carry out last minute typing, and custodians and building/grounds maintenance staff can assist with service-learning projects when they overlap with their job roles and functions. **Ex.** Inviting the grounds keeper at your school to sit in on a service-project planning session that involves the school yard is a great way to get him/her excited about the opportunities. Especially if a partner in the project is an outside grounds maintenance service provider.

Parents

Parent leaders in the school should be aware of partnerships. Their attitudes are important in determining whether a service-learning partnership will succeed. Parent/teacher organizations or school advisory councils may also feel they are the appropriate link between the school and the community. Your awareness strategies should help them understand how service-learning initiatives will benefit the school and students. **Ex.** Plan a presentation for the parents of children involved in your after-school service-learning program. Invite your contact from the local Volunteer Center whom you partner with on a regular basis for your service project needs to speak with the parents about the benefits they have witnessed from the partnership.

Students

Students should be aware of partnerships. They may be your best allies in helping community members to understand why a service-learning partnership is developed, and how it will benefit them in the future. A youth voice is a critical element for the effectiveness, longevity, and credibility of service-learning implementation. **Ex.** Have your students prepare and conduct a power point presentation to take to the school board meeting about the benefits of service-learning and partnering with community-based organizations.

Community Based Organizations

CBO's need to be aware that a service-learning partnership is being considered so that they will more likely be ready, willing and able to participate in the service-learning initiative if necessary. Volunteer centers and non-profit organizations, such as Service Clubs, Addiction Centers and YMCA, can be wonderful allies, especially when they are involved at the outset and when the partnership will help meet the needs of the agency and/or their clientele. **Ex.** Contacting your local Lions at the beginning of your project planning may initiate all types of opportunities for your students and the community. For instance, they may offer funding for your project, or provide a space for your service-project if it involves inviting in the service recipients and/or community.

Business People

Business people need to see a connection between the partnership and improving education. You may want to focus on how a service-learning initiative helps improve the "workforce readiness" skills of students. A business needs to know how their involvement in a service-learning partnership can 1) have a direct impact on what students learn; 2) help it fulfill corporate responsibilities to the community; and 3) improve the company's image. **Ex.** Enlist a local bank to encourage it's employees to team up with a young person from your agencies service-learning program to tutor at-risk elementary students in math. The youth receive the benefits of working with different generations; and the bank receives the benefits of involvement in the community, free advertising, and improving student's math skills.

Sample Service-Learning Partnership in Tennessee

Lions-Quest

Youths grow into solid citizens when they learn how to make responsible decisions, communicate effectively and avoid drugs. That's where [Lions-Quest](#) fits in. Lions-Quest is a school-based life-skills program for children from kindergarten to the 12th grade.

More than 6 million youths have taken part in a Lions-Quest classroom. The program has drawn raves from educators and high ratings from government agencies. More importantly, youth are gaining the skills that translate into success as adults.

Lions Clubs International originally partnered with Quest International to nurture youth in 1984. Lions Clubs International Foundation acquired the rights to Lions-Quest in 2002 to increase the program's reach and to offer greater support and visibility for the Lions who work with their local schools and communities on the program. Lions-Quest is currently active in 23 countries.

Lions-Quest Surges in the Volunteer State

Tennessee Lions have leveraged a partnership with the state department of education and state service commission so that Lions-Quest **Skills for Action** is the primary training requirement to qualify teachers to deliver a for-credit High School service-learning course. Lions-Quest is also the basic training for schools that receive either of two federal grants for at-risk service-learning programs. Teachers trained through these "incentive" programs have spread the word to colleagues and now after-school program staff working with elementary age students are getting in on the act. Since 2001, more than 1000 Tennessee teachers and youth leaders have participated in Lions-Quest **Skills for Action**, **Skills for Adolescence**, and **Skills for Growing** trainings. More than 50,000 youth, many at-risk, have benefited.

Lion PID Allen Broughton serves on the Tennessee state service commission with the TN Commissioner of Education and links the worlds of Lions and Teachers. "Tennessee Lions have seized an opportunity to share the joy of service with young people and their families through Lions-Quest," Broughton noted, "It's exciting for our local clubs to hear from teens and teachers and begin to partner with them on Lions service projects."

Tennessee Governor Phil Bredesen commended Tennessee Lions for their Lions-Quest work, noting "This is exactly the kind of partnership I'm trying to forge statewide between the public and private sectors...As we enter a new era for Lions-Quest in Tennessee, may it mark the beginning of a renewed spirit of citizenship and service for us all. I salute you."

[The next frontier may be private childcare agencies that are seeking ways to meaningfully engage their elementary age participants in positive youth development activities like Lions-Quest service learning.](#)

National at-risk conference recognizes lions-quest's impact

Students and Teachers at the New Directions Academy, which houses Dickson County's alternative school program in Dickson, Tennessee, were recognized at the At-Risk Youth National Forum, February 20-23, in Myrtle Beach, SC, for their school-wide Lions-Quest service-learning program. The students at the academy have been participating in a variety of service-learning projects including converting a basement room of their school into a weight room, painting the interior of the school, and organizing a pancake breakfast fundraiser for the community's new skate park. The New Directions service-learning program includes students who have been suspended or expelled, but choose to do a service-learning program as an alternative.



