

North Dakota DECA – Service-Learning Tool Kit

2020-2021

The purpose of the North Dakota Toolkit is to assist chapter officers with ideas and strategies to help them work with their chapters throughout the year, primarily in the area of Service Learning and Community Service projects.

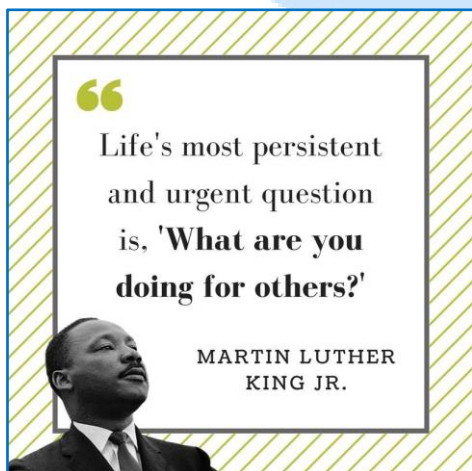
WHAT IS SERVICE-LEARNING? HOW WILL IT HELP YOU?

Service-learning is an educational approach that combines learning objectives with community service in order to provide a pragmatic, progressive learning experience while meeting societal needs.

Service-learning involves students in service projects to apply classroom learning for local agencies that exist to effect positive change in the community.^[1] The [National Youth Leadership Council](#) defines service learning as "a philosophy, pedagogy, and model for community development that is used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards."^[2]

Author Barbara Jacoby defines service-learning as "...a form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities for reflection designed to achieve desired learning outcomes."^[3]

Service learning is a combination of what we know as formal education and applying that learning in a service-oriented way. It is a type of educational philosophy that requires the student to demonstrate their knowledge, thus connecting the cognitive to the emotive and resulting in better learning outcomes. It incorporates personal passions with intellect, empowering students to find their passion and exercise useful ways to engage in real world problems. It is a connected learning experience, linking personal development with cognitive development and touching feelings as well as thought. Students take the ideas they learn about in theory and connect them to real problems in practice, creating viable solutions for long term transformation in society. The classroom becomes a place where thought is connected to passion, evoking real world change.



HOW WILL THIS TOOLKIT HELP YOUR CHAPTER?

The following Toolkit items are to assist chapters to develop the 21st Century Skills for our members. Toolkit items include:

- ◇ DECA MEMBER INVOLVEMENT IN SERVICE LEARNING
 - What Service Learning is
 - How Service Learning can help DECA members and chapters
 - The development, plan and execution of a service-learning project
 - DECA's Chapter Campaigns; Community Service

WHAT DOES THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDE FOR YOUR CHAPTER?

1. Officer Contact Information: North Dakota Adopt-A-Chapter Program
2. A list of potential places for every chapter to volunteer or provide service learning.
3. A sample letter to send to either:
 - a. Set up a place to volunteer
 - b. Send a donation to their organization after the event.
4. List volunteer or fundraising ideas and to carry them out and get more members involved.
5. Encourage every chapter in North Dakota to plan, organize and submit a Chapter Campaign in the area of community service.
6. Leadership and Responsibility
7. Planning, Executing and Evaluating a project.



NORTH DAKOTA DECA ADOPT A CHAPTER PROGRAM

"Leadership and Learning are indispensable to each other."

John F. Kennedy, Former President of the United States of America

Each chapter is assigned to work with a North Dakota Association Officer to work with throughout the year. Chapter president, officers, and the local advisor should work with the assigned officer to assist throughout the year.

Garret Mehl

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- ◇ NVCTC Grafton
- ◇ Grand Forks Central
- ◇ Northern Cass

Jake Hanson

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- ◇ Bismarck High
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- ◇ Wahpeton High School
- ◇ Watford City

"It's hard to LEAD a cavalry charge if you think you look funny on a horse."

Adlai E. Stevenson

WHAT ARE THE PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES?

Purpose: DECA members are encouraged to be involved in their community and participate in community service activities during each year as a DECA member.

Objectives: Plan, organize, and implement a local project or activity to promote an organization. The project may include raising money for the organization.

Ideas for organizations are:

- ◇ Muscular Dystrophy Association
- ◇ Diabetes Association
- ◇ Heart Association
- ◇ Lung Association
- ◇ Humane Society
- ◇ Local charities / organizations / fundraisers

Sample activities may include but are not limited to:

- ◇ Host a 5k / Walkathon
- ◇ Silent Auction
- ◇ Raffle / Penny War
- ◇ Restaurant Giving Night
- ◇ Text / Email campaigns
- ◇ Ice Cream Social
- ◇ Duck Race / Bingo Night

Reach out to your North Dakota Association Officers for more ideas!

