



Demonstration and Celebration!

Recognize Teachers and Students For Their Service-Learning Efforts

Source: National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, May 2008

For additional resources on this and other service-learning topics visit Learn and Serve America's National Service-Learning Clearinghouse at www.servicelearning.org.



GOAL:

Recognize the commitment of students and teachers who are making a difference in their communities through service-learning and give the participants a chance to demonstrate what was accomplished during their service-learning

GETTING STARTED:

Take a moment to reflect, asking yourself how you would like to be recognized. If you were a student or teacher involved in service-learning, what would make you feel your contribution was valued? Meaningful expressions of appreciation can help reinforce the idea that service and service-learning are an core values in your community. Also remember that

1. Whatever you choose to do to recognize participants, ask community partners to participate so their voice is recognized and so they can share their sense of the authentic value of the service-learning project.
2. Contact your school's administration to propose the idea and set a date for the event.
3. The annual Learn and Serve Challenge (October 6-12, 2008) can be an especially good time for scheduling an event. See www.learnandservicechallenge.org for more information.
4. Keep it simple. To be effective, the event does not have to be extravagant or expensive. The main ingredient for success is a genuine desire to show your appreciation.

IDEAS:

1. It is important to connect the recognition celebration to the service-learning experience itself. For example, the recognition ceremony might be organized as a venue in which participants can share their experience and their own sense of accomplishment with the larger community. Remember your goal: recognition of the efforts of all those participating and a demonstration of the service-learning project's goals and outcomes.
2. If you'd like to provide participants with a token of your appreciation, be sure it is in keeping with the spirit of the project and does not take away from the value of the project in and of itself. For instance, if the service-learning project involved working on a community garden, you might recognize participants by giving a gift of a signed photo of community members taken at the new garden.
3. Hold a service-learning appreciation brunch. Have the parents and community

partners get involved. You can make invitations and serve juice, coffee, muffins, or bagels. Keep it simple, but special.

BEFORE THE EVENT:

Remember that you want to convey a two-fold message that will stick in the minds of your audience. First, you want to show appreciation for the efforts of teachers and students to make a meaningful difference in students' lives and in the life of the community. Second, you want to emphasize to audience members the authentic benefits service-learning has for all those involved by providing a venue showcasing the service-learning projects outcomes for both the community and the students.

- Contact the service-learning project's community partners and see if a representative would like to say a few words or write a letter of thanks to be read at the event.
- Call Learn and Serve America's National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (NSLC) at 1-866-245-SERV(7378) or visit our website at www.servicelearning.org to order free *Bring Learning to Life Materials* that you can hand out to attendees.
- Consider creating a commemorative program to hand out to the audience with a description of the project; a list of the students, teachers, and community partners; and quotations from participants.

DURING THE EVENT:

Just remember to show all those involved with the project that you appreciate all the time and hard work that they have put into both their service and the learning process.

RESOURCES:

[What is Service-Learning?](http://www.servicelearning.org/what_is_service-learning/index.php)

www.servicelearning.org/what_is_service-learning/index.php

[Bring Learning to Life materials](http://www.servicelearning.org/lsa/bring_learning/)

www.servicelearning.org/lsa/bring_learning/

[Resources for Parents page](http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/parents/index.php)

www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/parents/index.php

[Learn and Serve America logo](http://www.cns.gov/about/media_kit/logos.asp)

www.cns.gov/about/media_kit/logos.asp

[Recognition in Service-Learning](http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/he_facts/recognition/)

www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/he_facts/recognition/

[Why Districts, Schools, and Classrooms Should Practice Service-Learning](http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/why/)

www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/why/

[Impacts of Service-Learning on Participating K-12 Students](http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/impacts/)

www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/impacts/

[Parent & Family Involvement in K-12 Service-Learning](http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/family_k-12/)

www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/family_k-12/

[Service-Learning with Disadvantaged Youth](http://www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/disadvantaged_youth/)

www.servicelearning.org/instant_info/fact_sheets/k-12_facts/disadvantaged_youth/