

## Service-Learning Project Ideas

Below are some ideas for service-learning projects. Please remember that service-learning projects should be student generated and student driven. The following ideas are to help the teacher and the students understand the connection of service and learning.

### **Cooking for You or Two**

Students studied about the nutritional needs of the elderly population as part of a Nutrition for the Life Cycle unit. Through a brainstorming session, students discussed possible food habits of the elderly in the community and local availability of nutritious foods. Students developed and distributed a survey to elderly community members. The results of the survey led students to the reality that elderly community residents preferred to snack throughout the day because they lacked the knowledge in order to prepare nutritious meals for one or two individuals. As a result of the survey, the students planned a demonstration for elderly community members that would feature recipes to serve one or two individuals and were high in nutrition and low in cost. The students researched recipes and locally available ingredients and then determined the nutritional value of each recipe and how it might fit into the nutritional needs of the elderly. Working in pairs, the students chose a recipe to demonstrate. Students also personally contacted the elderly community members and invited each individual to attend the demonstration. Students used available technology to create a mini-cookbook that would be given to each attendee. During the presentation students demonstrated how to prepare each recipe, discussed the nutritional value of each recipe, and provided a taste sample.

Service Involved: Nutritious recipe demonstration for elderly community members

Learning Involved: Nutritional needs of the elderly; research skills to locate recipes; budgeting skills; computing nutritional values of recipes; demonstration techniques; communication skills; technology skills; teamwork skills

### **Walking Garden**


As part of an Interior Design course, students studied landscaping techniques that help prevent land erosion and provide enjoyment and recreation for all individuals and age groups. Students discovered an empty lot owned by the city and proposed to improve the lot by adding native plants, constructing a walking area, and providing sitting areas. Students partnered with the local City Beautification Committee and created the new walking garden.

Service Involved: Creation of a family-friendly, community walking garden

Learning Involved: Landscaping, design, and construction techniques; communication and negotiation skills when securing land for the garden; research skills to determine native plants and to locate samples; budgeting skills; and teamwork skills

### **Emergency Preparedness**

After hearing news about a school shooting in an Amish community, students in an Instructional Practices in Education and Training class became concerned about the preparedness of their school and student safety during emergencies. Students discussed emergency preparedness with school officials. It was determined that each classroom needed an emergency kit with basic supplies in the event of a lock-down or evacuation. Students applied for a grant and used the money to purchase supplies to prepare an emergency care kit for each classroom. The students met with school faculty members to discuss the use of each item in the kit. As a long-term project, the students inventoried the emergency kits at six month intervals and replaced items, as necessary. After an actual school



lockdown, students developed a survey concerning the value of the items in the emergency kit, and distributed it to the faculty. The survey also solicited faculty suggestions for additional needed emergency kit items. Students compiled the survey data and purchased additional items.

Service Involved: Preparation of emergency care packs

Learning Involved: Local emergency policies and requirements; grant writing skills, communication skills; technology skills; and money-management skills

### **Thrift Store**

As a result of learning various shopping alternatives in a Principles of Human Services course, students developed and distributed a community survey concerning the shopping needs and available shopping alternatives. After compiling the data, the students determined that the community members would benefit by having a lost-cost, shopping alternative. The students met with community leaders and business owners to locate a building to house the store. The students applied for a grant to fund building improvements and other start-up expenditures. Student and community volunteers renovated the building and collected donations of gently used items. The thrift store opened for business two days a week. Revenue generated from sales in the thrift store was donated to the local library and a high school scholarship fund.

Service Involved: Open a thrift store

Learning Involved: Technology skills to create surveys and compile data; communication and negotiation skills with diverse populations; construction techniques; grant writing skills; money-management skills; entrepreneurial skills including creating schedules and costing merchandise; and design skills when displaying merchandise