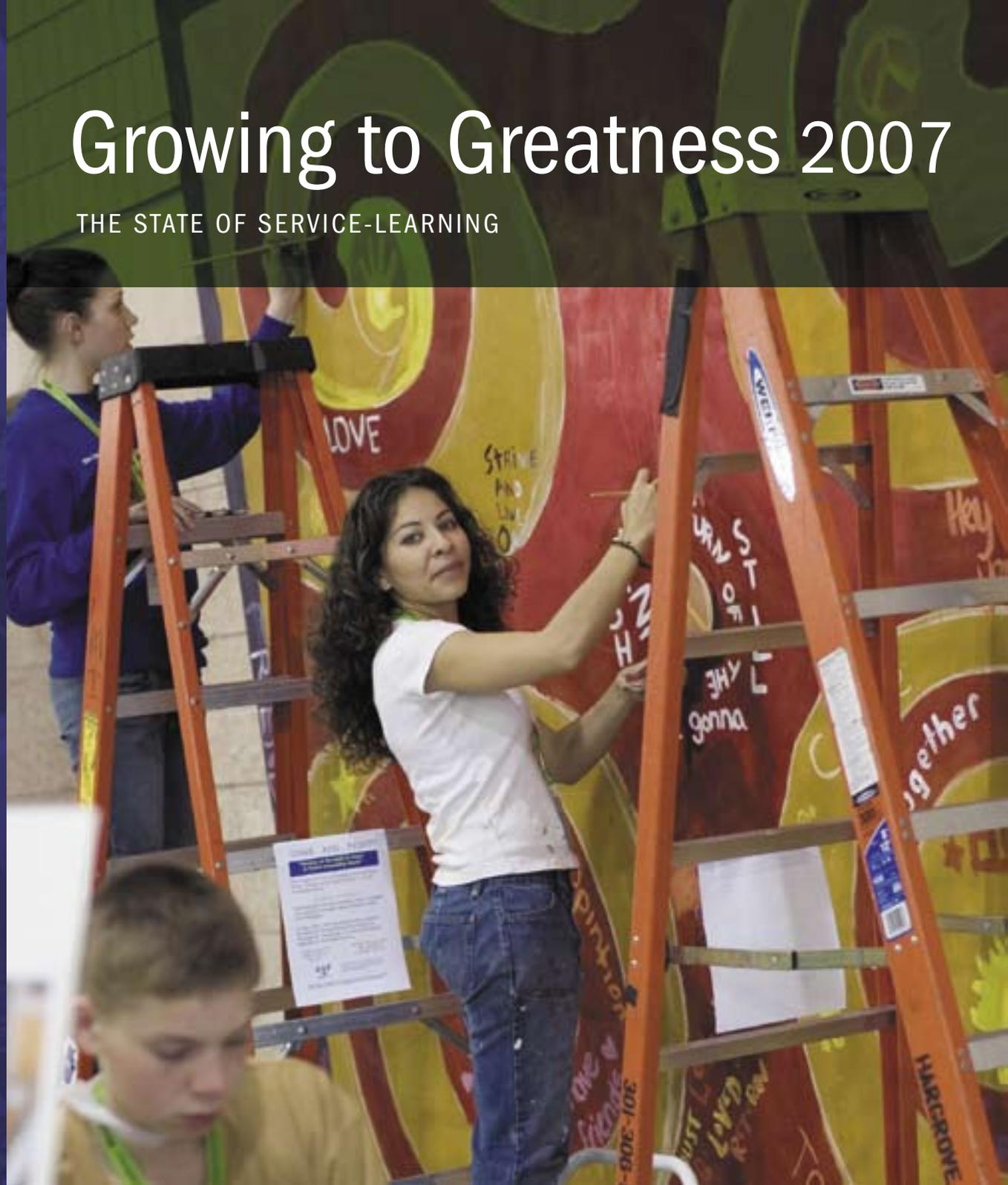


G2G

Growing to Greatness 2007

THE STATE OF SERVICE-LEARNING



A report from the
National Youth Leadership Council

WITH FUNDING PROVIDED BY



State Farm
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FOUNDATION

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Excerpted from "Growing to Greatness 2007"

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National Youth Leadership Council By the Numbers

1983	Year NYLC began in St. Paul, Minn., as a national council of 12 regional organizations, all interested in youth leadership and service-learning.
244,906	Number of young people trained by NYLC.
134,556	Number of adults in the U.S. trained by NYLC.
13,455,600	Estimated number of young people taught by teachers trained by NYLC.*
6	Number of continents on which NYLC has offered service-learning trainings.
4,990	Number of people trained overseas by NYLC.
3,300	Number of Minnesota youths recognized by NYLC for exemplary service-learning leadership over 10-year timeframe.
29,581	Total number of people who have attended the annual National Service-Learning Conference, developed by NYLC.
225	Number of conference attendees at first National Service-Learning Conference held in St. Paul in 1989.
41	Number of countries represented at recent National Service-Learning Conferences.
1	Number of people it takes to initiate change in the world.

* Based on each teacher reaching 100 students.

Service-Learning

As a philosophy,

service-learning embraces young people as community resources and assets.

As a community development model,

service-learning addresses real issues such as disaster relief, pollution control, hunger, homelessness, and diversity.

As an educational method,

service-learning is a form of active learning that values critical thinking and problem-solving. Research shows that when service-learning is effectively implemented, students gain in measures of academic achievement, citizenship, and character.

Growing to Greatness 2007

THE STATE OF SERVICE-LEARNING

JAMES C. KIELSMEIER, PH.D., PROGRAM DIRECTOR

MARYBETH NEAL, PH.D., RESEARCH DIRECTOR

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Growing to Greatness 2007

Everybody
can be great,
because
everybody
can serve.

- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s
February 4, 1968, sermon at the
Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta

- iv Editorial Board
- v Acknowledgments
Marybeth Neal, Ph.D.
- vi Letter from State Farm
Kathy Payne
- 1 Introduction
James C. Kielsmeier, Ph.D.
- 4 Advancing Youth Academic Success,
School Engagement, and International
Leadership through Service-Learning
Andrew Furco, Ph.D.
- 14 Toward Research-Based Standards for
K-12 Service-Learning
Wokie Weah
- 18 Unpacking What Works in Service-Learning:
Promising Research-Based Practices to
Improve Student Outcomes
Shelley H. Billig, Ph.D.
- 29 Walkabout: Learning from Others
Richard J. Kraft, Ph.D.
- 34 The 2006 Gulf Coast WalkAbout:
A Promising Summer School Program
Tom Berkas, Ph.D.
- 42 Service-Learning for Homeland Security
and Disaster Relief: A Report from Learn
and Serve America
*Monique Caston, Elson Nash,
Scott Richardson, and Kimberly Spring*
- 46 The Power of Service-Learning in Urban Settings:
An Interview with Patricia Harvey
Marybeth Neal, Ph.D., and Sarah Pearson
- 51 Service-Learning in Urban Settings
Marybeth Neal, Ph.D.
- 52 Digital Miracles in Philadelphia
Faith Goldstein and Margit Myers
- 54 Social Justice and Service-Learning
*Richard Gelb, Ph.D., Laura LeMone,
and Juan Carlos Ocon*
- 56 The Effectiveness of Service-Learning
in Afterschool Programs
Elizabeth McCarthy, Ph.D.
- 65 Service As a Developmental Opportunity:
Building Connections for Vulnerable Youth
*Andrea Finlay, Connie Flanagan, Ph.D.,
and Sarah Black*
- 77 The Promise of Service-Learning
John Bridgeland
- 82 The New Mexico Blueprint for Civic Engagement
Greg Webb
- 84 Youth Perspectives: How Young People
Improve Their Communities
Marybeth Neal, Ph.D.
- 87 Youth Civic Contributions Indicators
- 98 Service-Learning by the Numbers

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Growing to Greatness: The State of Service-Learning Project would like to acknowledge those who have contributed to this year's report.

It was an honor to work with all of our authors, both emerging and seasoned researchers and practitioners, who brought their perspectives and expertise from various fields to create this year's articles.

The Corporation for National and Community Service and the Education Commission of the States generously provided data and encouragement for our indicators of youth civic contributions. Stan Potts provided valuable background information on after-school programs, along with Jane Sperling, who shared her perspective as a practitioner.

Suzanne Martin of Harris Interactive helped shepherd further analysis of data from the *2006 National Survey on Service-Learning and Transitioning to Adulthood*, and copresented with me on this survey at three conferences. Nancy Wong, also of Harris Interactive,

helped us disseminate the 2006 research findings, extending our reach beyond the service-learning community. Harris Interactive graciously allowed us to ask an additional question on its monthly YouthQuery, which allows us to further explore and appreciate the perspectives of young people in regard to service.

We would like to thank Peter Rode, who conducted further analyses of our *Growing to Greatness 2004* survey of U.S. principals and the Harris Interactive YouthQuery question on how young people contribute to their communities.

Our board continues to chart the way forward with suggestions and encouragement. Barbara Holland, Andy Furco, and Robert Shumer provided additional research guidance in specific areas.

Within the National Youth Leadership Council, press releases and e-blasts were adeptly created by Bill Snyder, NYLC's Brand

and Web Projects Manager. Libby Rau, Resources for Recovery Project Manager, was a great support in creating the Gulf Coast WalkAbout article. We would also like to thank Wokie Weah, Vice President, for her guidance on the standards setting process. Maddy Wegner, Nate Schultz, and Caryn Pernu were extremely able and energetic as editors and researchers. Thanks to Tony Byers, Bernard Gill, and Maya Beecham for their input, especially in regard to urban service-learning.

None of this work would have been possible without the support of the State Farm Companies Foundation.

Lastly, we thank you, our readers, for supporting our fourth annual *Growing to Greatness* report.

Marybeth Neal, Ph.D.
Research Director
National Youth Leadership Council



Dear Reader,

State Farm Companies Foundation is excited to help bring you *Growing to Greatness 2007*, the fourth in a series of annual reports on the state of service-learning by the National Youth Leadership Council.

State Farm has long supported efforts to make sure young people have access to an education that allows them to achieve their greatest potential and prepares them to be active citizens — that's why State Farm is committed to service-learning. We strive to support programs that teach students about issues that have real-world importance while improving achievement and providing students with opportunities to help their communities. We also support research, such as that in *Growing to Greatness*, that documents how service-learning can do this.

We are proud to sponsor this project that vividly depicts the great hope that our young people carry forward as they engage in service-learning. Young service-learners repairing damage in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and addressing the challenges of poverty through service-learning, as described in this volume, illustrate how young people are developing resilience and compassion while improving the lives of those who live in their communities.

As the leading insurer of automobiles in the United States, State Farm has both a personal and practical interest in helping young people develop resiliency and experience a healthy transition to adulthood. Service-learning is an effective strategy for guiding young people toward responsible adulthood.

If you have not already discovered service-learning, my hope is that the information you find in this report will inspire you to get involved, as a parent, teacher, community member, or young person. For those of you who are already participants, I hope you take from these pages inspiration and strategies that will help you make the world a better place for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Payne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kathy Payne
Assistant Director – Community Alliances
State Farm Insurance

Introduction

JAMES C. KIELSMEIER, PH.D.

NYLC's founder James C. Kielsmeier has committed his life to transforming the roles of young people in society – building youth-adult partnerships that help young people grow from recipients of information and resources to valuable, contributing members of a democratic society. Jim has advised three Minnesota governors, helped write state and federal service-learning legislation, and testified before the Minnesota House and Senate as well as the U.S. House of Representatives. He has written numerous articles, co-authored two books, and presented on youth and service issues in 16 countries and 27 U.S. states.

Since 2004, *Growing to Greatness: The State of Service-Learning Project* has presented an annual review of the scope and scale of service-learning in U.S. primary and secondary schools. Our mission is to document the story of a burgeoning movement, the development of research, and the history of its institutionalization in every U.S. state and territory.

Growing to Greatness was inspired by the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who said that “everybody can be great, because everybody can serve.” The work that we’ve done over the years of this project has attempted to highlight the “greatness” embodied by the young people participating in service-learning, and to bring insight and encouragement to the practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers who support them.

In this edition of the annual research report, **Andrew Furco** of the University of California – Berkeley analyzes the study by New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce. The study calls for changes in U.S. schools that will “create the conditions”

to improve student learning, and Furco explains how service-learning is an important tool in doing so.

This year’s report also presents an overview of the collaborative work that is being done in the field to establish standards for high-quality K-12 service-learning practice. **Wokie Weah** of the National Youth Leadership Council outlines the history and the process of setting standards for service-learning, and **Shelley Billig** of RMC Research identifies research that supports the current Principles of Effective K-12 Service-Learning Practice as being associated with positive academic, civic, and behavioral outcomes. She also gives vivid examples of how these principles can be

As achievement gaps between different groups of students broaden, we also enter into a world where the potential for disasters both human and ecological seems greater – making the contributions of our young people more needed than perhaps ever before.

readily incorporated into classroom practice. Future editions of *Growing to Greatness* will report on the standards and the rubrics that will help ensure they can be understood and implemented consistently by practitioners.

As achievement gaps between different groups of students broaden, we also enter into a world where the potential for disasters both human and ecological seems greater — making the contributions of our young people more needed than perhaps ever before.

Service-learning helps young people become strong in the face of adversity by facing real challenges head on. In the process, they come to understand the relevance of their classroom knowledge and the importance of working together to address common needs. Two articles that examine NYLC’s WalkAbout model of service-learning build on this insight. In his contribution, **Richard Kraft** suggests ways that U.S. pedagogy may be improved by incorporating educational innovations of other countries. And **Tom Berkas** provides a

closer look at NYLC’s Gulf Coast WalkAbout program and how it engaged young people in Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi in restoring their communities while addressing personal and academic challenges. **Learn and Serve America** similarly highlights how service-learning can be an effective means for getting young people involved in homeland security and disaster relief.

The particular challenges of urban school districts, with their high concentrations of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, is another area where *Growing to Greatness* is concentrating its efforts. An interview with **Patricia Harvey**, former superintendent of St. Paul Public Schools, offers her perspective on the benefits of service-learning and practical advice to administrators on how to address challenges in implementation. NYLC also begins a series of profiles of model service-learning programs in urban schools, with a look at the highly successful **Digital Miracles** program in Philadelphia and a social justice program

at **Benito Juarez Community Academy** in Chicago.

The reality of education today dictates that not all service-learning takes place in the traditional classroom setting. **Elizabeth McCarthy** shows how service-learning has been effective in afterschool programs in California — helping to engage their interest in school and increase their academic achievement.

Drawing on the important survey on service-learning and transitions to adulthood that led the *Growing to Greatness* report last year, NYLC engaged Pennsylvania State University researcher **Constance Flanagan**, along with her students **Andrea Finlay and Sarah Black**, in taking a deeper look at the data that were collected. They examine data from young people who may be marginalized from mainstream opportunities and explore whether their engagement in service has benefits that help them better navigate the transitions to adulthood.

Because one important part of becoming a contributing adult is being an engaged citizen, we invited **John Bridgeland** of Civic Enterprises to discuss his two recent publications, *The Silent Epidemic*, a survey on drop-outs, and *America’s Civic Health Index*. He points to an alarming and growing divide between the well educated and the less

educated in terms of civic engagement and suggests service-learning as a means of empowering students and giving them a voice in the larger issues facing their communities.

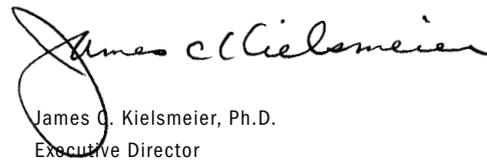
One state that has undertaken an ambitious effort to create a statewide framework for civic engagement using service-learning is New Mexico. **Greg Webb** of the New Mexico Commission for Community Volunteerism presents an overview of their groundbreaking work and the resulting document that will guide policy efforts over the coming years.

As a way to gain deeper understanding of the ways young people contribute to community well-being, **Marybeth Neal** presents the results of a nationally representative survey by **Harris Interactive** of young people ages 8 to 18. The survey offers youth perspectives on how they contribute to their communities.

Qualitative profiles of service-learning in each of the states and U.S. territories have been an integral part of *Growing to Greatness*. This year, we begin to examine existing quantitative data on a state-by-state basis in an effort to show young people’s activities, the impacts of service-learning, and the conditions that support service-learning across the United States. Finding sources of reliable state-level data that can not only offer a picture of activities in each state but also be aggregated to create a national

picture is challenging, and we are exploring ways to work with others to collect data more effectively into the future to help us better tell the story of service-learning. This year, we offer data on youth civic contributions in the realms of volunteering, national service, young voter turnout, and youth service on state governing boards, as well as a media scan and data from Learn and Serve America on funding trends and institutionalization.

As *Growing to Greatness* enters its fifth year, we continue to reflect on the wisdom of Martin Luther King, Jr. In his “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” King wrote that we have two options when we’re faced with problems. We can act like a thermometer and record what’s happening around us, or we can act like a thermostat and change the conditions. *Growing to Greatness* plays an integral role in not only recording what’s happening in the field, but also using that information to create a new framework where young people are viewed as positive contributors to society. We hope you’ll join our efforts.



James C. Kielsmeier, Ph.D.
Executive Director
National Youth Leadership Council

Key Assumptions and Principles for the Growing to Greatness Initiative

- A major structural shift in human development has occurred and will continue, extending the period between childhood dependency and full adult responsibility.
- Transition into adulthood has become particularly problematic for young people and their communities as reflected in extensive measurement surveys.
- Nearly all systematic collection of information on adolescents measures their deficits, not their positive participation in society.
- Most resources directed at this age group support traditional education, employment, and entertainment – with mixed results.
- Emerging approaches that authentically engage young people as citizens contributing to communities – especially when linked with well-designed learning and youth development content – are a credible structural response to issues of adolescent dissonance and community decline.
- The Growing to Greatness project is a systematic strategy for measuring engagement of young people in service-learning and youth development programs and defining the passage to adulthood as a period of engaged citizenship and active learning.

Advancing Youth Academic Success, School Engagement, and International Leadership through Service-Learning

ANDREW FURCO, PH.D.

Andrew Furco is director of the International Center for Research on Civic Engagement and Service-Learning at the University of California, Berkeley, where he serves on the faculty in the Graduate School of Education. His research in service-learning has explored the effects of different forms of service on students and the elements that foster service-learning institutionalization. He is a John Glenn Service-Learning Scholar and the recipient of the National Society for Experiential Education's 2006 Researcher of the Year Award.

Each year, one-third (33 percent) of all students who enter a public high school drop out. The situation is even worse in inner cities, where one out of every two students (50 percent) who enters a public high school does not graduate. More than half of the nation's high school dropouts have left school by the 10th grade (Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morrison 2006; Barton 2005; Pittman 2005).¹

As for the students who remain in school, the statistics are equally grim. Despite five years of the No Child Left Behind Act and its goal to improve academic achievement in reading and mathematics through increased standardized testing and accountability, the overall academic achievement of students remains less than satisfactory. While student performance on some standardized reading and mathematics measures has improved slightly, students' individual academic *growth* (the difference in scores for a single student from

one point in time to another) has decreased since the passage of NCLB (Cronin, Kingsbury, McCall, and Bowe 2005). While it is premature to assess the overall impact of NCLB on students' academic performance, the early results are not promising.

The lack of student academic achievement is particularly evident when comparing the achievement levels of U.S. students with those of students from other countries, especially in the subject areas of mathematics

¹ It should be noted that there is much debate over how to best calculate high school dropout and completion rates. For example, Greene and Winters rely on data from the National Center for Education Statistics for their calculation, which results in an overall high school completion rate of 67% and a completion rate of 50% for both African-Americans and Hispanics. In contrast, the Census Bureau uses data from the Current Population Study and reports the completion rate to be 90% overall, 88% for African-Americans and 76% for Hispanics. For an analysis of the debate regarding high school dropout rate calculations, see L. Mishel and J. Roy (2006). *Rethinking High School Graduation Rates and Trends*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

and science (National Center for Education Statistics 2006). For example, on the mathematics portion of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's 2004 Programme for International Assessment, U.S. students ranked 24th out of the 29 countries that participated in the program. In science, U.S. students scored an average of 24 percent on the physics portion of the most recent Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, compared to the 35 percent overall average score achieved by students from other participating countries. Analyses also reveal continued lower overall academic performance among poorer students when compared to students from more affluent communities, as well as lower academic performance among African-American and Latino students when compared to Caucasian and Asian students (National Center for Education Statistics 2006; Scales and Roehlkepartain 2005).

Among U.S. students who graduate from high school and go on to college, one-third are substantially unprepared for college level academic work (Greene and Forster 2003). In 2005, only 51 percent of American students met the college readiness benchmark on the reading portion of the ACT. For African-American high school graduates, the overall rate of under-preparedness has remained at 80 percent; for Hispanic students, the rate is 84 percent (Greene and Forster 2003).

Leading educational policy analysts conclude that the U.S. is at risk of losing its global competitive edge unless the underachievement and lack of satisfactory performance among a large sector of America's future work force are addressed. In a recently released report on the skills necessary for success in the global economy, the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce (Commission) concludes that

K-12 education needs to restructure its priorities by moving away from traditional paradigms of discipline-specific curricula and toward an educational system that can meet the needs of the more constructivist and interdisciplinary culture of the 21st century.

Specifically, the Commission concludes that K-12 schools need to ensure that students: (1) learn how to make connections across disciplines, (2) know how to use what is learned in school to address real life issues, (3) develop people skills that allow them to work effectively in diverse group settings, (4) build higher order thinking skills that enhance their problem-solving and analytic abilities, (5) increase their intercultural competencies (e.g. ability to converse in different languages and adapt to alternate cultural norms), and (6) are able to effectively organize and utilize sources of information (New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce 2006). Although the

K-12 education needs to restructure its priorities by moving away from traditional paradigms ... to meet the more interdisciplinary culture of the 21st century.

report recommends that school districts relinquish control to companies and businesses — a recommendation that many educators, including the National School Boards Association, believe would not guarantee a more effective education for our young people — the report also provides a reality check regarding the state of U.S. education and the drastic changes that are needed in our school systems if they are to prepare students for success in a global society.

Beyond Academics

Since the passage of the No Child Left Behind legislation, educators have focused on improving the academic achievement of students as measured by their performance on standardized tests. However, as the authors of the Commission report suggest, the teaching of discipline-specific subject matter content is only one part of what should be happening in classrooms. The education system also needs to ensure that

students learn how to use this content knowledge in meaningful ways that extend beyond demonstrating their performance in the classroom.

The Commission identifies important goals that extend the purpose of education beyond a focus on academic achievement alone. Regardless of how schools are ultimately organized, achieving the Commission’s educational goals will require substantial shifts in the ways classrooms are organized and instruction is delivered. It will require moving instruction beyond the traditional “chalk and talk” approach to pedagogies that engage students more actively in authentic and complex tasks that build advanced knowledge and transferable skills. It will require schools to provide opportunities for students to immerse themselves in new environments that broaden their horizons and expand their understanding of the world. Overall, it will require schooling to have a greater focus on developing the whole child.

Students’ educational experiences at home and in the community significantly influence what students know and are able to do academically.

DEVELOPING THE WHOLE CHILD

The Commission’s report suggests that along with a focus on building academic learning and cognitive development, schools need to nurture students’ affective development in the social, personal, civic, and career domains. Indeed, student academic achievement is not determined solely by the learning experiences students have in classroom settings; students’ educational experiences at home and in the community significantly influence what students know and are able to do academically (Comer 2004). While the “academics first” approach to schooling, which has intensified substantially since the passage of NCLB, has its merits in promoting greater student achievement in key academic areas, it tends to de-emphasize other important aspects of student learning and development (Comer 2004; Noddings 2005).

As Comer (2004), Noddings (2005), and Miller (1997) assert, learning and understanding require not only stimulating the mind, but also nurturing the heart, body, and spirit. Students who are hungry, depressed, angry, or conflicted do not perform at optimal academic levels (Eccles and Gootman 2002). Poor relationships with peers and adults can negatively affect students’ motivation to learn, and their overall ability to focus and concentrate on mental tasks (Woodward and Fergusson 2000). In addi-

tion, students with low self-esteem are more likely to develop learned helplessness and be less self-determined as learners (Valas 2001).

Therefore, beyond the engagement of students in academically rigorous classroom experiences, students need to be exposed to educational experiences that nurture their development of character, self-esteem, and sense of empowerment. These personal and social development factors are important because they place students in an emotional and social space from which they can engage more fully in cognitive tasks and academic learning (National Research Council 2003). Studies also show that students who possess these characteristics engage in fewer at-risk behaviors and do better academically than those who do not (Eccles and Gootman 2002; Scales and Leffert 1999).

Students' sense of character, self-esteem and empowerment can be cultivated by promoting positive relationships with peers and adults as well as by providing students with experiences that facilitate their development of leadership skills. These types of experiences increase the likelihood that young people will develop greater self-efficacy, positive social relationships, and greater social and academic engagement (Noddings 2005; Scales and Leffert 1999). A focus on

educating the whole child, therefore, is a key to creating the conditions for students to achieve academically.

IMPLEMENTING A PEDAGOGY OF ENGAGEMENT

Martin and Halperin (2006) report that every nine seconds in America, a student becomes a dropout. Conventional wisdom suggests that students who drop out do so because they are engaged in at-risk behaviors — drug and alcohol abuse, gang violence, underage sexual activity, or other unlawful activities. However, the reasons students drop out of school have less to do with students' personal behaviors and circumstances, and more to do with the nature of schooling itself.

A recent research study conducted by Civic Enterprises reveals that the reasons most frequently cited for dropping out of school are students being bored with classes and finding school irrelevant to their lives. (See Figure 1.)

What dropout statistics reveal is that despite NCLB's increased emphasis on raising K-12 academic achievement, schools are failing to create the conditions that put students in a position to meet these academic goals and standards. According to the National Research Council (2003), rising student disaffection is considered one of the most serious crises in education today. No matter

FIGURE 1
Reasons High School Dropouts Give for Leaving School

47%	Classes were not interesting
43%	Missed too many days/unable to keep up
42%	Spend time with people not interested in school
38%	Too much freedom and not enough rules or structured time
35%	Failing in school
28%	Don't get along with students or teachers
21%	Don't feel safe at school
18%	Get a job/have to help support family
12%	Get married, pregnant, or become a parent
12%	Have drug or alcohol problem

Source: Bridgeland, Dilulio, and Morison (2006).

