G2G™

GROWING TO GREATNESS

2004

THE STATE OF SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

NYLC

National Youth Leadership Council

Serve. Learn. Change the World.™

The National Youth Leadership Council is a locally-based national and international nonprofit organization, advancing a mission of "building vital, just communities with young people through service-learning." NYLC programs reach constituents from all 50 states and more than 20 countries.

From its beginning more than 20 years ago, NYLC operations have been guided by a three-fold vision:

For young people – A belief that all young people, from elementary school ages to adulthood, are needed as providers of service and leadership to their communities, nation, and world.

For learning – That people learn in a variety of ways, and that service-learning is an effective teaching and learning philosophy and methodology, yielding measurable achievement, civic engagement, and personal/social/spiritual development outcomes.

For community – For societies to be democratic, all members — including every race, gender, faith, and age — must understand and practice the work of democracy: service, advocacy, and political engagement. Like the conversion of wind power to electricity, NYLC's wind generator logo is a metaphor for directing the strengths of young people in building their communities.

Action, Reflection: Praxis

All NYLC operations and materials are stringently evaluated and grounded in research. One-third of all full-time NYLC staff hold advanced degrees, including three senior staff who have Ph.D.s.

Along with the multi-year G2G initiative, NYLC is engaged in research-based development of service-learning approaches to AIDS.

Global Vision, Local Roots

Our vision is rooted in programs and policies originated by NYLC in Minnesota:

- Convened first in nation statewide service initiative (1984).
- Staffed, chaired, and served as member of state service commissions (1985-1992) (1995-2001).
- Convened and helped convene state service conferences (starting in 1985).
- Advanced state youth development and service legislation, and funding (1987, 1989).
- Organized statewide campus service initiatives, developed related legislation (1988-1993).

Leadership

- Convene National Service-Learning Conferences (1989-ongoing).
- Influenced federal service-learning legislation in 1990 and 1993 through congressional testimony, including authoring language for National Service-Learning Clearinghouse.
- Launched first national service-learning project funded by W.K. Kellogg Foundation (1990).
- Participant in White House conferences on philanthropy and adolescent development.
- Presented on service-learning to audiences in 14 countries.
- Lead provider of training and technical assistance for Corporation for National and Community Service (1993-2001).

- Developed "Essential Elements of Service-Learning," establishing standards for service-learning.
- Presented lead testimony for National Commission on Service-Learning.
- Co-convener, with Points of Light Foundation, of 2000 National Youth Summit.
- Edited special editions on service-learning for Phi Delta Kappan magazine (1991, 2000).
- Lead co-sponsor, with Youth Service America, of National and Global Youth Service Day.

Current Operations

- Publications, training materials, and workshops.
- National network of 400 peer consultants led by five regional centers supported by State Farm Insurance.
- New service-learning teacher certification and online courses.
- Annual weeklong summer youth leadership model in operation (since 1983).
- Active Youth Advisory Council.
- National Service-Learning Conference (2,700 people representing every state and 20 countries attended in 2003).
- Lead sponsor, with State Farm Insurance, of "Project Ignition," a national youth safe-driving media campaign and contest for high schools.
- HIV/AIDS Initiative funded by Ittleson and W.K. Kellogg Foundations.

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Acknowledgements

W e would like to thank all of those individuals and organizations that made this report possible.

The idea of engaged young people building better communities while learning was a great fit for Kathy Havens Payne at State Farm. A former teacher and school board member, Kathy knows what works in the classroom and in the larger world of young people. She and colleagues have been terrific partners in the G2G Report and in the several other service-learning initiatives State Farm sponsors with NYLC.

The articles by Shelley Billig of RMC Research, Peter Scales and Gene Roehlkepartain of Search Institute, Amy Cohen of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and Jennifer Piscatelli of the Education Commission of the States provide descriptions of service-learning's impacts on youths, their communities, and state and national policy.

We'd like to thank Rich Cairn of Cairn and Associates, and Nelda Brown, executive director of SEANet, for their work in creating state profiles. And of course, we'd like to thank the staff at the state educational agencies and the other organizations who were interviewed for the state profiles; their help was invaluable in reviewing the profiles for publication. These profiles help greatly to understand the "story" of service-learning's development for each state and illustrate examples of service-learning programming.

Larry Bailis, Alan Melchior and Thomas Shields of Brandeis University collected data and wrote profiles for the national community-based organizations. These profiles help remind us of service-learning in the larger picture and the varieties of ways that learning can take place with or without a connection to formal schooling. We would like to thank the representatives of the profiled organizations who gave so generously of their time to provide data to our researchers.

The national survey was a collaborative effort with our editorial board and carried out with the ongoing guidance of Peter Scales and Gene Roehlkepartain of Search Institute, and Larry Bailis and Alan Melchior of Brandeis University. We are most grateful to Gerald N. Tirozzi, Executive Director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and Rocco Marario, Director of Student Activities, for writing a letter of endorsement encouraging principals to complete the survey. We'd also like to thank Ellen Tenenbaum of Westat for her expert shepherding of the national survey and her stalwart corps of interviewers, which undoubtedly contributed to our remarkable response rate of 91 percent.

Within the National Youth Leadership Council, research director Dr. Marybeth Neal helped design and ably implemented the project. Megan McKinnon, project coordinator, efficiently took the larger vision and translated it into the reality of deadlines, contracts, and editing final versions. Maddy Wegner, director of publications, also contributed her editorial skills to this project, for which we are very grateful.

Lastly, I'd like to thank our editorial board for their encouragement and support of this project. As we look forward in this multi-year project, we hope to build on this sense of community, uniting around our common concern to document the scope, scale, and quality of service-learning with care and rigor.

James C. Kielsmeier, Ph.D.
President/CEO, NYLC
Project Director, G2G

Dear Reader:

State Farm® and the State Farm Companies Foundation are very pleased to introduce Growing to Greatness, the 2004 annual State of Service-Learning Report.

Documentation of service-learning, where it has been, where it is currently and explorations of how it might proceed into the future can guide us in helping to build strong communities where citizens of all ages are engaged as active contributors to the common good. As the leading provider of auto, boat and home insurance and as a leader in life and financial services, State Farm® is very interested in building such a positive future.

We are excited and inspired for what we see here in the first report from this multi-year project. The recently completed National Survey of K-12 School Principals, with its remarkable 91 percent response rate, will be a rich trove of data for many years to come. The percentages of schools with community service and service-learning indicate that these strategies for improved civic engagement, academic achievement and positive youth development are holding their own despite budgetary cutbacks in schools. For the schools with service-learning, 50 percent of principals reported an increase in service-learning at their schools over the past five years, while only four percent reported a decrease.

The article by Billig relates the most recent research on service-learning impacts. The article by Scales and Roehlkepartain documents the central importance of service-learning as a "gateway" aspect, which, if present in the lives of our youths, helps bring about other positive assets that contribute to healthy youth development in a democratic society. The policy scan by the Education Commission of the States reveals promising developments in the area of state policies.

The article on Learn and Serve America, and the state and national profiles tell the story of deepening service-learning practice and suggests the variety of possibilities that exist for service-learning programming. A glossary at the end, resources and reference to the Essential Elements of Service-Learning for Effective Practice and Organizational Support will help this report become a convenient and hopefully inspiring reference work for your nearest bookshelf!

State Farm Companies Foundation and the associates and agents of State Farm share this vision and are proud to sponsor the National Youth Leadership Council in this project.

Sincerely,

Kathy Payne

Kathy Payne
Public Affairs Manager – Education Excellence
State Farm Insurance

"I thank State Farm for their wisdom and foresight in funding this project. I encourage all readers to join together to create future reports documenting this powerful strategy for teaching and learning."

–Senator John Glenn
Chair, National Commission
on Service-Learning

Foreword

This year, as we celebrate Dr. King's 75th birthday and reflect upon the 50th anniversary of the historic Brown vs. Board of Education legal case, let us recommit ourselves to the creation of the "beloved community" to which Dr. King devoted his life. The service-learning field is indeed "Growing to Greatness." In so doing, all of us are helping to ensure that the day soon comes when Dr. King's belief that "everybody can be great because everybody can serve" is a belief shared by all.

~Anthony Welch, Chair,
National Service-Learning Partnership

Growing Hope

Growing to Greatness 2004 presents tangible evidence of an emergent way of thinking about and engaging young people that is taking hold across the nation — and beyond. Needed and recognized as contributing members of society, young people are responding to the call to serve and learn as part of schools, colleges, and all manner of community- based organizations. Growing evidence, shared by several disciplines and collected across a diverse range of settings, documents young people actively learning and making real differences in communities.

A primary catalyst for this dramatic shift in our understanding of youth is service-learning, a strategy for engaging students in useful service linked to learning objectives. Annual G2G reports will capture the scope and scale of young people contributing and learning through service-learning, civic engagement, character education, and youth development approaches.

Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s words and life, G2G documents the capacity of all youths to be great — to serve, learn and change the world. A season of service, learning and leadership has been inaugurated by recent generations of young people. This is their story — bringing to life King's definition of greatness and hope for the world.

Why G2G?

G2G is a counterpoint to our preoccupation with expecting the worst from young people and measuring only their inadequacies. Too often the media spin on young people is that they just don't "measure up." Adolescent, juvenile, teenager – words freighted with negative baggage suggest that to be young is to be incomplete or a problem to society. Academic test results highlight youth deficiencies or achievement gaps between groups. Top-line indicators of health predominantly underscore youths' use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.

Every pre-modern youth generation once had a clearly defined transition period from childhood to full adult responsibility. In contrast, schooling today fills time for most young people, but not their need for engaged learning and useful, contributing roles. Disengaged from school, marginalized in dead-end jobs, too many young people turn to outlets yielding short-term gratification and long-term pain.

The modern service and service-learning movement is a response to the loss of meaning, alienation, and lackluster learning many young people experience in schools and work settings. Two decades of focused service-learning and youth development advocacy, research and program growth have had an impact — but we are far from our goal of engaging all young people as contributing members of society. G2G reports and ongoing data collection will begin to capture what we know about service-learning for the purpose of expanding program practice and quality.

G2G is grounded on the premise that all young people are — or can become — contributing members of society, and what they contribute and how they learn while serving needs to be widely documented, understood, and valued. We are interested in factors that encourage effective service-learning practices; hence, we will have an annual focus on what we are learning through local and national research on service-learning. (For more information on the rationale for G2G, see the special report of the Generator, Spring 2003, available at: www.nylc.org and inside back cover, this issue).

Service-Learning: An Ecological Approach

Service-learning is a distinctive *philosophy, way of teaching*, and *community development strategy* dependent on a variety of surrounding variables. Like plant communities that depend on an abundance of water, soil nutrients, and light to thrive, service-learning requires a community of support. Funding availability, the climate of volunteerism for all age groups, opportunities for volunteer community service, supportive school/organizational policies — all are indicators of the health of service-learning.

G2G 2004, for example, includes a summary article on the activities of the Learn and Serve Program of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the largest single service-learning funding source. How CNCS fares is a major predictor of future practice. Similarly we looked at policies that support service-learning through an ECS policy scan, and asked questions about community service on the National Principals Survey.

The Future of G2G

Annual reports will be released along with a cumulative online record of data collected. For example, the April 2003 Introduction (*Generator* Vol. 21, No. 3) to G2G 2004 is currently online. This year's full report will also be available online and printed copies are available through NYLC.

A distinctive national survey such as the 2004 Principal Survey is planned for each year (see Kielsmeier, Scales, Roehlkepartain, and Neal, this issue). We also anticipate articles on service-learning in various contexts, such as faith communities, higher education, and international locales.

G2G is grounded on the premise that all young people are — or can become — contributing members of society, and what they contribute and how they learn while serving needs to be widely documented, understood, and valued.

We are looking ahead to measurement of the specific impact that young people are having on their communities: Can we document that tutoring improves achievement? Can we make a correlation between students' participation in service-learning and their likelihood of voting and/or volunteering in political campaigns? We will try.

We Need You

For service-learning and the community of related factors to thrive, young people need to be understood as change agents and builders of civil society as creators of their own learning and development. To tell this story in the years ahead we need your help now!

Please read and respond to this report with a critical eye. Tell us where we need to add examples of exemplary programs or where related research on the contributions of young people is documented. We are eager to report on the range of community and school district surveys showing how youths are "growing to greatness."

To reach GTG staff at NYLC, please contact mneal@nylc.org.

Jim Kielsmeier
Saint Paul, Minnesota
March 2004

Community Service
and Service-Learning in Public Schools

James C. Kielsmeier, Ph.D., Peter C. Scales, Ph.D., Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, and Marybeth Neal, Ph.D.

Study at a Glance

This nationally representative study of principals and other administrators in K-12 public schools in the United States in January 2004 found the following:

- 69 percent of K-12 public schools engage students in community service, reaching an estimated 15 million students.

- 30 percent of K-12 public schools engage students in service-learning, reaching an estimated 4.5 million students.

- 9 out of 10 principals in schools that offer service-learning say that it has a positive impact on students' civic engagement, personal and social development, and school-community partnerships.