Partnership Tips: Working With Agencies

Partnerships between schools and their surrounding communities can have a positive impact on both parties involved. Too often relationships are strained by assumptions made by both sides. However, if both sides collaborate to work towards the common goal of community improvement, great strides can be made. It is important to realize that many community agencies may not have the same or as extensive experience working with young people as your school. You may need to advocate for the involvement of young people or help agencies understand how to best provide appropriate opportunities.

Steps to building a strong partnership with community agencies

1. Plan before contacting community organizations.

- Develop basic goals and guidelines for your program.
- Identify the issues in which volunteers and volunteer leaders are interested.
- Learn which community organizations and people are involved in addressing these issues, from the Volunteer Center, United Way, community resource directories or word of mouth.

Remember that some agencies resist involving students as volunteers and may need some convincing

about the benefits of working with your school, campus, or club. Budget cuts for agencies often mean they have no additional staff to coordinate or supervise volunteers; one solution is to involve faculty or staff volunteers.

2. Include community organizations in the planning process.

- Community organizations can offer a multitude of information.
 - They can provide valuable insight into the needs of the community.
 - They may provide guest speakers or other services for classes, meetings or events.
 - They can assist in the development or presentation of curriculum.
 - (The Volunteer Center of San Francisco publishes a [Guide to Community Educational Resources](#) that lists speakers and other educational resources nonprofit organizations have available.)
- Invite a variety of community organizations to participate.
- Involve the organization's clients, if appropriate.
- Obtain the agency's "buy-in" and belief in your program.

3. Involve community agencies as partners in your program.

- The agency has the final say in the service to be provided to their clients.
- Develop shared responsibility for the program (in areas such as orientation, training, project development, supervision, recognition).
- Develop a partnership that is mutually beneficial and on-going.
- Share costs where possible.
- Identify a contact for the agency to call if it has questions.

POSSIBLE SOURCES OF AGENCY CONTACTS:

- If your community has a United Way or Voluntary Action Center, call them first. They may have listings of agencies that want to work with young people.
- Check your phone book. Some have separate listings for community agencies.
- Contact social service agencies: hospitals, nursing homes, group homes for adults with disabilities, child care centers, etc.
- Contact your municipal or county governments.
- Ask any volunteer director identified through the methods above if there is a professional association of volunteer directors in your area.

- Talk with churches, community councils, police precincts, business associations, neighborhood organizations, political parties, special interest groups such as environmental organizations or any other community groups near your school.
- Ask parents of your students to help identify possible volunteer opportunities.

In any case, start small and build on success. Better to have strong relationships with one or two good service sites that you visit a few times before expanding. Don't over-commit yourself.

(From Learning by Giving)

Select Bibliography & On-line Resources

Building Community: Exploring the Role of Social Capital and Local Government, Program for Community Problem Solving-A Division of the National Civic League Building upon the work of academics and practitioners alike, this working paper takes a clear-eyed view at how local government efforts to strengthen individual, organizational and neighborhood relationships additionally build the capacity to tackle tough issues of communities. This paper concisely explains the theoretical aspects of social capital and then examines how these aspects can be practically applied by nonprofits, local government and other grassroots organization. Program for Community Problem Solving, Washington, D.C., 1998. \$8.00 -- To order, call (202) 783-2961.

Creating Better Community Partnerships

<http://www.fsu.edu/%7Evoluntee/news/partner.html>

Irma Jamison (1998)

This article contains tips on how anyone can maintain good community partnerships for service.

Teacher's Manual for Parent and Community Involvement, Larry E. Decker, Gloria A.

Gregg, and Virginia A. Decker, August 1995. Based on the premise that community and parent involvement is integral to the success of public schools, this training manual provides topical outlines and instructional units to be used by trainers or school educators. National Community Education Association, 3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91A, Fairfax, VA 22030; (703) 359-8973, (703) 359-0972 fax.

School Community Collaboration: A Vehicle for Reform, Toward Collaboration: Youth Development, Youth Programs and School Reform, Michele Cahill. This synthesis provides different strategy approaches to youth development and school reform. Center for Youth Development and Policy Research, 1996. \$5.00 Prepaid -- To order, call (202) 884-8266.

Community Agency and School Collaboration: Going in with Your Eyes Open.

Mark P Batenburg (1995)

Agency/school partnerships were analyzed from the agency perspective in this research report. Individuals from six CBOs were interviewed about their experiences working with schools and youth volunteers. The study found that despite culture clashes between agencies and schools, the agencies were committed to continuing the partnerships. Specifics are given about the problems each agency encountered.

Critical Issues in K-12 Service-Learning: Case Studies and Reflections.

Edited by Gita Gulati-Partee and William Finger, National Society for Experiential Education (1996)

This guide is broken into sections on each of the critical issues, including “community”. This section has six articles written by teachers, agency project managers and those whose role it is to manage partnerships between schools and agencies

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH AGENCIES

- Know what you want.
- Ask up front what the agency and its clients need. Many agencies will have specific rules for children who volunteer. Find out what those rules are and communicate them to your students.
- Evaluate whether your goals and the agency’s needs match.
- Visit the site. Don’t try to have students go somewhere you know little or nothing about. Ask a parent volunteer to check it out.
- Invite an agency representative to class to orient students and to inform them about their community.
- Orient students to volunteer work issues such as time requirements.
- Have students develop contracts with the agency. (See sample page 103.)
- Monitor and follow-up at the end of the service project. Develop clear goals and procedures for evaluating student performance as well as the success of the program. (See sample forms, pages 107-108.)
- Have students write thank-you notes to the agency.