FIGURE 2
Instructional Practices for Successful Learning

1.	Emphasizes learning over teaching: instruction is driven and organized by what students need to know rather than what curricular units need to be taught.	6.	Connects new knowledge to what students know by having students construct meaning (knowledge depth): instruction provides a vertical alignment of curriculum that helps students connect new learning to learning from previous years.
2.	Engages students as active participants in the learning process: a teacher's role is that of being the proverbial "guide on the side" rather than the "sage on the stage."	7.	Meaningful and interesting to students: instruction engages students in activities whereby they can see the value of the information to be learned for their lives outside of school.
3.	Centers on students rather than teachers: instruction takes into account students' needs and concerns and is not solely reliant on teachers' preferences or driven by preset, scripted curricula.	8.	Brain-based: instruction engages students in exciting and meaningful experiences that trigger neurons associated with enhanced retention of information.
4.	Promotes the development of students' higher order thinking skills: instructional activities focus less on memorization of discrete facts and more on complex tasks that involve problem solving, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.	9.	Socially constructed: instruction allows students to receive peer-critique and share their personal knowledge, skills, and talents with peers and adults.
5.	Focuses on making connections among disciplines (knowledge breadth): instruction provides for horizontal alignment of curriculum in which students apply knowledge from different disciplines to build understanding of complex phenomena.	10.	Practiced and used: instruction provides multiple opportunities for students to bridge theory with practice and the abstract with the concrete through applications of learning in new contexts and situations.

Sources: Slavkin (2004); Marzano, Pikerling, and Pollock (2001); Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (1999); Oakes and Lipton (1999).

how rigorous or well-implemented a curriculum may be, if students do not connect with the subject matter or engage themselves in the learning process, they are unlikely to achieve.

Current school efforts to reform the educational experience by raising expectations, setting standards, and adopting well-researched standardized curricula are certainly admirable. However, such moves are insufficient for securing the academic success of our students. Curricular approaches that focus on a set of highly structured, prescribed activities that promote a one-size-fits-all approach to learning have not proven very appealing to students who have unique interests, specific learning needs, and individual talents. If students, especially those who are most disenfranchised with school, find the curriculum boring and irrelevant to their lives, then it is unlikely they will be motivated to invest themselves fully in the content (National Research Council 2003).

Therefore, instruction needs to engage students actively in the learning process as well as take into account students' interests and needs. This more experiential approach to teaching incorporates instructional practices that have been shown to improve student engagement in learning. (See Figure 2.)

EXPANDING BOUNDARIES

As a report from the New Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce details, schools must prepare students to be successful in an ever-expanding global society. Students' potential for future success as employees and citizens is dependent on their ability to work effectively in diverse communities and multicultural settings, both at the national and transnational levels (2006). The Commission predicts that the future workforce will require individuals who are multilingual, can navigate effectively across various cultural settings, and understand the complexities and nuances of different societal norms. The increasing globalization of society has implications for the kinds of experiences schools need to provide for students.

While a growing number of K-12 students are immersing themselves in multicultural experiences through cross-cultural web dialogues, study abroad, and other experiences that broaden their horizons, too many young people, especially those with limited opportunities, maintain a narrow view of the world (Noddings 2005). They see the world primarily through the lens of the neighborhoods in which they live, the social networks they have formed, and the norms and practices to which they are accustomed.

Students of the 21st century need to develop multicultural knowledge and intercultural competencies if they wish to be successful as workers, citizens, and leaders in a global society. Therefore, schools need to provide educational opportunities that expand students' horizons beyond their familiar notions of the world. Immersing students in communities different from their own provides opportunities for them to learn about other cultural norms and practices. From intercultural experiences, students can build a better understanding of diverse populations and perspectives, reassess their preconceived notions about unfamiliar groups and practices, and develop intercultural fluency (Banks 2006; Boyle-Baise 2002).

Meeting the Challenge Through Service-Learning

Of the various ways schools can meet the educational challenges of the 21st century, service-learning shows much promise as an instructional strategy for educating the whole child. Service-learning is built on academically rich "authentic" experiences that occur in students' own community and have relevance to students' lives (Slaykin 2004). The practice of service-learning involves having students use their academic knowledge to construct solutions to complex

problems in their community. Students take action on those solutions and analyze the results. As a pedagogy of engagement that extends academic learning beyond the classroom walls, service-learning provides opportunities for students to expand their view of the world. Studies have revealed that high quality service-learning experiences can enhance students' academic, personal, social, civic, career, and ethical development (Billig 2000). In many ways, service-learning engages the whole child and creates the kinds of learning environments and conditions that facilitate and support students' academic achievement and overall school success.

ACADEMIC OUTCOMES OF SERVICE-LEARNING

Since the passage of NCLB, there has been a call for more research that shows the impacts of service-learning on students' academic achievement. Critics of service-learning have questioned its educational value, suggesting that because service-learning requires extensive time and work to develop and implement, it detracts from a focus on academics and overall school curriculum (Kapustka 2002). However, several studies of service-learning in K-12 education have revealed a number of positive academic outcomes for students. Specifically, service-learning has been found to increase scores

Studies have found that service-learning can broaden career awareness and options, enhance understanding of workforce ethics, and enhance workforce preparation.

on standardized tests, foster content knowledge and skills, improve attendance, and improve grade point averages (Billig, Meyer, and Hofschire 2003; Klute and Billig 2002; Ammon, Furco, Chi, and Middaugh 2001; Santmire, Giraud, and Grosskopf 1999).

While the academic outcome findings are encouraging, it should be noted that the achievement findings are mixed and the overall effect sizes of the results are generally small. Currently, several investigations are underway to assess which programmatic features of service-learning are most likely to produce academic and civic gains. So while service-learning proponents seek to make the case that service-learning has positive effects on academic achievement, the typical measures of academic success (e.g., test scores, attendance) show mixed results. With the accountability pressures of NCLB in full swing, the longstanding call for more and better research to investigate the academic outcomes of service-learning continues (Billig 2000).

THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF SERVICE-LEARNING

In contrast to the academic outcome studies, the research on service-learning in other domain areas (civic, personal, social, and career) reveals generally more robust and consistently positive findings. While some think this weakens the case for the academic merits of service-learning, in actuality, these findings make a strong case for the educational value of service-learning, especially as they pertain to preparing students for success in a global society.

For example, recent studies have found that K-12 students engaged in service-learning gain enhanced citizenship and social responsibility, and enhance their awareness and understanding of social issues (Metz and Youniss 2005; Kahne and Westheimer 2003; Covitt 2002; Furco 2002; Melchior and Bailis 2002; Michelsen, Zaff, and Hair 2002; Perry and Katula 2001; Torney-Purta 2001; Zaff and Michelsen 2001; McDevitt and Chaffee 2000; Scales, Blyth, Berkas, and Kielsmeier 2000).

Studies have also found that service-learning can broaden career awareness and options, enhance understanding of workforce ethics, and enhance workforce preparation (Furco 2002; Shumer 2001; Melchior 1999). In addition, students who engage in service-learning gain greater exposure to a variety of perspectives, show positive changes in ethical judgment, and enhance their ability to make independent decisions regarding moral issues (Leming 2001; Melchior 1999). As the Commission report describes, these are the kinds of civic and vocational skills students need to build global leadership for productive employment.

Similarly, service-learning studies reveal fairly consistent positive effects on key personal development areas, such as self-esteem, empowerment, self-efficacy, and engagement in prosocial behaviors (Kraft and Wheeler 2003; Eccles and Gootman 2002; Furco 2002; Hecht 2002; Laird and Black 2002). Students who possess these personal assets are more likely to become secure individuals who take initiative and who aspire to achieve higher goals (Scales and Leffert 1999). These students, in turn, are more likely to perform better in school and achieve academically (Eccles and Gootman 2002).

Other studies have found that service-learning and other organized civic participation activities have robust, positive effects on students' motivation for learning and student engagement in three areas: academic engagement, civic engagement, and social engagement. Specifically, several studies have found that when done well, service-learning and community involvement programs can enhance students' engagement in school and in learning (Ritchie and Walters 2003; Billig 2002; Eccles and Gootman 2002; Melchior and Bailis 2002; Scales et al. 2000; Follman and Muldoon 1997). Studies also show that well-designed service-learning experiences can enhance students' engagement in community and civic affairs, specifically as it relates to their involvement in the social and civic issues most important to their own lives (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Kahne, Chi, and Middaugh 2002; Melchior and Bailis 2002; Michelsen, Zaff, and Hair 2002; Melchior 1999; Berkas 1997). Studies have also shown that service-learning and active community participation can enhance students' engagement with peers and adults, building more positive interactions with adults and producing more positive role models for disenfranchised students (Martin, Neal, Kielsmeier and Crossley 2006; Holliday and Luginbuhl

2004; Furco 2002; Billig 2002; Hennes 2001). Given the large number of students who are bored with and disengaged from school, the true value of service-learning may be in its ability to strengthen students' connection to school and learning.

Overall, it appears that while service-learning does not always have a strong, direct effect on students' academic achievement, it has strong potential for fostering student development in areas that mediate academic achievement and success in school. By increasing students' motivation to learn and engagement in school, building more confident and empowered individuals, and fostering more prosocial behaviors, service-learning can help place students — especially those who are most disaffected and disenfranchised with school — in a better position to achieve academically.

Preparing for the Future

While more studies are needed, it appears that when done well, service-learning is a powerful strategy for preparing students for academic success, school engagement, and global leadership. By focusing on the whole child, incorporating a pedagogy of engagement, and providing opportunities for

students to expand their horizons, service-learning offers a way to help students become more engaged in learning and to see the relevance of what they are learning to their lives outside of school.

High quality service-learning experiences typically present students with challenging tasks that require them to analyze a complex situation in their community, identify successful strategies for addressing the issue, implement one or more of the identified strategies, reflect on their experience, and evaluate the success of their actions. To perform quality service, students must be able to apply their skills and knowledge in appropriate ways to meet the needs of the community. They must learn how to negotiate with various constituents, listen to and understand different perspectives, challenge their own assumptions and reconsider their pre-conceived notions. Service-learners must engage in deliberation to explore possible actions, analyze potential and real consequences of their actions, and understand protocols and policies. These are the kinds of competencies that are called for in the Commission report.

A rigorous curriculum of discipline-based foundational knowledge is essential for students to progress to more advanced studies. However, as the Commission report suggests, this curriculum needs to be taught in ways that instill in young people the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that are necessary for their roles as citizens in a global society. Building a curriculum that incorporates active and authentic learning experiences designed to make the academic content more relevant, interesting, and meaningful for students is one way to help schools create the conditions necessary for building stronger student engagement in learning and for meeting the needs of the whole child. Through its focus on connecting academic work to the real lives of students and through its use of experiential and constructivist teaching approaches, service-learning offers a way to meet the educational goals that an increasingly multicultural, global society demands of our future citizens and employees.

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Toward Research-Based Standards for K-12 Service-Learning

WOKIE WEAH

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In K-12 settings across the United States and throughout the world, the practice of service-learning is growing. The public is becoming aware of service-learning and its value. Opinion polls (see references) show that parents, community members, and educators alike value the connection between schools and their communities, and the use of service as an enhancement to traditional instruction. Stakeholders also agree that schools have a strong academic and civic purpose, and for any practice to be sustained in schools, it must reach outcomes in these domains.

Service-learning has the potential for reaching these outcomes, and in many cases, succeeds. Too few educators within a school or community-based organization, however, understand and utilize the principles of effective practice for service-learning to achieve the desired cognitive and behavioral gains. For service-learning to continue its growth and become a core teaching method in U.S. education, institutionalized beyond its dedicated practitioners, key principles of effective practice must be implemented consistently. The principles must be based on

research that shows what works and, when adequate research is not available, on the professional wisdom of long-time effective practitioners. Further, in this age of accountability, it may be necessary to have standards in place that can serve as a way to assess and improve practice.

The service-learning field has a long history of self-examination. Dating back to a Wingspread Conference held in 1989 on the “Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service with Learning,” the collective wisdom of individuals and representatives of organizations has been

captured and distilled into documents including “Standards of Quality for School-Based and Community-Based Service-Learning,” as documented by the Alliance for Service-Learning in Education Reform in 1993.

In 1998, the National Youth Leadership Council collaborated with the National Service-Learning Cooperative and other lead practitioners to identify 11 “Essential Elements.” The list was refined in 1999, including rubrics and indicators for high-quality teacher practices rooted in relevant research. In 2004, this list of essential elements was revisited in light of recent research, and narrowed to 10. (There was consensus in the field that “celebration” is an aspect of reflection and thus need not stand alone.)

At the same time, a national team working on a practitioner certification program led by NYLC saw the importance of describing proficiency and developed rubrics of high quality. The 10 elements and accompanying

rubrics were presented to participants at the 2005 Wingspread Conference on Service-Learning Practice Excellence.

After that meeting, a committee to help facilitate the formation of national standards was created and further reviewed of the 10 elements. As a result of those meetings, the Essential Elements were again revisited and distilled. Recent research was reviewed in the context of standards-based reform, and practices that appeared to predict outcomes were discussed in detail. (Much of this research appears in “Unpacking What Works in Service-Learning,” found in this volume of *Growing to Greatness*.)

Certain elements were removed because they were definitional. For example, the “preparation” element was removed because it was considered a program component rather than an effective practice. Other elements, such as “duration,” were added because they were clearly supported by research.

The result of this effort was the identification of Principles of Effective Practice for K-12 Service-Learning. (See Figure 1.)

Moving Toward Setting Standards

The Eight Principles of Effective Practice for K-12 Service-Learning will be used as the starting point in a standards-setting process. This process will entail multiple steps.

Research Review. The research from the field of service-learning and the larger literature on what works for student academic engagement and learning, civic engagement and learning, socio-emotional learning, and related youth development fields will be reviewed and translated into a series of briefing papers related to the eight principles. (Portions of those papers are synthesized in the research review that appears on pages 18–28.)

Convening Lead Practitioners. A national panel of practitioners, policy-makers, and

Parents, community members, and educators alike value the connection between schools and their communities, and the use of service as an enhancement to traditional instruction.

FIGURE 1

Principles of Effective Practice for K-12 Service-Learning

1.	Curriculum Integration: embedding service-learning experiences in curricular goals and standards that drive student learning of concepts, content, and skills in academic disciplines and cocurricular settings.
2.	Reflection: facilitating continuous reflection before, during, and after the service experiences – using multiple, cognitively challenging methods to encourage critical and creative thinking that addresses learning objectives.
3.	Youth Voice: engaging the vision and leadership of young people as valued contributors to society by integrating their ideas into the selection, design, implementation, and evaluation of service-learning experiences.
4.	Diversity: fostering civil discourse and democratic values through the inclusion of diverse perspectives and experiences, and through a respect for all learners.
5.	Meaningful Service: applying problem-solving and critical thinking skills to community and civic needs in real-world environments.
6.	Process Monitoring: analyzing student reflections and assessment measures, in combination with project and partner evaluation data, for continuous review and improvement.
7.	Duration: ensuring that service and learning experiences are of sufficient intensity and duration (or are equal to one semester), so that all phases of planning, through project evaluation, are included.
8.	Reciprocal Partnerships: leveraging community assets and promoting collaborative communication and interaction among stakeholders.

researchers will convene to develop standards from the principles, complete with benchmarks and indicators based on the research review. Traditional standards-setting processes will be used. In an interactive fashion, the group will draft behavioral descriptions of exemplary practice and, if possible, define performance levels and operational descriptions of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that must be demonstrated at each level. The ultimate success of this part of the process will be determined by the clarity of the behavioral definitions, the veracity of the research base from which they are derived, and their ability to drive practice.

Feedback from Reactor Panels.

These draft standards will be reviewed by 10 panels of service-learning professionals, conducted in conjunction with Learn and Serve meetings and other existing venues. It is expected that the standards will be refined in terms of their clarity and their conceptual soundness, and even the degree to which each standard represents an essential practice. Standards-setting is a consensual

process and thus will be vetted in multiple venues. This iterative process allows differences to be resolved and distills areas of consensus and disagreement.

Synthesis. The convening committees will synthesize the feedback from the reactor panels and use the results to refine the standards and develop benchmarks.

Standards Dissemination. The approved standards will be disseminated through national conferences, professional development trainings, online coursework, and partnerships with teacher education programs nationwide.

Other Steps Toward Professionalizing Practice

Concurrent with this effort to codify the Principles of Effective Practice has been the development of an online service-learning certification program, piloted by NYLC in tandem with the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. The certification program integrates the Principles of Effective Practice within a guided study program to recognize exemplary practice. The pilot group completed its studies fall 2006. The model is under refinement, and two more cohorts will go through the process spring and fall 2007.

1989	1993	1998	2003	2005	2006	2006
Wingspread Conference on Principles of Good Practice for Combining Service and Learning held	Alliance for Service-Learning and Education Reform develops Standards of Service-Learning	Essential Elements of Service-Learning developed	National Youth Leadership Council develops a certification process for service-learning, and revises the Essential Elements	Wingspread Conference on Service-Learning Practice Excellence held	National Standards Development Committee proposes the Principles of Effective Practice for K-12 Service-Learning	NYLC pilots the Certificate of Practice Excellence with University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Conclusion

These steps will take a great deal of time and effort. The end result, though, will be better practice that leads to more robust outcomes for service-learning participants and a greater likelihood of sustaining the practice of service-learning for decades to come.

We invite you to join us in this development effort by volunteering to be on panels or to become a reactor. Once the standards are drafted, we hope that you will adopt them into your practice and help us by measuring and reporting the results. Together, practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers can make a difference and reach the goals of giving every student an opportunity to participate in service-learning and of helping every participant to gain maximum benefit from their participation.

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Unpacking What Works in Service-Learning

Promising Research-Based Practices to Improve Student Outcomes

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“I can’t believe everyone doesn’t do service-learning. It changed my life.” - STUDENT

Many individuals associated with service-learning have seen the ways in which participation can change lives. Some young people find that they are successful in school for the first time in a long time. Others report that service-learning gave them a career direction and a sense of purpose. Still others say that their participation convinced them that “kids can make a difference” in how communities operate and in meeting the needs of others (Billig 2004).

While these sentiments are not uncommon, they do not represent the outcomes for all service-learning programs. As the practice of service-learning becomes more popular, the ways in which service-learning is implemented have varied dramatically, often with results that are disappointing, yielding few or no positive impacts. As practitioners have noted for many years, service-learning *can* have strong academic, civic, and character-building outcomes, but these outcomes are not automatic. Rather, *it is the way in which service-learning is implemented that makes a difference*. In short, quality matters, and it

matters even more as service-learning practice spreads.

In this age of educational accountability, outcomes count more than ever. Fortunately, the research in K-12 service-learning has begun to illuminate what it is about service-learning design that promotes stronger outcomes, particularly in the areas of academics and civics.

This article explores eight promising service-learning practices. These eight emerged from the past several years of collecting research on what works, and from recent studies that

tested the Essential Elements of Service-Learning (National Service-Learning Cooperative and National Youth Leadership Council 1999) and other indicators defined as being associated with quality practice in the field. Each of the eight that emerged as predictive of positive outcomes has statistical evidence of effectiveness in several studies, either within the field of service-learning or in a closely related field of educational reform.

However, the practices are not always as obvious as they seem. This article provides a brief examination of what works, the evidence behind it, and examples of what these promising practices could look like in K-12 and afterschool settings. The order in which these are presented roughly matches the sizes of the effects that the interventions have had, though there is not consistency in the order of magnitude across studies. All of the examples are composites from service-learning projects evaluated by RMC Research within the past five years.

Eight Promising Practices

CURRICULUM INTEGRATION

Curriculum integration is defined here as using service-learning as an instructional method to help students master content standards. Studies have shown that with strong integration, students' test scores in the subject matter area with which service-learning is integrated can increase significantly (Billig and Klute 2003; Billig, Klute, and Sandel 2003; Meyer, Billig, and Hofschire 2004; Santmire, Giraud, and Groskopf 1999). In these studies, curriculum integration meant that service-learning was planned and implemented with specific learning objectives in mind. The learning objectives were tied to the content standards or the specific areas of knowledge and skills that students are meant to acquire.

General meta-analyses of studies of educational reform have found that a "guaranteed and viable curriculum" is the school-level

factor with the greatest impact on student achievement (Marzano, Pickering, and Pollack 2003). As applied to service-learning, Ammon, Furco, Chi, and Middaugh (2001), for example, found that the factors that seemed related to higher academic impacts were clarity of academic goals, clear connections between goals and activities, reasonable scope, and support through focused reflection activities. Billig, Root, and Jesse (2005) found service-learning that featured integration with content standards predicted academic outcomes for high school students.

The implications of these combined results mean that educators should integrate service-learning into curricula by engaging in the same kind of lesson or unit planning that they use for any other teaching method. Teachers start with the standard or curricular objective; think about (and possibly discuss with students) how they will address the standard within the preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration phases of the

It is the way in which service-learning is implemented that makes a difference. In short, quality matters, and it matters even more as service-learning practice spreads.

service-learning approach; and devise the specific activities to be used for this purpose, including the rubrics they will use for assessment, the questions they will use for reflection, or the planning steps in which students will engage.

Teachers should challenge and inspire students to learn by making their expectations for learning clear before engaging in activities. Learning goals and objectives should be defined and displayed prominently in written form. Teachers and students should know where goals fit into the curriculum and the expectations for mastery. Teachers should plan for differentiating instruction as needed, the same way they would for any other lesson plan. (See, for example, Marzano, Pickering, and Pollack 2003 for citations of the literature that support the connection between these practices and academic achievement. Correlations were also found between these factors and civic outcomes by Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Billig, Root, and Jesse 2004; Ammon, Furco, Chi, and Middaugh 2001.)

EXAMPLE: In one high school, teachers began the planning for service-learning by identifying the standards across content areas that they would like to address through service-learning activities. They listed these standards on the board and reviewed them with students as they discussed the specific community needs the class would address.

Students and teachers co-planned the service activity, identifying the specific standards that they would weave into the various service-learning activities. Any standards that would not be addressed in the service-learning activity were placed aside and the teacher incorporated them into other forms of instruction. Students worked with the teacher to develop an assessment to be used at the end of the service-learning activities to evaluate what the students learned. The students then engaged in the service, reflection, and demonstration activities and were later evaluated using the assessment tool.

ONGOING COGNITIVELY CHALLENGING REFLECTION ACTIVITIES

Reflection is one of the core elements of service-learning and, when done well, leads to stronger and deeper outcomes, often helping the development of metacognition and other higher order thinking skills (Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede 1996; King and Kitchener 1994; Leming 2001). However, many service-learning practitioners do not vary the type of reflection activities they use, resorting exclusively to journal-writing and summaries of service experiences that capture the feelings students had when engaged in service (Billig 2004). The power of reflection can be strengthened considerably if reflection both becomes ongoing and involves more cognitive challenge.

Ongoing reflection occurs before, during, and after service and features multiple forms of reflection: written, oral, and nonlinguistic. Many studies have shown the value of varied and differentiated instruction (see, for example, Tomlinson and McTighe 2006; Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock 2003).

Cognitively challenging activities are those that prompt participants to think deeply about an issue, to deconstruct a problem and find multiple alternative solutions, or to be confronted with situations that cause dissonance and the need for resolution between previously held thoughts and beliefs and evidence to the contrary. The level of challenge should be developmentally appropriate and should build on what the students already know and are able to do. Cognitive challenge has been found to be correlated with academic engagement, civic engagement, and acquisition of academic and civic knowledge and skills (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Billig, Root, and Jesse 2006; Root and Billig in press).

With cognitively challenging activities, those who facilitate learning explicitly teach problem-solving, decision-making, exploration, classification, and hypothesis-testing skills. They ensure that students have time to practice and refine the skills during preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration.

The reflection activities themselves should be challenging, continuous, connected, and contextualized (Eyler, Giles, and Schmiede 1996; Pritchard and Whitehead 2004). Some especially promising reflection activities utilize questions to stimulate affective, behavioral, and cognitive reactions, and ask students to explore metaphors, nonlinguistic representations, conceptualizing activities, analysis of similarities and differences, and perspective-taking (Pritchard and Whitehead 2004; Billig 2006).

Promoting cognitive challenge by using appropriate questioning strategies that probe the thinking behind the service experience assists students in acquiring knowledge and skills. This activity also helps students transfer what they have learned to real-world settings where the variables affecting their experiences are not controlled. The reflection prompts them to make meaning of their experiences and scaffold the new information onto what they already know.

With older students, it is important to ask questions to help them develop metacognitive skills, defined as thinking about their own thinking patterns and learning processes. Illuminating these patterns helps young people develop multiple ways to analyze issues, relationships, and events, and to make better-informed decisions.

Providing youths with opportunities for meaningful participation allows them to engage in problem-solving, decision-making, planning, goal-setting, and helping others.

Probing, redirection, and reinforcement of ideas will help young people improve the quality of their responses to questions.

EXAMPLE: In one middle school, students decided that they should hold a community health fair for migrant farmworkers, restaurant workers, and others who did not have health care through their employers to acquaint them with services available in the community. The students were asked to document the problem, so they initially conducted online research to identify health care access issues.

The teacher asked how they knew that these issues applied to their own community, so the students interviewed farmworkers and restaurant workers to determine what their health care needs were and what it would take for them to come to a health fair. In speaking to the community members, students realized that they could not hold the fair during the working day and that many of the needs had to do with children's immunization, which is required when children move into a new school.

Students reoriented the content of the fair to address children's needs and to discover low-cost alternatives for the uninsured workers. They identified

resources within the community for free or low-cost health care, especially for children, and were able to have many health care providers come to the fair and vaccinate children for free. They were also able to get free screening for cholesterol and blood sugar, and free nutritional advice. As part of their follow-up activities, they investigated health care policies and established a campaign to advocate for health care reform, writing letters to their legislators that expressed their opinions.

YOUTH VOICE

Giving young people a say in every phase of a service-learning project has been shown to have a strong influence on academic and civic engagement (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Bradley 2003; Fredericks, Kaplan, and Zeisler 2001). Without voice, students can feel discouraged, alienated, and disrespected, and they may believe that their contributions are unimportant. Providing youths with opportunities for meaningful participation allows them to engage in problem-solving, decision-making, planning, goal-setting, and helping others. They become an integral part of the process and shape their own service-

learning experiences, which may increase community engagement in the long run (Fredericks, Kaplan, and Zeisler 2001).