- Principals in schools with service-learning in low-income communities are more likely than principals in other schools with service-learning to say that it positively affects students' academic achievement and school engagement.

- 8 out of 10 principals in schools that offer service-learning say that it has a positive impact on academic achievement, teacher satisfaction, school climate, school engagement, and community's view of youth as resources.

Despite financial pressures and pressures to focus on core subjects, public schools continue to engage millions of young people in service to others. Schools that use "service-learning" as a strategy see a wide range of positive benefits for the students, the schools, and their broader communities.

These are preliminary findings from a National Youth Leadership Council study of 1,799 school principals[1] in a nationally representative sample of public elementary, middle, and high schools in January and February 2004. (See Display 1 for more details.) The study examines the scope and nature of community service and service-learning in U. S. public schools, highlighting the potential and challenges of engaging young people as resources through schools. (Further analysis and information is available at www.nylc.org.)

Community Service and Service-Learning Engage Millions of Students

Based on this new study, we estimate that roughly 56,000 U.S. public K-12 schools (out of approximately 84,000 public schools) currently engage about 15 million students in community service. Furthermore, we estimate that roughly 23,000 public schools offer service-learning projects and programs, engaging roughly 4.5 million K-12 students in some form of curriculum-based service.[2] Thus, community service has become

a widespread practice and expectation in U.S. schools, and service-learning has a solid base of committed schools and educators.

Our study found that 69 percent of public schools involve students in community service projects (Figure 1), which this study defined as service or volunteer activities that are "*non-curriculum-based* and are recognized by and/or arranged through the school." These levels of involvement are consistent with the patterns found in a 1999 federal study (Skinner & Chapman, 1999). At that time, 64 percent of all schools provided community service opportunities for students.

By cultivating young people's community involvement, community service sets the stage for more intentional integration of service into the curriculum through service-learning. Our study defined service-learning as "*curriculum-based* community service done through the schools that integrates classroom instruction with community service activities." About one-third of schools (30 percent) currently engage their students in service-learning, a level that is consistent with the 1999 study (Figure 1). However, this new study does point to meaningful declines in both community service and service-learning opportunities in middle schools.

As part of its Growing to Greatness service-learning initiative, National Youth Leadership Council commissioned Westat, Inc. (in consultation with Search Institute and Brandeis University), to conduct a national study of community service and service-learning in U.S. elementary, middle, and high schools. The survey was made possible with the generous support of the State Farm Companies Foundation, which seeks to build strong communities by engaging all citizens — young and old — as active contributors to the common good.

Ellen Tenenbaum served as the project manager for Westat. The sample and survey were designed for comparability to the national survey of service and service-learning conducted by Westat for the U.S. Department of Education in 1999. (See Skinner & Chapman, 1999.)

In January 2004, surveys were mailed to principals of 2,002 public K-12 schools. Data were collected by mail or follow-up telephone interviews through mid-February 2004. In all, 1,799 schools participated, representing a remarkable 91 percent response rate. Forty-seven percent of participating schools were elementary schools, 26 percent were middle schools, and 28 percent were high schools. Principals responded for 52 percent of the schools, with the rest of the sample composed mostly of counselors, assistant principals, and teachers. Only 1 percent of the respondents were service-learning directors or specialists.

More complete information on the study and its findings will be available in a detailed report, which will be posted on www.nylc.org.

Figure 1

Trends in Use of Community Service and Service-Learning in U.S. Public Schools

Percentages of school principals who say their school offers community service and service-learning.
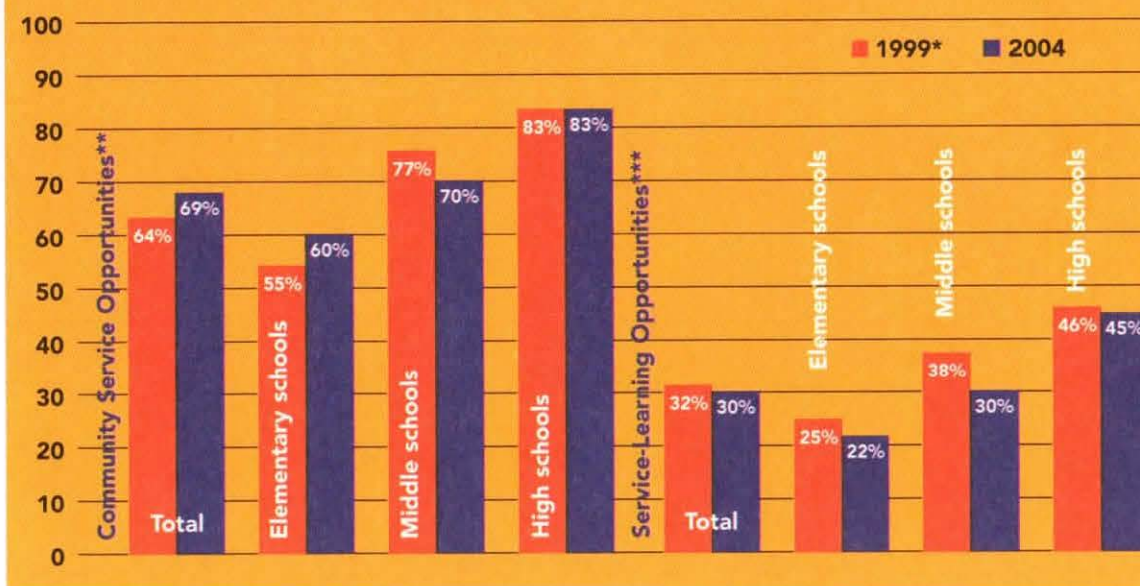
*   From Skinner, R., & Chapman, C. (1999). Service-learning and community service in K-12 public schools. *National Center for Education Statistics: Statistics in Brief* (NCES 1999-043). Available at http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=1999043.
** Community service was defined in this study as follows: "Community service activities that are *non-curriculum-based* and are recognized by and/or arranged through the school."
*** Service-learning was defined in this study as follows: "*Curriculum-based* community service done through the schools that integrates classroom instruction with community service activities."

Maintaining their commitment to community service and service-learning in the midst of major budget cuts, a focus on "basic" subjects and teaching approaches, and required standards of learning attests to the staying power of community service and service-learning in the life and mission of today's schools. (Further analyses are underway to determine the extent to which principals see current trends in education as supporting or hindering engagement in service-learning.)

Principals See Many Benefits of Service-Learning

One of the reasons for the staying power of service-learning is likely the wide-ranging

Community Service and Service-Learning in Public Schools

benefits that principals see resulting from service-learning — benefits that address specific challenges and priorities faced by today's schools. The survey asked principals who report having service-learning in their school whether it has a very positive, somewhat positive, or little or no positive impact on various student and school outcomes (Figure 2). The vast majority of principals believe that service-learning has a very or somewhat positive impact on all 10 outcomes (including students' academic achievement), with the highest impact being on students' citizenship, personal and social development, and school-community relationships. While these findings are based on principals' perceptions of benefits, they are consistent with a wide range of research showing the positive impact of service-learning on students, schools, and communities (see Billig, this issue; and Scales & Roehlkepartain, this issue).

Low-Income Schools Offer Less Service-Learning, But See Greater Benefits

In a time when schools are being held particularly accountable for engaging low-income students, it is important to examine the utilization of service-learning — and its perceived benefit — in schools serving low-income students. While schools serving mostly low-income students[3] are less likely to use service-learning (29 percent of these schools offer service-learning, compared to 36 percent of other schools), those that do tend to see greater positive impact on their students than do schools serving students from higher-income levels.

Low-income schools that do offer service-learning tend to see a greater impact on students than other schools in student achievement and school engagement, as shown in Table 1. If these perceptions are accurate, they suggest that service-learning could be an important strategy for addressing these key priorities connected to the federal No Child Left Behind education initiative.

Quality of Service-Learning Programs Is Mixed

Despite the "critical mass" of schools engaging students in service-learning and the perceived positive impact of those efforts, many questions remain about the quality of those experiences in schools. The field of service-learning has identified

Figure 2

Service-Learning Perceived to Have a Broad, Positive Impact

Principals in schools with service-learning who say it has a very or somewhat positive impact in each area.

	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Very and Somewhat Combined
Students' citzenship/ civic engagement	61%	31%	92%
School-community relationships	60%	31%	91%
Students' personal and social development	58%	33%	91%
School climate	45%	43%	88%
School engagement	44%	44%	88%
Community's view of youth as resources	49%	37%	85%
Teacher satisfaction	42%	43%	85%
Academic achievement	32%	51%	83%
Attendance	34%	40%	74%
Parent involvement	26%	45%	71%

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

several critical principles for effective practice (see, for example, National Youth Leadership Council, 1999), yet most schools that say they are doing service-learning are not meeting many of these standards.

For example, most schools that do service-learning say they primarily offer one-time events (80 percent) or projects that last less than one month (76 percent). Longer events — which are central to a more intentional service-learning approach — are much less common. Furthermore, only a minority of schools (36 percent) that do service-learning have student participation in performing needs assessments to identify possible projects — a type of student participation that is considered foundational to effective service-learning. Further analysis will explore these dynamics more fully, but they point to ongoing needs for staff development and institutional commitment to doing service-learning effectively.

Little Funding, Infrastructure Available to Support Service-Learning

Despite the perceived value and impact of service-learning, it appears that most schools that offer service-learning have relatively little dedicated financial support, coordinating personnel, teacher training, or incentives to support their programs and projects. Indeed, it appears that financial support for service-learning has declined significantly in the past five years. Some evidence of this lack of infrastructure support includes the following:

• Two-thirds of school principals (66 percent) in schools that offer service-learning say

Table 1

Higher Impact Perceived in Low-Income Schools

Percent of principals in schools that offer service-learning who say it has a "very positive" impact on each outcome area, by the average poverty level of the students the school serves.

Areas of Impact**	Schools Poverty Level*		
	Low	Moderate	High
Students' academic achievement	32%	28%	43%
School engagement	49%	40%	54%

* Low poverty: 0-24 percent of students are eligible for free- or reduced-price lunches. Moderate poverty: 25 percent to 54 percent of students are eligible. High poverty: 55 percent or more students are eligible.

** Differences on other areas of impact were either not statistically significant or were only marginally significant, making them not meaningful due to small sample sizes.

Community Service and Service-Learning in Public Schools

neither their school nor their district has a written policy encouraging or requiring service-learning.

• Only 15 percent of schools that offer service-learning have a part-time service-learning coordinator at the school or district level, and only nine percent have a full-time coordinator.

• Some financial help is available within about half of the schools that offer service-learning. Mini-grants for service-learning programs or curriculum development are available in 49 percent of schools, and 51 percent of schools have funds available to offset the costs of service-learning projects or programs.

• Sixty percent of schools or districts that have service-learning support teachers in attending service-learning training or conferences outside of school. However, only 34 percent of schools with service-learning have sponsored in-service training in service-learning at the school or district level in the past three years.

• Very few schools make structural changes that facilitate more effective service-learning. For example, only 14 percent of schools that offer service-learning reduce course loads for teachers so that they can develop or supervise service-learning, and only 17 percent offer extra planning time for service-learning activities.

• Only about one in four schools track basic data on the scope of their service-learning efforts — much less its relationship to key areas of accountability, which makes it much more difficult to make the case for service-learning as a core educational strategy and priority.

Capitalizing on Widespread Support and a Core Leadership Base

This study reaffirms the potential and power of service-learning as a strategy for simultaneously engaging young people in civic and community life, promoting their healthy development, and strengthening their education. It reveals a core of school leaders who believe strongly in the

> This study reaffirms the potential and power of service-learning as a strategy for simultaneously engaging young people in civic and community life, promoting their healthy development, and strengthening their education.

importance and power of service-learning — even in the face of pressure to focus time and resources elsewhere.

The potential for service-learning becomes even clearer when these findings are paired with the 2000 Roper Starch Worldwide survey of American adults. That study found that nine out of 10

American adults would support service-learning in their local schools — though only about one-third of the adults were previously familiar with the concept. In addition, parents with students in schools are most supportive (Roper Starch Worldwide, 2000).

Despite the consistent evidence of support for student engagement in community service and service-learning, the study highlights two critical challenges. The first is the challenge of expanding service-learning beyond the core group of one-in-three schools that offer students these opportunities to serve and learn — a level that has remained unchanged across the past five years. The second challenge lies in strengthening service-learning's infrastructures, supports, and effective implementation so that it can spread within and beyond these schools to become an integral, sustainable commitment of schools.

These findings only begin to reveal the learning that will emerge from this new study. Among other things, additional analyses will examine differences across different grade levels of schools, variations across different sizes of schools, barriers to service-learning implementation, available infrastructures and supports in schools, and additional insights based on the economic realities of students being served.

As this wealth of learning enters the dialogue of educators, service-learning advocates, policy-makers, and community members, these insights will, we hope, stimulate more educators to embrace service-learning as a powerful strategy for enhancing student achievement and engagement.

Even more important, we hope that it helps to fuel a broad and deep commitment to recognizing and engaging young people as positive resources for communities — and their first steps in being engaged, active, contributing citizens for the nation and world. G2G

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1. Half of the respondents (52%) were principals, with counselors, office secretaries, assistant principals, teachers, and others together making up the remainder of the sample. For simplicity, we refer to the total sample as "principals" in this article, since each person completed the survey at the request of the principal.