Partnership Tips: Working with K-12

Partnerships between schools, colleges, universities and their surrounding communities can have a positive impact on both parties involved. Too often relationships are strained by assumptions made by both sides. However, if both sides collaborate to work towards the common goal of community improvement, great strides can be made. Remember in many ways schools and campuses are their own little communities. They are all different and they all have a number of forces exerting pressure on them from within, as well as from the outside. In some schools Principals have great relationships with teachers, but in other schools that relationship is strained. The same situation is true of parent groups, clubs, faculty, campus organizations, and other administrators. This makes it extremely important to involve the appropriate stakeholders in the planning process to be sure no one is undermining the process. Additionally it is a good idea to learn the history or relationship between these different groups at a school, college, or university so you know if groups generally work well together or if the dynamic will be a challenge. This may be a good time to reevaluate the scope and goals of the partnership.

Suggestions for connections with Schools

Tips for working with Teachers

- Teachers must understand how service learning will better engage their students
- Students have diverse interests and abilities
- Teachers need support too; provide materials and on-going support to help teachers build a strong program into the curriculum.
- Teachers can be hard to reach. Be sure to ask when it is best to contact a teacher. (It may not be while they are school!)
- Teachers have limited decision-making power
- Educational outcomes are the priority for teachers
- Work with others in the school, so the teacher does not have to spend time “defending” a program to others in the school that know little about it.

Remember to look at your personal relationships to see if you have a connection to the school. That person can often help you get to the best person to speak with. If you get stuck here are some good places to make connections:

- School Administrator (Principal/Vice Principal)
- School or Career Counselor
- Student Activities Director
- Student Government
- School Clubs (ex: Builders and KEY Clubs)
- Honor Society
- Social Studies Department
- State Department of Education*
- Community Service/Service Learning Coordinator
- Parent Organization (PTA, PTO, HSA...)
- Specific courses/teachers related to issues your organization addresses



HOT BOX!

* Remember while a State Department of Education will not give you a full understanding of each school, you can learn a lot about schools including state standards of learning, testing schedules and other helpful information. Because schools face so much pressure around these standards, showing an understanding of them and a willingness to recognize the implications can be very powerful in establishing a relationship with schools.

Select Bibliography & On-line Resources

Agencies + Schools = Service-Learning--A Training Toolbox.

The Points of Light Foundation (1996)

A comprehensive manual to assist trainers, agencies and schools engaged in service-learning. Illustrates how to produce effective training sessions and provides sample agendas and handouts. Explores how agencies and schools can develop successful partnerships.

Community Agency and School Collaboration: Going in with Your Eyes Open.

Mark P Batenburg (1995)

Agency/school partnerships were analyzed from the agency perspective in this research report. Individuals from agencies were interviewed about their experiences working with schools and youth volunteers. The study shows some specific problems and solutions from real partnerships.

Collaborators: Schools and Communities Working Together for Youth Service.

Rich Willits and Susan Althoen Cairn, National Youth Leadership Council (1990)

This guide describes ways CBOs and schools can be resources for each other. Fourteen CBOs explain their missions, needs, and specific examples of how young people can meet those needs. Guidelines for successful collaborations are also included.

Critical Issues in K-12 Service-Learning: Case Studies and Reflections.

Edited by Gita Gulati-Partee and William Finger, National Society for Experiential Education (1996)

This guide is broken into sections, including "community", which has six articles written by teachers, agency project managers who manage partnerships between schools and agencies.

Everyone Wins when Youth Serve: Building Agency-School Partnerships for Service-Learning.

The Points of Light Foundation (1995)

Written for agencies, this publication highlights the power of creating service-learning opportunities for youth. This easy to read booklet discusses service-learning, benefits of involving youth, common concerns related to creating service-learning opportunities and the first steps to developing these kinds of opportunities.

A Practical Guide for Developing Agency/School Partnerships for Service-Learning.

The Points of Light Foundation (1995)

This manual guides organizations from the agency perspective on how to provide service-learning opportunities for youth. It includes information on the concept of service learning, how to develop partnerships with schools, involving youth, and practical and logistical elements related to developing a service-learning program. It is presented in an easy to read format with ready to use worksheets.

Communities in Schools www.cisnet.org

This organization offers training, networking opportunities and resources to schools and community based organizations to involve students in the community.

Family Education Network www.familyeducation.com

This website is a good place to get an idea of some the issues facing schools.

LEAP (Leadership, Education and Athletics in Partnership) www.leap.yale.edu/index.html

This is a nice example of partnership between schools, agencies, and campus with other resources available.

National Association of Partners in Education www.napehq.org

This membership organization has direct links to school districts, community organizations, and other networking opportunities. They also offer training and extensive resources.