Mitra (2004) and Oldfather (1995) found that students who were given opportunities for voice in school increased their abilities to articulate opinions, began to see themselves as change agents, and developed leadership and public-speaking skills. Students increased their sense of belonging in schools and had improved interactions with teachers.

Giving youths voice, however, needs to occur within a framework of learning outcomes, understanding when they can experiment with new ideas and when they cannot, and respectful treatment of others who have ideas different from their own (National Research Council 2004). Adults should expect some initial hesitation and even apprehension from students who may be unaccustomed to taking responsibility for their own learning, since becoming self-directed takes experience and time. Adult facilitators should ensure that students know, and receive, the assistance and support they need throughout the process. This does not mean that students should always be helped to succeed. Instead, students can learn from their mistakes, and these experiences can become significant learning opportunities. However, adults should always be sure that students are safe.

Youth voice should also be developmentally appropriate, with young people being asked to make decisions and choices within established parameters. Discipline of this nature mirrors real life and should not be seen as constraining. Older youths should be given most of the responsibility, including roles as facilitators and resource persons (Bradley 2003).

It is particularly important to ensure that young people have a voice when they are providing service within the community. Young people can provide meaningful input by consulting with government leaders about public policy, participating in community coalitions, engaging in organizational decision-making and activism, and carrying out service-learning projects (Camino and Zeldin 2002). The combination of research, service, and advocacy is associated with the most powerful outcomes for high school students in the area of civic learning (Root and Billig in press).

EXAMPLE: *In one elementary school, students were asked to solve problems they identified within their school and its immediate surroundings. First-grade students reported that kindergartners were running in the hall and that this running made the hallways unsafe.*

The teacher asked the students to document the problem, which they did by counting and graphing the number of running incidents during several timed periods during the day. The teacher then asked the students to brainstorm the potential reasons why the kindergartners may be running and what solutions might address these reasons. Students initially said that the kindergartners were running because they were lost and they needed hallway signs. They solicited names for the hallways from the kindergartners, held an election to name the hallways, and made signs for the hallways.

When they measured the incidence of running again, the first-graders found that the problem was not solved. They then studied how speed was controlled in society and came up with the idea of licenses for the students. They brainstormed what should be on the licenses and composed a letter to a nearby hardware store to request the materials needed to make licenses.

They created a license for every kindergarten student and then measured the incidence of running once again. The first day after the licenses were issued, the running had stopped. However, the running resumed the next week, when many kindergartners either misplaced their licenses or realized there were no negative consequences for running.

Back at the drawing board, the first-graders then devised other possible solutions. The teacher allowed the students to choose solutions and to

make mistakes until they finally solved the problem. In so doing, the teacher covered many reading, writing, math, and social studies standards. At the end of the year, the students scored high on all measures of academic and civic engagement and felt that learning was fun.

RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY

Diversity can come in many forms. For example, students can be exposed to people from diverse cultural backgrounds, to people with different ideas, to people with disabilities, to people from different generations, or to people who face life circumstances different than their own. It is important to note that service-learning participants are likely to be diverse in some ways, especially those who are being served. Research has shown that explicit teaching of respect and discussion of diversity is associated with multiple civic and character outcomes for youths (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Powers, Potthoff, Bearinger, and Resnick 2003; Blozis, Scalise, Waterman, and Wells 2002).

Respect for diversity comes in many forms, many having to do with the way that activities are organized, the language being used, expectations for cognitive processing, and promoting motivation to learn (Nieto 2004). In the learning setting, respect is articulated by making sure that there is equity in the

learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds, genders, or academic performance levels. Teachers should hold high expectations and a caring attitude for all groups. Providing opportunities for culturally heterogeneous cooperative learning with individual accountability and group recognition also promotes respect and equity. Learning activities using print, video, and authentic interactions with diverse populations should be provided and reflections should bring out the need for understanding. (See, for example, Tomlinson and McTighe 2006; Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock 2003.)

Societal practices that have proven detrimental to positive intercultural relationships should be explicitly discussed and the unfairness of prejudice and discrimination should be highlighted. For example, students should become aware of the thinking flaws associated with stereotyping, with adults

showing them that this way of thinking is associated with overgeneralization and a misunderstanding of individuals within society. Explicit social skills, particularly conflict resolution, should be taught and practiced. Differences should be understood and appreciated, even when students disagree with one another (Nieto 2004). Serious scholarship in multicultural education allows students to explore their identities and what it means to live in a democracy.

Within the service-learning setting, it is especially important to design service activities that have mutual benefit for students and those being served so that students' stereotypes of others are not reinforced. For example, working with the elderly should not just entail helping elders with writing or computer skills, but should also include activities such as gathering oral histories from them to document their lives and societal events. This way, both students and elders benefit from the interaction.

Serious scholarship in multicultural education allows students to explore their identities and what it means to live in a democracy.

EXAMPLE: Students in an afterschool program decided to work with families who wanted to learn English. They made arrangements with a local community center to offer classes in English language and to go on field trips with the English learners to help them understand how to buy groceries at supermarkets and how to use the public transportation system.

When the students came to the center for the first lesson, the room was filled with parents and children from many different language and socioeconomic backgrounds. In providing English lessons to the families, the students from the afterschool program learned about the families' lives before they came to the United States. They told of their experiences in America in ways that expanded the students' ways of thinking about everyday life. While the families learned English, the students learned about other cultures and what it is like to negotiate the rules of U.S. life.

When service-learning is viewed as valuable, useful, relevant, and interesting, young people become both more engaged and acquire more knowledge and skills.

MEANINGFUL SERVICE

When service-learning is viewed as valuable, useful, relevant, and interesting, young people become both more engaged and acquire more knowledge and skills (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Blank 1997). The ways in which meaning is derived vary by individuals and groups and appear to depend upon stimulating both student interest and control (Brophy 2004). Many researchers have found that teachers can enhance students' feelings that activities are meaningful by providing activities that are substantive but not overwhelming; framing the activities so they have clear relevance to students' lives; elaborating beyond information in textbooks; explicitly connecting to previous experiences; and providing activities characterized as having "high academic press," that is, requiring comprehension, explanation, exploration, debate, or other cognitively challenging skills (Brophy 2004).

Service-learning planners can do a lot to ensure that young people find the activities relevant and useful, both for them and for the people they serve. Typically this means that the activities go beyond simple "meeting the community needs." For example, filing papers for an agency may meet a need, but often does not feel very meaningful to the person doing the filing. Instead, meaning should be derived by meeting an interesting challenge and seeing the benefit of one's efforts for both oneself and for others.

Service-learning becomes more meaningful when students choose the issue to address, when the issue requires analysis and problem-solving, and when there is a personal connection to the task at hand, often through the formation of a relationship between the server and the recipient of the service (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Root and Billig in press). Being explicit about why the task is meaningful also helps students to connect to the issue.

To be meaningful, service should actually meet an important need. New research on the connection between service-learning and efficacy shows that when students take on a task that is too big, like solving homelessness, they may not find meaning in the

work they do. Instead, they can feel frustrated because their efforts do not appear to make a difference. When smaller tasks are selected and follow through is conducted so that students see the results of their efforts, they more often say that the service was meaningful to them (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Root and Billig 2006; Billig 2006).

EXAMPLE: Middle school students decided that they wanted to learn history from the 1800s to 1850s by cleaning up an old cemetery near the school and investigating the lives of the people buried there who lived during that period. The students gathered rubbings from the headstones and then studied the town records to learn about the person they chose. Students uncovered records that told of an indentured servant who ran away, was captured, and stood up for herself as being subject to unfair capture and labor practices. There were records of the trial, and the students were able to trace the lineage of the woman to a family that currently lived in the next town. When they shared the story with the descendants, the family showed them pictures of the woman and discussed what happened to her. Students retained knowledge of that period of history, policies that shaped people's lives, and how experiences in that period still affect people today.

PROGRESS-MONITORING AND PROCESS-MONITORING

Progress-monitoring and process-monitoring refer to assessing the progress made toward reaching goals and analyzing the processes being used to ensure that the learning is maximized. In service-learning, progress-monitoring typically occurs through measuring gains on a survey, a participation count, or other measures that indicate if goals are being met. Process-monitoring is rarer in service-learning, and when it does occur, it typically takes the form of analyzing student work, including their reflections, and assessing what they learned. Process-monitoring and progress-monitoring are often viewed as types of formative evaluation, though monitoring is typically more frequent and the measures are more discrete and specific than those typically used in formative evaluations. In all of these types of monitoring and evaluation, results are expected to be used to improve practice.

Progress-monitoring, formative and summative evaluation, and use of data for improvement are associated with stronger outcomes in service-learning when the measures are well connected to the tasks and outcomes, and when teachers use the data (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005b).

Using data for improvement has repeatedly been shown in educational research to increase both individual and group learning, because the data reveal what the impacts of participation have been and whether important goals have been reached. For example, Good and Brophy (2000), in their review of the monitoring literature noted that progress-monitoring helped teachers with diagnosis; teachers could examine errors and treat them as important learning opportunities. Fuchs and Fuchs (2006) identified more than 200 empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals that attest to the effectiveness of this type of progress-monitoring for helping students improve reading, mathematics, and spelling skills. In addition, student motivation for learning was enhanced when learners could see skills left to master and strategies for how they would learn the skills and accomplish tasks, especially when the information was presented in concrete terms with examples (Brophy 2004).

EXAMPLE: In one high school service-learning class, students established teamwork as a goal for a service-learning project in which they worked with children of prisoners. After students set the goals, they developed an assessment rubric that would determine how well each of the goals was being

reached. Every few weeks, students assessed their individual and group efforts, then discussed how well they were doing, whether they were on target to reach their goals, whether the teamwork group process was working, and how they could improve. This self-monitoring led to establishing clear expectations, conflict-resolution skills, and more goal-driven behaviors.

DURATION

Recent research has shown that projects must be of sufficient duration, typically at least a semester or 70 hours long, to have an impact on students (Billig, Root, and Jesse 2005; Spring, Dietz, and Grimm 2006). The 70 hours include preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration of results. Fewer hours simply do not give the students enough time to grapple with difficult issues or to have a deep enough experience to make the learning endure. This is not to say that community service can not or should not be performed in single or multiple events; rather, it is to

point out that if the intended academic, civic, or character development outcomes are to be developed through the service-learning process, more time is needed.

Other studies in the larger body of literature on student academic performance support duration as a key to increased learning. For example, the National Research Council (1999) found that coherence, or the connectedness of the ideas and skills presented to students over an extended period of time, is related to increased achievement. To have coherence, a curriculum must focus on important ideas or skills, help students have a logical and developmentally appropriate experience of those ideas and skills, help students see the connection between the ideas and skills, and assess and diagnose what students understand to determine the next steps in instruction. Quality service-learning practice displays these characteristics by addressing “power” or “essential” standards

and helping students to transfer the academic knowledge learned through their service experiences (such as problem-solving or how to find the answer to a mathematical question) to other parts of the curriculum.

EXAMPLE: When one teacher learned that duration was important, she stopped to think about her current practice. She had let the students choose an issue of importance to them, and they decided they wanted to reduce the incidence of rape in their community. Students studied the incidence rates and the research on how to prevent rape. They established a campaign and made people aware of cell phone programming that would alert authorities immediately if there was an imminent problem, and they sponsored an awareness night. The teacher realized that they never followed through to see whether their strategy had worked, whether others actually programmed the cell phones and knew what to do in a dangerous situation, or if the incidence of rape declined in their community.

Working with the students, the teacher brainstormed what the class needed to do to identify the impact of their efforts. The students designed the studies, carried them out, and then when they found only limited impact, developed additional strategies that were more powerful.

Coherence, or the connectedness of the ideas and skills presented to students over an extended period of time, is related to increased achievement.

RECIPROCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with community organizations are a strong feature of most service-learning programs. Partners bring many important resources to service-learning, such as providing a site for projects; resources in the form of funding, time, or materials; and opportunities to involve young people in meeting urgent needs. Reciprocity in partnerships means that both sides benefit through the activities, and usually involves having a shared vision, regular two-way communication, interdependent tasks, and common goals.

Reciprocity was found by several researchers (Kramer 2000; Ammon, Furco, Chi, and Middaugh 2002) to be associated with sustainability of service-learning. On the other hand, when partnerships were short-term and isolated, both teachers and students were less engaged and less likely to continue participating in service-learning because of the lack of local support and the difficulty in initiating more partnerships.

Abравanel (2003) found that partnerships worked better when there were ongoing dialogues to guide their development. She advised that schools need to communicate a clear definition of service-learning, the

essential elements of a service-learning program, the benefits to the community, the academic and curricular standards for which teachers are held accountable, and the role of youth voice in implementing projects to the community partner. The community partner, in turn, needs to communicate its mission, the capacity of the organization to provide service-learning opportunities, and the resources available and the costs required to support the service-learning partnership to the school.

EXAMPLE: Students in an alternative school had been conducting water studies in the nearby watershed for years and received consistent recognition from the Bureau of Land Management for their efforts. The Bureau counted on these students to keep track of progress being made in reducing pollution. The students learned valuable skills in measuring various aspects of stream health. When the school district put the alternative school on the list for closure, due to budget cuts, the students and the Bureau partnered to develop a campaign for the school board to keep the school open. They went door to door to voters to tell them of the need for the school and the benefits for the community of having the school in place. Voters passed a tax levy and the board was convinced to keep the school open.

Conclusion

The composite examples included here illustrate that the eight characteristics of effective service-learning practice need not be difficult for practitioners to implement. However, these practices must be intentionally woven into service-learning and monitored for quality in order for impacts to be shown. Developing expertise in each of the principles will go a long way toward helping make the case for service-learning in K-12 schools and to deepen both the quality and the outcomes of service-learning. This need is particularly important for educators working with the growing number of high-poverty suburban schools, since some evidence indicates that quality is relatively lower in these settings (Pritzker and Moore 2005).

Educators generally know how to operationalize the ideas presented here. It will take some time in terms of personal reflection and professional development, however, for change to occur.

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Walkabout

Learning from Others

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As an international educator, I am intrigued that many children who attend resource-poor schools in Latin America and Africa are able to master basic skills and go on to higher education, while an achievement gap persists in the United States. The U.S. response to this crisis requires more than strategies that haven't worked in the past, such as a return to the basics or a greater technological response. We need to go beyond what can be easily tested and challenge students to practice adult competencies.

Many cultures have institutionalized the transition to adulthood in rites of passage. In such rites, young people face challenges, build a sense of community and teamwork with others, and practice the rights, roles, and responsibilities that are part of being an active adult participant in their culture.

The United States can learn much from educational practices in other parts of the world, such as Latin American educational reformers with their Escuelas Nuevas, African reading experts and their Breakthrough to Literacy program, and Australian aborigines with their tradition of walkabout. Each of

these practices provides youth with increased adult responsibilities that help them more effectively make the transition to adulthood.

The Escuelas Nuevas of Latin America

In 1997, I observed the New Rural Schools of Guatemala and came away inspired. Research on these schools, which were initiated more than 25 years ago in rural Colombia and are now found in some of the most impoverished parts of Latin America, has led UNICEF (Schiefelbein 1991), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (Kraft 1998) to declare them model schools for the 21st century.

FIGURE 1
10 Key Factors of the Escuelas Nuevas

1.	Democratic education and student leadership
2.	Community involvement and shared decision-making
3.	Empowered teacher-authors and -trainers
4.	Continuous assessment and flexible promotion
5.	Individualized and small group instruction
6.	Cultural sensitivity and local content
7.	Active learning and teacher facilitators
8.	Learning centers and classroom libraries
9.	Student workbooks and teacher handbooks
10.	Local control and national commitment

The Escuelas Nuevas teach democratic values, empowering students, parents, and teachers to be active participants in their communities. Students enact the principles of democracy in their classrooms by leading class meetings at least once a week. They also run the school health office, lunch programs, classroom libraries, school and environmental cleanups, classroom educational corners, school gardens, fish ponds, art programs, and community affairs. Children ages 6-12 take the lead in involving their parents in efforts to improve the infrastructure of their communities, including electricity, roads, water, and sewers.

Based on observations and interviews with the founder of the movement, Oscar Mogollón, I have identified 10 keys to the success of the model. (See Figure 1.) When these factors are present, students can practice newly acquired skills, face challenges, build a sense of community, and practice the rights, roles, and responsibilities that will be theirs as adults. In effect, the classroom experience becomes a rite of passage.

In other developing countries, I have observed teachers, even in the early grades, lecturing in front of 50-100 students who sit in rows and copy from the board. In contrast, the Escuelas Nuevas have no formal front of the room, and there are no lectures.

Students work in multiage small groups, at their own skill levels. Their learning activities are based on the national curriculum but adapted to their local realities. When students complete the work for a particular grade level — whether this takes three months or two years — they are promoted. Children absent for illness or work return to the classroom, pick up where they left off, and continue to move forward.

These innovations lead to greater academic success. A multinational study completed in 2002 found that students attending Colombia's rural Escuelas Nuevas, performed at higher levels on a mathematics and literacy measure than did students in Colombia's urban areas — defying expectations (Casassus et al. 2002).

Breakthrough to Literacy in Africa

A problem for many children in learning to read is that while they are capable of decoding written language phonetically and reading aloud, they are unable to comprehend the meaning of a text. Millions of young people in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and the Middle East remain functionally illiterate (Ogle et al. 2001). Studies conducted in the United States also find high percentages of young people who have attended or even graduated from secondary

school but have not attained sufficient literacy to function effectively as adults (National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983).

Breakthrough to Literacy began to address literacy issues in South Africa during apartheid. Educators saw the importance of teaching children not just English or Afrikaans, but also the mother tongues of their respective tribes. Over the past two decades, their approach to bilingual literacy has spread throughout Southern and Eastern Africa, and is now moving into both English-speaking West Africa and the French-speaking countries throughout the continent.

The most successful example of the Breakthrough approach is the Primary Reading Program in Zambia, which I observed in 2005. Students tell their own stories to the teacher, who writes them on a sentence board. This activity teaches students that the words they speak correspond to the letters they see in the classroom. Children also write their own words in their mother tongue, and by the end of a few short weeks, are composing brief stories. By the second semester, children are introduced to English. They use the same process of telling their own stories to learn this second language. This strategy of teaching through the words of students has

proven itself to be a powerful mechanism, both for maintaining indigenous languages and for building international literacy (Sampa 2005).

African educators recognize that mastery of the written word in one's native language is critical to the mastery of academic content (Alidou et al. 2006), and that schools that begin with instruction in a student's native language can utilize student-centered methodologies that empower both teacher and student learning. Literacy in Africa no longer means shaping children's voices to fit a language other than their own, but instead nurturing the growth of their own voices in their own words.

Western Educational Models Inspired by the Australian Aboriginal Walkabout

In 1974, Maurice Gibbons, inspired by the ancient Australian aboriginal rite of passage called walkabout, wrote "Walkabout: Searching for the Right Passage from Childhood

and School." Gibbons' article was inspired by the movie of the same title, in which two white Australian children are left in the outback. They are found and cared for by a young aborigine, a native Australian, who helps them survive six months in this very hostile environment. Gibbons explores the pedagogical implications of the aboriginal rite of passage: Young people on a walkabout are faced with real dilemmas. Their inner spiritual resources are called upon, and heightened senses, perceptions, instinct, and intuition are recognized as critical components of full adulthood.

Gibbons inspired schools and youth programs in the United States to put into practice walkabout-type curricula as a way to create more meaningful rites of passage for American youths. But despite tremendous initial interest in this radically different approach to schooling, few schools actually have put these ideas into permanent practice. What follows is a Colorado exception.

Students attending Colombia's rural Escuelas Nuevas performed at higher levels on a mathematics and literacy measure than did students in Colombia's urban areas – defying expectations.

Literacy in Africa no longer means shaping children's voices to fit a language other than their own, but instead nurturing the growth of their own voices in their own words.

Jefferson County Open School

Jefferson County Open School, a pre-K-12 public school in Lakewood, Colo., was developed to provide youths with more meaningful rites of passage (Posner 2004). At this school, traditional curricula, courses, and grade transcripts have been replaced with a system of six "passages": creativity, logical inquiry, career explorations, global awareness (including service), practical applications, and adventure. Students are challenged to achieve 27 competencies, which include basic subject matter competencies, as well as personal, social, survival, and career skills.

Students practice self-directed learning and democratic governance. The curriculum includes self, peer, and advisory group assessments that lead to student-written transcripts, trips, apprenticeships, and community work. Groups of students, teachers, parents, and community members provide feedback and assessment at each stage of the process. Despite a lack of grades, traditional classes, and a traditional curriculum, graduates have gone on to

many of the best colleges in the nation (Posner 2004).

Gulf Coast WalkAbout

The National Youth Leadership Council has also developed a walkabout program rooted in the idea that students benefit academically and socially when learning intersects with hands-on service to the community (Kielsmeier 1996). The latest NYLC iteration of this program is the Gulf Coast WalkAbout, which was initiated in the summer of 2006 in five communities located in three states that have been directly affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The curriculum emphasized environmental restoration, emergency preparedness and response, and oral history. These emphases are based on the original Australian walkabout premise that youths' transition to adulthood should be marked by significant educational experiences that lead to full adult responsibilities and a new "construction of self" as an adult member of society (Van Gennep 1960).

In a contemporary version of the aboriginal rite, middle school students in the hurricane-affected areas have been in the process of coming to terms with the disaster. Their work has been done cooperatively, and they have been confronted by a range of physically, intellectually, and morally challenging experiences. Young people in the Gulf Coast WalkAbout program were encouraged to reflect on their own hurricane experiences and to tell their stories through drama, music, art, journals, and photos. They were involved with their leaders in the selection of service-learning projects that were environmentally conscious and community-based. As in the Latin American and African settings, improvement of basic academic skills was a critical component of the program and was related to the context of the students' experiences.

In the Gulf Coast WalkAbout site of Port Arthur, Texas, senior citizens from the Experience Corps spent several weeks helping children from their neighborhoods master basic mathematics and communications skills as preparation for their service-learning projects. Similarly, WalkAbout teachers and community members in Picayune, Miss., provided a rich learning environment for young people, many of whom had experienced little success during the regular school year. Counselors assisted young people who had been traumatized by the experience of

the hurricane. Coaches and teachers in New Orleans WalkAbout sites led their students in reflections and writing about their experiences and the effects of Hurricane Katrina.

Considerations for U.S. Education

While too many U.S. children remain functionally illiterate in their mother tongue, many African children learn to love and respect their home language and culture and also master English. While too many U.S. children feel powerless to effect change in their schools and communities, Latin American primary students take democratic responsibility for almost all aspects of their schools and begin to impact their broader communities in terms of potable water, electricity, community libraries, and safety. Examples from Australia, Africa, and Latin America demonstrate that when youth confront genuine physical, moral, spiritual, and intellectual challenges, they move further along the path toward engaged adulthood.

So why, in the U.S., do we keep young people in a state of dependence when what they need is real-world practice applying skills that lead to greater independence and responsibility? They, too, need and deserve meaningful rites of passage designed to prepare them for higher education, work, and lives as fully participating citizens. When confronted with genuine challenges like the hurricanes,

young Americans can and do respond positively and in creative ways. The WalkAbout model offers a conceptual approach demonstrating how formal and informal schooling can operate in a way that prepares youth for lives as contributing citizens in their communities.

It is time to fully develop walkabout-like curricula for elementary, middle, and high school levels in the United States. These types of programs would not only provide for mastery of academic and work skills, but also challenge students to become full participants in the democratic process. NYLC's WalkAbout program and the Jefferson County Open School illustrate how these principles can be put into practice and suggest directions for further growth.

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The 2006 Gulf Coast WalkAbout

A Promising Summer School Program

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In the summer of 2006 five school sites in the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast region engaged their students in a new summer school program. The Gulf Coast WalkAbout involved students in community-based service-learning projects specifically designed to help them improve their academic skills.

Gulf Coast WalkAbout was developed by the National Youth Leadership Council as part of its Resources for Recovery initiative. After visiting the hurricane-ravaged region in the fall of 2005, NYLC worked with colleagues and partners in the area and across the United States to create a framework to use service-learning as a means to address the dire needs in the Gulf Coast. The effort was funded by the State Farm Companies Foundation, with additional assistance from the Shinnyo-en Foundation and the Joe W. and Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation.

With cooperation from state education agencies in the Gulf Coast states, NYLC

adapted its WalkAbout program model to make it appropriate for middle school students in the region.

The WalkAbout program was first developed in St. Louis in the late 1980s and refined in the Twin Cities in the 1990s as a summer school service-learning program that served as a vehicle to engage young people as assets in reclaiming their communities (Kielsmeier 1996). The term “walkabout” was borrowed from a 1974 film by that name and refers to an Australian aboriginal rite of passage wherein young people contend with challenging experiences as part of their transition to adulthood (Gibbons 1974). In the Twin Cities

and in the Gulf Coast WalkAbout, young people begin the program by literally walking through their community to discover needs and to learn how they can be of service.

Research from the Louisiana State University Department of Psychiatry into the effects of Hurricane Katrina on young people supports this program. In a forthcoming study of 2,192 New Orleans students in grades 4-12 who had been displaced by Hurricane Katrina, researchers suggest that involving young people in helping to rebuild after disasters is important, particularly for adolescents. They write:

Students sufficiently symptomatic to qualify for mental health services frequently described their first concern as “how can I rebuild my community? ... [Thus] for adolescents, being a part of the recovery, building support in communities and having responsibility for outcomes is very important. (Osofsky et al 2007).

Over the winter and spring of 2006, NYLC developed a Gulf Coast version of WalkAbout, including a sourcebook of service-learning curricula. Working under a tight timeline, NYLC sent a request for proposals through the Learn and Serve state offices in March, selected sites in April, and trained staff in May. The program then ran for a six-week period in June and July.