2. These estimates are derived from this study's findings and statistics from the U.S. Department of Education on the number and average size of public elementary, middle, and high schools in the United States (Hoffman, 2003).

3. For this analysis, we grouped schools into three groups based on the principal's estimate of the percentage of students who are eligible for the federal free- or reduced-price lunch program (a standard indicator of poverty). Low-income schools were those with 55% or more of their students qualifying for this federal program.

Heads, Hearts, and Hands:
The Research on K-12 Service-Learning

Shelley H. Billig, Ph.D., RMC Research Corporation, Denver

If you were going on a weight-loss diet, as so many of us have, you would ask a few hard questions about any program that a friend or physician suggested. First, you would want to know what the diet is ("Atkins? South Beach? What's that?"). Next, you would want to know if it works ("How much weight have people lost on that diet? Really?!"). Finally, you might ask, "What do I need to do to make it work best?" – Or perhaps, "How do I know it will work for me?" (e.g., "I don't like some of these foods. What should I do?" "But what if I'm traveling? Then what do I do?" or "I don't eat meat. What about me?") There are probably lots of other questions you might ask, but these are most likely the big three.

So it goes with service-learning. If you call an educator, parent, or policy-maker who does not know anything about service-learning, but cares about education, they will probably ask you the same three questions:

- What is it? (the "it" is service-learning);
- Does it work? Does it produce the outcomes we are seeking?
- What does it take to make it work best? (And/or, will it work for me?)

In this article, the research on service-learning that has been completed in the past few years will be summarized. The article will show how educators, researchers, and the general public have begun to define the "it," that is, the essence of service-learning. It will address how the research has begun to converge on the effects that service-learning appears to have on students in three domains: cognitive ("heads"), affective ("hearts"), and behavioral ("hands"), along with effects on schools and communities. Finally, the article will look at what the research has begun to discover on the aspects of quality programming. That is, what do we want to do within the experience of service-learning that helps us to maximize outcomes? More plainly, how to make it work best? The paper will culminate in a discussion about the conditions under which different "quality indicators" matter. (How can I make it work best for me?) As you will discover, none of these issues is easy, but the research community is beginning to make headway. In addition, researchers are recognizing how important it is for their work to be translated into advice for service-learning programs. This article will attempt to do that, too.

Definitions of Service-Learning

Over the past several years, the literature shows that there is still some misunderstanding among researchers, the general public, and even practitioners of what service-learning *is* and *is not*. The biggest confusion appears to lie in the distinctions between service-learning and community service.

Confusion Between Community Service and Service-Learning. Pritchard (2002) provided both insight and data to help draw the distinctions between the concepts and to shed light on current practice in the United States. He analyzed three data sets: the 1999 U. S. Department of Education study that examined prevalence of community service and service-learning in public schools in the United States, the "Service-Learning Survey" that examined prevalence in private schools, and the 1999 National Household Education Survey that examined prevalence in both types of schools.

These surveys showed that at least some students in 68 percent of all public schools, and in 88 percent of all private schools, participated in either service or service-learning. Rates were lowest in elementary schools and highest in high schools. In terms of student participation, the National Household Education Survey showed that over half of the public school students in the sample were found to participate in service or service-learning and that the percentages of private school students that participated were even higher. Of those who said they provided service, about half said they participated in service-learning. The conclusion was that

about *one quarter of all students* participate in service-learning and about *three-quarters of all schools* participate in service-learning.

Pritchard (2002), however, goes on to show that these statistics may be a little misleading since they are based on different definitions of community service and service-learning. In the survey of public schools administrators, for example, Pritchard reported that when respondents were asked to use a definition of service-learning that included clearly identified learning objectives, student involvement in selecting or designing the service activity, a theoretical base, integration of service with academic curriculum, and student reflection, the *percentage reporting that their schools were engaged in service-learning fell to 32 percent.*

In the private school study, respondents were asked to say whether they were engaged in service or service-learning, but no definitions were given. In that study, only 9 percent described their programs as service-learning. Surprisingly, though, a large number who said that they were engaged in community service and not service-learning said that the community service included curricular integration (62 percent); connection to an academic class (26 percent); student reflection (61 percent); and students designing service projects (61 percent).

Same activities, same emphasis. Another indicator that the two concepts were being confused with each other was the way in which activities were described as either community service or service-learning. The activity lists were nearly identical

for the two terms. Whether their programs were called community service or service-learning, most students engaged in tutoring, providing companionship, working on environmental issues, and distributing food or other goods. In both types, educators focus on the relationship between the community and the student service provider.

Different objectives. The objectives identified for the activity, however, differed somewhat, but only among administrators. Community service activities were more often associated with civic engagement and caring/altruism while service-learning was more often connected to learning critical thinking skills, problem-solving, and other cognitive or academic outcomes.

Other researchers have found similar results when examining the varieties of objectives associated with service-learning. Ammon (2002), for example, studied service-learning implementation among teachers in California. While all of the

teachers called their approach "service-learning," there were sizable variations in learning objectives, activities, program components, and teacher roles. In her study, more teachers mentioned application of disciplinary knowledge and awareness of social or civic issues as being part of the defining characteristics of service-learning. These teachers tended to be less focused on social/personal development and career development skills. However, there were 29 different categories of objectives that were identified. Probing these results, she found that the design and implementation of service-learning activities appeared to be influenced by:

• The clarity and specificity of teachers' goals;

• The degree to which the goals were discussed with students;

• The roles established for teachers and students; and

• The connection with activities and content in specific curricular areas.

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Conclusion. These analyses by Pritchard and Ammon shed some light on the variations in definitions apparent among different stakeholder groups. A quick scan of the research literature affirms this result: practitioners, policy-makers, and researchers simply do not define service-learning in consistent ways. *So the answer to the question, "What is service-learning?" appears to vary depending upon whom you ask.*

Effects of Service-Learning on Participating Students

In 2000, a summary of the research literature (Billig, 2000) showed that the evidence of the positive effect of service-learning on participating students was beginning to build in four areas:

- *Academic or cognitive domains* — that is, what students were learning in terms of content or higher-order thinking skills as a result of their participation;

- *Civic domains* — that is, connection to society and community;

- *Personal/social domains* — that is, personal and interpersonal development in areas such as youth empowerment, respect for diversity, self-confidence, and avoidance of risk behaviors; and

- *Career exploration skills* — such as knowledge of career pathways and workplace literacy.

The results summarized in that article have found a good deal of support in more recent studies that have been conducted. New studies in each of these domains will be summarized next.

Cognitive/academic impact ("heads")

Because service-learning generally occurs within the school environment, there is great interest in identifying the academic or cognitive outcomes of participation. The emphasis on this aspect of service-learning has grown in the current educational context that strongly stresses school accountability and standards-based education. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has been shown to have a strong impact on schools and instructional decision making through its accountability provisions (Hess, 2003), especially in terms of the relative emphasis of content area instruction (with a heavier emphasis on reading/language arts and mathematics) and on the need to devote less time to subjects that are not considered to be part of the core curriculum. However, many schools and school districts (see, e.g., Berman, 2000; Education Commission of the States, 2001) have embraced service-learning as a key part of their educational reform efforts, either as a strategy for cognitive development, for revitalizing the civic mission of schools, or for helping to develop character and other traits.

There are still only a limited number of studies that have been conducted to show the academic impact of service-learning, though there are more that are underway. The few studies that have been performed have promising results.

Michigan Learn and Serve Study: A study of Michigan Learn and Serve sites conducted by RMC Research (Billig & Klute, 2003; Klute & Billig, 2002) examined the impact of participation on students' school engagement and on performance on the state assessment, the Michigan

Educational Assessment Program (MEAP). Survey responses on school engagement scales, and test scores of students who were engaged in service-learning, were compared with a group of students from similar sites who did not participate in service-learning. The study had 1,988 student respondents, 1,437 of which participated in service-learning. Teachers who facilitated service-learning activities also responded to a survey to determine the service-learning content and quality.

Results from this Michigan study showed that service-learning students in Grades 7–12 were more engaged cognitively in English language arts than comparison students. No differences were found in other areas of affective or cognitive engagement, and service-learning students were behaviorally less engaged than comparison students (e.g., paying attention in class and turning homework in on time). For younger students, Grades 2–5, there were statistically significant differences in all aspects of cognitive engagement, with service-learning students more engaged than their nonparticipating peers. This meant that service-learning students were more likely to pay attention to schoolwork, concentrate hard on learning, and try as hard as they could in class.

The study also showed that service-learning was positively associated with test scores on the MEAP for students in the fifth grade. Compared to nonparticipating students, statistical tests show that service-learning students scored significantly higher on the writing test, the total social studies score, and three of the social studies strand scores: historical perspective, geographic perspective, and inquiry/decision-making. The differences in test

scores between the two groups also approached positive statistical significance on the earth science test. No significant differences were found among students at the other grade levels tested.

Philadelphia Need in Deed Study: In another study by RMC Research, 6th-grade students who participated in Need in Deed, a service-learning programmatic approach that was implemented in Philadelphia, were found to have statistically significantly higher test scores on the Terra Nova, a standardized test, in the areas of language arts and science. The same effects were not found, however, for 4th- and 8th-grade participants. Qualitative data revealed that some of the differences might be explained by the content of the service-learning activities and the quality of the service-learning experiences.

California Comparison Study: A study by Furco (2002) compared high school students who participated in service-learning with students who performed community service, those who engaged in service-based internships, and those who performed no service at all. The study addressed several domains, one of which was academic. For this study, academic outcomes were defined in terms of mastery of course content, thinking and problem-solving skills, and attitudes toward learning. Data analysis showed that students engaged in any type of service had significantly higher scores on surveys that measured attitude toward school, though some of the differences may be explained by gender and school site (where students generally were more negative). The service-learning group scored

higher in all of the academic measures, though significant differences were only found between the service-learning condition and the "no-service" condition, and not between service-learning and community service or service-based internships. Ammon, Furco, Chi, and Middaugh (2001) found that the factors that seemed to be related to higher academic impacts were clarity

> Service-Learning, then, does appear to have a positive impact on students' "heads," helping them to engage cognitively in school and score higher in certain content areas on state tests.

of academic goals, clear connections between goals and activities, reasonable scope, and support through focused reflection activities.

New England CO-SEED Sites: RMC Research (Klute, 2002) studied four sites in three New England states to determine the impact of participation in CO-SEED, an environmental

stewardship service-learning program, on state achievement scores. The analysis showed that New Hampshire students in the sixth grade had significantly higher achievement scores on the state assessments in the areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies than their past averages. No differences were found for 3rd-grade students. Vermont 6th-grade participants also scored slightly higher and 2nd-grade students scored much higher in reading and word analysis. No other differences were found. The author suggested that the differences in outcome might have been related to the degree of quality implementation at the sites. There was also a general lack of agreement with a survey item that asked whether participation in projects related to the environment would help increase scores on standardized achievement tests.

Alternative Schools Studies: Two studies were performed with alternative school students as the primary respondents of the study. Laird and Black (2002a) compared the academic outcomes of students in an alternative school in Michigan that implemented the Literacy Corps, a service-learning tutoring program, with students who were on the waiting list for the alternative school. Literacy Corps participants had statistically significant positive differences from non-participants in overall grade-point average, English grades, and math grades, and slightly higher scores on the MEAP in science. Kraft and Wheeler (2003) interviewed students and tracked achievement of students in a Kansas alternative school. Qualitative data showed a strong difference over time in attitude toward school and learning, and positive increases on a six-trait

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writing assessment, changes in scores on a set of reading level indicators, and grade-point averages. No comparison groups or baseline measures were used, however.

Study of "At-Risk" Students: Hecht (2002) conducted a study of Delaware students who were educationally "at risk" because they were retained or administratively assigned to seventh or eighth grade. These students read to pre-schoolers at a local community center as part of their English language arts class. In interviews, observations, and document reviews, Hecht demonstrated that students who engaged in service-learning found unexpected enjoyment and fun in their participation. All students described the program in positive terms, showing that service-learning appeared to increase their engagement in school.

Waianae, Hawaii, Study: Billig and Meyer (2002) and Billig, Meyer, and Hofschire (2003) conducted research on the Hawaiian Studies Program in Waianae, Hawaii. Students in this program engaged in a variety of service-learning rotations that focused on connecting them with the community and their cultural heritage. Compared to their peers at the same schools, service-learning participants were statistically significantly more likely to think school was stimulating. At the "trend level," they were also more likely to say that school was interesting and fun. In focus groups, these students most often said that their participation resulted in learning practical knowledge and skills, and learning about the Hawaiian culture.

Flint, Michigan, Study: A study by Smartworks Incorporated (n.d.) surveyed service-learning students in Flint, Michigan, in Grades 3, 5, 8, and 10 about their learning. More than two-thirds reported that their participation helped them understand what they were learning in school and improved their academic achievement.