Public Education Network www.publiceducation.org

“The Public Education Network Web site is an important gateway to the key issues affecting student achievement in America’s public schools.” The site also has a number of publications to download.

Sustainability Strategy 3: Resource Development

The information in this section was adapted from *The National ASK to Sustain Institute*, CAMPAIGN CONSULTATION, Inc.; *Fundraising for Youth Service*, a resource from Points of Light Foundation; and *Funding for K-12 Service-Learning Programs*, a resource from National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, www.servicelearning.org

Overview of Resource Development

What is *Resource Development*? Simply put, resource development is the development of valuable resources to aid in the sustainability of your service-learning program. Resources can range from grants to the donation of needed products and much more. When thinking about resource development, it is good to keep in mind the need for a “diversified” funding base, that includes public funding from government and private support from foundations, corporations and especially gifts from individuals. In all cases, the success of your solicitations will be determined by the relationship you have with your stakeholders. Listed below and discussed on the following pages are the types of resource opportunities available. First however, we must begin by addressing the foundation of Resource Development and Sustainability as a whole, stakeholders. It is important that you view every person or organization as a potential stakeholder, partner, funder, etc. Knowing how to relate your program to them is key.

Resource Opportunities:

In-Kind and Cash Donations

Annual Giving

In-person and Mail
Special Events

Public Funding

Federal Government
State Government

Private Funding

Foundations

Resource Development From the Potential Stakeholder Perspective

Every chance meeting of the day is a potential opportunity to develop resources. Have you ever heard of the thirty-second elevator speech? You never know when you will run into your next potential program partner as you go through your daily life. The thirty-second elevator speech supposes you are on the elevator with a complete stranger who asks what you do. Here is your chance to hook his/her interests into your program. Will you blow it because you don't know what to say or how to say it? The next few pages will provide you with tools on how to relate your program verbally to others while you are on the go. In the Stakeholder chapter you learned how to write your *Case for Support*, in this chapter you will learn something similar, except with out all of the formality. Not every stranger you meet is going to appreciate being given a 5 page document and student produced video when asking "what do you do?" Learning how to relate your program during a casual conversation in a passionate, not desperate, way will prove useful to your funding supply.

How?

- **Develop a conversational mission statement. Don't even have a formal mission statement? Write one!**
- **Work on developing, nurturing and expanding your networks.**

Motivated Donors

Although people often feel guilty, reserved or even frightened when asking for money, people who give money feel good about their donation. Here are some common motivations for donors.

- **Good publicity & recognition**
- **Make a difference**
- **Feel needed**
- **Feel like a leader**
- **Acknowledgment**
- **Be apart of something**
- **Social**
- **Fun**

Do not underestimate the power of thanking and recognizing these folks!

Developing a Formal Mission Statement

“Mission statements are often developed in a formulaic manner that renders them dull and almost meaningless, but organizations that understand the real purpose of a mission statement will find them useful. Too often, finding the right words is emphasized rather than finding the right ideas to express. A mission statement should help define the organization and be specific enough that it can be used as a touchstone in determining whether a particular project fits with the organization’s mission. To be kept fresh and useful, mission statements should undergo continual redefinition and refinement.”

-InfoWorld, January 29, 1996

Components of a Mission Statement

A study of the mission statements of 61 of the Fortune 500 companies found eight components that were frequently included. However, rarely were all eight components included in a single statement.

- 1. Target Population – Who is the specific population served?**
- 2. Principal Services – What are the specific services the organization intends to provide to the target population?**
- 3. Geographic Domain – Where will the services be provided, in what geographical area?**
- 4. Core Technologies – Does the organization intend to concentrate its efforts into a particular technology?**
- 5. Concern for survival and growth – Are there particularly important and fundamental accomplishments that must take place to ensure organizational survival and growth?**
- 6. Organizational Philosophy – Does the organization have a particular religious, ethical, or social philosophy that accounts for its distinctiveness?**
- 7. Organizational Self Image – Does the organization have an image of itself that should be conveyed to stakeholders?**
- 8. Desired Public Image – Is there an image that those inside the organization want to convey to the public, even if it is not the organization’s image of itself?**

- Administration & Society, May 1994

Mission Statement – From Formal to Conversation Example

A formal written mission statement should vary from a spoken description. Note how by combining content of both the formal and conversation, the mission can be made more moving.

The Mission – Formal Content

Service-learning is a form of experiential learning where students apply knowledge, skills, critical thinking and wise judgment to address genuine community needs. The service-learning class at Sunshine Alternative Center is a program designed to include and encourage at risk youth in the ideologies of service-learning, through thoughtful, student organized projects that meet the needs of Happy Valley community.

The Mission – Conversation Content

“We help troubled or at risk youth overcome the stigma of being unreachable objects and encourage the unique skills and abilities they do have as individuals to learn and make a difference in the community. The service-learning students are building a playground for an inner city elementary school that is in desperate need of a safe place for their students and nearby neighborhood youth to play. By doing this, the service-learning students are learning and using complex mathematical skills, improving literacy, and learning about important health and safety issues related to youth and the environment. They are also gaining extremely important interpersonal and leadership skills that allow them to work together as a team.”