To be considered as a WalkAbout summer school site, schools needed to demonstrate that participating students met the following criteria:

- at least 50 percent had been displaced by the hurricanes
- at least 50 percent qualified for free or reduced-price school lunch
- at least 50 percent scored below grade level in reading or math

The five sites selected for the program (two sites in New Orleans; Port Arthur, Texas; and Picayune and Moss Point, Miss.) are described in Figure 1, which shows that even before the hurricane, many of these students faced challenges of deep poverty and high crime rates in their communities at levels well above national averages. Not only were participating students displaced, but many of the teachers had lost their homes from the hurricane as well. Thus students and teachers alike were still living in motels, with family, or in temporary trailers during this summer program. During the summer most of the schools being used for WalkAbout were in the midst of extensive repairs due to hurricane damage.

Figure 2 offers additional demographic information on programs at each of the sites. The number of students served through WalkAbout at each site varied from 50-60 students at the single-school sites, to between 90 and 200 students at the multi-school sites.

Researchers suggest that involving young people in helping to rebuild after disaster strikes is important, particularly for adolescents.

FIGURE 1
Description of Sites Participating in the 2006 Gulf Coast WalkAbout

	Capdau Charter School	Sophie B. Wright Charter School	Moss Point	Picayune	Port Arthur
Location	New Orleans Garden District	New Orleans Eighth Ward	Southeast Mississippi	Southwest Mississippi	Southeast Texas
Pre-hurricane city population	484,000 (about 200,000 post-hurricane)		15,000	10,500	58,000
Hit by hurricane	Katrina	Katrina	Katrina	Katrina	Rita
Pre-hurricane per capita income (\$21,587 = U.S. average)	\$17,258	\$17,258	\$15,537	\$15,798	\$14,183
Pre-hurricane population 25 or older with a bachelor's degree	29%	42%	12%	16%	9%
Pre-hurricane population 18 and under living in poverty	40%	40%	23%	28%	35%
Pre-hurricane crime index (322 = U.S. average)	561	561	688	441	470

Because of the severe needs of the schools, the WalkAbout program was designed to be flexible in order to accommodate the particular contexts of each site. All sites, however, received:

1. Training for staff and volunteers
2. A sourcebook of service-learning curricula
3. Access to an extranet to share information and questions across sites
4. Up to \$45,000 in funding from State Farm Companies Foundation
5. Ongoing support from NYLC staff and consultants

All programs shared the following features:

1. The WalkAbout model was designed to be staffed by an instructional team of a site coordinator, four teachers, nine college students, and two adult volunteers. As much as possible there was to be a “cascading mentorship” model, in which the classroom teachers mentored the college students, who mentored the middle school students, who in turn mentored younger students. (Some of the projects conducted by the middle school students involved tutoring or offering other enrichment activities to children in elementary school and preschool.)

2. All sites began their programs with a community mapping exercise (which was included in the sourcebook). Students and their teaching teams walked around their community to identify both its needs and assets. Based on what students discovered, they then generated service-learning projects for the summer.
3. Projects focused on at least one of the following areas: environmental restoration, disaster preparedness, and oral history.
4. Each site published a weekly WriteAbout, an online newsletter reflecting on what they were learning.
5. Each site devoted at least one day a week to hands-on service-learning projects.
6. Daily team-building and physical fitness activities supported the learning efforts.
7. Students at each site documented their projects through written and oral presentations using art, drama, music, and photography.
8. The service-learning projects connected to academics in math, science, social studies, and language arts.

FIGURE 2
WalkAbout Program Participation by School Site

	Capdau Charter School	Sophie B. Wright Charter School	Moss Point ¹	Picayune ²	Port Arthur ³
Students receiving free and reduced-price lunch	85%	90%	72-98%	69-83%	90%
Ethnicities of students					
- African-American	99%	98%	26-98%	30-39%	87%
- White	N/A	2%	72-1%	65-59%	1%
- Hispanic	N/A	1%	2%-N/A	4-2%	10%
Daily schedule	8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	8 a.m. - 2 p.m.	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.	8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Assistants to teachers	N/A	College students	Adult aides and high school students	Adult aides and college students	Adult aides

1. Charlotte Hyatt, Escatawpa, and Kreole elementary schools
 2. Nicholson and South Side Upper elementary schools and Center for Alternative Education
 3. Moved from DeQueen Elementary to Port Arthur Alternative Center halfway through the program

How It Worked:
The Service-Learning Projects

Students conducted service-learning projects based on their mapping of their communities in the following three focus areas.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION PROJECTS

As students walked about their community, the need for environmental cleanup was obvious. Students at some sites cleaned up their school grounds. At other sites they

planted gardens or trees, or worked on landscaping their schoolyard. They also built birdhouses and bus stop benches. One site reported to their city council on cleanup still needed in their community, while another worked on a longer-term project involving planning for improvements of their community’s senior center. One site helped restore the gardens at a neighborhood bed and breakfast that had served as a base for first responders following the hurricane.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PROJECTS

Students helped their families and others create family emergency plans and emergency preparedness brochures and backpacks. The students also researched what supplies would be needed in a disaster and created emergency first-aid kits, lists of medications for seniors, and hurricane "care bags." At one school, students teamed up with the American Red Cross to do a joint presentation on emergency preparedness, offering their insights and experiences from a youth perspective as to what youths ought to know, to pack, and to do.

ORAL HISTORY PROJECTS

All the communities suffered losses in the hurricanes. Buildings can be replaced and the environment can be cleaned up, but much was irreplaceable. Not only did some people lose their lives, but those who survived lost photographs and other artifacts of historical and sentimental value. Students engaged in

one oral history project worked for six weeks on telling their own Katrina stories, presenting and recording their experiences. At another site, students interviewed community members and created storyboards that highlighted their experiences from evacuation to the present day. They discovered that their stories of survival were often heroic and offered many valuable lessons.

Programmatic Variations and Challenges

A key distinction among the participating WalkAbout sites was that some focused exclusively on WalkAbout and others included WalkAbout as one component of their summer programming. The two sites with additional programming and funding were larger and able to provide additional activities for their WalkAbout students, but they also struggled more to keep up with the additional youths and the multiple goals of their summer programs.

Some sites encountered challenges because districts required that students identified as low performing attend summer programs specifically focused on helping them increase their state test scores. These students were moved midsummer into more traditional remedial summer programs.

At one site, the district relocated the WalkAbout program to a different building partway through the summer, and attendance dropped for the final weeks.

Starting a new summer program using an unfamiliar pedagogy is challenging under the best of circumstances. Service-learning was unfamiliar to several of the site directors and many of the teachers, and the local conditions under which the WalkAbout programs were operating compounded those challenges.

Most of the sites also had unanticipated difficulties with recruiting college students to volunteer for the program. Because paid summer work was plentiful and necessary for many students, fewer than expected were available to draw on for the summer school program.

Evaluation Findings

Because of the immense needs and challenges of the situation, the Gulf Coast WalkAbout program model allowed for

Over 90 percent of the teachers and site coordinators surveyed agreed that by the end of the program the students felt more a part of their community.

variation in implementation to accommodate the sites. It was necessary to extend this flexibility to the evaluation as well when it became apparent that schools weren't equipped to provide some of the planned evaluation activities. School staff strapped for time naturally gave greater priority to providing students with quality summer programming than they did to participating in formal evaluation activities for the Gulf Coast WalkAbout.

The initial evaluation design, for example, required pre- and post-tests on student demographics, civic engagement, and writing. All of the sites were supplied with the materials but several sites were unable to recruit volunteers to administer the evaluation tools. In lieu of the intended evaluation activity, surveys on civic engagement, academic impacts, and other aspects of the program were sent out to the site coordinators and teachers following the program. These were completed by site coordinators at all of the sites and teachers from three out of the five sites. Additional qualitative data were collected during interviews with teachers and observations at all sites during the evaluator's mid-project site visit. Written reflections from students, midterm and final written reports by staff, and a group debriefing with all of the site coordinators and some of the teachers in September completed the

data used in evaluating the Gulf Coast WalkAbout program.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Over 90 percent of the teachers and site coordinators surveyed (site coordinators from all five sites and teachers from three of the five sites) agreed that by the end of the program the students felt more a part of their community, knew what they could do to help make their community a better place, and felt they could make a difference in their community.

During the evaluator's site visit one of the teachers from Sophie B. Wright said:

It is good to see our students take the initiative to restore the beauty of the neighborhood. I am hoping that native New Orleansians will see what we are striving to do, and that this will encourage them to contribute to our wonderful city. We are setting a positive example of what productive citizens should do. ... We are just hoping that others will follow in our footsteps.

The Moss Point site coordinator added:

These children are doing tasks that were part of my everyday life growing up. Yard work and community service were just something we did and somehow that has gotten lost. This project is rekindling those old values.

Another aspect of civic engagement that developed through the program was students' willingness to help others. Over 90 percent of the teachers and site coordinators surveyed agreed that as a result of the WalkAbout program their students felt that helping others is something that everyone should do, that helping others became more important to them, and that students liked to help others even if it was hard work. Eighty percent felt that their students were now trying to think of ways to help others.

As one of the students from Moss Point wrote as part of a weekly WriteAbout:

When I heard about the WalkAbout I thought it meant for us to walk around the community. The experience was different [as] we had to build, plant, and things. We even had to clean up the community. The impact helped me because it taught me how to be more responsible and to help my community more often. Helping the community was fun.

Working on increasing the civic engagement of the youths also was something the teachers enjoyed. One of the Moss Point teachers said: "I like what I'm learning. I can talk about character all day long, but till we put kids into situations where they can develop in this area, they learn nothing. I'm looking forward to building on this."

A student from Moss Point summarized her WalkAbout experience as follows: “The WalkAbout has changed me because I’m motivated and prepared for the real world.”

ACADEMIC RESULTS

While it’s difficult to document academic progress over six weeks, the data collected from the Moss Point site indicate progress in literacy skills over the course of the program.

Pre- and post-program assessment of writing skills among Moss Point students indicated that about half (49 percent) of those assessed improved their writing skills over the six-week program by at least one level of the rubric used, with 5 percent increasing by two levels. An additional 54 percent either maintained their writing skills or slightly improved them over the summer program; only 4 percent had a decline in their writing skill levels.

As one of the teachers said:

This [program] is a very different and better way to do summer school because it’s more hands on. Writing skills are being developed; language scores are going up; and writing is improving.

Of the teachers and site coordinators surveyed, 90 percent agreed that their students greatly improved their knowledge of their community, their teamwork, and their reflection skills. About 80 percent also felt there was improvement in the students’

knowledge of the environment and how to plan for and respond to natural disasters.

One student from Port Arthur wrote:

I have learned that when you work together you can get more things done or accomplished. Also, it makes getting things done more fun and the work doesn’t really seem like hard work. When we are trying to figure out a problem, we did it faster when we could work in a group, rather than when [we] had to work alone. I also didn’t make as many mistakes when we worked together than when we worked alone.

A teacher from Sophie B. Wright said:

I’ve been doing service a long time, but not within academics. This is wonderful. The kids will benefit from it long term as it will change their frame of mind, especially after what they’ve been through. For them to be working as a team on activities is very good.

Roughly 70 percent of the teachers and site coordinators who responded felt their students had greatly improved their problem-solving and reading. Sixty percent felt that their students had also greatly improved in writing, math, and newsletter writing.

The respondents indicated that not as much improvement had taken place as they had hoped in students’ oral presentation skills and ability to collect oral histories. It is not

clear why this was so. Academics was only one of the objectives of this program, however. In the words of the Picayune site coordinator:

[Our program] is chock full of activities. ... We want kids to be able to release their frustrations and have something different to do. We want to fill the void of them having nothing to do during the summer. Without this [program] they’d just be sleeping late, watching a lot of T.V., and eating junk food. Instead they’ve learned [here] that it’s better not to be a couch potato, that they need to make wise choices.

Additional Outcomes: Mental Health and Resiliency in the Face of Disaster

While Gulf Coast WalkAbout did not have the capacity to document or address mental health issues, its focus on leadership, teamwork, and service could contribute to positive mental health outcomes. Reflecting on Gulf Coast WalkAbout, Ann Masten, Distinguished McKnight Professor of Education and Resiliency at the University of Minnesota said:

There are some pretty fundamental processes that you need to tap into that help young people or are likely to help them recover. And one of the most important is to give them back the sense that they have some control over the world. I think that programs that empower young people, that try to build their leadership — which is at the very core, an essence of what they try to do in the WalkAbout

program — can play a very important role after everything that has been taken away from you. (NYLC 2006)

The data collected in the WalkAbout evaluation suggest that participating students experienced these benefits, as noted by the site coordinator from Port Arthur:

Working on the WalkAbout let kids hash out some of their feelings while getting more connected to the community.

As a student from New Orleans wrote:

I have had an excellent time learning about service learning during the time I was in NYLC's Gulf Coast Walkabout. We learned not only to care about keeping our neighborhoods clean, but also to care about others and their needs. I have leaned so much this summer and cannot wait to return to school in the fall to continue what we started. I am looking for others to join the clubs we started this summer, so we can grow together and continue to make a difference in the lives of the citizens of New Orleans.

Conclusion

The Gulf Coast WalkAbout program demonstrated a wide variety of positive results, in part because the design seemed to respond well to the different realities of the five sites. The destruction and disruptions caused by hurricanes needed to be considered in the pro-

gram design, implementation, and evaluation. For example, many of the WalkAbout youths and their teachers were still living in temporary housing during this program.

Talented and committed staff at both NYLC and the five sites were essential in moving from WalkAbout's general concepts to its implementation. At the same time, additional training and support of the site coordinators and teachers will be necessary in future iterations of this program. More support by the school districts also would strengthen the longer-term results of the program.

Planning and preparing for a summer WalkAbout program requires a significant time investment. Future sites should be selected to participate in early fall, with preparations to begin soon thereafter. This will greatly strengthen the program and make for a much less frenetic summer for site coordinators and teachers.

In summary, the WalkAbout program filled an important need at the right time for the youths and adults who participated in it. It offered a safe, empowering setting for students to develop academic and service-learning skills. Youths gave back to their communities, and teachers worked with their students in new and productive ways. The seeds that were sown and the lessons learned will continue to bear fruit.

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Service-Learning for Homeland Security and Disaster Relief

A Report from Learn and Serve America

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As the nation's primary federal funder of service-learning, Learn and Serve America leads the Corporation for National and Community Service's strategic initiative on engaging students — both college and K-12 — in service to their communities. These projects involve students in applying their knowledge and skills to meet critical community needs in the areas of education, public safety, the environment, health, housing, disaster preparedness, and homeland security.

Recent crises including threats of terrorism, the Florida hurricanes of 2004, and the Gulf Coast storms of 2005 highlight the importance of preparing for disasters and mitigating their effects. Young people are becoming an increasingly important part of those efforts. In 2004, Learn and Serve sponsored a competition among K-12 schools that offered students the opportunity to work on "hometown security" projects dedicated to emergency preparedness and disaster relief efforts in their communities. Through these projects, youths demonstrate the crucial roles they can

play in helping their communities prepare for and cope with extreme challenges.

Although the initial 2004 homeland security grants expired in 2006, in response to ongoing needs Learn and Serve provided supplemental funding to some existing grantees in 2006, and offered new three-year grants that emphasize disaster preparation and response.

In the 2006 program year, 79 programs received grants specifically designated for homeland security and disaster relief:

- Programs were located in Washington, D.C., and 12 states: California, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, Montana, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin.
- Twenty-two percent of these programs were first-time Learn and Serve grant recipients.
- In 2006, 52,359 service-learning participants engaged in a total of 857,590 hours of service in these programs, with an average of 16 hours of service per participant.
- These programs also engaged 2,523 teachers and school staff, as well as an additional 13,839 adult and youth volunteers.
- Seventy-eight percent of these programs provided services to youths from disadvantaged circumstances.
- Sixty-five percent of these programs have a staff person who coordinates service-learning activities.

Learn and Serve Programs

Most Learn and Serve homeland security programs involve students in at least one of four project types: training to serve on an emergency response team, contributing to school safety plans, working to reduce school violence, or educating members of the community about how they can prepare for future disasters.

The following are compelling examples of what young people and their schools can accomplish:

EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS

Emergency response teams are trained to handle emergency situations as they arise. Learn and Serve students at Hoboken High School in New Jersey have such an effective emergency response team that the nearby Blairstown Ambulance Corps donated a fully equipped ambulance to the team for use during training in CPR and advanced first aid techniques. After receiving 50 hours of

training from the American Red Cross and the local hospital, many of the students on the emergency response team became certified to answer 911 calls during school hours and assist the trauma unit at Jersey City Medical Center. According to the National Safety Council, they are now able to respond to breathing and cardiac emergencies as well as bleeding, illnesses, and injuries (2003). Project director Joe Miele says, “Kids are training to save lives, to be there when others need them. It’s a lifelong experience that stays with them forever.”

REDUCING SCHOOL VIOLENCE

At Eastern Greene Elementary in southern Indiana, 662 Learn and Serve students in grades K-6 decided to work together to create a safer school. With the help of their teacher, they researched existing programs on school safety and proposed adopting the Students Against Violence Everywhere program, a national campaign against bullying. They then designed a plan to educate students and

Through these projects, youths demonstrate the crucial roles they can play in helping their communities prepare for and cope with extreme challenges.

FIGURE 1

Comparison of 2006 Self-Reported Impacts Between Learn And Serve (LSA) Programs in General and Programs Funded by Homeland Security Grants

Programs reporting that Learn and Serve America activities have a positive impact on:	LSA Positive Impact*	Homeland Security Positive Impact*	LSA Significant Positive Impact	Homeland Security Significant Positive Impact
the community service organizations served	95.4%	93.7%	67.5%	70.9%
participants' civic engagement	91.4%	97.5%	55.7%	60.8%
the academic performance of participants	89.3%	91.1%	42.9%	44.3%
efforts to make service-learning a permanent part of their institution	88.0%	89.9%	53.8%	53.2%
the habits of the participants (including attendance, extracurricular activities, and participation in class)	90.2%	96.2%	47.2%	49.4%

* Positive impact is an aggregate of programs that report either moderate positive and significant positive impacts.

parents in their own school about bullying. This Eastern Greene Elementary School program recently received the National SAVE Chapter of the Year Award. These students have presented their bullying prevention and safe schools program to all the elementary and middle schools in their district.

PREPARING FOR DISASTERS

A statewide Florida Learn and Serve program, the Service, Preparedness, and Response Coalition has initiated seven projects that have trained 2,470 students on homeland security. These SPaRC students in turn trained 5,183 community beneficiaries in disaster preparedness. As a result of hurricane and community-safety activities, SPaRC students in Lake County, Fla., showed a 93 percent increase in their awareness and knowledge of homeland security topics, which was the largest individual site increase in the state.

Homeland Security Activities

A total of 514 Learn and Serve-funded programs (or 30 percent of all Learn and Serve-funded programs) organized activities related to homeland security and disaster relief during the 2006 program year.* The average program devoted 15 percent of their activities to homeland security and disaster relief.

- Of these 514 programs, 384 were implemented by K-12 schools or districts, 60 by community-based organizations, and 70 by institutions of higher education.
- These programs were located in 49 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam.
- Of these programs, 17 percent were first-time Learn and Serve grant recipients.
- In 2006, \$2,817,232 in grant funds supported the homeland security and disaster relief components of these programs.
- During the 2006 program year, 57,319 students participated in homeland security or disaster relief activities as part of these programs.
- In addition, 3,124 teachers, faculty, and staff participated in a 2006 Learn and Serve program that included some homeland security and disaster relief activities.

* This includes the 79 programs funded by the grants specifically targeting homeland security and disaster relief.

- These programs also recruited 15,445 community members, both adult and youth volunteers, who participated in programs that included activities dealing with homeland security and disaster relief.
- Eighty-two percent of these programs provided services to youth from disadvantaged circumstances.
- Seventy-four percent of these programs have a staff person who coordinates service-learning activities.

Positive Impacts of Homeland Security Activities

Those who implement projects under the homeland security grants find that these activities have similar or slightly greater positive impacts on students, schools, and the community Learn and Serve-funded programs on average. (See Figure 1.)

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The Power of Service-Learning in Urban Settings: An Interview with Former St. Paul Superintendent Patricia Harvey

MARYBETH NEAL, PH.D.

Interview conducted by Sarah Pearson,
Close Up Foundation

Patricia Harvey, Ph.D., currently splits her time between the University of Minnesota, where she holds the Carmen Starkson Campbell Visiting Endowed Chair in Urban Education, and the National Center on Education and the Economy/America's Choice in Washington, D.C., where she serves on the leadership team of the State Alliance for High Performance.

Patricia Harvey, Ph.D., former superintendent of St. Paul Public Schools (1999-2005), is a passionate advocate for service-learning, believing that it offers a critical underpinning for public education and that it should be integrated throughout the K-12 curriculum. She shared her philosophy of service-learning in an interview held in Washington, D.C.

Harvey's successes as the leader of an urban school district, her broad knowledge of urban education across the United States, and her ability to motivate and empower community stakeholders has earned her respect among educators, parents, students, legislators, and business leaders alike.

According to Harvey, service-learning helps children develop into caring adults, capable of contributing to their communities. "I can't imagine how you can have a quality education if you don't provide these opportunities for kids at every age level, connected to everything academically," said Harvey.

An Urban Example of Service-Learning

Harvey supports service-learning as a method for reaching at-risk students in large urban districts. She has seen firsthand how living below the poverty line in a highly populated urban area can be crippling for young people. "Students need to see how they fit in the world," she said. "Kids who live in poverty quickly learn that people are helping them, and they are not able to *give back*." She points out that all young people can contribute to solving community problems if given opportunities to do so: "If we want kids to become all that they can be, then everything they do *has* to be connected to the real world."

Harvey described the 150th anniversary of the city of St. Paul to illustrate how, through increased knowledge of their city's assets and challenges, students learned to give back. The celebration activities focused on reconnecting the city to the Mississippi River.

"In all schools, not just in a set-aside service-learning program, the adults and the students decided together that the river was part of their inheritance," said Harvey. "So the kids were involved in all kinds of activities: testing water, working with senior citizens, doing everything they could with the river as the theme. They began to think about how the community comes together around the river and what each one of us needs to do to help support that learning."

Students, with the support of their teachers, came up with their own activities and identified problems that needed to be solved. Teachers skilled in service-learning supplied

a framework of good practices to help students be successful in both their projects and their learning. Harvey noted that the city's celebration activities became something that involved a wide spectrum of citizens and students. The students came away "with some brand new experiences and opportunities, a new level of ability in terms of giving back."

Harvey added that one of the strengths of urban areas is that larger communities have a greater pool of foundations, businesses, and community organizations that can be called upon to help in a variety of ways. This might include providing materials, professional development, and opportunities for service. Local businesses are also often happy to partner with schools.

For example, Harvey said, "We've asked businesses for a commitment to provide opportunities for kids. ... Every place that teachers and principals gather, the grocery

stores or wherever, they are willing to give to kids. But you have to ask for their help." She noted, too, that foundations and businesses are interested not just in giving money but in creating reciprocal partnerships: "They want to be involved in the decision-making part of it, too."

For Students: The Real World as Challenging Curriculum

In Harvey's experience, many students are motivated to apply what they learn in school to the world outside the classroom. "The biggest surprise I've ever gotten in my professional life was watching a videotape that a television producer had done right before my arrival in St. Paul," she said. The interviewer had asked high school students what advice they would give to their new superintendent. The students on the video told Harvey, "We want to have discussions about real problems," and "We can learn things

"Every place that teachers and principals gather, the grocery stores or wherever, they are willing to give to kids. But you have to ask for their help."

outside of school.” Harvey noted that she could see the core components of service-learning in the advice that students offered.

Harvey insisted that service-learning can provide meaningful education for every child — English language learners, students living in high poverty, students without access to many resources — not just gifted or motivated students. “When you look at the International Baccalaureate programs or advanced placement programs, they’re all about real-life experiences,” and she is adamant that these kinds of experiences should be provided to all students.

According to Harvey, there’s a troubling tendency at some schools to create remedial programs that make schooling even less interesting and relevant for those who are at risk for academic failure. “With minority kids and kids who are second language learners and kids who live in high poverty, we have

been using an approach that is different from the one we use [with students who face fewer challenges],” said Harvey. “What we have done is to dumb down, empty out the curriculum, and make it as uninteresting as it could possibly be, thinking that if we provided them that kind of remediation they would, in fact, excel.

“What we have learned, and what we know now is that just the *opposite* is true. The way to get to kids who are behind, to jump-start them forward, is through an *accelerated* learning program. So, instead of dumbing it down, you beef it up.” She suggested that service-learning, as a pedagogy based in group cooperation and real-world applications, can help educators do just that.

For Communities: A Shared Vision

Getting the larger community behind the district’s vision of education — particularly if that vision is rooted in service-learning —

is critical, Harvey noted. One of the mistakes superintendents make is assuming that other people will adopt their vision of education. She emphasized the importance of getting everyone on the same page by having conversations about what people want their kids to learn and be able to do. When you reach agreement, Harvey said, “The vision does not belong to the superintendent, it belongs to the city. Everybody owns it.”

Opening the door to the community in this way allows for supportive social networks to be built and strengthened. A shared community vision leads to opportunities for engaging in service-learning, and connecting with people and ideas.

Harvey offered as an example a group of students in St. Paul who read *The Diary of Anne Frank* as part of their study of the Holocaust. After reading, they studied other genocides and chose to focus on Rwanda. “Rwanda: In a hundred days over two million people were killed,” she said. From their exploration of the issue, the students decided to create a public awareness campaign. They collected nonperishable goods to send to Rwanda and educated St. Paul citizens about the genocide taking place there.

“The way to get to kids who are behind, to jump-start them forward, is through an *accelerated* learning program.”

But the students wanted to do something more visible within the Twin Cities community, and so they asked Harvey to help them invite the president of Rwanda to talk with middle school students in St. Paul. “I said, ‘Let’s do it!’ I called the State Department in Washington, D.C., and said that we would like the president of Rwanda to come and talk to our kids,” Harvey said.

At first officials told her that schools didn’t have the kind of money that this would require. But a friend in St. Paul encouraged her to persevere, and eventually Harvey succeeded. President Paul Kagame addressed thousands of eighth-grade students from St. Paul. Before he spoke, he met with a student who had lost his entire family in Rwanda. “The first thing the president said to him backstage was, ‘Are you all right?’” Harvey recalled. Tears came to her eyes as she related the boy’s reply, “Yes, I am.”