Other Studies of Impact of Participation on Grade-Point Averages and Perceived Learning

Several other studies showed the impact of participation on grade-point averages and general ratings of young people's learning. Surveys of Learn and Serve participants in Wisconsin (Kirkham, 2001) found that 97.9 percent of teachers who offer service-learning said that students learned more than what they would have learned through regular instruction. Nearly half (46.4 percent) reported that students' grades improved and 35.8 percent reported that absenteeism decreased. High school students who participated generally affirmed these findings. On a survey, 77 percent said that they acquired new skills, knowledge, and interests; 67 percent reported that they gained a broader understanding of people and places; and 62 percent said they had a better understanding of the community and how it works. In their evaluation of KIDS Consortium, Ritchie and Walters (2003) showed that both middle and high school students had statistically significant increases in their motivation to learn, putting forth the necessary effort to reach a goal, and understanding of everyday life. Melchior and Bailis (2002) found that Learn and Serve participants had strong impacts on school engagement and math scores. Scales, Blyth, Berkas, and Kielsmeier (2000) found that service-learning students talked more with their parents about

school than did control students, but reported no other differences on achievement variables between the service-learning and control groups unless dimensions such as the amount of reflection were taken into account.

Studies of Student Problem-Solving: Three studies were conducted that examined the impact of service-learning on students' problem-solving abilities and cognitive complexities. The studies, conducted by RMC Research in Philadelphia, Denver, and Waianae, Hawaii, examined the degree to which students changed in the way they understood and tried to solve community problems as posed in scenarios on essay prompts. Repeated "measures analysis" was performed and in each case, strong positive results were found among the students. After engaging in service-learning, students were much more apt to view social or community problems as systemic rather than personal, become more action oriented in their solutions, pose more solutions, and advance more realistic solutions. In the Hawaiian study, students also were more likely to become more empathic and take a deeper, more analytic approach to the problems. In the Philadelphia study, the younger children had stronger results than older students.

Conclusion (Heads Up): While there are still too few studies on the academic impact of participation in service-learning, the trend revealed by these studies is generally positive. Students who participated in service-learning were found to have scored higher than non-participating students in several studies, particularly in social studies, writing, and English/language arts. They were found to be more cognitively engaged and to be more

motivated to learn. Studies show great promise for service-learning as an avenue for increasing achievement among alternative school students and other students considered "at risk" of school failure. Studies on school engagement generally show that service-learning students are more cognitively engaged in school, but not necessarily more engaged behaviorally. Studies of students' problem-solving abilities show strong increases in cognitive complexity and other related aspects of problem-solving. Service-learning, then, does appear to have a positive impact on students' "heads," helping them to engage cognitively in school and score higher in certain content areas on state tests. Some of these outcomes are mediated by the quality of the program, to be discussed later in this article.

### Civic/citizenship impact ("hands")

Recent evidence suggests that there is a growing problem of civic disengagement among youths in the United States, particularly those currently in high schools. Young people in high school report having little interest in civic and political affairs and little knowledge of, or trust in, the political system (Levine & Lopez, 2002; National Commission on Service-Learning, 2002; Torney-Purta, 2002). Results from a recent poll indicate that many young people do not feel they can make a difference, solve problems in their communities, or have a meaningful impact on politics or government (Lake Snell Perry & Associates & The Tarrance Group, Inc, 2002). Young people do not vote in percentages equal to those in earlier generations (Levine & Lopez, 2002) and they are not connected to political life in the same ways as those in the past (Flanagan,

2004; Kahne & Westheimer, 2002; Levine & Lopez, 2002). Policy-makers and educational leaders alike have noted the woeful lack of interest in civic activities among youth and express concern about the future of democracy (for example; Education Commission of the States, 2002; National Commission on Service-Learning, 2002).

The 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) confirms that young people are not knowledgeable about many of the social and political institutions that govern American life. This national assessment measured:

- Student knowledge of government and society;
- Intellectual and participatory skills — including the ability to identify and describe, explain and analyze; and evaluate, take, and defend a position; and
- Civic dispositions, such as willingness to become an independent member of society; assuming personal, political, and economic responsibilities of citizenship, respecting individual worth and human dignity; participating in civic affairs in an informed, thoughtful, and effective manner; and promoting the healthy functioning of American constitutional democracy.

Results showed that 65 percent of 12th-grade students scored at the basic level, 26 percent at the proficient level, and four percent at the advanced level. Those who scored the lowest were from schools with high poverty.
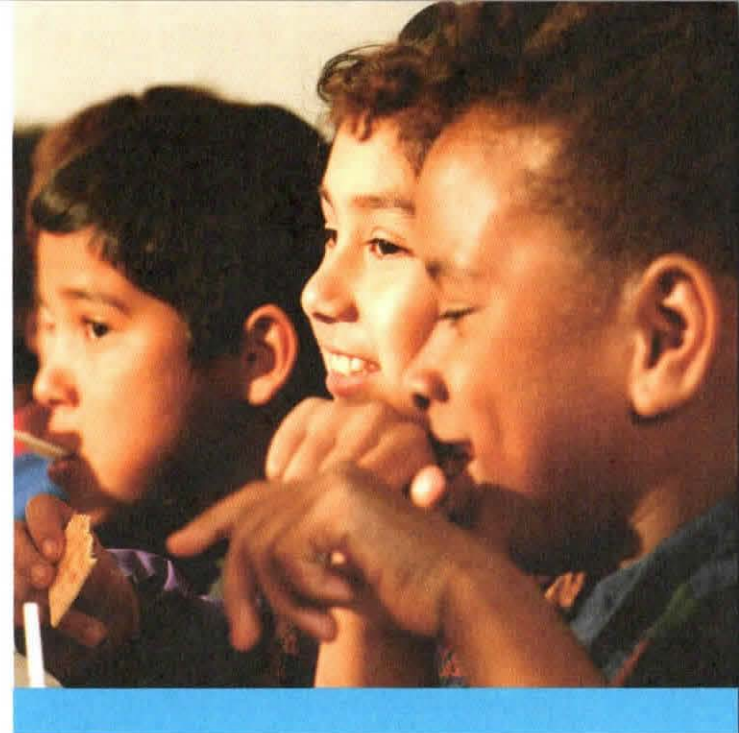
Interestingly, this decline in civic engagement has been paralleled by an increase in volunteerism by young people. Studies estimate that over half of young people participate in voluntary service (Skinner & Chapman, 1999). As Putnam (2000) optimistically remarked, "A wide range of evidence . . . suggests that young Americans in the 1990s displayed a commitment to volunteerism without parallel among their immediate predecessors. This development is the most promising sign of any that I have discovered that America might be on the cusp of a new period of civic renewal, especially if this youthful volunteerism persists into adulthood and begins to expand beyond individual caregiving to broader engagement with social and political issues" (p. 13).

The 2003 publication of the "Civic Mission of Schools" (Carnegie Corporation of New York & CIRCLE, 2002) along with the "National Commission on Service-Learning Report,"

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(2002) stimulated or at least re-energized the national debate on the need for schools to play a stronger role in preparing young people for rights and responsibilities associated with U.S. democracy. The "Civic Mission of Schools" summarized the discussions and recommendations of a group of scholars and educators who examined the declining engagement of young people in civic engagement activities such as voting and working on issue and election campaigns. Authors pointed out that strong democracies need competent and responsible citizens. Four goals for civic education were specified:

• Assist students to become informed and thoughtful about American democracy through an understanding of history and democratic principles, including awareness and understanding of public and community issues, primarily through the development of skills that help young people obtain and analyze information, develop critical thinking skills, and enter into dialogue with those who hold different perspectives;

• Increase students' participation in communities either through membership or through service, as a way of addressing cultural, political, social and/or religious interests and beliefs;

• Show students how to "act politically" by facilitating the acquisition of skills and knowledge related to group problem-solving, public speaking, petitioning, voting, and serving other public purposes; and

• Help students to acquire virtues such as concern for the rights and welfare of others, efficacy, tolerance, respect, and social responsibility.

Schools are considered to be the appropriate social institution to accomplish these goals both because they are the only institutions that have the capacity and mandate to reach virtually every young person, and because they are a key contributor to the development of social norms. The school environment can relatively easily be shaped to accomplish these citizenship goals, particularly since schools already address the cognitive and social foundations for activities that research shows are related to reaching these goals. The "Civic Mission of Schools" positions service-learning as a "promising practice."

The National Commission on Service-Learning Report, "Learning In Deed," also calls for schools to take a strong role in helping students develop civic knowledge and skills. This report casts its recommendation in the form of reclaiming the public purpose of education, and shows that service-learning is an approach that is uniquely poised to help young people acquire civic virtues, especially when service-learning is designed to encourage public dialogue and community connections.

Typically, the area of civics and citizenship contains calls for the acquisition of knowledge (most often reflected in standards and measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress), skills, and dispositions or virtues. Service-learning research in the area of civic engagement and citizenship is growing exponentially, especially in response to these calls for increased civic education. Some of the more recent studies are summarized next.

Colorado Learn and Serve Program: A study of the impact of the Colorado Learn and Serve program (Kim & Billig, 2003; Klute, Sandel, & Billig, 2002) examined 35 classrooms and 761 students, about half of whom participated in service-learning and half of whom did not. Results for these students showed a statistically significant difference in connection to community, connection to school, and civic responsibility for those participating in service-learning relative to their non-participating peers.

California Service-Learning Programs: Ammon et al. (2001) in their study of CalServe Service-Learning Partnerships conducted a pre-/post-survey at 38 sites with schools engaged in service-learning. This study found an increase in civic engagement in some, but not all sites. The differences in impact were attributed to differences in programmatic goals; disparity in the ways in which attitudes changed; the ways in which previous service experiences were linked to civic engagement; and the differences in student thinking about good citizenship. Furco's (2002) study of California's high school programs also found a statistically significant difference in favor of service and service-learning on students' awareness of societal issues and willingness to take active roles in the community.

Philadelphia Freedom Schools Junior Leader Study: Freedom Schools have a rich history of helping African-American students and others to connect to their cultural heritage and to empower young people to develop leadership skills and help their communities, both through direct action and capacity-building. An evaluation of the Freedom

Schools Junior Leader program in Philadelphia (Billig, 2002a) showed how powerful this approach can be. High school students were selected through an application process, were provided with intensive professional development, provided tutoring to elementary school students in the summer, and engaged in a year-long service-learning project on issues directly affecting the community. The evaluation showed that over time, participants increased in statistically significant ways on measures of connectedness with community, connectedness to American society, taking action and making changes in their communities, developing a realistic perspective about higher education requirements, and acquisition of a variety of leadership skills, including the ability to plan projects.

Waianae, Hawaii, Study: In the same study cited previously, researchers (Billig, Meyer, & Hofschire, 2003; Yamauchi, Billig, Meyer, & Hofschire, in press;) showed that service-learning participants had statistically significant positive outcomes on their feelings of contribution to the school and to the community; had feelings of being a valued part of the community by adults and other students; had pride in school; understood issues that affect the well being of the community, and took actions to make changes in the community. Service-learning students were also significantly more likely to want to help others and, at the "trend level," were found more likely to be involved in activities that will make people's lives better.

Rural Community Study: Henness (2001) conducted a study of service-learning in 11 Midwest rural communities. He found that student social capital development (e.g., their relationship with adult civic leaders and community organizations) was much higher in students who participated in service-learning than those who did not. There were no

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differences in human capital development in terms of civic knowledge, skills, and values.

Relative Efficacy of Service-Learning: Several studies have been conducted to examine the effects of service-learning on civic engagement relative to other school-based interventions. Melchior and Bailis (2002) compared results

from their evaluations of Serve America, Learn and Serve, and Active Citizenship Today (ACT). Student participants in each of these programs were in middle and high schools across the United States. In each of these programs, students engaged in service-learning, though there was less service-learning in ACT than in the other programs. However, the Learn and Serve program participants were in schools that had "fully implemented" service-learning, while the Serve America and ACT participants were randomly selected. Results indicated that both the Serve America and Learn and Serve programs had a statistically significant positive impact on students' civic attitudes and behaviors, particularly in the areas of personal and social responsibility for the welfare of others; personal and social responsibility for community involvement, service leadership, acceptance of diversity, and communication skills. Impacts were greatest among high school students. The greatest impacts were in those areas that were directly affected by service-learning rather than on broad social responsibility areas. These researchers also found that quality matters, and that sustaining participation over time was associated with more lasting impacts. ACT also had a number of positive impacts, particularly in the area of communication skills development.

Kahne, Chi, and Middaugh (2002) evaluated the Constitutional Rights Foundation's City Works program, administering a pre-/post-survey to students who participated in the program and those in control groups. They also conducted classroom observations and focus groups. These researchers found statistically significant greater

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commitments to become a participatory citizen, to justice-oriented values, and an interest in service generally among City Works students compared to non-participants. At the "trend level," they also found that City Works participants had greater personal responsibility, knowledge of social networks, leadership skills, and civic efficacy. When the researchers deconstructed the components of City Works to see which type of intervention had the greatest impacts, however, simulations and exposure to role models were found to have a greater impact than service-learning. Service-learning had a positive impact, but the impact was in fewer areas — specifically, the development of personal responsibilities, social networks, and increased commitment to service. The authors conclude that the opportunities to work on issues that matter to students and learn about aspects of society that need changing were the key to producing broad civic engagement impacts.

