

Service –Learning and You... Get Engaged

Leadership Toolbox

Podcast Transcript

Centennial Student Union & Student Activities

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Greetings! My name is Denise Billington-Just, and I serve as the Assistant Director of Community Engagement on the campus of Minnesota State University, Mankato. I would like to welcome you to this podcast that will introduce you to the purpose and benefits of building service-learning experiences into your academic portfolio.

Service-learning is a teaching method that combines service to the community with classroom curriculum. It is more than community service. It is a hands-on approach to mastering subject material while fostering civic responsibility.

Service-learning provides a context for talking about learning in terms of not only what students know but also what they are able to do. Reflection is a key step in this process and helps students make the connection between classroom and community learning. Taking time to analyze the scope of the service-learning experience fosters an understanding of how each person can make a difference, affect positive change, and develop leadership skills that strengthen community.

Some of the courses offered at MSU include service-learning components. Service learning takes time, thought, attention and commitment. Students who participate in service-learning benefit

academically, professionally, and personally! Let's spend some time reviewing how!

Service-learning...

- Increases understanding of class topics.
- Provides hands-on experience that could lead to internships or career opportunities.
- Provides an opportunity to explore values and beliefs.
- Gives you an opportunity to act on what you believe is right.
- Helps develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Promotes growth in your understanding of diverse cultures and communities.
- Inspires learning about social issues, their causes and how to affect change.
- Helps identify your strengths, skills and talents while applying them in real world settings.
- Develops and enhances communication, collaboration, and leadership skills.
- Tests your skills, interests, and values in a potential career path, and helps you learn more about a field that interests you.
- Connects you with professionals and community members with whom you will learn.
- Supports growth of a professional network of people you might connect with again later for jobs or internships.
- Satisfies your urge toward public service or civic participation.

Now that you are up to speed are you ready to get started? If the answer is yes, the Office of Community Engagement is available to introduce you to on and off campus service-learning experiences. Two projects that operate on campus are known as Campus Kitchen and Mavericks READ!

Campus Kitchen develops student leadership in support of individuals throughout the Mankato area who are managing food insecurity. Minnesota State Mankato students assist in recovering nutritious, delicious food from area restaurants that is repackaged and delivered to the homes of our neighbors.

Mavericks READ supports area elementary aged children in the development of literacy skills and a love for reading. This is accomplished by hosting reading activities and events, and by cultivating school-based mentoring relationships with Minnesota State Mankato students.

If your areas of interest go beyond campus-based opportunities, we can also assist in connecting you with businesses and organizations community-wide.

If any of this is of interest to you, please stop by Student Activities in the Centennial Student Union, room 173 or call 507-389-6076 to visit with me. You can also find more information on our web site at www.mnsu.edu/engagement. Look us up today to learn more about ways to enhance your academic experience through service-learning!

This podcast was presented by Student Activities at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Find other podcasts at mnsu.edu/activities/toolbox.