The Mission – Combined Content

The Sunshine Alternative Center service-learning class is a program designed to include and encourage troubled or at risk youth in the unique skills and abilities they have as individuals to learn and make a difference in the community. The students have organized a project of building a desperately needed playground for the inner-city Happy Valley Elementary School. In doing so the students are using complex math skills, improving their literacy, learning about health and safety issues related to youth and gaining extremely important interpersonal and leadership skills that allow them to work effectively as a team. All this, while meeting the need of a safe place for the elementary students and neighborhood youth to play.

Mission Statement – From Formal to Conversation Template

Mission – Formal Content

The Mission – Conversation Content

The Mission – Combined Content

30 Second Elevator Speech

Example

- **Opener:** “So what do you do?”
- **Interest Tickler:** “We help troubled or at risk youth overcome the stigma of being unreachable objects and encourage the unique skills and abilities they do have as individuals to learn and make a difference in the community.”
- **Response:** “Oh really? What do you mean?”
- **Interest Peaker:** “The Sunshine Alternative Center service-learning class has organized a project of building a desperately needed playground for the inner-city Happy Valley Elementary School.
- **Response:** “Oh Yeah? How does that work?”
- **Interest Captivator:** “...well, in doing so the students are using complex math skills, improving their literacy, learning about health and safety issues related to youth and gaining extremely important interpersonal and leadership skills that allow them to work effectively as a team. All this, while meeting the need of a safe place for the elementary students and neighborhood youth to play.”
- **Other:**

Ways to Develop and Expand Your Networks

When thinking of ways to develop your resources, meeting the perfect stranger in the elevator isn't always the best opportunity. Don't overlook the obvious. Sometimes you have to "plan" meetings with strangers, or the right contact may already be in your circle of family and friends.

- Leverage existing resources
- Read the newspaper, business journals, etc. – Research!
- Notice public donor listings
- Get visible
- Leverage family connections
- Befriend professional and small business owners
- Find **connectors**

Who Are Connectors?

People who:

- Know lots of people from different social and professional circles because they have a knack for making friends and acquaintances everywhere they go.
- Keep in touch with the people they know, often by sending notes, birthday cards, and other small contact gestures.
- Occupy different social and professional circles.
- Like to bring people together – great for providing introductions and access to those you don't know.
- Have numerous friendly acquaintances rather than lots of close friends.
- Know enough about their contacts to provide insight on how best to approach and motivate prospective stakeholders.

Map your Networks

Identify and write a sampling of the names and affiliations of your personal, work-related and community contacts.

<p><u>Personal Contacts:</u> (family and friends)</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Key networks/affiliations: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Key networks/affiliations: _____</p> <p><u>Work-related Professional Contacts:</u> (school administrators, co-workers, etc.)</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Key networks/affiliations: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Key networks/affiliations: _____</p> <p><u>Community Contacts:</u> (religious, civic, sports, medical, academic, etc.)</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Possible networks/affiliations: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Possible networks/affiliations: _____</p>
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In-Kind and Cash Donations

While you may not have the Kellogg Foundation in your backyard, local partners can provide cash support, as well as contacts, visibility and in-kind resources. In-kind or non-cash resources can take many forms: free market assistance, advertising, food for a special fundraising event, the donation of gardening tools, even transportation depending on your program needs. This in-kind support can reduce line item costs in your budget and may also be the beginning of “buy-in” for financial assistance in the future.

Local Corporations or influential members of your community could make a major gift donation at any time. Check with your school or agency on how to accept contributions from local community partners. For instance, your school may request that all cash donations be made directly to the school and then the money will be placed in a specific account for your program. It may also be a good idea to familiarize yourself with the IRS’s Charitable Contributions Policies.

They can be found at:

www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p526.pdf.

In-kind and cash donations from individuals or corporations in the community coupled with public funding from the government and private funding from foundations and corporations will be a great strategy for keeping your service-learning program sustained, and help you avoid the “all eggs in one basket” trap that leaves you stranded when your one funding source pulls out.

You’ve just learned how to relate your program on the go in the community and how to leverage and expand your networks. Your community can be your greatest resource development asset. Don’t underestimate the power of donated in-kind goods and services. Believe it or not, many service-learning programs can be run on little funding when all of their goods and services needs are met. Especially if the funding need does not include someone’s salary.

In-kind goods and services can be provided by a variety of sources to meet the management, program and operational needs of your program. Volunteers and service providers can donate the following services:

- Financial accounting/bookkeeping
- Legal Counsel
- Fundraising
- Advertising/Public Relations
- Staff Training
- Clerical Support
- Facility Maintenance
- Facility Use
- Equipment Use
- Food Service
- Transportation
- Program Volunteers
- Other?

Consider your current use of the community for supporting your project's activities. List the in-kind goods and services your program already receives.

List four goods and services your program could receive through in-kind services and identify who could provide the services.

1. Service: _____
1. Provider: _____

2. Service: _____
2. Provider: _____

3. Service: _____
4. Provider: _____

5. Service: _____
3. Provider: _____

In-kind and cash donations are easy strategies for fundraising that are not so time consuming. Another fundraising strategy that is more time consuming, but more profitable and consistent over the long haul is an **annual giving program**.