Environmentally Responsible Behaviors: Covitt (2002) compared middle school students engaged in service-learning on environmental projects with non-participating peers to determine whether service-learning participation was related to motive fulfillment, "pro-social" behaviors, and civic outcomes related to environmental responsibility. The two different types of service-learning that were implemented in these programs did not produce positive differences on any of the measures. The author suggests that there are factors associated with pre-packaged service-learning programs that may inhibit motive fulfillment and achievement of desired outcomes, and differences in the quality of implementation most likely affected the results. Billig, Klute, and Sandel (2001)

in a study of CO-SEED, an environmental stewardship program described previously, found more agreement than disagreement from students that they felt a greater connection to local communities. Colorado elementary school students in another environmental project, Earthwalk, were found to significantly increase their desire to make a difference in the community (Billig & Salazar, 2003). Finally, students who participated in a Denver Zoo service-learning program also significantly increased their ratings on survey items related to young people's abilities to make a difference and indicated that all young people should contribute. Differences were also found on measures of the need to take responsibility for the environment (Meyer, 2003).

Meta-analysis: Perry and Katula (2001) conducted a "meta-analysis" to examine the extent to which service affects citizenship. These researchers found that three dimensions of citizenship were impacted by service:

- Individual's motivations and skills that include civic and political involvement and community attachment; cognitive capacities, and ethics;

- Philanthropic and civic behaviors, defined as non-political behaviors that produce public benefits, such as volunteering and charity; and

- Political behaviors, including voting, campaign contributions, service on public boards or commissions, and running for public office.

The meta-analysis examined both service and service-learning, and both K–12 and higher education. Perry and Katula describe the influence of specific antecedents like parental education and church attendance, the attributes of service such

as quality, the attributes of the server — such as intellectual stimulation, socialization, and practice — and the degree of institutionalization of practices on service and service-learning impacts. They conclude that the type of service that produces the most consistent positive results is service-learning (p. 360).

Conclusion (Hands Up and Down): Most, but not all, of the studies of service-learning and its impact on various measures of civic engagement show that service-learning has positive results — particularly for the domains of civic skills and dispositions. The mixed results here have been analyzed by the researchers as being related to the quality and intention of service-learning programs. When service-learning is intentionally oriented to a civic outcome, it appears to produce that outcome most of the time, especially for high school students. However, for many programs, civic engagement is not an intentional goal, and in those cases, it appears that service-learning may not accomplish civic outcomes as well as some other deliberate interventions. As will be seen below, quality matters.

Social/personal impacts ("heart")

Over the years, the social and personal impacts of service-learning have been most frequently documented. Typical outcome areas that were shown to be strongly related to service-learning included self-efficacy, respect for diversity, self-confidence, collaborative skills, avoidance of risk behaviors, and resilience (Billig, 2000). Over the past few years, the number of studies in this area has declined. Researchers in the social-emotional learning field, however, have embraced service-

learning as a key strategy for accomplishing the five core social-emotional competencies (self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making) that all young people should develop (Elias, 2003). Social emotional learning theorists believe that "social emotional learning provides the skills while service-learning provides the opportunities to apply the skills" (p. 1). Recent studies by researchers in the realm of social/personal impacts are presented next.

Ethics: Several studies of the impact of service-learning participation on ethics have recently been conducted. In these studies, ethics were generally defined as students' willingness to stand up for what is right, the development of strong moral values and judgments, willingness to intervene for the sake of justice, and development of a strong sense of right and wrong, good and bad. Furco (2002) once again found that there were statistically significant differences between service and service-learning participants and non-participants on all measures of ethics, with far more positive ratings for those who participate in service or service-learning.

Leming (2001) examined whether service-learning reflection that contained an ethical reasoning component impacted student "agency" (feeling that one could make a difference), social relatedness, and political-moral awareness. Students with the ethical component included within their service-learning program were compared to those who engaged in community service with reflection but without the ethical component, and with those who did not participate in

service. Leming found that after one semester, high school students with the ethical component in their service-learning program scored much higher on the ethics measures (essays were scored

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according to an "ethical awareness" index) than students in either of the other conditions. In both service-learning conditions, students scored higher than non-participants on measures of

social responsibility and anticipated future participation in community affairs. There were no differences on measures of self-esteem.

Resilience: A study of the Lions Quest program by Laird and Black (2002b) examined students' "risk" behaviors such as potential for dropping out of school, use of alcohol and other substances, and misconduct. They also conducted surveys that documented degrees of participation in service-learning and a checklist of personal gains. This study found that 9th-grade students who participated in service-learning classes had statistically significantly more positive scores on all measures of resilience, and that 12th-grade service-learning students maintained a low risk of dropping out compared to their nonparticipating peers, including those identified as being at high risk, initially. Those students who participated in environmental service-learning projects had higher scores on interpersonal attitude scales than those who participated in other forms of service. Those involved in human service projects started out with lower scores and gained more than others. This study also showed that those with more service hours showed higher scores on several areas, particularly measures of positive community values and interpersonal competencies. Ninth-grade students were also more likely to decrease their cigarette smoking if they engaged in service-learning.

Other Studies: The Hawaii study cited previously (Yamauchi et al., in press) also showed statistically significant impacts of service-learning on a constellation of measures related to resilience, leadership, and prevention of dropping out of

school. Similar findings occurred in the "Freedom Schools Study" (Billig, 2002a) and the "Denver Zoo Study" (Meyer, 2003). In addition, the study of Waianae students and Freedom Schools Junior Leaders show strong positive results in terms of connection to cultural heritage. Qualitative data were also provided to support these findings.

In a pilot study of elementary schools, Johnson and Notah (1999) found that 156 primarily Hispanic students had positive, but statistically insignificant effects from participating in service-learning on students' self-esteem and personal responsibility. Morgan and Streb (1999) showed that service-learning students showed greater empathy than comparison groups. Scales et al. (2000) showed positive impacts of service-learning on concern for others' welfare and efficacy in helping others. Meyer and Billig (2003) in the evaluation of "Need in Deed" found that 4th-grade service-learning participants scored higher on measures of altruism and empathy than non-participants, though this result was not found for 6th-grade students. Finally, Kirby (2001) performed a meta-analysis of studies that addressed teenage pregnancy prevention. He concluded that of all of the programs studied, service-learning had the greatest positive impact.

Conclusion (Big Heart): These studies affirmed the strong evidence from earlier research summarized by Billig (2000) that service-learning produces an array of positive impacts in the area of pro-social behaviors, acceptance of diversity, connection to cultural heritage, development of ethics, and strengthening of protective factors related to resilience. Service-learning clearly helps students

to develop caring, altruism, and other social/emotional learning associated with "heart."

Career Exploration: Several recent studies affirmed the research that has consistently shown the value of service-learning in helping young people explore career options. Yamauchi et al. (in press), for example, showed students in service-learning, relative to non-participating students, had a stronger set of job- and career-related skills and aspirations, including knowledge of how to plan activities, desire to pursue post-secondary education, and job interview skills. Furco (2002) found strong statistically significant differences on formulation of career plans and emphasis on finding a career that was personally satisfying and/or beneficial to others between the service-learning and service groups and the non-participants.

Quality Matters

As indicated previously, many of the studies cited here found that quality of service-learning matters in terms of the relative impact of service-learning. One of the studies that addressed the impact of quality most directly was the study of academic achievement of Michigan students (Klute & Billig, 2002; Billig & Klute, 2003). As part of the analysis for this study, teachers were asked to rate their service-learning programs on a variety of indicators related to the "Essential Elements of Service-Learning" (NYLC, 1999) and other variables found to be associated with quality in the research literature. When the study controlled for quality, that is, when the data on high-quality service-learning schools were compared with the data on low-quality service-learning schools, it was found that low-quality schools had virtually no impact on

students and in some cases, produced lower scores than the comparison schools with no service-learning. The quality variables that had the greatest influence on outcomes were communication, interaction with community members, and linkage to standards. In both cases, when these variables were present, students were more engaged in school. Results were mixed for youth voice, preparation for service work, and whether service was mandatory or voluntary — meaning that sometimes these variables were associated with higher scores and sometimes they were not. Challenging tasks, use of assessment for improvement, meaningful service tasks, valuing diversity, use of reflection, and duration of service-learning were not associated with school engagement in this study.

The Philadelphia Need in Deed data (Meyer & Billig, 2002) also suggest that quality of services and fidelity to the model made a difference in the results. Focus groups revealed that in some of the cases where the impact was lowest, teachers did not implement all of the service-learning activities or did so without allowing enough student voice or time for reflection. The Colorado Learn and Serve evaluation (Klute et al., 2002), however, did not find significant differences based on quality in terms of school engagement or attachment to community.

Melchior and Bailis (2002) found that quality mattered in their study. In comparing outcomes of high quality Learn and Serve programs with Serve America and ACT programs, the high quality programs were found to have much larger impacts. Ammon (2002) also found that quality counts, but

in her study, quality was related to clarity of teacher goals, dialogue between the teacher and student about goals, and teachers' roles as facilitators in understanding during reflection processes. Covitt (2002) also found that quality of implementation affected results.

Conclusion. It appears as though quality matters, but more studies are needed to determine what aspects of quality make the most difference. Early results appear to indicate that linkage with standards, intention design, clarity of goals, and direct contact with the community are the strongest predictors of impact on students.

Other Pertinent Research

There have been a few studies that have examined the impact of service-learning on teachers and schools, sustainability and institutionalization, and costs of service-learning. Some of these studies are reviewed next.

Social Trust: Toole (2002) conducted a study on social trust, investigating the types of trust issues that arise among teachers implementing service-learning, the degree to which these trust issues influence service-learning implementation, and whether service-learning raises unique trust issues. He studied the initial Generator School Network (operated by the National Youth Leadership Council) and selected a sample of seven K-8 sites. Results indicated that social trust issues emerged throughout all dimensions of service-learning implementation and that the issues influenced implementation. High trust environments were associated with smoother processes. Service-learning provoked specific

trust conversations around justice and moral development, and issues about whether those involved were modeling the content of the service appropriately.

Implementation Issues and Impact on Teachers: Billig (2002b), in a study of service-learning educational reform sites in New Hampshire,

Kirby (2001) performed a meta-analysis of studies that addressed teenage pregnancy prevention. He concluded that of all of the programs studied, service-learning had the greatest positive impact.

found that teachers involved in service-learning tended to have different needs at different stages of implementation. Implementation in these schools appeared to be easiest when there was a critical mass of teachers involved in support and implementation, and when philosophies around teaching and learning were more alike. Seitsinger and Felner (2000) found that middle school

teachers who used service-learning more regularly were those who were more knowledgeable about their state content standards, more experienced, and had better understandings of adolescent development.

Sustainability and Institutionalization: There were several studies of sustainability and institutionalization of service-learning. Koliba (2002) studied rural schools that were able to sustain service-learning for five years. He found that the five sustaining schools were more likely to have adopted school-wide norms for service-learning; a commitment to shared leadership; stable school leadership; active mission and vision statements; common definitions and terminology to discuss meaning; value and respect for students as community contributors; high levels of collegiality and trust among faculty and between faculty, staff, students, and community members, and a shared understanding that learning can take place in multiple settings. Sites also had high "leadership density," that is, a large number of advisory boards, committees, and governance structures. Billig (2002b) found that sustainability was related to strong leadership, shared cultural norms and expectations, incentives, visibility, availability of financial resources, and measurable impacts on student achievement. Billig and Klute (2001), in their retrospective study of W.K. Kellogg Foundation grantees, showed the value of the cultivation of long-term community partners, funding for a permanent staff position, tangible and positive results, connection to educational reform, and ongoing support from advisors and leaders.

Heads, Hearts, and Hands: The Research on K-12 Service-Learning

Cost/Benefit: Melchior (2000) took on the task of determining the costs of service-learning in a quasi-cost/benefit analysis. He noted that there are an almost infinite array of service-learning implementation strategies so costs will probably vary by scope, integration with curriculum and community, and type of program. Generally, though, he found that costs for service-learning tend to vary, with a range of $14 per student to $1,700 per student, and an average of $52 per student. Higher costs are associated with having a permanent, full-time coordinator. The Pritchard research cited toward the beginning of this article showed that very few sites received additional funds outside of district funds for implementing service-learning.

Summary

Heads, Hearts, and Hands: So if you were a person considering service-learning and you asked the questions, "What is it? Does it work? Under what conditions does it work?" you would likely get multiple answers since the research and practice are still unclear. Most people agree on what service-learning is, but it is still confused with community service. The research evidence is building around the set of outcomes that service-learning produces. Service-learning has evidence of academic/cognitive, civic, social/personal, and career outcomes. The research suggests that quality matters.

The research base, while growing, is still in need of more studies, and of studies that meet the criteria for scientifically based evidence. There are still too many evaluations and too few experimental and quasi-experimental designs to show impact and the components of service-learning that make a differ-ence. However, the research shows that K-12 school-based service-learning remains an enor-mously promising practice, especially if practice includes elements of high quality. The evidence that service-learning affects the heads, hearts, and hands of our students is compelling enough to encourage all schools to try it. G2G

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Service-learning has evidence of academic/cognitive, civic, social/personal, and career outcomes. The research suggests that quality matters.