But even beyond the students spearheading a major state visit to their community, their success stimulated interest within the schools to engage in other service-learning opportunities. It served as a catalyst that got students involved in efforts to promote literacy and projects designed to support soldiers serving in Iraq.

“It doesn’t matter what subjects you teach when your goal is to help a student engage at the highest possible level.”

For Teachers: Nurturing Innovation by Opening the Door to Service-Learning

“What we truly have to do if we are sincere about making sure that our kids are ready for the 21st century is that at every step of the way we have to revisit what we are doing,” said Harvey. “How can we expect teachers and school staff to be able to do everything that we ask them to do, when [in] typical undergraduate training, there is no Service-Learning 101 or 205? ... I am arguing that if we really want to do this right, it is up to individual school leaders and individual system leaders and higher ed to figure out how to change the thinking.”

Harvey insists that it’s not as complicated as some would think, and she is aware that teachers might not recognize their own capacity to be innovators, and to be “special people” to the students: “Anyone can do this, they just have to want to do it.”

She explained that whether a teacher is experienced in service-learning or not, the point is to learn and grow: “It doesn’t matter what subjects you teach when your goal is to help a student engage at the highest possible level. If I were a music teacher, I could find a million different ways to weave service-learning into those opportunities for kids. Perhaps they are singing or playing an instrument, providing music for people who don’t have any. The child is learning how to give the gift of music in a very different way. On graduation this child, who is highly skilled, will know how to give back. Now *that* is an *educated* child.”

Emphasizing that “service-learning is not a set-aside program for a small group of kids, or one director, or a defined program,” Harvey identified what has to happen for teachers to understand and support service-learning. This includes addressing possible misperceptions, including the idea that such programs are inherently costly in terms of time and money.

“The professional development that we provide to all teachers should include service-learning,” she said. “We have to help the young educators, or the new educators, figure out how to balloon these activities into their normal activities, so that it is *not* cost-prohibitive. [Then there] are no time constraints because it is a part of everything you do.”

“I’d hate for people to think that you have to have a separate pot of money just for service-learning,” she continued. “Now that’s good if you do have it, but it is not to say that you can’t provide service-learning opportunities for kids without the separate budget.” Harvey cited policies that any school district can incorporate to make room for service-learning without a dedicated funding stream: transportation funding to ensure students have a variety of out-of-classroom learning experiences, and providing teachers and students with access to school facilities outside regular school hours.

For School Districts: A New Vision for Service-Learning in Urban School Districts

For Harvey, one of the most exciting aspects of being a superintendent was the opportunity to paint her vision of education and change the way the district developed staff, but she notes that she has learned a few things since her time leading the St. Paul district. If she were starting out as a new superintendent today, she would take a broader approach. “I would work on issues of scale,” said Harvey, “making sure that all employees of the district understood ... the power of service-learning to academic achievement. And I would very purposefully weave it into our overall agenda in a very, very public way.”

Ultimately, service-learning would be a larger part of her agenda, and she would provide additional supports and opportunities for not only staff and students, but also for the community as a whole.

Service-Learning in Urban Settings

MARYBETH NEAL, PH.D.

Marybeth Neal is an anthropologist and the research director for the National Youth Leadership Council. In addition to her writings in *Growing to Greatness*, she is co-author of publications for the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, including *Evaluation: The Key to Improving Service-Learning Programs* (1994) and *Assessing Learning Through Service* (1999).

Urban communities have often pioneered ways to leverage community resources in creating and sustaining social networks, understanding the relationship between service providers and service recipients, and addressing issues of poverty and social justice. Systems must now be created for gathering data from this wealth of experience to build a solid foundation for service-learning in urban environments.

The *Growing to Greatness 2004* national survey of U.S. public school principals indicates that urban schools, particularly those in which the majority of students are high poverty and of color, have the most institutional support for service-learning, even when compared to urban schools with lesser concentrations of students in poverty. They also provide more support than rural and suburban schools, regardless of income levels or ethnicities represented (Pritzker and Moore 2006).

Further analysis on the 2004 data collected by the National Youth Leadership Council indicates that compared to all other schools, the high poverty/urban/majority non-white schools are much more likely to report a very positive impact for students participating in service-learning in the areas of academic achievement, school engagement, and attendance. (See Figure 1.)

To illustrate some of the positive impacts service-learning can have in urban settings, we offer the following compelling examples of service-learning projects from different regions of the United States.

FIGURE 1
Schools Perceiving High Impact of Service-Learning

Impact on:	Very Positive		Very Positive	
	High poverty/ urban/non-white ¹ N=60	All others N=469	High poverty/ urban/non-white N=60	Less poverty/non- urban/white ² N=300
Academic achievement	51.4%**	31.7%	51.4%**	27.5%
School engagement	55.0%	44.0%	55.0%**	40.2%
Attendance	46.7%**	31.6%	46.7%**	28.6%
Personal/social development	62.7%	58.6%	62.7%	56.1%
Citizenship/civic engagement	61.3%	61.9%	61.3%	59.8%
School climate	51.8%	46.6%	51.8%	47.3%
Parent involvement	35.6%	26.4%	35.6%	25.3%
School-community relations	53.5%	60.8%	53.5%	61.0%
Youth seen as resource	47.1%	48.7%	47.1%	48.7%
Teacher satisfaction	51.9%	42.3%	51.9%	37.6%

Source: Analysis of NYLC Principals' Survey data by Peter Rode, 2007.

**Statistically significant at $p < .05$ level.

¹ "High poverty" is defined as at least 55 percent of students eligible for free or reduced-price school lunch.

² In Figure 1, note that the percentage of "very positive" responses for the less poverty/non-urban/white schools is very similar to the percentage for "all other" schools, because they comprise such a large proportion of all other schools in the study.

Digital Miracles in Philadelphia

FAITH GOLDSTEIN, MARGIT MYERS

Faith Goldstein is the Director of the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance. Margit Myers provides training and technical assistance to the Pennsylvania 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

Students in urban environments such as Philadelphia often struggle with taking advantage of opportunities available outside their families and communities, while maintaining connections to home and neighborhood. Philadelphia's Urban Technology Project combines long-term, holistic support for urban youths with a continuum of service-learning and school-to-work experiences that help keep participants' worlds integrated.

The Urban Technology Project includes four interconnected programs. Graduates of the middle-school program can continue in the program through high school, and even extend their involvement into post-diploma work opportunities.

Digital Miracles Program, a 40-hour curriculum for middle school students designed for in-school and out-of-school time.

Urban Technology Project's afterschool clubs and summer programs for high school students.

Digital Service Fellows, a one-year, post-high school internship designed for School District of Philadelphia graduates in their first year out of high school.

Computer Support Specialists, a three-year fellowship program, staffed primarily by successful Digital Service Fellows graduates.

The project begins in middle school, with the Digital Miracles program of the School District of Philadelphia, organized and facilitated by the Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance. As part of 40 hours of instruction, middle school students disassemble a donated computer, reassemble it, install hardware and software, learn about the components, and take the computer home.

The service-learning component of the curriculum hinges on the concept that once students gain computer skills through Digital Miracles, they can pass them on to their school, family, and community. Youths are able to see the direct impact of their knowledge as they apply their developing technology skills in their communities.

Students receive guidance from teachers and community members as they assess technology needs in their school and develop projects that apply their technological skills. Several classes have utilized computers they

Compared to all other schools, the high poverty/urban/majority non-white schools are much more likely to report a very positive impact for students participating in service-learning.

had rebuilt to set up computer labs in nonprofit organizations.

At Turner Middle School in Philadelphia, Digital Miracles students organized a Martin Luther King Day of Service. With support from their teacher and AmeriCorps volunteers, the students surveyed teachers and staff in the school to determine who needed help learning how to better use a computer, and which computers in the school were out of order. The students then partnered with the AmeriCorps members to repair the computers and teach technology skills to their teachers.

Philadelphia's Digital Service Fellows and Computer Support Specialist programs (also run by the city's school district) work with Digital Miracles graduates, helping them continue to build on their technology skills while working towards college and career goals. This is done through AmeriCorps and internship positions at the school district focused on providing technological support to teachers and staff at schools across the city. Additionally, the Digital Service Fellows and Computer Support Specialists help lead

Digital Miracles programs at local middle schools. The Fellows and Specialists mentor younger participants.

The Pennsylvania Service-Learning Alliance provides resources to support the sustainability of the program. The Alliance's website offers online resources needed for schools and organizations to implement their own Digital Miracles programs. These include curricula, sample lesson plans, sample forms, tips on how to acquire computers, and a media presentation that can be given to potential community partners and schools.

The evolution of these programs has included a deliberate interconnectedness. Students are supported as they learn technological skills, apply these skills to improve their communities, and transition into successful college and career opportunities. Many participants get involved with the Digital Miracles program as middle school students, continue through high school and post-graduation, and then become leaders in the afterschool clubs and Fellows programs. The threads that connect these experiences

Students now learn to “read their world” by researching and working with a community-based organization of their choice.

are the technological skills the students acquire, and the community development they facilitate as they work to bridge “digital divides” in their own neighborhoods.

To determine the impact of the Digital Miracles program, a baseline study of middle and high school students was conducted in 2005 by Nicole Webster of Pennsylvania State University. Ninety-nine percent of the students reported that they have had greater access to information since becoming involved with the program. As a result of their participation in the program, 92 percent of the students reported that their use of technology increased either moderately or substantially. One hundred percent stated their belief that technology was important for everyone, regardless of race or income, and that everyone should have access.

Because of the service-learning dimension of this project, many of the students saw themselves not only as students, but also as teachers. A student commented that she has “had a chance to be taught new things I did not know or understand before. I also have

had a chance to pass on what I have learned to others.”

Communities must engage increasingly tech-savvy students and acknowledge that their skills are assets. Edison Freire, whose vision led to the creation of Digital Miracles, explains, “I link access to hardware, to community-building, to concrete ways of building and improving our community.”

It is crucial for at-risk youths to have opportunities to provide, rather than just receive, services. The Digital Miracles program provides students with that opportunity.

Social Justice and Service-Learning: Benito Juarez Community Academy Students in Chicago Write Their World

RICHARD GELB, PH.D., LAURA LEMONE,
JUAN CARLOS OCON

Richard Gelb has taught English in the Chicago Public Schools for 25 years, and is currently an assistant principal at Benito Juarez Community Academy and an adjunct professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Laura LeMone has been an English teacher in Chicago for six years. Juan Carlos Ocon is currently an assistant principal at Benito Juarez Community Academy.

In December 2002, war raged in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the 9/11 attacks were still fresh memories. In the shadows of these trials, Richard Gelb, the curriculum coordinator of Benito Juarez Community Academy, met with English teacher Juan Carlos Ocon to discuss how to convince their students that they had the power to change their world, that success is not only measured by accomplishments, but also by obstacles overcome.

The difficulty was figuring out how to present this concept of hope and empowerment to students who daily faced the hardships and obstacles associated with living in an impoverished community. Guided by the teachings of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, Gelb suggested service-learning as a key strategy.

The idea of service-learning, while new to the school, was closely aligned with the school’s philosophy. Benito Juarez, the Mexican hero for whom the school is named, once famously stated, “Respect for the rights of others is peace.” The Academy, situated in Chicago’s Pilsen neighborhood, was founded on this philosophy, and the school’s vision is to create an environment that provides students with the critical thinking skills necessary to make informed choices and function effectively in their community.

Gelb proposed that this mission would best be communicated to freshman through service-learning. In collaboration with his colleagues, Gelb integrated service-learning into the language arts curriculum. Students now learn to “read their world” by researching and working with a community-based organization of their choice and reporting on their experiences in a student-generated newsletter. Through the efforts of Ocon, more than 50 community-based organizations have been organized into a database that students use to access and explore organizations and projects.

To help prepare the students for their projects, teachers have created an “anticipation guide” that activates students’ prior knowledge regarding community issues, including alcohol and drug abuse, illiteracy, AIDS, and crime. Teachers also introduce students to the organizational complexities they may encounter while working with their chosen organization.

After being placed with organizations, students research and profile them. These profiles include the scope and availability of services provided by each organization, its history, and mission. Beyond research and writing, students help their organizations in a variety of ways. Most of the organizations

need volunteers to carry out daily tasks, including the creation and distribution of promotional materials.

As students grow more comfortable working with their organizations, teachers report that they return to class eager to talk about their experiences. The emphasis on student choice in the selection of placements enhances their sense of investment in the project. In addition, teachers have encouraged students to work with organizations that deal with issues most relevant to their own lives. Some students are now providing service to organizations that served them when they were young. They are giving back to those who once supported them.

Back at school, the students’ studies of their organizations are the focus of their reading class. Students are engaged because their class work is determined by their experiences at their organizations. They develop and utilize key writing and reading skills to create their newsletter. They also create advertisements for their organizations, which helps them develop a broader awareness of how products and social services are marketed. They conduct interviews and client surveys that help them to develop a more complete view of their organizations.

Based on their research, students craft a statement that encapsulates the mission of their organization’s work. This statement helps anchor the final, most rigorous component of the project, persuasive essays in which students explain what they think needs to be done to achieve the mission of their organization, or to deal with the problem that it is trying to solve.

This multifaceted project is engaging and challenging. The project forces students to look beyond their own trials and tribulations. It awakens them to the fact that there are many people fighting against many wrongs. And it provides them with opportunities to improve their world by engaging with community organizations.

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Both documents are available for download from the NYLC Resource Center at www.nylc.org



The Effectiveness of Service-Learning in Afterschool Programs

ELIZABETH MCCARTHY, PH.D.

Elizabeth McCarthy is a researcher and evaluator who divides her time between Youth Service California and WestEd in Northern California. She received her doctorate in psychological studies in education from Stanford University.

What can be done to engage students' interest in school, increase their academic achievement, teach them life skills, and inspire them to make long-term goals? Incorporating service-learning into afterschool programming offers a particularly promising answer and has been described by Tannenbaum and Brown-Welty (2006) as an effective “tandem pedagogy.”

As learning strategies, afterschool programming and service-learning benefit from each other's strengths. Service-learning involves students in meaningful service to their communities that integrates academic and life skill goals while boosting students' developmental assets, including relationships with adults and peers (Billig 2002; Scales and Roehlkepartain 2004; Scales and Roehlkepartain 2005; Martin, Neal, Kielsmeier, and Crossley 2006; Finlay, Flanagan, and Black 2007).

Afterschool programs provide an excellent context for service-learning. When Tannenbaum and Brown-Welty (2006) compared students who participated in afterschool

programs that included a service-learning component with students who participated in afterschool programs lacking such a component, they found that those who participated in service-learning performed better on both academic and social measures.

Afterschool Research

Afterschool programs have become prevalent as a way for community and school leaders to address issues of increased youth crime and a lack of parental supervision in the afternoon hours (Kugler 2001). In addition, school administrators look to afterschool programs as a means of engaging students who are at risk of falling behind academically or dropping out (Grossman, Walker, and Raley 2001).

Research has found varying degrees of effectiveness in afterschool programming (McComb and Scott-Little 2003; U.S. Department of Education 2003). However, a recent meta-analysis performed by Lauer et al. (2006) suggests that even when afterschool programs are not focused exclusively on reading and mathematics, they can positively affect the academic achievement of at-risk students in these areas.

Other studies have found that quality afterschool programs can lead to positive outcomes in academic and other domains. For example, an overview of the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program in 2004-2005 showed that more than half of afterschool participants experienced gains in homework completion and school attendance, and more than a third increased math and reading grades as well as state proficiency scores (Naftzger, Kaufman, Margolin, and Ali 2006).

In a comprehensive review of school and community-based youth programs, of which afterschool programs are a subset, Eccles and Gootman (2002) identified the following key components of programs that succeeded in promoting positive youth development:

- physical and psychological safety
- appropriate structure
- supportive relationships
- opportunities to belong
- positive social norms
- support for efficacy and mattering
- opportunities for skill building
- integration of family, school and community efforts

According to their research, when afterschool and other youth programs include these components participants increased development in the following four domains:

- physical (good health habits, avoiding risks)
- intellectual (life skills, school success)

- psychological and emotional (coping skills, self-efficacy, responsibility, prosocial values)
- social (connectedness to others and institutions, civic engagement)

How Can Service-Learning Strengthen Afterschool Programs?

Though Eccles and Gootman do not specifically mention service-learning in their review of afterschool programs, many characteristics that they cite as hallmarks of high quality afterschool and other youth programs align closely with characteristics of high quality service-learning, as shown in Figure 1.

In addition, directors of afterschool service-learning programs report having few problems with recruitment and retention of middle and high school students — a problem common in many other types of secondary afterschool programs (Grossman, Walker, and Raley 2001). Directors of service-learning programs attribute this to the way in which service-learning captures students'

As learning strategies, afterschool programming and service-learning benefit from each others' strengths.

FIGURE 1

Alignment of Components High-Quality Afterschool Programs with Components of High-Quality Service-Learning

Features of Programs that Promote Positive Youth Development (Including Afterschool Programs)	Matching Components of High-Quality Service-Learning
Physical and psychological safety	Student voice
Appropriate structure	High-quality service
Supportive relationships	Collaboration
Opportunities to belong	Student voice
Positive social norms	Student voice Collaboration Civic responsibility
Support for efficacy and mattering	High-quality service Student voice Civic responsibility
Opportunities for skill building	Integrated learning Reflection
Integration of family, school, and community efforts	High-quality service Collaboration Civic responsibility

Source: Eccles and Gootman 2002; YSCAL 2006.

interests and attention by directly involving them in the learning process. According to one instructor:

When the kids started to work on a [service-learning] project it really impacted them. I saw the progression throughout the semester and I learned a lot from the kids because they went from not caring at all, to all of a sudden being passionate about something besides messing around at home or being with their friends (McCarthy 2006).

California Afterschool Service-Learning

Youth Service California, a nonprofit organization in Oakland, Calif., funded seven service-learning based afterschool programs between 2003 and 2006. Figure 2 describes these programs. Student participants worked on service-learning projects that progressed over the course of a semester. The service-learning projects were highly rated by a project assessment tool (YSCAL 2004) based on Youth Service California's "Seven Elements of High Quality Service-Learning" (see Figure 3). All seven sites participated in ongoing research to measure the effects of afterschool service-learning on student developmental assets and connectedness to school.

Measuring Students' Developmental Assets and School Connectedness

Recent research on developmental assets suggests that students who possess more assets are more likely to stay in school and go on to lead healthy and productive lives (Scales, Benson, Leffert, and Blyth 2000). Bonnie Benard and her colleagues have found that when specific external assets — safety, connection, and participation — were in place, youths reported feelings of security and hope, which in turn led to positive outcomes in their lives (Benard 2004).

In her resilience model, Benard measures these external assets using one module of the California Healthy Kids Survey. The feelings of self-efficacy, security, and hope that come from being supported by external assets are termed "internal assets." Benard also calls these positive developmental outcomes or resilience traits (Benard 2004). These internal assets are also measured by the CHKS. In addition to measuring developmental assets, the CHKS measures school-connectedness, which is a predictor of risk avoidance (McNeely, Nonnemaker, and Blum 2002) and positively correlated to school attendance (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Flemming, and Hawkins 2004).

FIGURE 2
Descriptions of California Afterschool Service-Learning Programs

Afterschool Program	Sponsoring Organization	Community Location	Student Demographics	Grade Level	Learning Focus	Service-Learning Project
De Colores in Action	Art, Research, Curriculum Associates	Pico Rivera, a suburb east of Los Angeles	Primarily Hispanic, ELL	Elementary 3-5	Academic enrichment, art, technology	Design and sell bookmarks to raise funds for library
Project NET: Neighborhoods Education Teamwork	Galt Joint Union Elementary School District	Galt, a rural area 30 miles south of Sacramento	Primarily Hispanic, ELL	Elementary 3-5 Middle 6-8	Academic enrichment, citizenship, environment	Wetlands restoration and construction of a Living History Ranch
Dare to Dream	Fresno County Office of Education	Rural farming areas in Fresno County	Primarily Hispanic, low-income	Elementary 4-6	Decision-making and citizenship	School beautification and community garden
Community Partnership for Education	Petaluma Joint Unified School District	Petaluma, a suburban area in northern California	Academically at-risk students and ELL	Middle 6-8	Academic support, life skills, youth development	Fundraising and awareness-building in support of homeless teens
SAFE Program Collaborative	East Bay Conservation Corps	Oakland, an urban area east of San Francisco	Primarily low-income, African-American	Middle 6-8	Youth development, academic enrichment	School garden and mural project
HOME Program	Alternatives in Action	Urban and suburban areas in San Francisco Bay Area	Primarily low-income, ethnically diverse	High School 9-12	Youth development, leadership, health	Raised funds for and constructed a half-basketball court
Stories of Service	Volunteer San Diego	Urban and suburban areas of San Diego	Ethnically and socio-economically diverse	High School 9-12	Leadership, video production, citizenship	Conducted interviews with veterans and created video oral histories

Source: YSCAL 2006, 7.

FIGURE 3
YSCAL's Seven Elements of High-Quality Service-Learning

<p>Integrated Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The service-learning project has clearly articulated knowledge, skill, or value goals that arise from broader classroom or school goals. - The service informs the academic learning content, and the academic learning content informs the service. - Life skills learned outside the classroom are integrated back into classroom learning. 	<p>High-Quality Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The service responds to an actual community need that is recognized by the community. - The service is age appropriate and well organized. - The service is designed to achieve significant benefits for students and community.
<p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The service-learning project is a collaboration among as many of these partners as is feasible: students, parents, community-based organization staff, school administrators, teachers, and recipients of service. - All partners benefit from the project and contribute to its planning. 	<p>Student Voice</p> <p>Students participate actively in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - choosing and planning the service project - planning and implementing the reflection sessions, evaluation, and celebration - taking on roles and tasks that are appropriate to their age
<p>Civic Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The service-learning project promotes students' responsibility to care for others and to contribute to the community. - By participating in the service-learning project, students understand how they can impact their community. 	<p>Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflection establishes connections between students' service experiences and the academic curriculum. - Reflection occurs before, during, and after the service-learning project.
<p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All the partners, especially students, are involved in evaluating the project. - The evaluation seeks to measure progress toward the learning and service goals of the project. 	

Source: YSCAL 2006, 15.

An Exploratory Study of Afterschool Service-Learning, Developmental Assets, and School Connectedness

The developmental assets of youths participating in YSCAL's California After School Service-Learning programs were measured using the California Healthy Kids Survey. Because participants came from high-poverty populations, program evaluators predicted that these youths would report having fewer external and internal assets compared with norms for all California schoolchildren. However, because these youths had extensive involvement in afterschool service-learning programs, evaluators also predicted that they would report more external and internal assets compared to norms for other students in their school districts. The evaluators similarly predicted that CASSL students would score lower than California norms on a measure of school connectedness, but higher than norms for their districts.

Data collection for this study included giving the CHKS's Module B: Resilience to afterschool students in grades 5, 7, 9, and 11 who had participated in their afterschool program regularly during the 2005-2006 school year. To capture student perceptions of the external assets of their afterschool program, several survey items were added to the CHKS.

FIGURE 4
Percentage of Students Scoring High on Measures of External Assets, Internal Assets, and School Connectedness. (For all California norms, n>200,000.)

Variable	Grade 5		Grade 7		Grade 9		Grade 11	
	CASSL n=93	Calif.	CASSL n=87	Calif.	CASSL n=25	Calif.	CASSL n=41	Calif.
External Assets (Home, School, Community)	84%	71%	67%	59%	63%	50%	60%	54%
External Assets Afterschool	54%		57%		75%		65%	
Internal Assets	78%	66%	70%	68%	80%	64%	86%	69%
School Connectedness	70%	na	46%	39%	50%	30%	55%	29%
Connectedness to Afterschool	na		77%		88%		90%	

These new items mirrored those on the original CHKS, but focused on the afterschool environment.

Results: Afterschool Service-Learning and Developmental Assets and School Connectedness

Results from analysis of the CHKS data suggest the benefits of afterschool service-learning. Figure 4 shows the percentage of students scoring high on measures of external assets, internal assets, and school connectedness.* Because this is an exploratory

study, CASSL scores are compared to norms for California public school students. This comparison was made because it was not possible to have a control group measuring developmental assets or school connectedness in afterschool programs with participants not engaged in service-learning. Norms for all districts in the study were lower than California norms in external assets, internal assets, and school connectedness.

As stated earlier, evaluators had predicted that the external and internal assets reported by participants would be below California

norms but above the norms for their district. They were surprised when CASSL participants’ aggregate scores for external and internal assets across all age groups were higher than California norms. Thus, the data suggest that service-learning results in positive outcomes not just within the selected districts (where there are high concentrations of low-socioeconomic status populations), but that students who participate in afterschool service-learning also do better when compared to the entire state.

* Possible scores for the CHKS are high, medium, and low.

Findings also suggest that students participating in CASSL programs are finding external supports in their afterschool programs *and* their schools, homes, and communities, something that most nonparticipant peers lack. Participants report higher levels of internal assets — cooperation, communication, empathy, problem-solving, self-efficacy, self-awareness, and aspiration — than their peers across California. As stated earlier, research suggests that internal assets protect youth from involvement in high-risk behaviors and are related to improved health, social, and academic outcomes (Benard 2004).

In addition, evaluators had predicted that CASSL participants would score below California norms on school connectedness. However, participants, particularly those in middle and high school, reported feeling connected to their school at much higher rates than most public school students at

Instructors reported that service-learning creates strong student buy-in and helps promote supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering, and opportunities for skill-building.

their grade level in California. There is currently much discussion about the positive relationship between school connectedness, school engagement, academic success (Blum 2005), and a lowering of dropout rates (Fortin, Royer, Potvin, Marcotte, and Yergeau 2004; Smink and Schargel 2004; Bridgeland, DiIulio, and Morison 2006; Furco 2007).

Explaining the Positive Results

Though the encouraging results from the CHKS data were surprising to the researchers, they may not have come as a surprise to the project coordinators and instructors at the CASSL sites who engage in afterschool service-learning every day with their students. In focus groups, program coordinators and instructors reported that the use of service-learning creates strong student buy-in and helps promote supportive relationships, opportunities to belong, positive social norms, support for efficacy and mattering,

and opportunities for skill-building — the same characteristics that Eccles and Gootman (2002) have identified as essential for programs that promote positive youth development. CASSL instructors tell story after story about youths who have grown significantly through their programs:

Before, they did not care at all about the homeless. They had all these stereotypes. After completing the [service-learning] project, they realized that just because people are homeless doesn't mean they are bad people, or that they are alcoholics or drug addicts. They are just in a bad situation. They completely changed their minds after the project (McCarthy 2006).