This is a program that generates gift support for the operating budget on an annual basis. Usually it consists of in-person, mail, and special event solicitation. The premise behind the program is that donors will become loyal to your program and it is an effective means to broaden your donor base and develop significant contributions over time. A successful ask involves several stages:

Making the Ask

- Research/know the donor
- Set an Appointment
- Chat and Relax
- Establish Involvement
- Presentation
- Ask for specific gift
- Listen
- Close

Asking In-Person:

- Requires annually asking in-person, either formally or informally, those who have donated to your program in some way
- Could be a great way to teach youth key presentation skills.

Asking by Mail:

- Is a letter written to donor prospects annually asking for support of funding, goods, or services.
- Require continually testing mailing lists.
- Should target key volunteers in the community, parents, vendors, service providers, members of organizations who will likely care about your work, anyone who has contributed to your program in the past, etc.
- Could be organized and letters could be written by the youth in your service-learning program.

Special Events

Finding funds for your service-learning program does not have to be intimidating and complicated. Already you have been given easy ways to develop your resources. As you begin assessing the resources you need, you should also be assessing the best method to reach those goals. A special event may be just the ticket. Do some research and consider how much effort your program can commit and what the return for that effort will be. Usually you will want to maximize the amount of money coming in with the smallest effort from staff, students, and volunteers.

Types of Events

Bake Sales

Car Washes

Chili, Spaghetti, etc. Suppers

Pancake, Waffle, etc. Breakfasts

Silent or Live Auctions

Raffles

Be Creative!! There are numerous types of events you could host. Be sure to involve your students through out the event process, or better yet, let them be the event coordinators. You also don't want to underestimate the power of using volunteers such as parents, co-workers, etc. This will also be a great opportunity to utilize your in-kind solicitation skills. Many of the products and services needed to host an event can be donated or underwritten in the form of sponsorship.

Special events take a lot of work, but they can deliver good results. They can help promote your program, make it more visible to the public, and give you a chance to promote your mission and value to the community.

Eight Guiding Principals for Special Events

1. Make worthy of the participants
Give donors something they consider worth their time and money.
2. Plan ahead
Give yourself enough time to make sure that things run smoothly during the event.
3. Do the event more than once
Like starting a business, results improve with each repetition.
4. Take a risk
Return on investment is greater when the risk is greater.
5. Count on volunteer support
Ask fellow faculty members, co-workers, parents, and friends to help out.
6. Reduce event costs to enhance profit
Events typically cost 50% of the money you raise so try to get donors and sponsors to underwrite all or most of event expenses.
7. Promote, Promote, Promote
Spend 80% of the effort on ticket sales. It doesn't matter how good the event is if no one comes.
8. Excavate hidden benefits
Events can educate people, gain you publicity and find you new supporters, such as new stakeholders, new donors, and new partners

Special Event Planning Checklist

Once you've decided on the type of event you're planning to host, and the types of strategies you will use to generate revenue and in-kind support, you are ready to plan your event!

- _____ Identified coordinators and volunteers
- _____ Planned out event format and theme
- _____ Developed potential sponsor list
- _____ Developed guest list
- _____ Identified event product needs
- _____ Identified and secured site and food
- _____ Developed and implemented publicity plan
- _____ Developed program and ad space (if using one)
- _____ Approached sponsors
- _____ Invited event guests
- _____ Made event assignments
- _____ Hosted event
- _____ Evaluated event and wrote thank you notes
- _____ Other

<p>Is the EXTRA money worth the time?? Many items can become sources of income. For example: Polariods. For \$10 you can have your picture taken with another guest. For \$25 you can have your picture taken with the star of the evening. Programs. Use the program to thank all the donors and volunteers. Sell ads in the program and get the printing donated. Your bigger donors might get free ads. Centerpieces. Have the centerpieces for your event donated and then sell them at the end of the event.</p>
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Remember to Thank ALL Your Donors!!

Be sure you have the correct address, a personal salutation, and a date that is no later than seven business days from receipt of the gift.

Sample Thank You Note

Dear Mr. Nicely of Nicely-Mart

Thank-you for supporting our Sunshine Alternative Center Pancake Breakfast. Without your contribution of plates, linens, and flatware, this event would not have been as successful as it turned out.

Thanks to caring people like you, we were able to raise \$3,000.00 for the Sunshine Alternative Center Service-Learning Program. As a matter of fact, many comments after the event included special references to all the wonderful donors that had participated in this worthwhile community occasion. Again, thank you for your generous contribution. You have impacted the students of Sunshine Alternative Center and the Happy Valley Community.

Warm Regards,

**Summer Smith
Program Director**

Public and Private Funding

Deciding on the specific resource development strategy to use depends on how much funding you are looking for and the size and scope of your service-learning program. The ideas previously given in this section are great for single service-learning programs or particular projects. If, however, you are looking to fund a large scale service-learning program or the line items in your budget are high (i.e., a salaried position), then a long-term grant would be preferable. Keep in mind that grants require significant time to write, as well as significant reporting and follow-through if you receive a grant. Before you apply for a grant be sure your program or project fits with the goals of the grant-maker and that you can easily measure your activities for reports.

There are two types of grant funding available: public and private. Public funding would come from federal, state and local government agencies. Private funding generally comes from national and community foundations, corporations, and gifts from families and individuals.