Service to Others:
A 'Gateway' Asset for
School Sucess and Healthy Development

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Much has been written in recent decades about "gateway drugs" that, if young people start using them, too often lead to more and more risky behaviors and harmful outcomes. But what about the other side of the coin? Are there "gateway assets" to positive outcomes?

New analyses of Search Institute's research on "developmental assets" suggests that serving others may, in fact, be a "gateway asset" that leads to many other assets and outcomes, including success in school. Indeed, when young people report engaging in the asset of service to others, they are more likely to experience more of the *other* assets over time, and to have more positive outcomes, including school success, because those service experiences are part of an overall web of assets that provide a strong foundation for healthy development.[1]

Developmental Assets:
A Foundation for Healthy Development

For the past 15 years, Minneapolis–based Search Institute has been developing the framework of 40 developmental assets (shown in Table 1), which are relationships, opportunities, values, skills, and self-perceptions that help young people succeed in school and other aspects of their lives. Among the developmental assets are service to others, youth as resources, community values youth, and having

Table 1
Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets

External Assets	Internal Assets
Support	**Commitment to Learning**
1. Family support	21. Achievement motivation★
2. Positive family communication	22. School engagement★
3. Other adult relationships	23. Homework
4. Caring neighborhood	24. Bonding to school★
5. Caring school climate★	25. Reading for pleasure
6. Parent involvement in schooling★	**Positive Values**
Empowerment	26. Caring★
7. Community values youth★	27. Equality and social justice★
8. Youth as resources★	28. Integrity
9. SERVICE TO OTHERS	29. Honesty
10. Safety	30. Responsibility
Boundaries and Expectations	31. Restraint
11. Family boundaries	**Social Competencies**
12. School boundaries	32. Planning and decision-making★
13. Neighborhood boundaries	33. Interpersonal competence★
14. Adult role models★	34. Cultural competence★
15. Positive peer influence★	35. Resistance skills
16. High expectations★	36. Peaceful conflict resolution
Constructive Use of Time	**Positive Identity**
17. Creative activities	37. Personal power★
18. Youth programs★	38. Self-esteem
19. Religious community★	39. Sense of purpose★
20. Time at home	40. Positive view of personal future★

★ The 20 developmental assets that, from a theoretical perspective, could most easily be enhanced through effective service-learning experiences.
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For definitions of each asset as well as additional research and resources related to the asset framework, visit www.search-institute.org.

values such as caring and a commitment to equality and social justice.

Numerous studies have shown the importance of developmental assets for young people's well-being. This relationship holds true across all groups of youths studied, including young people from many racial-ethnic backgrounds, communities of all sizes, and different socioeconomic backgrounds (Sesma & Roehlkepartain, 2003). These associations occur among both adolescents (Scales & Leffert, 2004) and pre-adolescents (Scales, Sesma, & Bolstrom, 2004).

An important principle of developmental assets theory is that a young person's experience of a single asset or handful of assets is rarely sufficient to promote developmental outcomes that are both deep and comprehensive. Young people live in complex worlds of interacting and nested influences involving family, school, peers, and community. Thus, numerous assets working together across many parts of young people's lives have a sustained, significant impact on their developmental paths.

While this holistic approach makes developmental sense, it also strains both theory and common sense to imagine that all 40 of the developmental assets are equally important for all young people and/or for all outcomes. Some assets more than others may be thought of, not only as important in their own right, but as key influences on other assets as well. That is, they may function as "gateway" assets, with their presence making it more likely that young people will experience *additional* assets. Service to others is an example
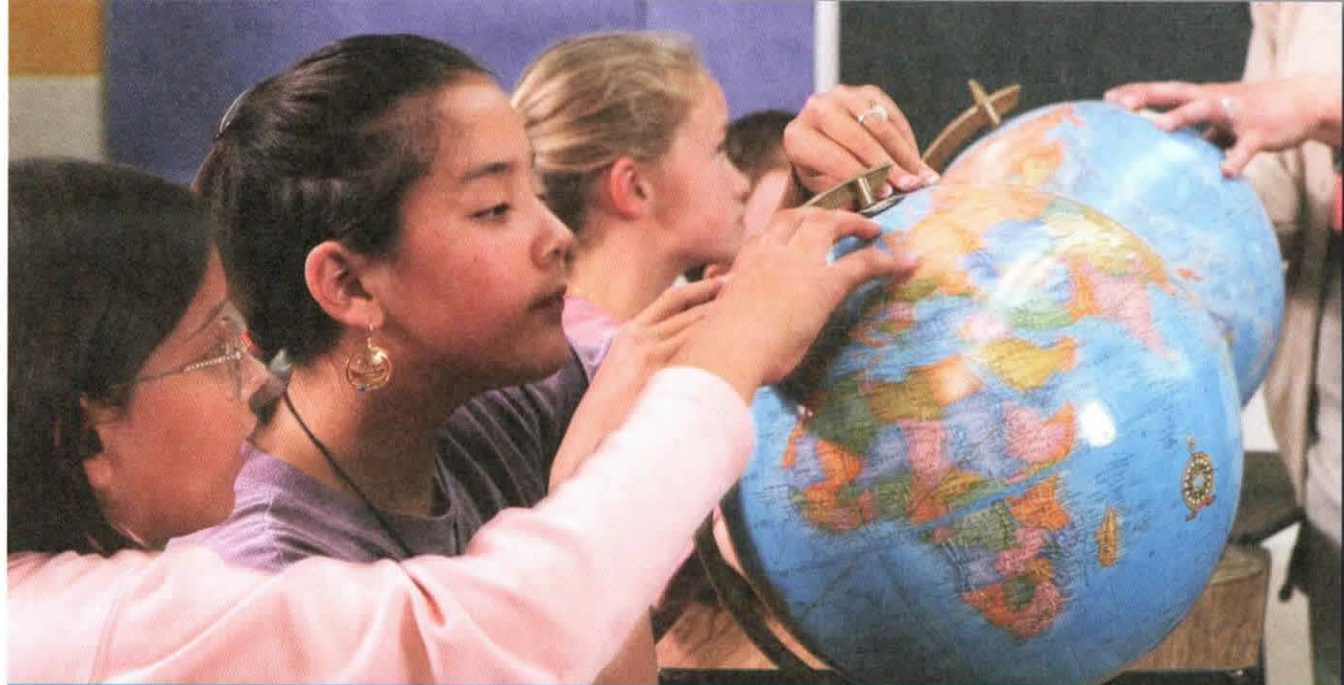
of this. In fact, service and service-learning theoretically can have positive effects on at least 20 of the developmental assets.

Service to Others: Clustering with Other Assets

A wide variety of research has found positive associations between service, service-learning and other academic and social outcomes. (See Billig, this issue.) And because the connection of service/service-learning to real-world needs and activities makes it an "authentic" form of learning, it may have particular motivational value to those students who are the least engaged with traditional curriculum.

Two Search Institute datasets offer insights into the relationship between service and positive outcomes.[2] (Because of the academic goals of service-learning, we focus here on the relationship to school success.) Analyses of the aggregate

dataset of 217,000 students found that students who reported serving others at least one hour per week were significantly less likely to report school problems (poor attendance and below average grades) and significantly more likely to report school success (self-report of earning mostly As in school) than those who did not serve others at least one hour per week.[3] For example, 25 percent of students who served reported earning mostly As, compared to 19 percent of students who did not serve. At first blush, this difference may not seem impressive, but it means that 32 percent more students who served earned mostly As compared to students who did not serve others.

Because it is linked to actual school records, the longitudinal dataset provides an opportunity to examine relationships to actual grade-point average (GPA). We found that young people who served in middle school had higher grades

A 'Gateway' Asset for School Success and Healthy Development

in high school. When earlier grades (the best predictor of later grades, since good students tend to remain good students) are taken into account, however, we found that service to others, by itself, was no longer significant.

While these findings may appear, at first, to imply that service and service-learning do not have the hoped-for influence, the reality is likely more complex, as suggested by several possible explanations. One factor may be the measurement issue. Our measure of self-reported hours spent volunteering does not capture the nature of service performed, the depth of reflection upon those experiences, and other factors related to the quality of service-learning that have been found to affect outcomes in other longitudinal studies (Metz, McLellan, & Youniss, 2003; and Scales, Blyth, Kielsmeier, & Berkas, 2000).

The sustained and cumulative experience of service likely makes more of a difference in longitudinal outcomes as well. In support of this reasoning, we compared two groups of St. Louis Park, Minnesota, students. One group included students who consistently volunteered from middle school in 1997 and 1998, through high school in 2001; and those who did not volunteer in 1997, but did afterwards ("emerging" volunteers). The other group consisted of those who never volunteered, and those who volunteered in 1997, but not again ("fading" volunteers). We found that the consistent and emerging volunteers had significantly higher GPAs in 2001 than those who never volunteered or those who did early, but then stopped.[4]

In addition, it appears that the power of the service-to-others asset actually comes in conjunction with multiple assets working together, not just one asset by itself. An exploratory factor analysis of the 40 developmental assets identified eight clusters of assets, two of which have particularly strong relationships to actual school grades (B+ or higher average) three years later. One of these clusters, which we call "connections to community" included youth programs, religious community, *service to others*, creative activities, reading for pleasure, other adult relationships, and adult role models. For every point higher students scored on this factor in 1998, they were three times more likely than other students to be in the high GPA group in 2001 (Scales & Roehlkepartain, 2003).

The second cluster of assets, which we call "norms of responsibility," includes achievement motivation, school engagement, bonding to school, positive peer influence, restraint, resistance skills, and peaceful conflict resolution. For every point higher students scored in 1998 on this factor, they were twice as likely as other students to be in the high GPA group in 2001.

To understand the power of these findings, remember that previous GPA is almost always found to be the single strongest predictor of later GPA. In this study, for every point higher in 1998 GPA, students were four times more likely to be in the B+ or greater GPA group in 2001. Thus, these two clusters of assets accounted for an impressive 50 percent to 75 percent of the influence of previous GPA — the strongest predictor of all.

These findings lend support to Youniss, McLellan, Su, and Yates' (1999) suggestion that there is an "integrated youth syndrome" parallel to the syndrome of youth unconventionality described years ago by Jessor and Jessor (1977), in which high-risk behaviors are symptoms of an underlying problem behavior syndrome. Building on this perspective, participation in service reflects not just an isolated positive experience, but may *both be a result and a cause* of connection to society in other ways, signifying an immersion in networks where prosocial and responsible behaviors are expected, modeled, and rewarded. In short, service participation may both result from and contribute to young people's connection to mutually reinforcing assets across the many contexts of life, all of which add together to enhance developmental paths in a much more significant way collectively than any asset can influence on its own.

Service to Others: A "Gateway Asset"

In addition to the direct, positive contribution that service to others can make as part of a cluster of other assets, the experience of serving others (particularly in an intentional, well-designed service-learning experience) may also make it more likely that students experience many other assets that collectively promote positive developmental outcomes. In this sense, service to others becomes a "gateway" to many resources for healthy development and school success. In Table 1, we placed asterisks by 20 of the 40 developmental assets that, from a theoretical perspective, could be enhanced through effective school-based service-learning experiences — with other assets potentially being addressed through specific activities.

A number of studies suggest the connection of service or service-learning to many other developmental assets. As shown in Display 1, service and service-learning have been found to contribute significantly to outcomes such as: increased altruism and perceived duty to help others, concern for others' welfare, social competence and empathy, increased sense that one can make a difference, increased self-esteem, closer parent–child relationships, and greater sense of personal responsibility (Scales & Leffert, 2004; and Scales, Sesma, and Bolstrom, 2004). Such results link to at least six of the eight asset categories: support, empowerment, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity.

For this article, we examined the relationship between service and all the other assets in the aggregate dataset. As expected, most of the correlations were quite modest, in the .10s and .20s. The strongest relationships (all with coefficients from .20-.30) were between service to others and these eight developmental assets: adult role models, creative activities, youth programs, religious community, reading for pleasure, caring, equality and social justice, and interpersonal competence.

It is noteworthy that the first five of these assets also were among the seven (service and other adult relationships being the other two) in the cluster of assets with the greatest longitudinal contribution to actual grades in the St. Louis Park study. The appearance of these assets together in two different studies and two different analyses suggests that they work

Display 1
Service-Learning Outcomes Connected to Asset Building

Although results vary widely depending on the intensity, quality, and type of service-learning studied, researchers frequently find that many positive changes occur for young people who engage in service to others. Many of these outcomes are related to categories of developmental assets. (See Scales & Leffert, 2004; and Scales, Sesma, & Bolstrom, 2004.)