Last year I worked with elementary kids in a similar program, but without the service-learning, and it was really repetitive and the kids got tired of it. But with the service-learning, there was constantly something to think about and something to learn about and it kept them motivated (McCarthy 2006).

Additionally, the students themselves might not be surprised by the positive survey results. In focus groups, students were able to reflect deeply on what they had gained from their afterschool service-learning programs.

Below are quotes from middle and high school CASSL participants:

[In a service-learning project] I got to do the whole thing. It was cool because I got to help people out. We helped the older ladies because they're not very strong and they can barely move around. I could get like three times more done than they could (McCarthy 2006).

We learn that when we work together, we can accomplish a whole lot (McCarthy 2006).

I know how to work with large groups and small groups now (McCarthy 2006).

Kids who don't do service-learning like us don't usually want to help people. By doing service-learning for four years, we have the leadership skills and the ability to help other people (McCarthy 2006).

One Example of Afterschool Service-Learning Programming

HOME is a free California Afterschool Service-Learning program that offers 400 low-income high school youths an opportunity to address institutional gaps in their Northern California communities (YSCAL 2006). HOME participants conduct needs assessments, organize their peers, and create meaningful community projects. Projects have included campaigns for nonviolence through the arts, promoting healthy eating

and physical activity through their Young Women's Fitness Challenge, and organizing youths to address the need for college preparation services for low-income young people. Youths participate one or two days a week for up to six hours a week at six school sites.

Before HOME participants start any project, they go through a careful process to choose a community need to address. In 2006, a group of participants at one school sought to develop a project that would improve the health and fitness of their peers and community. A key issue these youths wanted to address was the lack of access to safe spaces for exercising around the school.

The group came up with three strategies for addressing this issue and then surveyed peers, teachers, and staff for input. After analyzing the survey, the group chose to focus on building a half-basketball court at their school. Before moving forward with their project, the group needed to secure buy-in of key stakeholders. They invited the school principal, a contractor, the manager of a local building-supply store, and neighborhood representatives to a panel. The students gave a multimedia presentation about the community need, their survey, and their plans. Stakeholders asked questions and gave students valuable advice.

The group raised \$7,000 to build the half-basketball court at their school. Working with a local architect and contractor, they developed the design for the court. In addition, the group held fundraisers and rallied their school community to assist with removing debris in the designated space. In conjunction with the project, students engaged in physical activities and learned about nutrition. Once the project was completed, the youths held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at which they shared their hopes for the court and convened a celebratory three-on-three basketball tournament.

The HOME project is just one example of the projects implemented by CASSL participants over the past three years. More examples, along with tools and other resources are included in Youth Service California's *Service-Learning in Afterschool Programs* (2006).

Afterschool and Service Learning: A Powerful Combination

In the CASSL study, service-learning provided a means for afterschool practitioners to help their students build internal assets, focus on important life skills, and address real-life issues within their communities. In addition, this programming allowed students to interact and build trust with adults in the program and in their community, enhancing

relationships which provide emotional support not always available to participants in their everyday environments. Tied with other hallmarks of service-learning, such as the promotion of youth voice and opportunities for reflection, service-learning in the afterschool environment creates a powerful synergy, supporting the developmental assets necessary for young people to make healthy choices.

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Service as a Developmental Opportunity

Building Connections for Vulnerable Youths

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Emerging adulthood, roughly the years between 18 and 30, has become a protracted period. Compared to earlier eras, it takes longer for young people today to complete their education, find steady work, and start their families (Settersten, Furstenberg, and Rumbaut 2005). Achieving these markers of adult status has become more challenging for young adults in general and particularly difficult for those young people whose families cannot provide the necessary financial support and social connections (Osgood, Foster, Flanagan, and Ruth 2005).

Our study focuses on youths who may be marginalized from mainstream opportunities and connections, and thus a group for whom the transition to adulthood is likely to present special challenges. We address whether engagement in service may have beneficial effects that would better facilitate their transition to adulthood. These benefits of service could include connecting adolescents to positive adult role models in whom they can confide, reinforcing their educational aspirations, exposing them to a wider range of social networks, and fostering their motivation for and engagement in civic affairs.

The Importance of Social Networks During the Transition to Adulthood

Evidence has shown that families provide the major support for young adults as they negotiate their transition to full adulthood, and that youths whose families have fewer financial resources and social connections face greater struggles. This is most apparent with respect to the financial support parents offer through providing tuition payments, food, and housing (Schoeni and Ross 2005). Families in the top quarter of earned incomes provide three times more financial assistance to their children than families

from the bottom quarter. Parents also provide their young-adult children with emotional support and guidance about how to negotiate the challenges of adulthood (Collins 2001; Roberts and Bengtson 1993) and provide social connections that lead to opportunities for education and employment.

Service as a Way to Connect with Adults and Build Social Networks

For youths whose families are unable to provide sufficient support to guide them through their transitions to adulthood, institutions need to provide the necessary supports. Engaging in service can offer opportunities for youths to connect with adults who can help them scaffold their transition into adulthood. Adults can also provide youths with guidance in terms of how to balance their individual cultural traditions with values of the dominant culture (Raudenbush and Hall 2003). By mentoring youths, adults provide positive

social relationships, help young people build cognitive skills, and promote identity development (Rhodes, Spencer, Keller, Liang, and Noam 2006). With the support and guidance of adults, adolescents can more effectively frame a positive purpose for their lives and chart concrete directions for how to achieve their goals. Without such guidance, the challenges of completing education and finding remunerative employment can become impossible hurdles for more vulnerable youths (Osgood et al. 2005).

Service as a Way to Find Direction and Purpose in Life

In general, service may provide unique developmental opportunities for those transitioning to adulthood, but may be especially helpful to those youths with fewer connections to mainstream opportunities and institutions. Service projects that include developmental opportunities similar to the external assets described by the Search

Institute (2006) provide opportunities for participants to decide on a direction and purpose for their lives that is consistent with their values (Flanagan and Syvertsen 2005).

Developmental opportunities are experiences that promote more positive outcomes by connecting young people with adults, encouraging them to reflect on their service experiences, and giving them the opportunity to apply new skills. Longitudinal work done by Johnson, Beebe, Mortimer, and Snyder (1998) has shown that after engaging in volunteer work, high school students reflect upon and adjust their priorities for the future. The same study found that young people have higher intrinsic motivation for work and a lower individualistic focus on their careers after participating in service activities. As Johnson et al. followed these youths into early adulthood, they found that they had often formed habits of voluntarism and considered it important to participate in community life. A separate study has shown that institutional opportunities also matter as ways of encouraging youths to engage with their communities. School enrollment increased the likelihood of volunteering, whereas out of school employment decreased the likelihood of volunteering (Oesterle, Johnson, and Mortimer 2004).

By mentoring youths, adults provide positive social relationships, help young people build cognitive skills, and promote identity development.

Service as a Way to Empower the Disempowered and to Connect the Disconnected

Other work shows that, for at-risk youths typically targeted by prevention programs, opportunities to engage in service may help develop a sense of efficacy and an awareness that they can make significant contributions. In a study designed to reduce teenage pregnancy, school suspension, and course failure, part of the treatment group's program included service, classroom discussions about service projects, and discussions about adolescent developmental tasks. This intervention was designed to provide adolescents with the opportunity to take on positive roles while learning the skills to become competent adults. The program's success in reducing problem behaviors by more than 50 percent was attributed to the volunteer service students performed and the autonomy they gained through service (Allen, Philliber, Herrling, and Kuperminc 1997).

Inequality of Opportunity for Civic Engagement

In the current study, our focus on marginalized youths stems from a concern that civic opportunities are divided along class lines. Over the past several decades, conventional measures of political participation like voting

If young people are to become fully participating citizens, they need to feel that they matter, that their voices and opinions count.

and newspaper readership have declined despite an increase in overall education levels. The increasing gap in civic participation mimics the growing divide between the haves and the have-nots in the U.S. Since 1999, the civic gap (both in terms of political participation and community engagement) between high school and college graduates has widened, and among high school dropouts there has been a precipitous drop in civic participation over the past 30 years (National Conference on Citizenship 2006).

If young people are to become fully participating citizens, they need to feel that they matter, that their voices and opinions count. Opportunities for having a voice and participating in community affairs are lower for urban youths living in areas of concentrated poverty than for their peers living in middle-class communities (Hart and Atkins 2002). Not only are those youths less likely to participate in service, but they also have lower levels of civic knowledge as compared to affluent youths (Atkins and Hart 2003). Such gaps in civic opportunities and competencies are due not only to the fewer financial resources available but also to the lower

ratio of adults to youths in impoverished areas. Youths growing up in child-saturated communities have fewer adults with whom to interact. This decreases the possibility of their interacting with adults who can model healthy civic behaviors; it also limits the availability of community-based youth programs (Hart and Atkins 2002).

In addition to reduced civic opportunities within communities, service participation is unequally distributed across communities that vary in their social and economic resources, and are experiencing changing demographics. Findings from the *Growing to Greatness 2004* national survey of U.S. public school principals show that schools serving more low-income students are less likely to offer service-learning, and tend to involve fewer students in service-learning, than do schools with fewer low-income students (Scales and Roehlkepar-tain 2004). Pritzker and McBride (2006) found that urban schools with high rates of poverty were more likely to have part-time service-learning coordinators, have more support for teachers, and receive external support for service-learning programs compared to the growing number of high-

poverty schools in suburban communities. Convergent evidence suggests that opportunities for social connectedness and civic participation for youths is unevenly distributed.

Method

We conducted secondary analyses of data collected by Harris Interactive for the National Youth Leadership Council's Growing to Greatness: The State of Service-Learning Project in December 2005.¹ Two sources of data (surveys and focus groups) were used in the analyses. The survey was conducted online and completed by a nationally representative sample of 3,123 U.S. adults ages 18 to 28. The data were weighted to be representative of the total U.S. adult population on the basis of region, age within gender, education, household income, race/ethnicity, and propensity to be online. All reported statistics are estimates from the weighted data. In addition to the survey, focus groups were conducted in two large metropolitan cities with young adults who did service-learning but did not participate in the online survey.

All of the data are cross-sectional, which limits our ability to make causal arguments about the effects of service on the transition to adulthood. That is, participants in the

study were all young adults when they filled out the surveys. In the survey, they were asked about their current activities and attitudes as young adults. In addition, they were asked to reflect back on their K-12 years and report on their high school service experiences (or lack thereof). Our analyses focus on a subset of the survey participants who faced challenges as youths that we expect would have made the transition to adulthood more difficult.

“At-Risk” Defined

Youths at risk were defined as those who answered yes to at least two of the following four items, which focused on their situation while in high-school:

- (a) earning lower grades [B's and C's and below]
- (b) not living with both biological parents
- (c) living in a family that faced financial hardship
- (d) as a high school student, working 20 or more hours per week

Based on these responses, 1,096 respondents were classified as being “at risk” during their high school years. Of these respondents, 877 reported that they had engaged in some type of service before age 18, and 219 reported having no service experience. Service could

have been done as part of school, through youth organizations (religious-affiliated or otherwise), through another organization, or on one's own.²

Results

We explored first the nature of the at-risk students' service experiences with particular attention to the developmental opportunities of service that might scaffold their transition to adulthood. Following that, regression analyses were conducted on outcomes in the young adult years comparing those young people who reported some service experience before 18 years old with their peers who reported no such experience. Outcomes explored in this study included: educational achievement and aspirations; civic values (i.e., the importance they attached to voting in elections, keeping informed on current events); political voice (i.e., the extent to

¹ The NYLC survey asked respondents who indicated they had participated in service if their service included one or more of 14 attributes. The attributes were based on the Essential Elements of Effective Service-Learning Practice and were used as a way to assess the degree of service-learning quality. One of the attributes, reflection, was used as the way to distinguish service from service-learning. For a full list of attributes, see the appendix. Only 266 marginalized youth were in this category. Because the focus of this paper is the developmental opportunities of service, we expanded our parameters to include all participants who did service, regardless of service type and looked at several developmental opportunities including reflection.

² N.B. Students who have been in special education classes were no more likely to perform service than to not perform service, indicating that there were equal service opportunities for special education students.

which they had discussed politics or played a leadership role in their communities during the last 12 months); the diversity of their social networks (i.e., how much they socialized with individuals of another race or ethnic group); and their civic goals (i.e., intentions to get involved in their communities in the next two years).

Finally, regression analyses were conducted on the 877 individuals who had engaged in some type of service before reaching 18 years of age and met the criteria for being at risk. These analyses compared those who had engaged in service-learning (for the purpose of this study defined as those who reported a reflection component as part of their service) with their peers who did not report a reflection component associated with their service. In addition to reflection, we examined the following aspects of reported service experiences: working directly with people in the community; meeting people from different economic, racial or cultural backgrounds; working with teachers or adult leaders who set high expectations; and meeting adults they could go to if in need of help. We chose these developmental opportunities because we expected that they would be related to educational and civic outcomes in the young adult years.

CONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH CARING ADULTS

We reasoned that one important developmental opportunity of community service is that it can connect young people with caring adults who provide guidance. Respondents to the survey were asked a series of questions about the number of adults they could go to for help. In addition, focus group participants were asked to discuss their service experience generally and the benefits it had for them. In the following section, we integrate results from the survey with comments from the focus group participants that speak to the formative role that adults who guide youths' service experience can play in their lives.

Of the 1,096 participants who qualified as at risk, regardless of whether they participated in service or not, 41 percent said they had fewer than three adults they could go to for help, and 59 percent said they had three or more such adults. About 9 percent of respondents said they had no adults at all to whom they could turn for help. Ethnic minority youth were just as likely as white youth to report that they had adults they could go to for help.

When asked specifically about their service experiences, more than one-quarter of the respondents reported meeting adults

through their service experiences to whom they could turn for help. Those who did service were 2.25 times more likely than their peers who did no service to report having at least one adult they could go to for help. This matters because adults with knowledge about and connections in the mainstream can help young people navigate the system. The following quotes from two young adult males who participated in the focus groups illustrate how adults can connect young people to educational and work opportunities:

Mrs. Jones sat me down and talked to me. I was probably going to take a year off [before college], but then thought I might as well try and I stuck to it. The [service] project probably had something to do with it. ... Mrs. Jones helped me with my resume; she got me my first job in retail.

There was a kid in junior high who was going to fail out. ... I mentored him and it turned out his mom was on the School Board. ... The kid passed [and] his mom helped me get into the college I wanted to go to.

INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL OR WORK

Next, we looked at whether the young adults, at the time they completed the survey, were either enrolled in school or employed in a job. Involvement in school or work are typical indicators of social connectedness. In contrast, being unemployed and not

participating in education or other training decreases opportunities for social connectedness and participation in the larger society. Less than an estimated 9 percent of the sample were disconnected, that is, unemployed and neither currently in a post-high school education program nor finished with such a program. Engaging in service before 18 years of age minimized the likelihood of individuals being disconnected as young adults. Those who had engaged in service while in school were 1.70 times more likely to be connected (enrolled in school and/or employed) than their peers who had not engaged in service.

Participants also reported other positive aspects of service experiences that had afforded them with civic learning opportunities. For example, more than 68 percent reported working directly with people in the community, while more than 59 percent reported meeting people from different racial and economic backgrounds, and 71

percent thought their project was important for the group it served. About 54 percent of youths who did service said their teachers or adult leaders had high expectations for them. One focus group participant explained that service was “a chance to give back to the world, because I was given so much. I want to help because I was helped.” Another noted, “I think about things differently now. This isn’t about me, it is about other people.”

SERVICE AS A PREDICTOR OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR AT-RISK YOUTHS

To explore the question as to whether service was associated with a more positive transition to adulthood for young people who faced adversity, we ran linear regression models on the set of outcomes in young adulthood. The outcomes included the respondent’s educational attainment (how far they had gone in school), their educational aspirations (how much education they planned to achieve), a set of outcomes tapping their civic values

(the importance they attached to such things as voting in elections or keeping informed on current events), the degree to which they had exercised their political voice by being involved in their communities over the last 12 months, the racial/ethnic diversity of their social networks, and their civic goals (their plans for community involvement in the next two years).³

Six variables were entered as predictors in the regression analyses: (a) sex, (b) age, (c) ethnicity (white/ethnic minority), (d) having no positive adult role models, (e) having no adults one can go to for help, and (f) involvement in service work in high school. The results are shown in Table 1.

In predicting civic engagement outcomes, there was little difference between women and men, except for one measure. Women were more likely than men to say that they exercised their political voice (-.14 in the column for Exercise Political Voice). With respect to education, men reported higher levels of educational attainment than women. As expected, age was related to education with older participants reporting that they had attained more education as indicated by a positive beta value in the Educational Attainment column and also reporting

Those who had engaged in service while in school were 1.7 times more likely to be connected (enrolled in school and/or employed) than their peers who had not.

³ Constructs, based on factor analyses, were developed based on means of the item scores.

TABLE 1
Regression Analyses of Education, Civic Values, and Behaviors for At-Risk Participants

Variables	Educational Attainment ^c	Educational Aspirations ^d	Civic Values ^e	Exercising Political Voice ^f	Diverse Social Networks ^g	Future Civic Goals ^h	TABLE
	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	β (SE)	
Sex ^a	.02(.06)*	.00(.08)	.01(.06)	-.14(.06)*	.12(.06)*	-.02(.06)	^a Women = 0, Men = 1
Age	.04(.01)***	-.06(.01)***	.02(.01)*	.00(.01)	-.04(.01)***	.00(.01)	^b White = 0, Ethnic Minority = 1
Race ^b	.03(.06)	.13(.08)	.07(.06)	.07(.06)*	.21(.06)***	.10(.06)	^c R ² = 0.02
Role models	.22(.10)	.02(.13)	.37(.10)***	.27(.10)***	.33(.10)**	.36(.10)***	^d R ² = 0.06
Adults for help	-.16(.11)	-.65(.14)***	.30(.11)**	.12(.11)	.38(.11)***	.11(.11)	^e R ² = 0.07
Service	-.13(.07)	.51(.10)***	.45(.07)***	.62(.08)***	.35(.07)***	.81(.07)***	^f R ² = 0.08
							^g R ² = 0.10
							^h R ² = 0.13

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001

NOTE: All predictor variables are listed on the left; all outcome variables are listed across the top. Statistical significance for each outcome is indicated by the asterisks. Positive or negative effects on outcome variables are indicated by positive or negative signs before each number.

higher levels for civic values. However, younger participants had higher educational aspirations and more diverse social networks, as indicated by their negative beta values. Compared to white respondents, ethnic minorities were more likely to report that they had exercised their political voice during the previous 12 months and were more likely to interact with ethnically diverse social networks, but did not differ from white participants on measures of education, civic values, or future civic goals.

A pattern of lower civic engagement was evident for young people who had no positive adult role models or who lacked adults to whom they could turn for help. Compared to their peers who had adult role models, those who lacked such models had lower measures of civic values and future goals, were less civically involved in their communities in the previous 12 months, and had less ethnically diverse social networks. Youths who did not have adults they felt they could turn to for help were less likely to endorse civic values,

and had less ethnically diverse social networks, than youths who reported having such adult connections. These results suggest that youths without connections to adults are less likely to have opportunities for (or interest in) civic engagement.

In the regression models, participation in service before 18 years of age was associated with positive outcomes in early adulthood. Engaging in service was positively related to young adults' civic values and future civic

TABLE 2
Regression Analyses of Education, Civic Values, and Behaviors for Service and Service-Learning At-Risk Participants

Variables	Educational Attainment ^c β (SE)	Educational Aspirations ^d β (SE)	Civic Values ^e β (SE)	Exercising Political Voice ^f β (SE)	Diverse Social Networks ^g β (SE)	Future Civic Goals ^h β (SE)	TABLE
Sex ^a	-.08(.07)	-.12(.09)	-.11(.08)	-.26(.08)**	.16(.07)*	-.16(.08)	^a Women = 0, Men = 1
Age	.03(.01)**	-.04(.01)*	.02(.01)	.02(.01)	-.02(.01)*	.01(.01)	^b White = 0, Ethnic Minority = 1
Race ^b	-.03(.07)	.23(.09)*	.12(.07)	.12(.08)	.22(.07)**	-.01(.08)	^c R ² = 0.02
Role models	.16(.16)	-.31(.20)	.46(.16)**	.04(.18)	.34(.15)*	.10(.17)	^d R ² = 0.05
Adults for help	-.07(.15)	-.34(.19)	.17(.16)	-.03(.17)	.31(.14)*	.07(.16)	^e R ² = 0.06
Reflection	.09(.08)	.32(.10)*	.25(.08)**	.40(.09)***	.24(.07)**	.30(.08)**	^f R ² = 0.08
Other developmental opportunities	-.05(.11)	-.31(.14)*	.16(.11)	.34(.12)**	.25(.10)*	.56(.12)***	^g R ² = 0.09
							^h R ² = 0.08

NOTE: All predictor variables are listed on the left; all outcome variables are listed across the top. Statistical significance for each outcome is indicated by the asterisks. Positive or negative effects on outcome variables are indicated by positive or negative signs before each number.

* p < .05
 ** p < .01
 *** p < .001

goals, with exercising one's political voice, and with the ethnic diversity of one's social networks. Although service was unrelated to young adults' current educational attainment, it was positively related to their educational aspirations. Further analysis may be needed, due to the low r-square for educational attainment outcomes as noted in Table 1. Taken together, these results point to the positive potential of service for marginalized youths with respect to sustaining their connections to diverse others and nurturing their desire to contribute to and have voice in the affairs of their communities. The results also show a strong link between youths' relationships with adults and their civic engagement.

ATTRIBUTES OF QUALITY SERVICE-LEARNING AS PREDICTORS OF POSITIVE OUTCOMES

Another set of regression analyses were run focusing only on the 877 marginalized youths who had engaged in some type of service before 18 years old. In these analyses we looked at attributes of the service experience that we regard as developmental opportunities which should relate to positive educational and civic outcomes in young adulthood. The first of these developmental opportunities was reflection, measured in the data by the respondents' reports of whether

reflection for a class or group had been part of their service experience. (In the NYLC data set reflection was used to define service-learning.) The variable measuring other developmental opportunities of engaging in service was based on the sum of four items. Youths who engaged in service could receive a score from 1–4 based on the number of affirmative responses they gave to the following items: (a) I worked directly with people in the community; (b) I met people from different economic, racial or cultural backgrounds from my own; (c) The teachers or adult leaders set high expectations; and (d) I met adults I would go to if I were in trouble or needed help. The regression models were run with the same outcome variables shown in Table 1.

Of the 877 marginalized youths who did service, an estimated 15 percent did not report any reflection component or any of the other four developmental opportunities (worked directly with people in the community; met people from different economic, racial or cultural backgrounds; teachers or adult leaders set high expectations; met adults they could go to if in trouble or needing help). Forty-two percent of the 877 youths had engaged in service-learning (they reported a reflection component) and 90 percent of the 877 youths reported at least

one of the other developmental opportunities. The results of the regression analyses are shown in Table 2.

Reflection on the service experience in high school was positively associated with civic outcomes (civic values and goals, diverse social networks, and the exercise of political voice in youth adulthood). In addition, the developmental opportunities included in high school students' service experiences were linked to their endorsement of civic goals, participation in diverse ethnic networks as young adults, and exercise of political voice. Neither reflection nor other developmental opportunities had an effect on young adults' educational attainment; however, both reflection and developmental opportunities were linked with educational aspirations. As in Table 1, further analysis may be needed, due to the low r-square for educational attainment outcomes. Reflection was positively associated with educational aspirations and developmental opportunities were negatively associated. However, engaging in reflection before age 18 was significantly related to all four of the civic outcomes in young adulthood. Taken together, these results indicate that a reflection component to service work as well as other developmental opportunities are linked with positive civic outcomes in young adulthood.

The presence of adults appears to be a necessary ingredient for providing service opportunities for youths and improving their transitions to adulthood.

Conclusions

The transition to adulthood can be difficult, particularly for youths whose families cannot provide financial support, connections to educational and work opportunities, or advice about how to navigate the changing social terrain. New avenues of inclusion and connection are needed. The results discussed in this paper suggest that service can be such an avenue. The focus group and survey participants related the positive effects of service.

More than half of respondents who did some service said that through their service projects they were able to work directly with individuals in the community and meet individuals from different racial and economic backgrounds. Youths who engaged in service were more likely than those who did not to have adult role models and to have adults to whom they could turn for help. Relationships with adults are an important part of transitioning to adulthood because adults have the experiences, resources, and connections that youths need. Service also

created opportunities for youths to look beyond themselves and participate in society. Engaging in service before age 18 was related to having positive civic values and behaviors in the young adult years. Young adults who had engaged in service were more likely to be integrated into institutions (work or school) rather than disconnected from them.

Unequal distribution of service opportunities, however, is cause for concern. Youths from low-poverty areas may already be on a successful trajectory and may have families that can sufficiently support their transitions to adulthood. For youths who attend schools in high-poverty areas, access to service opportunities may be more limited. In addition, more flexible models of service may be called for. High school students whose families are financially unstable, students who combine work with their schooling, and those who do carework in their families may find it difficult to fit service hours into their “free time.”

The presence of adults appears to be a necessary ingredient for providing service

opportunities for youths and improving their transitions to adulthood. Adults facilitate this transition by helping youths navigate the routes to higher education and employment, by connecting them with opportunities, and by expecting young people to meet high standards. Without these mentoring relationships, youths may not receive the emotional support and guidance they need to successfully transition into adult roles.

During the past two decades, there has been a shift in the field of adolescent and youth development from a “youth at risk” to a “youth as assets” paradigm, emphasizing the contributions young people make to their communities. This positive approach to youth development has insisted that all young people, including those whose families are impoverished, whose schools are of low quality, or who in other ways do not enjoy abundant resources, are assets to society. The challenge is to ensure that all youths have caring adults and institutional opportunities that enable them to actualize their potential. Service that includes necessary developmental opportunities creates a context in which young people can develop their skills, helps them build relationships with adults, and encourages them to develop their own identities as active and contributing members of society.