SPECIFIC LOCATIONS IN COMMUNITIES WITH DECA CHAPTERS

If your city or community is not listed, please be advised that there are places that you can volunteer. These are just examples for some of our locations in the state.



Volunteer at any of these places in Bismarck or Mandan, North Dakota

- ◇ United Way
- ◇ Heaven's Helpers Soup Cafe
- ◇ Ronald McDonald House
- ◇ Salvation Army
- ◇ Youth Works
- ◇ Great Plains Food Bank
- ◇ Community Works
- ◇ Heart River Lutheran Church

Volunteer at any of these places in Fargo, North Dakota

- ◇ Great Plains Food Bank
- ◇ GiGi's Playhouse
- ◇ Jeremiah Program
- ◇ Ronald McDonald House
- ◇ United Way
- ◇ YWCA Cass Clay Emergency Shelter
- ◇ Charism
- ◇ Emergency Food Pantry
- ◇ New Life Center
- ◇ Youth Works
- ◇ Salvation Army

Volunteer at any of these places in Grand Forks, North Dakota

- ◇ United Way
- ◇ Global Friends Coalition
- ◇ Northlands Rescue Mission
- ◇ Salvation Army

Volunteer at any of these places in Minot, North Dakota

- ◇ United way
- ◇ YWCA
- ◇ Salvation Army
- ◇ Minot Area Homeless Coalition
- ◇ North Dakota Association of the Disabled
- ◇ Second Story
- ◇ Men's Winter Refuge
- ◇ Domestic Violence Crisis Center
- ◇ The Lords Food Pantry
- ◇ Veterans of Foreign Wars

Volunteer at any of these places in Wahpeton, North Dakota

- ◇ Richland Wilkin Food Pantry
- ◇ Salvation Army
- ◇ Three Rivers Crisis Center

Many of the cities now have small house style boxes in their communities for books or nonperishable items where you can donate items. A food drive or day of caring is available for any chapter during the year.



SAMPLE LETTER FOR SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

Date

(Name of Manager/Owner)

(Organization Name)

(Organization Address)

(City, State, Zip Code)

Dear (Name of Manager/Owner):

We are students at (High School), We are also members of DECA, which is an international organization that prepares high school students for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, entrepreneurship and management.

As part of DECA, we are challenged to serve or fundraise for an organization of our choice. Our chapter has a very strong interest in (type actual name of organization here) and would like to (serve/give funds) to your organization.

Our goal is to provide service or funds that have some value to your organization. If you have any resources or ideas to help our chapter (fundraise, raise awareness, donate) we would love your input. We are very eager and excited to meet with you so that we can learn more about your organization and discuss potential ways for our chapter to work with you.

Thank you so much for your consideration! Please call (chapter president #) or email (chapter president or advisor) at (high school name) if you have any questions. You can also contact us directly using our contact information below. We are really looking forward to working with you!

Sincerely,

(Advisor Name)
(email)
(Chapter) DECA Advisor

(2nd Student Name)
(email)
(Chapter) DECA President

(3rd Student Name)
(email)
(Chapter) DECA Vice President

CHOOSING A CAUSE OR SPECIFIC CHARITY

Is your association passionate about a cause, or a specific charity? This is an opportunity to give support to your passion project by bringing your association together for a project. The goal of the project can range from raising money, to bringing awareness to a cause or lending support to an organization on a volunteer level. With a solid goal in mind, you can begin brainstorming about how to get started.

CHOOSING A CAUSE AND GETTING BUY-IN

The first, and most essential, step in developing any successful project on an association level is getting buy-in from all the key stakeholders. This starts with your team and the individuals that will be working the closest with it. If the team that's trying to pull off this project doesn't have passion and excitement for it in this phase, it's only going to be more difficult to dedicate time and energy to it moving forward. Here are some ideas for creating a shared vision with each important group of stakeholders:

Learn the back story

Whatever organization you're planning to support, take some time to understand their history, purpose and impact. It's often difficult to get this from just reading text on a website, so reach out and ask if the organization could have a representative talk with your group either in person or via a video call. Does this organization support the goals of your association? Are you working within their values and guiding principles as well? Remember, you are trying to help *them*, not the other way around.



PREPARING LEADERS AND A LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY

CHAPTER ADVISORS

- **Maximize in-person communication**

Advisors get a lot of emails, so a message about a community service project they haven't heard about previously is easy to pass by when their other priorities seem higher. It is essential to leverage any conference communication you can have with advisors at the beginning of the year. Whether it's a workshop or a couple minutes in conversation, share why your team is so excited about bringing this project to life. Your energy will be contagious.