Asset Category	Areas of Impact of Service-Learning
Support	**Positive attitudes toward adults**
	Talking with parents about school
Empowerment	**Community involvement as adult**
	Political participation and interest
	Positive attitudes toward community involvement
	Positive civic attitudes
	Belief that one can make a difference in community
	Leadership positions in community organizations
Commitment to Learning	**Reading grades**
	School attendance and performance
	Commitment to class work
	Working for good grades
Positive Values	**Prosocial and moral reasoning**
	Empathy
	Personal and social responsibility
	Perceived duty to help others
	Altruism
	Concern for others' welfare
	Awareness of societal problems
Social Competencies	**Self-disclosure**
	Development of mature relationships
	Social competence outside of school
	Problem-solving skills
Positive Identity	**Self-concept**
	Self-esteem
	Self-efficacy

synergistically to shape development across multiple life contexts.

Further evidence of service to others as a gateway asset lies in a longitudinal analysis of the effect of volunteering in 1998 on the total number of assets students reported in 2001 in the St. Louis Park study, which revealed a significant impact of service on the number of assets students reported three years later. For example, 50 percent of servers in 1998 were asset-rich (31 to 40 assets) in 2001, compared to only 33 percent of non-servers who had such high levels of assets three years later. Collectively, these results suggest the validity of conceptualizing service as a gateway asset that helps create a web of development assets in young people's lives.

A Missed Opportunity

We have seen that service is both related to numerous other key developmental assets, and also has significant connections to both current and future positive developmental outcomes for youth, including school success. Finding ways to inten-tionally weave together service-learning with asset building has additional promise for increasing the potential impact of service-learning.

Display 2
What Asset Building Can Bring to Service-Learning

It's clear that service-learning has great potential to build developmental assets. In addition, an intentional focus on asset building and use of asset-building principles can enrich service-learning. In *An Asset Builder's Guide to Service-Learning*, Roehlkepartain, Bright, and Margolis-Rupp (2000) describe seven perspectives that the developmental assets framework and asset-building principles can offer to service or service-learning. While some are already integral themes in effective service-learning, all can be helpful for reflecting on how service-learning efforts are intentional about adopting a comprehensive asset-building approach.

1. *A relational perspective:* Both asset-building and service are, at their core, about building positive relationships.

2. *An additive perspective:* Multiple exposures to both assets and service is more effective than isolated experiences.

3. *A developmental perspective:* To be most effective, asset building and service begin long before adolescence, accumulating their impact over time.

4. *A multisector perspective:* Service or service-learning that links influences such as schools, congregations, and youth organizations has a greater chance of positively effecting assets throughout young people's ecologies.

5. *A holistic perspective:* Service or service-learning has a greater chance of building the other developmental assets if such impacts are intentionally made explicit as goals of the experience.

6. *A strength-building perspective:* The best service or service-learning builds the assets of both young servers and those being served.

7. *A "laboratory" perspective:* Service or service-learning experiences are the training ground for a life that emphasizes serving others. By linking current experiences with intentions to continue serving, service or service-learning can nurture the prosocial norms and culture that are characteristic of communities that are asset-building and developmentally attentive.

SOURCE: Roehlkepartain, E. C., Bright, T., & Margolis-Rupp, B. (2000). *An asset builder's guide to service-learning.* Minneapolis: Search Institute.

The unfortunate reality, however, is that few young people in this country experience these positive opportunities. At most, only 30 percent to 50 percent of young people volunteer from once a month (Child Trends DataBank, 2003) to an hour a week (Scales & Leffert, 2004). As shown in Figure 1, this involvement is fairly consistent across racial-ethnic groups, varying more by gender and grade.
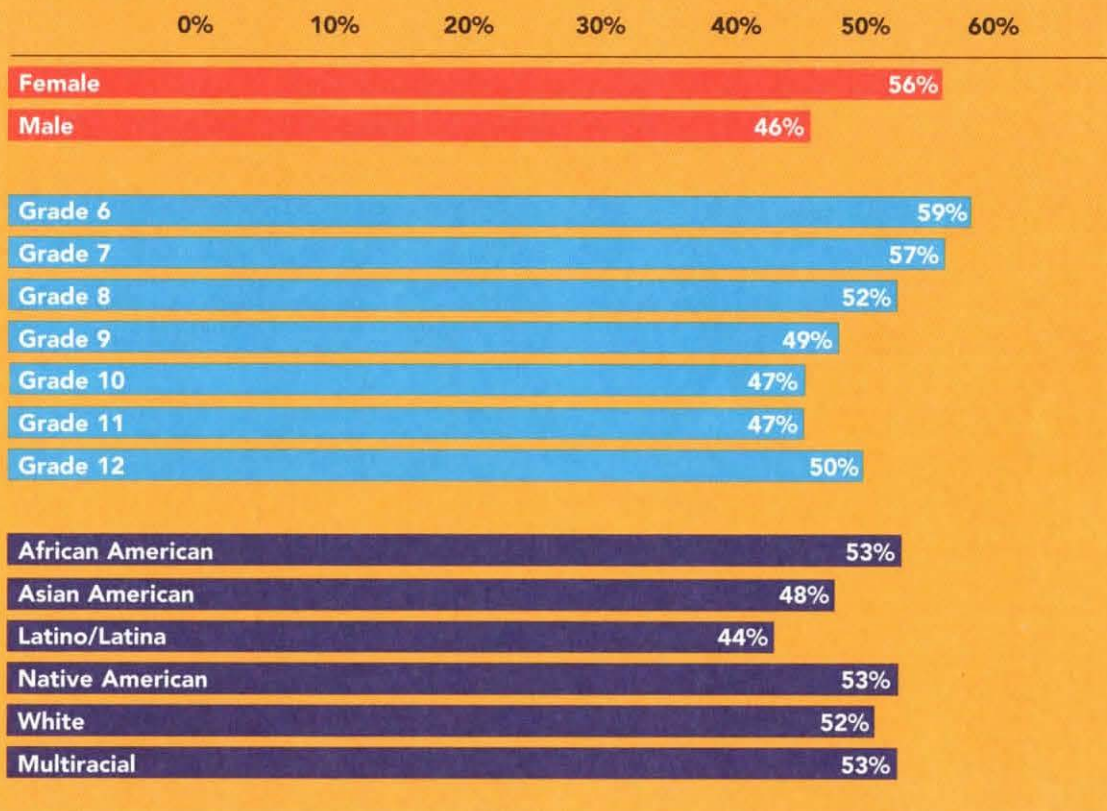
And though effectively implemented service-learning could have still greater impact than service alone, the new 2004 Growing to Greatness survey of principals (Kielsmeier, Scales, Roehlkepartain, & Neal, 2004) finds that only about 30 percent of schools (22 percent of elementary schools, 30 percent of middle schools, and 45 percent of high schools) provide service-learning. This overall level is statistically the same as the 32 percent of schools reported in a comparable survey in 1998 (Skinner & Chapman, 1999), and it remains far below the aspirations of service-learning advocates.

But the situation is likely even worse than these figures suggest. If Billig's (2004) reasoning is correct, students are only about one-third as likely to participate in service-learning as schools are to provide it. Therefore, only about one in 10 of the nation's students probably experience effective service-learning.

Figure 1

Percentages of 6th- to 12th-Grade Youth Who Report Volunteering at Least One Hour Per Week

Total sample 51%

	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%

Category	Value
Female	56%
Male	46%
Grade 6	59%
Grade 7	57%
Grade 8	52%
Grade 9	49%
Grade 10	47%
Grade 11	47%
Grade 12	50%
African American	53%
Asian American	48%
Latino/Latina	44%
Native American	53%
White	52%
Multiracial	53%

SOURCE: Search Institute surveys of 217,000 U.S. middle and high school students during the 1999-2000 school year.

A 'Gateway' Asset for School Success and Healthy Development

Much more needs to be done to guide young people onto a path of lifelong service to others. Service plays a significant role as a gateway developmental asset connecting students to numerous other assets, and thereby contributes to school success and other desirable developmental outcomes. The likely result of instilling the service habit in children and youth will be significant long-term benefits to young people, their families, schools, and communities that our current research barely begins to capture.

1. We recognize that there is a substantial difference between the potential impact of community service, and more elaborate and comprehensive *service-learning*. The Search Institute data we draw on in this article are limited to reports of young people's service; we do not know the degree to which the young people in our studies who report volunteering are doing so within a service-learning structure. However, the data Billig cites (2004, this volume) shows that only about 10 percent-25 percent of
   students likely participate in genuine service-learning.

2. Search Institute's aggregate dataset includes more than 217,000 6th-12th graders from more than 300 U.S. communities who were surveyed during the 1999-2000 school year. The sample also was weighted to align with Census distributions for race/ethnicity and urban residence. The second dataset is made up of longitudinal sample of 370 students from the Minneapolis suburb of St. Louis Park, Minnesota, which followed students from 1998, when they were in grades 7 to 9, to 2001, when they were in grades 10 to 12.

3. Analysis of variance for school problems: $(F(1,216,088) = 2745.597, p \le .0001)$. Analysis of variance for school success (self-report of getting mostly As in school): $(F(1,211,888) = 2373.517, p \le .0001)$.

4. Analysis of variance: $F(1, 313) = 4.06, p \le .05$.

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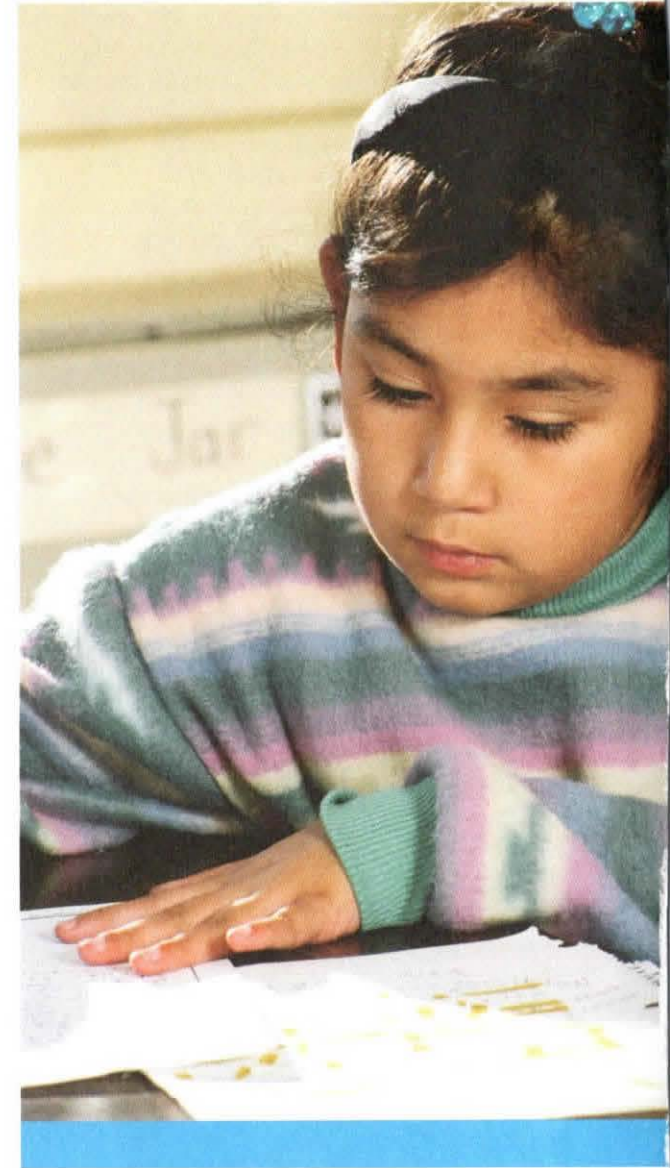
Learn and Serve America:
Reflecting on the Past,
Focusing on the Future

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As Learn and Serve America looks forward to its 15th anniversary in 2005, it is poised at a promising juncture: the President's proposed $3 million increase in funding for the first time in eight years. Learn and Serve America, the largest funder and resource for service-learning programs nationally, currently provides approximately $43 million each year for programs designed to engage young people in service to their community as a part of their education and development. Today's Learn and Serve America programs are the direct descendants of two of the four programs created through the National and Community Service Act of 1990.[1] In 1992, over $22 million was awarded in grants for K–12 and higher education service and service-learning programs.

Service-learning is defined as an educational method:

"[U]nder which students or participants learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that is conducted in and meets the needs of a community; which is coordinated within an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program, and with the community; which helps foster civic responsibility; which is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students, or the educational components of the community service program in which the participant is enrolled; and which provides structured time for the students or participants to reflect on the service experience." **[42 U.S.C. 12511]**

Today, Learn and Serve America engages nearly 2 million student participants. The programs also engages nearly 100,000 teachers, faculty, and staff of schools, higher education institutions and community-based organizations.

Learn and Serve America supports youth service and service-learning through:

- Grants
- Training and Technical Assistance
- Recognition Programs
- National Leadership

Background

Serve-America, the predecessor of Learn and Serve America K–12 School- and Community-Based programs, supported the efforts of schools and community-based agencies to involve school-aged youth in service. In 1992, Serve-America awarded $16.9 million by formula to state education agencies; one percent of which was available competitively to Indian tribes. That year, approximately 172,000 youths participated, providing an average of about 16 hours of direct service each. The relatively low number of service hours reflects the dual goals of this program — to enhance learning through service, as well as to enhance service through learning. More than half of all participant hours were spent in education activities related to the service. The programs also prioritized recruiting adult volunteers, 40,000 of who provided about 25 hours of direct service each. Program activities were in three broad areas: education, meeting human needs, and conservation and environment. Most programs involved students, through their teachers and classroom activities, in service linked to the curriculum. Some programs also reached students in the out-of-school hours, providing structured community service opportunities through youth-serving organizations.