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APPENDIX

Definitions of the Service and Service-Learning Populations in the Harris/NYLC Survey**Service**

All those who answered in the affirmative to the following question:

Some people participate in service activities (also known as volunteering or community service). Service activities include both direct service (such as tutoring, visiting the sick or elderly, serving meals to the homeless, cleaning up litter, working in a community garden, etc.) and indirect service (such as fundraising, raising awareness, doing research, etc.).

Before you were 18 years old, did you ever participate in any direct or indirect service activities in the following situations?

1. a school activity, class or requirement
2. a religious-affiliated youth organization (such as Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Kiwanis, etc.)
3. another organization
4. on my own and not part of an organization or class

Service-Learning

The service-learning population was defined by respondents' answers to the following question:

Thinking about this service project that you participated in before you were 18 years old, was each of the following part of that experience? Again, if you participated in more than one service project, please think about your most meaningful service project.

Respondents were then presented with 14 questions describing attributes of service-learning where they could check all that applied. These attributes were based on the Essential Elements of Effective Service-Learning. Respondents were classified as having participated in "service-learning" if they answered yes to "I was required to write about or reflect on my service experience for the class or group."

The other attributes included:

- I chose to or helped to choose the type of project I worked on.
- I helped design or plan the service project.
- I worked directly with the people in the community (a "hands-on" project).
- I received a grade for the project or it was related to my class grade.
- I met people from different economic, racial or cultural backgrounds from my own.
- I used and developed problem-solving skills.
- I learned a lot.
- The teachers or adult leaders set high expectations.
- I analyzed or evaluated whether the project was a success.
- I did research, read articles or books to prepare for the project.
- The project was important for the group it served.
- I met adults I would go to if I were in trouble or needed help.
- I had in-class discussions about the project.

The above questions were asked to help assess the degree to which the service experiences included elements which service-learning practitioners have determined increase the level of "quality." An additional question related to the quality of the service was:

"For how long did you regularly participate in this service project? Please include any time spent in planning, providing the service and writing about or reflecting on the project. If you participated in more than one service project, please think about your most meaningful service project."

1. one month or less
2. more than a month but less than 3 months
3. 3-5 months
4. longer than 5 months.



The Promise of Service-Learning

JOHN BRIDGELAND

John Bridgeland is President and CEO of Civic Enterprises and coauthor of *The Silent Epidemic*. He also serves as the chair of the national advisory board of the National Conference on Citizenship, the organization responsible for America's Civic Health Index, and is CEO of Malaria No More. Bridgeland served as Assistant to the President of the United States and was the first director of the USA Freedom Corps. Prior to that, Bridgeland served as the director of the Domestic Policy Council at the White House, where he coordinated policy on more than 100 issues.

Long before public education became concerned with preparing children to compete in the global economy, it focused on producing good citizens. The Massachusetts Constitution, which predates the U.S. Constitution by a decade, devotes an entire section to promoting better citizenship through education. The framers of this document expected citizens to be well educated in many subjects, as well as committed to promoting both private charity and the public good.

Two reports released in 2006, *America's Civic Health Index* and *The Silent Epidemic*, have highlighted the need to rescue the notion that the ultimate goal of public education includes producing good citizens — not just productive workers. Service-learning is a necessary part of these rescue efforts, as an effective strategy for improving the quality of instruction, motivating students to complete high school, and encouraging them to become active participants in their communities.

The Growing Civic Divide Between the Well-Educated and Less-Educated

The National Conference on Citizenship, a federally chartered nonprofit organization formed after World War II to strengthen citizenship, created *America's Civic Health Index*, which measures 40 indicators of civic health organized into nine categories. The Index tracks individuals' connections to civic and religious groups, giving and volunteering, social trust, trust in major institutions, and expressions of political views. While

there are some signs of civic recovery in the last few years, our civic health shows steep declines over the last 30 years.

According to the Civic Health Index (National Conference on Citizenship 2006, 10-11), one of the most dramatic divides in civic health is dependent upon levels of education. Individuals with college degrees are 9 to 17 percentage points ahead civically of individuals with no college experience. The divide between college graduates and high school dropouts has been as great as 24 percentage points and was 15 points in 2004. While the civic health gaps between college graduates and people without college experience or high school diplomas shrank from 1975 to 1999 these gaps have widened significantly since then. College graduates are much more likely than their less educated peers to vote, volunteer in their communities, read newspapers, trust one another and key institutions, and participate in a civic group.

College graduates are much more likely than their less educated peers to vote, volunteer in their communities, read newspapers, trust one another and key institutions, and participate in a civic group.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey data, from 2001 to 2004, college graduates were more than four times as likely to volunteer regularly than high school dropouts (43 percent to 10 percent). In 1975, more than three quarters of college graduates attended club meetings at which they could address common issues, develop relationships, and network. Thirty years later, less than half (47 percent) attended club meetings annually. But the decline was much steeper for people who left high school. In 1975, almost half of adults without high school diplomas attended club meetings. The figure dropped to 15 percent in 2005.

Many Americans have withdrawn from regular "public work" in their communities, but the decline has been most pronounced among people with the least education. In 1975, most college graduates (58 percent) had worked on a community project in the year prior. By 2005, that proportion had been

cut to 35 percent — a 40 percent decline. For those without high school diplomas, the decline was from 32 percent to 15 percent, a drop of almost 55 percent. Today, few high school dropouts participate in community projects — an especially serious problem for the hundreds of communities in which the dropout rate is high.

College graduates dominate everyday community life in the United States; high school dropouts are almost completely missing. Half of the Americans who attend club meetings, and half of those who say they work on community projects are college graduates. Only 3 percent of these active citizens are high-school dropouts. Thirty years ago, the situation was very different. In 1975, only about one in five active participants was a college graduate, while more than one in 10 was a high school dropout.

For the most part, the least educated are no longer part of the Tocquevillian civil society. The composition of civil society has changed in part because college graduates have become more numerous. But, unnoticed in these broader demographic changes, and more alarming, is that the rate of civic participation has fallen more steeply among the least-educated than among the college-educated.

Focusing on increasing high school and college graduation rates would yield a double reward: providing students with the skills necessary for employment, while also building their capacity to participate in community projects.

The Silent Epidemic of High School Dropouts

In spring 2006, Civic Enterprises, working in association with Hart Research Associates and supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, published *The Silent Epidemic: Perspectives of High School Dropouts*. In addition to highlighting the fact that each year almost one-third of all public high school students fail to graduate with their class, the report showed that most students could have completed high school given the appropriate support.

Academic failure, while a factor for a minority of students, was not the predominant reason that most students cited for dropping out; boredom and disengagement were the leading causes. Many students who decided to drop out complained that classes were not interesting and failed to connect to their career dreams. Seven out of 10 students reported that they did not see the real-world applications of their schoolwork. Based on

Focusing on increasing high school and college graduation rates would yield a double reward: providing students with the skills necessary for employment, while also building their capacity to participate in community projects.

this data, *The Silent Epidemic* recommends that educators develop curricula that connect what students are learning in the classroom with their real life experiences and the world of work.

Participants in the study recounted that some of their best days in school were when their teachers noticed them and got them involved. The study suggests that personal connections with teachers and school staff help students to stay in school. Unfortunately, a large percentage of students who drop out lack a sense of personal connection with their teachers. While two-thirds (65 percent) of those surveyed said that there had been a staff member or teacher who cared about their success, only 56 percent said they could go to a staff person for school problems and just two-fifths (41 percent) had an educator they felt comfortable talking to about personal problems. The report recommends that schools do more to foster strong adult-student relationships.

The decision to drop out is a dangerous one for the student. Dropouts are much more likely than their peers who graduate to be unemployed, living in poverty, receiving public assistance, in prison, on death row, unhealthy, divorced, and single parents with children who drop out of high school themselves. Our communities and nation also suffer from the dropout epidemic due to the loss of productive workers and the higher costs associated with increased incarceration, health care and social services. We have known that the dropout epidemic has personal, economic, and social costs. What we now know is that the decision also has severe civic costs to local communities and the nation, and creates a class of young people who are nearly voiceless in a system that is failing them.

Service-Learning as a Ray of Hope

Service-learning can help keep more students engaged in the classroom by making their schoolwork personally relevant. A woman interviewed for *The Silent Epidemic* reported dropping out two years short of graduation despite entering high school intending not only to graduate but to excel. She said:

If they related to me more and understand that at that point in time, my life ... what I was going through, where I lived, where I came from. Who knows? That book might have been in my book bag. I might have bought a book bag and done some work.

Of the interviewees, 81 percent agreed, saying that if schools had provided opportunities for real-world learning — including service-learning — it would have improved the students' chances of graduating from high school.

Service-learning can help keep more students engaged in the classroom by making their schoolwork personally relevant.

Service-learning can also provide young people with an opportunity to be agents of change in their communities. Empowering students and giving them a voice in the larger issues facing their communities can inspire them to become better students in the classroom and engaged citizens in their neighborhoods.

At César Chávez Public Charter Schools for Public Policy in Washington, D.C., high school students engaged in a service-learning project that changed their own lives and the lives of those in their community. The D.C. public libraries were closed, and these students recognized a need for them to reopen. They researched and became experts on conditions that had caused the collapse of the D.C. Public Library system. They also explored factors that contribute to the success of other library systems around the country. These student experts then testified before the D.C. City Council and

generated ideas for the revitalization of the D.C. Public Libraries that were included in the City's final plan.

Irasema Salcido, the school's founder and principal, reports that these students already view themselves as active, engaged citizens who can improve the quality of life in their communities. They are connecting that transformational experience to the lessons they learn in the classroom.

Service-learning has also been shown to promote stronger adult-student relationships, a key to academic, personal, and civic growth. In *Growing to Greatness 2006*, Martin, Neal, Kielsmeier, and Crossley report findings from the Survey of Service-Learning and Transitioning to Adulthood, a nationally representative survey conducted by Harris Interactive in the U.S. They found that students who participated in service-learning projects felt supported by adults who participated with them. Additional analysis by Markow et al. (2006) found that students who had participated in service-learning are nearly twice as likely (54 percent) to report having at least one teacher who they could go to if they were in trouble or needed help, as compared with 28 percent of students who did not participate in either service or

service-learning. This suggests that participation in service-learning might have helped the 59 percent of dropouts interviewed for *The Silent Epidemic* who reported having no adults at school with whom they could discuss personal problems. Participating together in service-learning projects fosters stronger relationships between youths and adults.

More extensive, well-designed service-learning projects hold the promise for keeping more students on track to graduate and for engaging more students in the lives of their communities. The national data, which shows a dropout epidemic and a growing civic divide based on educational achievement, confirms that increasing student access to service-learning is an urgent priority for our nation.

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The New Mexico Blueprint for Civic Engagement

GREG WEBB

Greg Webb is the executive director of the New Mexico Commission for Community Volunteerism, a bipartisan group appointed by the governor. The Commission is charged with promoting volunteerism, guiding Corporation for National and Community Service grant expenditures in New Mexico, and promoting an ethic of service across the state.

Since 2003, *Growing to Greatness has worked* to document the scale, scope, and impacts of service-learning and related prosocial youth development in each state. In 2006, New Mexico released the New Mexico Blueprint for Civic Engagement, which can serve as a policy model for other states.

The Blueprint provides the framework for a statewide civic engagement agenda for the next several years. It offers policy recommendations designed to strengthen and expand opportunities for the citizens of New Mexico to engage in their communities, identifies characteristics of effective civic engagement programs, and catalogs current opportunities for involvement across the state. The Blueprint is offered here as a model for other states to consider as they look to promote greater civic engagement among their own citizens.

With backing from Governor Bill Richardson and Lieutenant Governor Diane D. Denish, the New Mexico Commission for Community

Volunteerism led a grassroots effort to bring stakeholders from many different sectors — service-learning, national and community service, volunteerism, philanthropy, and more — into the planning process. They held town meetings and collected input from state and national leaders, with financial support from the New Mexico Community Foundation and the Messengers of the Healing Winds Foundation.

The Blueprint that has resulted from this process reflects a multiyear plan that can help New Mexico citizens make a case to their legislature for funding policies that will create a coherent, comprehensive vision of civic engagement in the state.

Specific policy recommendations are organized around four themes:

Environmental Needs, Job Skills, At-Risk Youths, and Young Adults

- Create a conservation corps to respond to natural disasters, provide youth employment, and prepare young people for college and life.
- Create a youth civic justice corps for young people transitioning out of foster care or juvenile detention.
- Support full-time service for tribal youth in Native communities.
- Match AmeriCorps funds dollar-for-dollar with state funds.

Academic Programs and Service-Learning

- Require New Mexico schools to offer service-learning opportunities to all students and provide incentives for student participation.

- Require that 50 percent of all higher education work-study funds go to community-service settings in New Mexico.
- Match Corporation for National and Community Service Education Awards to AmeriCorps members in New Mexico with scholarship funds for New Mexico colleges.

Service and Volunteer Opportunities

- Increase the capacity of existing volunteer and service centers and create up to five new centers.
- Revise applicable laws and statutes so that criminal offenders make “community restitution” rather than perform “community service.”
- Explore providing state employees with two hours of paid leave per month to serve a nonprofit of their choice.

State Investments

- Commission a study to increase the efficiency of all federal and state resources that support civic engagement.
- Invest \$30 million in an endowed fund to support service-learning and other youth development strategies statewide.

The Blueprint recognizes that there is a direct relationship between civic engagement, electoral, and ethics reform. The

Commission supports public election financing and election-day voter registration to increase voter turnout, as well as measures to restore confidence in government by requiring campaign finance reporting and lobbying guidelines.

Full funding of all the initiatives in the Blueprint is projected to require \$50 million in state money. The Blueprint’s crafters recognize that full funding isn’t feasible, but the plan has allowed them to identify initial targets, and work with stakeholders across New Mexico toward reaching them. By inventorying volunteer opportunities, identifying best practices, and defining key terms, the Blueprint offers a practical approach to civic engagement that goes beyond simple rhetoric to implementation.

The full report can be accessed at www.newmexserve.org/docs/FinalBlueprint.pdf.

Youth Perspectives

How Young People Improve Their Communities

MARYBETH NEAL, PH.D.

Marybeth Neal, Ph.D., is an anthropologist and the research director for the National Youth Leadership Council. In addition to her writings in *Growing to Greatness*, she is co-author of publications for the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, including *Evaluation: The Key to Improving Service-Learning Programs* (1994) and *Assessing Learning Through Service* (1999).

What do young people themselves identify as their contributions to their communities? Their answers to this question can deepen our understanding of the ways in which young people can, and do, make positive civic contributions.

In September 2006, NYLC and Harris Interactive asked a nationally representative sample of 1,412 young people in the United States, ages 8-18 this question: “In what ways do you help make your community a better place to live?” Respondents could list up to three ways they felt they contributed. Respondents who believed that they did nothing to help make their community a better place to live were instructed to answer “none.”

Individual Contributions

Approximately one-third of respondents (28 percent) reported contributing to their communities exclusively through activities that they participated in as individuals. The individual contributions they reported included riding bikes to reduce air pollution; helping parents with yard chores; supporting

organic markets; obeying laws; trying to keep the peace between people; “watching out for the little kids”; being “a good person”; “staying out of trouble”; and trying to “practice what I learn in church and school.”

The youths’ responses may prove useful in understanding the extent to which they are aware of their own capacity to have positive impacts on their communities. The responses also show that young people view what they learn through academic and religious instruction as a stepping stone to future community contributions. These responses might suggest the extent of values internalization; however, they may also reflect the extent to which young people, answering a survey asked by adults, simply repeat adult ideas about what young people “should do.”

Nearly half (42 percent) of the individual actions mentioned by young people were related to picking up trash, recycling, cleaning up, and not littering. These were coded as individual actions when respondents did not mention a connection with organized efforts outside their family. Their answers may suggest the extent to which they have heard messages of “don’t litter” from adults, parents, schools, religion, and the media.

Probing further into the data, we find that reports of recycling and not littering decline steadily with age. Among 8- to 9-year-olds, 34 percent of all actions mentioned fell into this category, while among 16- to 18-year-olds, only 13 percent of responses did. Do these findings mean that these types of action are not taken by older youths, or that these actions are simply not mentioned by older youths because their capacity to contribute on a larger scale has expanded?

Responses in which contributions were reported as being exclusively “individual” were much more likely among younger youths (43 percent for 8- to 9-year-olds versus 22 percent for 16- to 18-year-olds); among urban youths (33 percent versus 30 percent for suburban and 25 percent for rural); and among African-American youths (43 percent versus 28 percent for white youths, and 22 percent for Hispanic youths.)

Group Contributions

Nearly one-fifth (18 percent) of survey respondents highlighted activities they participated in exclusively as part of a group. This data may be useful as a measure of the extent to which young people have opportunities to serve, and the degree to which they are connected to their communities. Organizations mentioned included Girl Scouts, Habitat for Humanity, libraries, and food shelves. Other responses indicated activities most often carried out by organizational participants. For example, mentoring was assumed to be an organized activity, as was river cleanup.

Reports of contributions as being organized were higher among 16- to 18-year-olds (24 percent) than any other age group, and were much lower among African-American youths (12 percent) than white (20 percent) or Hispanic youths (21 percent).

FIGURE 1
In what ways do you help make your community a better place to live?

37%	None
28%	Individual only
18%	Organized only
11%	Both individual and organized
6%	Missing or cannot be categorized

FIGURE 2
Youths who say they make no contributions:

41%	Male
37%	Female
33%	8-9 years old
34%	10-12 years old
48%	13-15 years old
40%	16-18 years old
37%	White
38%	African-American
45%	Hispanic
36.9%	Urban
37.7%	Suburban
45.7%	Small town or rural

Both Individual and Organized Contributions

Almost 12 percent of respondents mentioned that they contributed both as individuals and as members of an organized group. Responses including individual and organized contributions were more common among girls (15 percent for girls versus 10 percent for boys), and less common among African-American youths (8 percent) than white (14 percent) or Hispanic youths (13 percent). Some young people indicated that activities they engaged in for personal benefit were also community contributions. For example, some responses included activities such as “play[ing] football for the community to enjoy.”

No Contributions

More than one-third (37 percent) of respondents said they did nothing to help their communities. Viewed with other indicators, changes in the percentage who say they do nothing could help track increases or declines in positive youth civic contributions over time. Older students, especially 13- to 15-year-olds, were more likely than younger students to respond that they made no contributions. Males, Hispanics and students from small towns or rural areas were slightly more likely than others to report no contributions.

Conclusion

Responses reveal the diversity of youths’ thoughts about how they contribute to their communities. However, the number of young people who believe that they do not contribute — more than a third — is troubling. We need to help young people recognize their capacity for contribution: the many ways, large and small, they can and do help their communities. Furthermore, we need to ensure that they are provided with opportunities to discover, develop, and share their talents in service to their communities.



Youth Civic Contributions Indicators

How do young people “grow to greatness”? Since its inception, *Growing to Greatness: The State of Service-Learning Project* has explored this question. We ask: What activities help young people become adults who contribute to their communities? What impacts do these activities have on communities? And what conditions can states create to support such youth activities?

Several challenges have arisen in our work to track youth activities and contributions, and to assess efforts to create the conditions necessary for young people to engage more fully in community life. The first challenge is that data on positive youth activities are not as commonly collected as data about youth at-risk behaviors. For example, data on youth philanthropy — the giving of money, time, or talents — are not collected on a systematic and national basis, but school dropout rates and juvenile crime data are. Second, the data that are collected are fragmented, and do not provide a coherent picture of youth activities that is representative at both state and national levels.

Three Types of Indicators: Activities, Impacts, and Conditions

In this edition of *Growing to Greatness*, we outline what we know about youth civic contributions from existing data. We have found it useful to deconstruct the concept of youth civic contribution into three components: youth activities, the impacts of these activities, and the conditions that support such activities. The underlying assumption behind this separation is that we cannot simply assume that any given youth activity does, in fact, have a positive impact on a community. In order to claim that an activity has made such an impact, the effects that

FIGURE 1

State Volunteer Rates AS A PERCENTAGE

	Total Volunteer Rates	Young Adult Volunteer Rates: Ages 16-24	College Student Volunteer Rates		Total Volunteer Rates	Young Adult Volunteer Rates: Ages 16-24	College Student Volunteer Rates		Total Volunteer Rates	Young Adult Volunteer Rates: Ages 16-24	College Student Volunteer Rates
Alabama	28.9	23.9	34.8	Kentucky	29.8	24.7	30.4	North Dakota	36.5	27.1	33.7
Alaska	38.9	30.7	40.1	Louisiana	22.7	17.9	27.8	Ohio	30.7	26.9	34.4
Arizona	24.9	19.1	30.8	Maine	33.2	26.4	31.4	Oklahoma	30.0	26.0	43.0
Arkansas	25.6	21.7	31.7	Maryland	30.3	25.9	30.2	Oregon	33.6	28.0	31.1
California	26.1	22.0	28.5	Massachusetts	27.0	19.4	24.0	Pennsylvania	30.8	26.2	35.1
Colorado	32.8	27.6	38.3	Michigan	32.1	28.4	37.4	Rhode Island	24.9	19.7	25.8
Connecticut	30.8	30.5	31.5	Minnesota	40.7	33.1	39.9	South Carolina	28.0	24.0	28.3
Delaware	26.7	19.5	26.4	Mississippi	26.4	23.7	33.1	South Dakota	38.8	28.7	31.0
D.C.	30.8	25.2	31.0	Missouri	31.9	27.8	38.9	Tennessee	25.9	20.2	24.0
Florida	24.1	20.3	25.9	Montana	37.9	29.5	34.6	Texas	28.3	22.7	29.2
Georgia	25.9	21.9	21.4	Nebraska	42.8	32.0	41.5	Utah	48.0	45.4	62.9
Hawaii	25.4	23.5	29.6	Nevada	18.8	15.8	23.6	Vermont	38.1	33.3	41.5
Idaho	35.5	30.9	44.4	New Hampshire	32.0	27.7	32.0	Virginia	29.0	21.5	24.6
Illinois	29.7	23.4	31.2	New Jersey	26.5	22.4	25.0	Washington	36.8	35.7	37.6
Indiana	29.5	26.9	37.3	New Mexico	28.5	21.8	31.3	West Virginia	24.6	22.6	27.4
Iowa	39.2	29.8	31.1	New York	21.3	19.2	23.4	Wisconsin	37.0	32.2	36.2
Kansas	38.6	29.7	31.5	North Carolina	29.1	23.1	28.8	Wyoming	38.8	37.2	40.3

Source: Corporation for National and Community Service. (2006). Volunteering in America: State Trends and Rankings 2002-2005. Washington, D.C.: Corporation for National and Community Service. Represents state volunteering rates based on a three-year rate for 2003-2005.

participating youths have had on community members must be measured. Unfortunately, the evaluation of impacts has not been done systematically, and little data is available.

We have selected the indicators presented here because the methods used to collect the data were consistent across states and are representative at the state level. In the spirit of “measure what we value, and value what we measure,” much more needs to be done to gauge the positive actions of youths. Over the coming years, efforts at further data collection will round out the portrait and help states learn how to better support young people as they move toward adulthood.

Indicators of Youth Activities

We know that young people engage in positive activities in their communities in a wide variety of ways. They volunteer their time and serve their nation through both military and nonmilitary service. Young people vote, and many encourage their parents and others to get out and vote. Because our goal is to track youth civic engagement over time, we also thought it might be useful to look at existing measures of “disconnected youth” as a way of tracking progress.

VOLUNTEER RATES

The Corporation for National and Community Service has begun tracking youth volunteer rates on a state by state basis. (See Figure 1.) As the data show, young people’s volunteer rates tend to reflect the overall volunteer rates for their state. Those states that have the highest rates of overall volunteering are also those that have the highest rates of youth volunteers. Interestingly, for the majority of states (32), the volunteer rate for college students is higher than the overall volunteer rate for the state.

NATIONAL MILITARY AND AMERICORPS SERVICE

Another important way that young people engage in their communities is through national service in the form of military service and nonmilitary service. These important contributions by young people bolster our nation’s security as well as national and community goals. As Figure 2 shows, the largest numbers of young people in national service come from the most populous states.

YOUTH VOTING

Youth voter turnout has traditionally been lower than adult turnout, but in the 2004 presidential election, youth voting showed a significant increase, particularly in states with tight races. Figure 3 shows the 2004 young voter turnout alongside the KidsCount measure of disconnected youth in the same age range. While there’s no direct correlation between the two measures, states with higher rates of young people engaged in the political process tend to have lower rates of young people who do not work or attend school.

FIGURE 2
Numbers of AmeriCorps and Military Volunteers by State

	AmeriCorps Volunteers	U.S. Military Recruits: Ages 18-24		AmeriCorps Volunteers	U.S. Military Recruits: Ages 18-24		AmeriCorps Volunteers	U.S. Military Recruits: Ages 18-24
Alabama	113	3,675	Kentucky	164	2,277	North Dakota	93	351
Alaska	403	599	Louisiana	370	3,561	Ohio	607	7,173
Arizona	206	3,892	Maine	86	899	Oklahoma	393	2,977
Arkansas	310	1,994	Maryland	580	3,330	Oregon	196	2,657
California	5,151	19,575	Massachusetts	784	2,160	Pennsylvania	1,119	6,416
Colorado	646	2,884	Michigan	830	5,660	Rhode Island	148	466
Connecticut	259	1,268	Minnesota	565	2,137	South Carolina	214	3,192
Delaware	207	170	Mississippi	143	2,043	South Dakota	0	600
D.C.	131	452	Missouri	223	3,630	Tennessee	294	3,391
Florida	918	12,278	Montana	254	1,001	Texas	1,048	18,047
Georgia	430	5,810	Nebraska	137	1,172	Utah	358	1,281
Hawaii	116	728	Nevada	166	1,644	Vermont	123	307
Idaho	114	1,122	New Hampshire	133	757	Virginia	286	5,289
Illinois	646	6,880	New Jersey	421	3,701	Washington	1,075	4,361
Indiana	411	3,767	New Mexico	201	1,532	West Virginia	673	1,289
Iowa	241	1,665	New York	2,312	9,368	Wisconsin	671	2,963
Kansas	179	1,648	North Carolina	545	5,296	Wyoming	50	444

TOTALS: AmeriCorps Volunteers: 25,743 U.S. Military Recruits: Ages 18-24: 179,779

Sources: *AmeriCorps State Commission Performance Report*, August 2006. Data Table: AmeriCorps State Annual Summary by State (2003-2005). 04-05 Number of Members Serving. A3-2.