- **Make participation easy and recognize it**

Give advisors whatever they need to be successful. If you can give them pre-set communication or toolkits so they can simply be the mouthpiece for reaching their chapter, the more likely you'll get their help. Let them know that when the project is complete, you will be recognizing key players and chapters with a press release or e-mail out to your association to commend their efforts.

- **Keep it short and sweet**

While you probably have a lot to say about your service project, think about how you can use the fewest words to say it. Use bullet points, link out to a blog or area on your website with more information and keep emails succinct.

CHAPTER LEADERS

- **Showcase contagious enthusiasm**

You know those people who are so excited about something they just have to tell you? If this is the way you feel about your team's service project, chapter leaders will naturally feel inspired to join. Lead by example and the chapter leaders who look up to your team will follow.

- **Use creative communication**

Think about how you could reach officers in a new way, maybe that's putting together a series of Snapchats of your team and people from the organization talking about the cause, maybe it's walking them through your vision or mailing them a card. Use your creativity to get chapter leaders to hear your pitch.

- **Give them a job**

When chapter leaders feel considered and a part of the team, they'll be excited to play their part.

PLANNING, EXECUTING AND EVALUATING THE PROJECT

PLANNING THE PROJECT

The key to **planning** a successful service project is all about the small goals and checkpoints you set up along the way. If you take the time to make a realistic, structured plan, the rest will fall into place.

- **Be realistic**
It's easy to dream big when you're so inspired on what you're working on but be conscious about how much time you'll be able to commit to the project throughout the year.
- **Make a timeline**
Start with the end in mind and consider what you want to accomplish by a certain date, then work backwards
- **Define accountability**
Work with your advisor to define roles and responsibilities. Using a RACI matrix, could help you separate who's responsible for actual execution vs. who just needs to be kept in the loop. RACI = Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed, learn more about RACI [here](#).
- **Assign goals and check-in points to specific dates**
Understand what the priorities are for each phase in the timeline and schedule check-ins with your team to hold you accountable with what you need to have accomplished.
- **Have accountability partners**
Work with someone else on the team to hold you accountable. Life gets busy and while it's easy to make big plans when you're in a meeting, it can be more difficult to stay focused and keep them during the year. Have another officer on the team check-in with you and ask if there's any blockers they can help with to keep the project moving.

EXECUTING THE PROJECT

It's finally here! All the work you've put in has led up to this point. While this part can be stressful, your decisive planning beforehand will have set you up to be in a great spot.

- **Be clear with responsibilities**
Make sure your team understands their roles, whether it's rounding up volunteers or picking up trash, it's important people know what's expected of them.
- **Create a day-of checklist**
From set-up to tear-down and everything in between, since one person can't be in several places at once, empower other leaders to help and give them the information and guidance they need to do the job - whether that's a checklist of tasks, a script or clear, detailed instructions.

- **Expect the unexpected**

Things never go as planned, coming in with that attitude will help you stay calm under pressure and help kick your problem-solving skills into gear.

- **Do a run through**

Walk through the day with your team start to finish- from the first thing on the schedule setting up, to the final tear-down. Hopefully it is all documented (if not, write it out) and ask teammates to ask questions along the way and even poke holes in plans, this will only make it stronger. For example:

- Do you think we need extra trash cans there?
- Does “X” person know what they should do if situation “Y” arises?
- Where are the outlets to plug in the speakers?

EVALUATING THE PROJECT

After the completion of the project, make some notes for improvement and take some time to reflect on the impact. Review your notes and ask yourself the following questions:

- Did we reach our goal?
- What percentage of our association did we reach/participated?
- If we were to do this project again, what could change to make it better?

Use the answers to these questions to not only reflect on your own efforts, but to set a foundation for the team that follows. Make sure to thank members of the community that contributed money or volunteered efforts by sending them a thank-you from your team. To reach out to your association, consider making a reflection video that gives the outcomes of the project as something for students and advisors to be proud.

AFTER THE PROJECT

Send a thank you card to the organization saying you appreciated the opportunity to work with them and letting them know the final product of the project. Let them know they can reach out to your chapters if they ever need volunteers for events or seasonally.

**Thank you to the 2020-2021 North Dakota Officers and former North Dakota president Morgan Thompson for the information and ideas for this toolkit.*

SERVICE PROJECT PLANNING

To help you brainstorm project ideas, use the form below.

WHO?	
CAUSE	
RATIONALE	
POSSIBLE PROJECT IDEAS	

HOW CAN THIS BE ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL MEMBERS/CHAPTERS TO PARTICIPATE?

CAN WE INVOLVE LOCAL COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN THE PROJECT? HOW?

WHAT RESOURCES CAN WE PROVIDE TO CHAPTERS TO HELP THEIR INVOLVEMENT?

HOW CAN WE USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE THE SERVICE PROJECT AT ALL PHASES?