There are other funding resources available that are not in the form of a traditional grant: awards, fellowships, internships, and scholarships. It is also to your advantage to belong to listserves and receive newsletters and periodicals pertaining to service-learning, which often advertise grant, award, scholarship, etc. opportunities.

Listed below are ways to access all of these resource development opportunities. They are listed in respective categories, but many of them overlap in the type of resource opportunities they provide.

Federal Public Funding – web resources

- Learn and Serve America
<http://www.learnandserve.org>
Contains applications for Learn and Serve America and other grants.
- The Corporation for National and Community Service
<http://nationalservice.org/egrants/index.html>
Online grant application and management system.
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
<http://servicelearning.org>
Contains a searchable database of awards, fellowships, scholarships, funding resource, grants, and funders called Funding Sources.

- National Service-Learning Partnership
http://www.servicelearningpartnership.org/youth_innovation/resources.cfm
Contains sample funding applications and press releases, and provides timelines for fundraising and grant writing.
- The U.S. Department of Education Forecast of Funding
<http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/find/edliteforecast.html>
Lists all programs and competitions under which the Department of Education has invited or expects to invite applications for new awards.
- U.S. Department of Education Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools
www.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml
- U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
www.ojp.usdoj.gov/fundopps.htm
- Grants.Gov
www.grants.gov/Education

State Public Funding – **web resources**

- Tennessee Department of Education
www.state.tn.us/education/mgrants.htm
- Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth
<http://www.state.tn.us/tccy/grants02.htm>

Private Funding – **web resources**

- The Foundation Center
<http://fdncenter.org>
Lists funding opportunities and provides information about the grant application process. Contains the *Philanthropy News Digest*, a foundation directory, and online grant writing and fundraising tutorials.
- The Grantmaker Forum on National and Community Service
<http://www.gfcns.org>
Provides resources for grant writers and links to publications of service-learning and civic engagement.

- Community Foundation Locator (Council on Foundations)
www.cof.org
- Foundation Resource Guide Online Database (HUD Office of University Partnerships)
www.oup.org
- W.K. Kellogg Youth Innovation Fund
http://www.servicelearningpartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=vif_index
- State farm Good Neighbor Service-Learning Initiative
http://www.servicelearningpartnership.org/site/PageServer?pagename=SI_sfgoodneighbor

Awards, Fellowships, Internships and Scholarships – **web resources**

- Presidential Freedom Scholarship
www.nationalservice.org/scholarships
- Spirit of Community Awards, Corporation of National and Community Service
www.spiritofservice.org/spiritofservice

Listservs and Newsletters – **web resources**

- The K12 Listserv
Provides a forum for the discussion of issues concerning the K-12 service-learning community. Some of the past discussions have involved project ideas, information requests and current service-learning news.

You may subscribe to the listserve via the web interface at

http://lists.etr.org/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=k12-sl

OR

Send an email to joink12-sl@lists.etr.org following these instructions

- 1. Leave the subject bland**
- 2. Remove any appended signatures**

- Community-Based Service-Learning
A national listserv for individuals at community-based organizations who are engaged in service-learning activities. This listserv is hosted by the Points of Light Foundation.

To subscribe send an email to listserv@listserv.pointsoflight.org following these directions:

1. Leave the subject line blank
2. The message text should read: **SUBSCRIBE CBO-SL City State
Firstname Lastname**
For example: **SUBSCRIBE CBO-SL Nashville TN John Doe**

- NSLC – Resources
NSLC-Resources is a free, electronic current awareness service published periodically by the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. It is intended to provide timely information and relevant resources on service-learning to support service-learning programs and practitioners. Each issue of NSLC-Resources typically focuses on one topic and features eight to ten of the best items selected from the NSLC website. For more information, visit:
<http://www.servicelearning.org/nslc/nslc-rsrcs/index.php>
- LSA-News
LSA-News is a new electronic current awareness service published quarterly by the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse and distributed to members of all the NSLC listservs. It is intended to provide timely information and relevant resources on Learn and Serve America programs. For more information, visit:
http://lists.etr.org/read/all_forums/subscribe?name=lsa-news
- *Clues & News*
Clues & News is an electronic newsletter produced by the Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service in partnership with the Department of Education through a grant funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service. It contains announcements of National Service Days and activities, articles that relate to the national, state, and local service-learning field, Commission news, service-learning project ideas, and sustainability and grant resource information.
For more information or to receive the electronic newsletter, visit:
www.volunteertennessee.net
OR, email:
Kimberly.Brantley@state.tn.us

Funding Periodicals and Articles – **web resources**

- Education Week
www.edweek.org
- Federal Funding Glossary (Houghton Mifflin Education Place)
www.eduplace.com
- Grant Writing Tips (Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance)

www.paservicelearning.org

- Grant Writing Tools for Non-Profit Organizations
www.npguides.org

Other Great Websites to Know About

These websites provide searchable and updated listings of funding opportunities for youth service programs, and also provide links to many websites of Corporations and Foundations with money to give.