Population Representation in the Military Services FY 2002, March 2004. Table 2.10. Selected Statistics for FY 2002 NPS Accessions by Region, Division, and State, and Civilians 18-24 Years Old. Office of the Undersecretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness. www.dod.mil/prhome/poprep2002/index.htm.

FIGURE 3
Voter Turnout and Disconnected Youth AS A PERCENTAGE

	2004 Voter Turnout Ages 18-24	Disconnected Youth Ages 18-24		2004 Voter Turnout Ages 18-24	Disconnected Youth Ages 18-24		2004 Voter Turnout Ages 18-24	Disconnected Youth Ages 18-24
Alabama	44	19	Kentucky	56	21	North Dakota	*	9
Alaska	*	22	Louisiana	48	20	Ohio	56	15
Arizona	42	17	Maine	59	13	Oklahoma	44	17
Arkansas	36	19	Maryland	51	13	Oregon	49	15
California	45	15	Massachusetts	46	11	Pennsylvania	43	14
Colorado	48	13	Michigan	54	15	Rhode Island	*	9
Connecticut	41	12	Minnesota	69	10	South Carolina	43	18
Delaware	*	16	Mississippi	52	22	South Dakota	*	12
D.C.	*	N/A	Missouri	53	15	Tennessee	38	19
Florida	46	15	Montana	*	13	Texas	39	18
Georgia	45	18	Nebraska	42	11	Utah	51	13
Hawaii	*	13	Nevada	44	19	Vermont	*	14
Idaho	48	14	New Hampshire	58	11	Virginia	41	13
Illinois	42	15	New Jersey	50	14	Washington	52	15
Indiana	41	15	New Mexico	42	17	West Virginia	46	21
Iowa	62	11	New York	45	15	Wisconsin	63	12
Kansas	40	14	North Carolina	43	16	Wyoming	*	12

NATIONAL: 2004 Voter Turnout Ages 18-24: 47% Disconnected Youth Ages 18-24: 15%

* Sample sizes are too small to estimate voter turnout.
 Sources: Youth voting data is available from the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/FS_04_state_vote.pdf.
 Disconnected youth are defined as young adults not attending school, not working, and having no degree beyond high school. Annie E. Casey Foundation (December 2006).
 Kids Count State-Level Data Online. www.aecf.org/kidscount/sld/compare_results.jsp?i=130.

Indicators of Service-Learning Impact

One measure of impact is how much media attention an issue has garnered. To explore how service-learning has had an impact on public awareness, we conducted a media scan to determine how frequently the term “service-learning” appeared in print news media located in each state. In order to capture how public awareness of service-learning has changed over the course of the last ten years, we counted articles that make reference to service-learning for 1996, 2001, and 2006.

The media scan results (see Figure 4) show that service-learning was mentioned nationally in three times as many articles in 2006 as it was in 1996, suggesting that the use of the term is becoming more widespread. For most states (33), the number of articles mentioning service-learning were highest in 2006. Eleven states reported their highest score in 2001. Only New Hampshire reported its highest score in 1996 (just one article more than in 2001 and 2006).

Conditions Indicators

States can create conditions that not only encourage positive youth activities but also potentially increase the likelihood that young people’s activities will have significantly positive impacts.

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARDS

Some states have increased opportunities for young people by giving them a formal voice on state policymaking bodies, including state boards of education and legislatures. (See Figure 5.) The practice of creating youth advisory councils through acts of legislation appears to have some momentum. In 2001, Maine created a Legislative Youth Advisory Council that has its own authority to introduce legislation. In 2005, Washington state created a state-level youth advisory council. In 2006, New Hampshire modeled its youth advisory council after Maine’s Legislative Youth Advisory Council, and as recently as January 2007 a bill was put forward in the Wyoming state legislature proposing a youth council to the legislature.

States report finding youth perspectives invaluable. For example, the New Mexico Youth Alliance, composed of young people ages 14-24 from each of New Mexico’s legislative districts, provided important insights in developing the New Mexico Blueprint for Civic Engagement (see page 82). The youths meet at least once a year with the governor, the lieutenant governor, the Children’s Cabinet, and the Legislature. Their input has led to recommendations related to electoral and ethics reform.

FIGURE 4
Service-Learning Media Scan

	1996	2001	2006		1996	2001	2006		1996	2001	2006
Alabama	3	5	5	Kentucky	0	0	1	North Dakota	3	2	6
Alaska	0	4	17	Louisiana	9	36	59	Ohio	10	18	9
Arizona	0	0	1	Maine	10	23	28	Oklahoma	3	3	10
Arkansas	6	10	4	Maryland	8	9	32	Oregon	5	7	11
California	10	31	84	Massachusetts	9	40	96	Pennsylvania	6	31	27
Colorado	4	6	7	Michigan	0	4	1	Rhode Island	15	39	13
Connecticut	0	0	6	Minnesota	3	11	14	South Carolina	4	21	10
Delaware	0	0	0	Mississippi	0	1	0	South Dakota	0	1	3
D.C.	10	31	46	Missouri	4	10	5	Tennessee	13	21	26
Florida	5	22	47	Montana	0	1	0	Texas	7	5	13
Georgia	2	22	12	Nebraska	6	8	24	Utah	9	13	61
Hawaii	0	0	0	Nevada	0	0	1	Vermont	0	0	5
Idaho	2	5	2	New Hampshire	4	3	3	Virginia	10	14	21
Illinois	3	23	24	New Jersey	2	2	4	Washington	9	33	24
Indiana	15	4	17	New Mexico	5	19	22	West Virginia	11	16	23
Iowa	3	2	7	New York	12	26	34	Wisconsin	12	14	17
Kansas	0	2	3	North Carolina	51	34	49	Wyoming	0	1	0

TOTALS: 1996: 303 2001: 633 2006: 934

Source: National Youth Leadership Council. The number of articles mentioning service-learning in major newspapers for each state was found using LexisNexis Academic Search set to the following parameters: (a) Guided News Search, (b) News Category: U.S. News, (c) separate searches were conducted for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia using the State News Sources option, (d) "service-learning" was the search term and was searched for in the Full Text, (e) separate results for all states were generated for the following time periods: January 1, 1996 to December 31, 1996; January 1, 2001 to December 31, 2001; and January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006. Articles were checked to ensure that they directly related to service-learning.

FIGURE 5
Youth Advisory Councils

	Students on State Boards of Education	Youth Advisory Councils to State Legislatures		Students on State Boards of Education	Youth Advisory Councils to State Legislatures		Students on State Boards of Education	Youth Advisory Councils to State Legislatures
Alabama	Yes		Kentucky			North Dakota		
Alaska			Louisiana	Yes*		Ohio		
Arizona			Maine		Yes**	Oklahoma		
Arkansas			Maryland	Yes		Oregon		
California	Yes		Massachusetts	Yes		Pennsylvania		
Colorado			Michigan		Yes	Rhode Island		
Connecticut			Minnesota		Yes	South Carolina		
Delaware			Mississippi			South Dakota		
D.C.	Yes	Yes	Missouri			Tennessee	Yes	
Florida			Montana	Yes		Texas		
Georgia			Nebraska	Yes	Yes	Utah		Yes
Hawaii			Nevada			Vermont	Yes	
Idaho			New Hampshire		Yes**	Virginia	Yes*	
Illinois			New Jersey	Yes		Washington	Yes	Yes**
Indiana		Yes	New Mexico		Yes	West Virginia		
Iowa	Yes		New York			Wisconsin		
Kansas			North Carolina	Yes*		Wyoming		

* Boards on which students are represented but not as voting members ** Councils enacted by legislation.

Sources: Data on students on state boards of education provided by Education Commission of the States. States that have at least one student member serving on its state board of education were counted as “yes.”

Data on youth advisory councils to state legislatures was collected by NYLC. See Forum for Youth Investment data at forumforyouthinvestment.org/_catdisp_page.cfm?LID=64AB2431-61D9-40A9-B623941317D498F6, and First Annual Report of the Legislative Youth Advisory Council available at www.maine.gov/legis/opla/LYACrpt.PDF (page 16). Includes councils that have been enacted by legislation, appointed by governors, or required as part of accepting federal funding from sources including the Workforce Investment Board and the Department of Juvenile Justice.

FIGURE 6
Institutionalization Index

Alabama	2.9	Hawaii	1.9	Michigan	4.2	North Carolina	2.7	Utah	2.8
Alaska	3.7	Idaho	3.0	Minnesota	3.5	North Dakota	N/A	Vermont	4.0
Arizona	2.6	Illinois	2.8	Mississippi	2.6	Ohio	3.6	Virginia	2.5
Arkansas	2.3	Indiana	2.8	Missouri	4.0	Oklahoma	3.1	Washington	2.4
California	4.1	Iowa	2.6	Montana	2.8	Oregon	3.4	West Virginia	2.8
Colorado	3.6	Kansas	3.4	Nebraska	1.7	Pennsylvania	3.5	Wisconsin	1.8
Connecticut	3.5	Kentucky	2.7	Nevada	3.7	Rhode Island	3.6	Wyoming	N/A
Delaware	2.1	Louisiana	1.4	New Hampshire	3.2	South Carolina	3.0		
D.C.	3.3	Maine	3.9	New Jersey	3.9	South Dakota	N/A		
Florida	2.9	Maryland	3.8	New Mexico	2.5	Tennessee	2.0		
Georgia	2.9	Massachusetts	4.0	New York	3.2	Texas	3.9		

Source: Corporation for National and Community Service. (2006). *Learn and Serve America Performance Report for Program Year 2004-2005*. Rockville, Md.: Westat. An average of the index scores for all Learn and Serve America formula programs within the state is reported for each indicator.

SERVICE-LEARNING INSTITUTIONALIZATION

In addition to states, other agencies also work to create conditions that lead to stronger youth engagement. Learn and Serve America encourages its grantees to adopt service-learning as a strategy to strengthen civic engagement and academic performance. LSA has created an Institutionalization Index for K-12 programs that captures the extent to which LSA programs have succeeded in developing service-learning programs that will last beyond their grant period.

This index is based on an understanding of the policies and practices that support the institutionalization of service-learning. It is a composite score of five measures, including:

- presence of service-learning advisory board
- presence of service-learning coordinator
- service-learning included in strategic plan
- service-learning included in core curriculum
- provision of technical assistance for service-learning activities

The index score for each indicator is either 1 or 0, where 1 means the indicator is present in the organization and 0 means that it is absent. Five points would indicate that all five indicators are present on average in a particular state.

The national average for the Institutionalization Index is 3.1. As Figure 6 shows, states range from a low of 1.4 (Louisiana) to a high of 4.2 (Michigan). States that currently do not receive Learn and Serve funding are not given an index score.

FIGURE 7

Learn and Serve America Grant Allocations by State Fiscal Year IN U.S. DOLLARS

	1996	2001	2006		1996	2001	2006		1996	2001	2006
Alabama	340,522	323,980	302,858	Kentucky	325,838	308,616	263,165	North Dakota	51,101	50,130	41,738
Alaska	50,365	54,277	44,574	Louisiana	456,313	426,307	343,353	Ohio	864,822	815,559	651,801
Arizona	303,434	348,622	334,581	Maine	85,663	86,328	82,345	Oklahoma	252,648	255,640	197,487
Arkansas	204,329	200,043	173,169	Maryland	310,978	325,764	277,891	Oregon	217,944	211,036	187,701
California	2,247,562	2,556,017	2,266,227	Massachusetts	386,142	415,408	350,527	Pennsylvania	883,143	867,101	757,888
Colorado	242,026	247,601	217,605	Michigan	823,396	819,062	623,217	Rhode Island	65,591	67,964	61,402
Connecticut	193,853	213,465	182,395	Minnesota	310,893	303,799	238,038	South Carolina	273,750	271,909	238,788
Delaware	48,818	54,217	43,786	Mississippi	291,902	273,935	247,714	South Dakota	59,488	55,330	49,798
D.C.	43,955	47,301	49,442	Missouri	374,021	382,857	302,439	Tennessee	366,935	370,531	319,704
Florida	877,209	997,705	831,082	Montana	73,448	68,600	52,772	Texas	1,602,459	1,686,964	1,476,796
Georgia	520,249	569,869	528,933	Nebraska	108,703	107,515	92,976	Utah	150,073	144,680	117,784
Hawaii	71,550	67,899	63,656	Nevada	80,852	99,459	109,269	Vermont	44,823	44,611	37,436
Idaho	84,336	82,002	71,576	New Hampshire	67,668	71,619	58,751	Virginia	381,936	396,157	358,270
Illinois	916,400	887,237	745,042	New Jersey	486,349	522,644	483,503	Washington	356,201	360,354	304,272
Indiana	382,863	374,027	311,884	New Mexico	158,179	159,586	130,340	West Virginia	166,807	157,191	127,041
Iowa	189,574	176,442	156,657	New York	1,537,110	1,606,121	1,391,342	Wisconsin	392,055	367,073	283,246
Kansas	183,305	176,120	137,673	North Carolina	451,044	477,372	429,713	Wyoming	45,083	42,466	33,894
TOTALS: 1996: \$19,942,592 2001: \$20,512,593 2006: \$17,656,465											

Sources: Data for 1996 provided by Learn and Serve America. Data for 2001 and 2006 from *Fiscal Year 2008 Congressional Budget Justification*. Available at www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/2008_budget_justification.pdf.

Learn and Serve's authorizing statute directs that state formula funding allocations are to be based on state school-age population and Department of Education Title One grant funding levels. For more information see SEC. 112. [42 U.S.C. 12524] Grants and Allotments. See also SEC. 112. [42 U.S.C. 12524] No state shall receive, under paragraph (2), an allotment that is less than the allotment such State received for fiscal year 1993 under section 12522(b) of this title, as in effect on the day before September 21, 1993.

SERVICE-LEARNING FUNDING

Although Learn and Serve America is the source for federal funding for service-learning, LSA supplies only about 7 percent of total funding for service-learning in the United States. Nevertheless, it offers a snapshot of how that funding is allocated state by state. Figure 7 represents the grant allocations over a ten-year span from 1996 to 2006. The data show the formula allocations rather than the actual amounts each state received. Some states do not have the necessary state infrastructure to take advantage of their allocated Learn and Serve formula funding. The data show, however, how the federal commitment to funding for service-learning activities has slipped in the most recent year, falling significantly below the 1996 level even without accounting for inflation.

Conclusion

By presenting data on an annual basis we will be able to document changes in youth civic contributions over time. We see that too many young people are disconnected, and that the voter turnout for young adults is low. We see that volunteering has increased, and as shown by the media scan, that there is also evidence of increased public awareness of service-learning. Federal funding of service-learning through Learn and Serve America, however, has decreased. Interest in including the perspectives of young people in policy decisions may be increasing as suggested by a trend to create state-level youth advisory boards.

Furthermore, recent survey data on attitudes toward national service suggests significant public support for creating opportunities for young people to serve their country in nonmilitary capacities (55 percent support increases in the federal budget to create more opportunities for nonmilitary service, only 30 percent oppose; Harris Interactive Online January 11-18, 2007).

We wish to emphasize that there is no single best way to assess the extent to which any particular state succeeds at providing youths with opportunities to engage in the life of their communities. All states differ in terms of organization, resources, and challenges.

Through both qualitative and quantitative research, we seek to document the inter-relationships between positive youth activities, impacts, and conditions. Our purpose is to heighten public awareness of the positive contributions that youths make, and to encourage further exploration and deeper understanding of these inter-relationships.

Growing to Greatness will continue to find ways to document the scope, scale, and impacts of activities that include one or more of the elements of effective service-learning. No single approach will do justice to the phenomenon of service-learning as it continues to evolve. We will persist in our efforts to explore service-learning on all levels — detailed descriptions of project examples, qualitatively oriented state profiles capturing the institutional history of service-learning within each state, and quantitative measures that will allow us to create a more precise national picture.

Service-Learning by the Numbers

94	Percentage of U.S. youths ages 8-21 who report that they want to be involved in making the world a better place. ¹	31	Percentage who did not participate in service activities while in school who report this. ⁶	58	Percentage who participated in service projects that lacked the elements of service-learning who report this. ⁶
4.7	Estimated millions of U.S. K-12 students engaged in service-learning. ²	61	Percentage of U.S. adults ages 18-24 who participated in service-learning who report that they had at least one educator whom they felt they could go to if they were in trouble or needed help. ⁶	92	Percentage of principals from U.S. schools with service-learning programs who reported that service-learning has a positive impact on students' civic engagement. ²
4:1	Monetary value of service Learn and Serve America participants provide to their communities, compared to Learn and Serve money spent. ³	55	Percentage who participated in service projects that lacked the elements of service-learning who report this. ⁶	88	Percentage who reported that service-learning has a positive impact on school climate and school engagement. ²
162	Funding in millions of dollars requested of Learn and Serve America by grant applicants in 2006. ⁴	32	Percentage who did not participate in service activities while in school who report this. ⁶	86	Percentage who reported that service-learning has a positive impact on the larger community's view of youths as resources. ²
37.1	Total Learn and Serve grant funding for 2006 in millions of dollars. ⁴	83	Percentage of U.S. adults ages 18-24 who participated in service-learning who report that their service experiences have positively affected their ability to help others. ⁶	85	Percentage who reported that service-learning has a positive impact on teacher satisfaction. ²
55	Percentage of U.S. residents who support increasing federal funding for national service programs including AmeriCorps, VISTA, and Peace Corps. (30 percent oppose). ⁵	68	Percentage who participated in service projects that lacked the elements of service-learning who report this. ⁶	83	Percentage who said service-learning has a positive impact on academic achievement. ²
55	Percentage of U.S. adults ages 18-24 who participated in service-learning who report being "very" or "extremely" satisfied with their lives overall. ⁶	75	Percentage of U.S. service-learning alumni ages 18-24 who report that their service experiences have positively affected their ability to see the world from someone else's perspective. ⁶		
44	Percentage who participated in service projects that lacked the elements of service-learning who report this. ⁶				

1 America's Promise Alliance. (2006). *Every Child, Every Promise: Turning Failure into Action*. Alexandria, Va.: America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth.

2 Scales, P., and Roehlkepartain, E. (2004). *Community Service and Service-Learning in Public Schools, 2004: Findings from a National Survey*. St. Paul: National Youth Leadership Council.

3 Melchior, Alan. (1999). *Summary Report: National Evaluation of Learn and Serve America*. Center for Human Resources, Brandeis University. Learn and Serve America provides federal funding for service-learning.

4 Learn and Serve America. (2006). *Learn and Serve Grant Application Review Process Statistics*.

5 Harris Interactive Online. January 1-18, 2007, among adults, n=2, 337.

6 Markow, D., Martin, S., Comey, G., Zwanziger, E., and Kim A. (2006). *The National Survey on Service-Learning and Transitioning to Adulthood*. New York: Harris Interactive.

Praise for Growing to Greatness

Growing to Greatness recognizes and celebrates the work done daily by dedicated young people, educators and civic leaders to promote and expand service-learning in schools and communities across the country. The examples, profiles and articles of this report are incredible resources for those of us committed to nurturing generations of engaged learners and active citizens ready to participate in our global community.

Nelda Brown

Executive Director, National Service-Learning Partnership

Growing to Greatness is an exceptional source of information and ideas about the status of service-learning. It provides perspectives on service-learning as a field of practice and subject of study; reports empirical evidence from survey research; presents profiles of practice in particular places; and features highly intelligent thinking about this work in the years ahead.

Barry Checkoway

University of Michigan School of Social Work

Growing to Greatness clearly documents the contributions service-learning is making to the intellectual, personal, civic, and moral development of students. It convincingly makes the case that service learning is a highly effective, creative, active pedagogy that enhances a student's capacity to think critically, solve problems practically, and function as moral, democratic citizens in a democratic society.

Ira Harkavy

*Associate Vice President and Director,
Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania*

Essential reading for anyone interested in youth development. Through original research, topical articles, and state profiles, *Growing to Greatness* provides fresh perspectives and intellectually stimulating arguments on the merits of service-learning.

Chris Kwak

Program Director, W.K. Kellogg Foundation

An excellent resource that answers questions many policymakers, education leaders and other education stakeholders ask: What is the current status of service-learning across the country? What does quality service-learning look like? What are examples of policies for states and districts?

Terry Pickeral

Executive Director, National Center for Learning and Citizenship

We know that young people's hope, passion, and energy can provide vital fuel to community efforts to improve. *Growing to Greatness* not only offers a comprehensive scan of the "how, what, where, and when" this exciting work is taking place, it also paves the way for the movement's continued growth by organizing information for policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and anyone who cares about youth and change into a true one-stop shop.

Karen Pittman

Executive Director, The Forum for Youth Investment

From the articles on policy, to the examples of practice, to the state-by-state directory, *Growing to Greatness* demonstrates the importance of providing meaningful opportunities for youth. It's an especially important resource for schools that have not invested in service-learning because it will convince them to get involved.

Patti Smith Ed.D.

*Associate Director, Secondary School Redesign
The Education Alliance, Brown University*

Growing to Greatness is an excellent resource for learning about the state of service-learning in the U.S.A. and for getting a bird's-eye view of the research that is needed for its progress. I hope that we shall read in future issues of G2G that service-learning has indeed become an institution of society. Its future will be assured as long as we remember that it is not something we do to young people, but by and with them.

Don Eberly

President, International Association for National Youth Service

Growing to Greatness is the best available resource on the state of K-12 community service and service-learning in this country. The evidence presented overwhelmingly supports the reach of this work, and includes research findings, policy information, and state and program profiles in clear, easily digestible summaries. K-12 service-learning educators will find this an invaluable resource.

Jeffrey Howard, Ph.D.

*Associate Director for Service-Learning at the University of Michigan's
Edward Ginsberg Center for Community Service and Learning*

Growing to Greatness offers readers essential information to understand and advance service-learning. Long-time practitioners will feel a sense of pride at the state of service-learning. For people new to the field, G2G captures the meaning and value of service-learning for young people and teachers, provides encouraging research results, gives you lessons on ways to implement service-learning, as well as helpful resources.

Carol Kinsley, Ed.D.

*Corporation for National and Community Service, Board of Directors
National Service-Learning Partnership, Chair, Board of Directors*

An excellent source for up-to-date information on service-learning from across the nation, including information on programs, policies, and research.

Reed Larson, Ph.D.

*Pampered Chef Ltd., Endowed Chair in Family Resiliency,
University of Illinois-Urbana*

Engaging youths in the advancement of civil society is a fundamental component of the promotion of positive youth development. This landmark report documents the important contributions being made by community-based, service-learning organizations in enhancing the lives of our nation's youths.

Richard Lerner, Ph.D.

*Director, Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development,
Tufts University*

Praise for Growing to Greatness

The desire to serve, to do meaningful work that is of value to other people, is universal. Youth in low-income communities especially want to rebuild their communities, and they will do so if given the opportunity. *Growing to Greatness* provides community leaders, educators, and policymakers with critical information and resources to mobilize local people, including neighborhood youth, to solve local problems. It is an important overview of the service-learning field's progress to date in creating not only active citizens, but also future leaders eager to be the agents of change to help others.

Dorothy Stoneman
President and Founder, YouthBuild USA

Growing to Greatness 2006 brought renewed power and insight to our shared commitment to service-learning and its impact and potential on "both sides of the hyphen." Together, NYLC and State Farm are playing an important leadership role for the field — by making the case, pointing to what works, and reminding us yet again that we will only achieve the full promise of this great country when young people are viewed as important resources and partners in the work to be done.

Marguerite Kondrake
Executive Director, America's Promise — The Alliance for Youth

Growing to Greatness continues to offer some of the most valuable reading in the service-learning field. The diverse subject matter in this year's edition ranges from the achievement gap and successful urban schools to after-school programs, global literacy strategies, and new principles for effective practice. Whether you are a researcher, administrator, or practitioner, you will find timely, lively, well-documented information that will assist you in your quest to improve both schooling and community life. The National Youth Leadership Council and State Farm are to be commended for providing a valuable service for all of us.

Drs. James and Pamela Toole
Compass Institute and the University of Minnesota

Growing to Greatness is a wonderful resource on service-learning that fits well with strategies for school reform outlined in NASSP's *Breaking Ranks II* and *Breaking Ranks in the Middle*. It also echoes the call for student involvement in the National Association of Student Councils' Raising Student Voice and Participation (RSVP) project, an NASSP program offered with financial assistance from Learn and Serve America. At our 2007 national convention we distributed copies of *Growing to Greatness* and look forward to working with NYLC to obtain enough copies to distribute to all of our members.

Gerald N. Tirozzi, Ph.D.
Executive Director, National Association of Secondary School Principals

Growing to Greatness is a must-read resource for policy-makers, practitioners, and any member of the public who is interested in service-learning. It's practical, highly readable, and full of rich detail about this important and ever-changing field.

Shirley Sagawa
Author; Consultant; Former Executive Vice President,
The Corporation for National Service

Engaging young people in meaningful ways not only contributes to their healthy development, but also mobilizes them as major contributors and change agents in their communities and across the nation. By drawing together cutting-edge research and carefully documented practice, *Growing to Greatness* tells the compelling story of how service-learning is shaping the lives of young people, their schools, and their communities.

Peter L. Benson, Ph.D.
President, Search Institute

NYLC and State Farm are giving a great boost to the service-learning field with each annual publication of *Growing to Greatness*. The information is not only useful for those of us "in the business," but it provides a compelling argument for young people, educators, elected officials, parents, corporate leaders, and anybody who cares about student achievement and the health of American democracy.

Steven A. Culbertson
President and CEO, Youth Service America

Across this country our youngest citizens are stepping forward to shoulder the responsibilities of active citizenship through service-learning in ever-expanding number. Thanks to State Farm and NYLC, this pioneering movement comes to life through the pages of *Growing to Greatness*.

Harris Wofford
Former U.S. Senator, Pennsylvania; Former CEO,
Corporation for National Service



national youth leadership council Serve. Learn. Change the world.®