- Youth Service America
www.ysa.org
- SERVENet
www.servenet.org

Writing a Winning Grant Proposal

Remember that just like other forms of fundraising, research is an important piece to getting a grant. Look for foundations and corporations whose philanthropic goals mesh with the goals of your project.

Some grant applications are very specific and direct the grant writer to answer a set of questions, however some grants merely ask you to submit a proposal. Most proposals should be around 4-5 pages.

Proposal Elements

- **Cover Letter – Your cover letter should be no more than one page. The first paragraph should include some background on your organization, the purpose of funding, and the amount requested.**
- **Summary – Your summary should be one page summarizing your proposal. This summary should show and link the goals of your project to the purpose of your organization, explain how the project will be implemented, state the results you expect to achieve, include other sources of funding for the project, and include the total budget. Most potential donors will have a good idea at this point if they will fund the project, so be sure to be clear, concise, and compelling.**
- **Introduction – This section should be a brief history of your organization. This section should contain mission statements, accomplishments, and population served, in addition to where the project fits into the organization.**
- **Need (Problem) Statement – This is the general problem your project will address, as well as the conditions that create the problem. Incorporate what resources exist and how your project will fill some of the gaps in resources in this part of the proposal.**
- **Goals/objectives – The goals are broad general statements of what the program hopes to accomplish; the long range benefit. The objectives are measurable, time-specific outcomes that are expected to be achieved as part of the grant**
- **Methods/Activities – (Including timelines)**
- **Evaluation – The evaluation describes the process that will be used to determine the project's effectiveness or efficiency. It should describe the evaluation process, identify the indicators and data collection methods that will be used to measure success, state who will do the evaluation, and describe how the evaluation data will be used.**
- **Budget – This is generally the first place that grantmakers look before any other part of the proposal. The budget is the dollar expression of the project you are proposing. It is an estimate of the expenses and revenue that you anticipate will occur.**

- **Conclusion – The conclusion should include contact information and thank the donor for their time and consideration.**

General Writing Tips

- ▶ **Follow guidelines provided by the funder**
- ▶ **Paragraphs should complement and link to each other – they should average only eleven lines in length**
- ▶ **Be compelling, but don't exaggerate**
- ▶ **Let the human element shine through – remember, the funder is a person**
- ▶ **Use positive rather than emotional language**
- ▶ **Support claims or explain assumptions whenever possible**
- ▶ **Avoid jargon**
- ▶ **Be brief and focus – keep sentences short and crisp**
- ▶ **Use action words and verbs**
- ▶ **Get critical review and feedback before you send the proposal**
- ▶ **Revise and edit**

Grant Reviewers Top 10

Top ten things that grant reviewers hate to see on a proposal...

- 1. Directions that are not followed**
- 2. Old approaches to existing problems**
- 3. Over 10 pages (unless required to be longer)**
- 4. Corrections made by hand**
- 5. Proposals sent overnight**
- 6. Proposals sent in late**
- 7. Expectation of continual funding or the program will fall apart**
- 8. Exaggerated or irrelevant statistics and facts**
- 9. Lots of jargon and big words that are unfamiliar to reader**
- 10. Really small print**

Sustainability Strategy 4: Media Management

The information in this section is adapted from *Working With the Media*, a resource from Points of Light Foundation

Overview of Media Management

Another partnership that should not be overlooked is that with the media: newspapers, television, magazines, radio, even the Internet. The media can play a big role in your program whether you are working in collaborations to create a public service announcement or to get news coverage for your project efforts. Like most partnerships, those between community agencies and broadcast media outlets can benefit all parties involved. Too often youth receive negative press on the news, especially those deemed at risk, but, given the opportunity, the media can turn this image around.

The following pages are a compilation of resources compiled by the Points of Light Foundation on how schools and community agencies can best work with the media and the benefits that all parties involved will receive. As you will notice, through out the section, there is no mention of email or Internet components as a means to corresponding with different media outlets. ***Please keep in mind that most media outlets now generally prefer, as with most of the business world, that correspondence take place through email or other Internet mediums. Be sure when you are collecting contact information for media personnel that you include their email and/or web address.***

The following tips for working with the media were compiled from three sources:

- The W.K. Kellogg Foundation **Guidelines for Media Relations** offers basic tips on what constitutes news, the difference between hard news and soft news, knowing how to sell your idea, and how to compose and select your news releases.

Contact: <http://www.wkkf.org/>

- The *News Backgrounder* from the Michigan Communications Project of the Foundation for American Communications printed, “**Making the Most of Your 15 Seconds**” by David Cohler. The article explains the limited time that journalists have to review the requests for coverage that they receive. In addition some tips are given on how to write a proper media release and how to be a accessible to journalilsts.

Contact: <http://www.facsnet.org/>

- **Ways to Publicize Your Program** suggests different mediums through which to publicize an event. Pages 46-49 and 53-56 from the **National Youth Service Day Toolkit** specifically deals with a media plan for National Youth Service Day, but many of the suggestions can be applied to any media campaign. Topics covered include: compiling a media list; contacting the media; public service announcements; and news releases. Pages 5-6 and 6-19 of **Understanding Media** explains how to asses the needs of the media and audience who will be receiving your message. Some “rule” for interviews are given as well as general guidelines to use when being interviewed.

Contact: <http://www.yasa.org>