The 1990 Act also provided for Higher Education Innovative Projects in Community Service, the predecessor of Learn and Serve America Higher Education. Designed to involve students in community service, promote community service

at educational institutions, and train teachers in service-learning methods, the program granted $5.6 million to higher education institutions or nonprofit organizations working in partnership with higher education institutions. Higher education programs involved 22,000 participants who provided an average of 39 hours of direct service. In higher education settings, too, a key goal was integrating service into the curriculum; yet over 80 percent of participants' time was spent in direct service. Close to 8,000 volunteers were generated by these programs, who provided an average of 16 hours of service each. Program activities were in the same broad categories — education, human needs, and environment — but nearly half of all higher education programs focused on providing education-related service.

The passage of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, as amended, provided the opportunity to expand and improve the student community service and service-learning programs. The 1993 Act authorized both K-12 school- and community-based programs and higher education innovative projects. The two student service programs were united under the Learn and Serve America banner at the creation of the Corporation for National and Community Service. The 1993 Act produced a durable definition of service-learning, used by practitioners and researchers, regardless of their association with the Corporation.

Enabling Registration

The legislation that created Learn and Serve America ensures that funds are distributed to a wide variety of youth-serving organizations and institutions. The program provides the following grant programs: school-based, which includes both formula and competitive grant programs and a set-aside of up to three percent for Indian tribes and U.S. Territories; community-based; and higher education programs.

Essential to the development of high-quality programs as well as to ensuring that Learn and Serve America is a catalyst for the development of strong service-learning programs beyond the reach of its limited grant funds, are the training and technical assistance programs and recognition programs that Learn and Serve America has administered.

School-Based programs: Formula-based grants are made to state education agencies (SEAs), which make sub-grants to create new service-learning programs; to replicate existing models; and/or train teachers, administrators, adult volunteers, service-learning coordinators, and students in service-learning. SEAs also conduct training and evaluation, support the development of local partnerships, and develop curriculum to align with service activities.

School-Based programs: LSA also makes grants on a competitive basis to SEAs, Indian tribes, U.S. territories, non-profit organizations, and institutions of higher education that apply as non-profits. Grantees, in turn, make sub-grants for the same purposes described above. In 2003 and 2004, three thematic competitions have been offered: Linking History, Civics, and Service; Community, Higher Education, and Schools Partnerships (CHESP); and Homeland Security.

Indian Tribes and U.S. Territories: Up to three percent of school-based funds are set aside for this competitive grant program whose funds may be used for the activities noted above. Indian tribes can elect either to sub-grant or work with tribal schools without sub-granting.

Community-Based programs: Funds are awarded competitively to non-profit organizations to make grants in two or more states, and state commissions on national and community service to make grants in their home states. Grantees sub-grant to youth-serving public or private non-profits to create new service programs or replicate existing ones and to provide training and technical assistance (T/TA). Grantees may, without sub-granting, provide T/TA to public or private non-profit organizations that work with school-age youths. (Participants in all school- and community-based programs are school-age youths.)

Higher education programs: Through a competitive process, LSA awards funds directly to individual colleges and universities or consortia of higher education institutions, which may include public or private non-profit organizations. Funds may support a wide variety of service-learning activities including training teachers in service-learning, integrating community service into professional education programs, strengthening the infrastructure in the institutions, and supplementing community service activities in Federal Work Study programs.

Two unique examples of higher education programs are: (1) The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's National Service-Learning in Teacher Education Program (NSLTEP) which is designed to help develop institutional capacity to incorporate service-learning into pre-service teacher education. NSLTEP addresses the issues of diversity, technology, accountability, and character education as they relate to K-12 classroom instruction. The initiative — which is divided into six regional centers — is the leading organization that utilizes service-learning in the preparation of future teachers. (2) The West Philadelphia Improvement Corps (WEPIC) which is coordinated by the West Philadelphia Partnership that includes the University of Pennsylvania and community organizations. The initiative involves approximately 4,500 children, their parents, and community members in educational and cultural programs, job training, community improvement, and service activities. WEPIC has developed an effective program by building a university, K-12, and community-based model around a targeted zone for academic and community improvement.

The National K-12 Service-Learning Clearinghouse

Essential to the development of high-quality programs as well as to ensuring that Learn and Serve America is a catalyst for the development of strong service-learning programs beyond the reach of its limited grant funds, are the training and technical assistance programs and recognition programs that Learn and Serve America has administered. Required by statute, Learn and Serve America provides support to the National Service-Learning Clearinghouse. The statute mandating the Clearinghouse allows for a wide variety of research, dissemination, training, and networking activities. While the availability of funds for the Clearinghouse has varied over the years, necessitating some variance in the services offered, the core of Clearinghouse services have been information collection and dissemination, research, and networking for practitioners and researchers through email, the web, and by telephone.

The Clearinghouse collects and disseminates information and materials related to service-learning in all settings. The Clearinghouse also hosts a variety of listserves for discussion and information on service-learning; a website and information database; a toll-free information phone line; and maintains a collection of publications on service-learning. Since its inception, the Clearinghouse has been available to anyone seeking information or advice on service-learning, without regard to their affiliation with the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Clearinghouse is authorized and provides limited direct training and technical assistance to sup-

port the development, expansion or improvement of service-learning programs. From 1994 until 2000, advanced practitioners and researchers provided direct training to others in the field. During the 1997-2000 period, the National Service-Learning Exchange provided technical assistance by means of a peer mentoring and training model in which practitioners were certified in technical assistance; regional centers referred those requesting support to certified peers based on geographical proximity and desired expertise. The Exchange, operated by the National Youth Leadership Council, continues — without federal support — in a modified fashion.

National Service-Learning Leader Schools

From 1999 through 2002, Learn and Serve America offered the National Service-Learning Leader Schools recognition program. This program, modeled on the U.S. Department of Education's Blue Ribbon Schools program, awarded recognition to 216 middle schools and high schools for their exemplary integration of service and service-learning into the life and culture of the school. These 216 schools, located in 47 states, served as active winners for a period of two years, making presentations on service-learning locally and nationally, hosting visits to their schools, and promoting the effective practices they used to make their schools models of successful service-learning. While Learn and Serve America does not currently offer this national designation, several states have continued the program, certifying and awarding effective practices through a statewide Service-Learning Leader School program.

Learn and Serve America: Reflecting on the Past, Focusing on the Future

Presidential Freedom Scholarships

As an agency charged not only with promoting service-learning but also with promoting service participation for individuals of all ages, the Corporation, through Learn and Serve America, has sponsored the Presidential Freedom Scholarships since 1997. The Presidential Freedom Scholarships, formerly known as the President's Student Service Scholarship, provides matching scholarships to high school juniors and seniors for exemplary leadership in service. Every high school in the country is eligible to nominate up to two students per school per year to receive the Presidential Freedom Scholarship. To emphasize the importance of school-community partnerships, $500 of the scholarship is provided by Learn and Serve America, the other $500 must be raised in the community — nonprofit organizations, civic groups, and local and national businesses have all provided the match. National partners, providing the match for thousands of scholarships annually are Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, Kiwanis, the Coca-Cola Foundation, and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the USA. Approximately 35,000 scholarships have been awarded for exemplary community service leadership in the seven years of the program.

Development of service-learning networks and other supports for service-learning

President's Volunteer Service Award: This award, an initiative of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, honors volunteers and encourages even more Americans to get involved in their communities. Children and youths up to 14 years of age can earn a bronze award for 50 to 74 hours of service, a Silver award for 75 to 99 hours, and a Gold Award for 100 hours or more of service. Young adults, adults, and families and groups also can qualify for the awards. In addition to the various award pins, recipients also receive a personalized certificate of achievement, a note of congratulations from the President, and a letter of recognition from the President's Council. Since instituting the program, 75,000 awards have been made.

State Education Agency Network (SEANet): The State Education Agency K-12 Service-Learning Network (SEANet) is a national network of state Learn and Serve America program directors and administrators. Hailing from 50 state education agencies, SEANet members provide assistance to local school-community partnerships. SEAs are responsible for developing statewide initiatives, building support for service-learning in their states, and providing technical assistance and professional development for teachers and administrators and their community partners.

Learn and Serve Grant-Funded Programs

While the technical assistance and recognition programs effectively disseminate the youth service and service-learning message, the centerpiece of Learn and Serve America are its grant programs. Funding for Learn and Serve America has remained static since its inception. In 1994, the Congress appropriated $40 million for Learn and Serve America programs, in 1995, $45 million was appropriated, and in 1996 and each subsequent year, the Congress has allocated $43 million to all Learn and Serve America grant programs. With this static funding, Learn and Serve has awarded approximately 140 grants annually. The programs receive funding for a period of three years, assuming satisfactory progress and availability of funds. New competitions are held every three years, and with the exception of the state education agency formula grants, about half of the grants awarded are to new organizations.

Most Learn and Serve grantees act as intermediaries; that is, they make subgrants, provide training and technical assistance, monitor and evaluate their subgrants, and disseminate effective practices, and perform other capacity-building activities. Each year, approximately 2,500 local programs receive Learn and Serve America subgrants for service-learning.

Learn and Serve America strongly encourages grantees to work with small community-based nonprofits and faith-based organizations. The percentage of collaborations with faith-based organizations has steadily increased over (LSA) supports the past three years.[2]

Exhibit 2	
Rank	**Type of Capacity-Building Strategy**
1	Evaluation
2	Building Broader Support for Service-Learning
3	Performance Measures
4	Staff/Faculty Training
5	Community Partnerships
5	Marketing

In addition, grantees and subgrantees have demonstrated an increased commitment to promoting accountability, improving their capacity to report on program performance, and building stronger community support for service-learning. In FY03, the majority of Learn and Serve programs reported that they had engaged in capacity building strategies. Exhibit 2 provides the top six strategies employed by programs.

Learn and Serve America continues to foster a culture of accountability for its programs and, in 2003, implemented performance measurement requirements at national, grantee and local (subgrantee) levels. Learn and Serve America applicants are required to nominate three to five performance measures as a part of their application and at least one of the measures must be dedicated to the development of civic skills and knowledge among participants or service beneficiaries. Grantees will report on these measures in progress reports and when applying for further funding. In addition, Learn and Serve America has begun planning for a national performance measurement system that will shift its annual performance reporting from process-oriented accomplishments to results-oriented outcomes

Outcomes

In 2003, Learn and Serve held its most selective competition in the program's history. Of 384 competitive applications submitted, 84 (22 percent) were chosen for funding. A breakdown of competitiveness by category can be seen in the chart in Exhibit 3. Learn and Serve America also received and approved 50 Formula grant applications from State Education Agencies.[3]

Exhibit 3
**Learn and Serve America Grant Competitiveness**
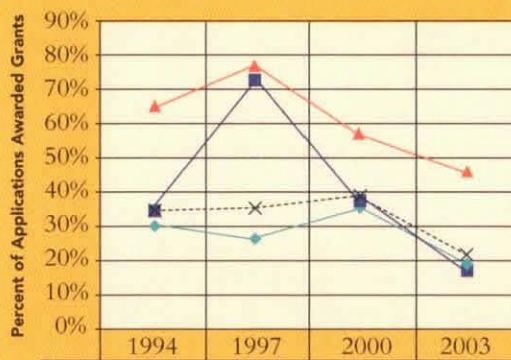
	1994	1997	2000	2003
Higher Education	31%	26%	36%	19%
Community-Based	35%	73%	38%	18%
School-Based Competitive	66%	77%	57%	46%
All Competitive Programs	35%	35%	39%	22%

The majority of Learn and Serve America grantees, in turn, subgrant the funds to local organizations. During the 2002-03 program year, the majority of subgrantees received between $1,000 and $20,000 in Learn and Serve America funds. The following graph provides a more detailed description of subgrant amounts.

Through Learn and Serve America's annual survey, 1,591 Learn and Serve America projects reported that they engaged 1,152,059 participants, with a

Exhibit 4
Collaboration with Faith-Based Organizations
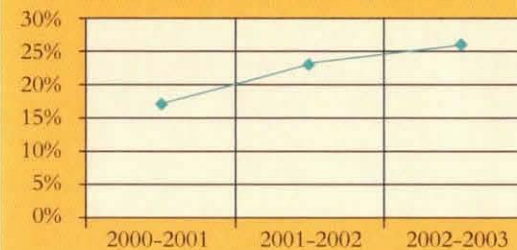
mean of 781 participants per project during the 2002-03 program year. On average, participants performed 21 hours of service for the program year, with a total reported number of service hours of 10,561,432. In addition, 90,044 teachers, faculty, administrators, and community-based organization staff assisted in these programs.[4]

The primary purpose of Learn and Serve America is to develop and fund programs that engage children and youths in service-learning activities that benefit their schools, communities, and their own academic and civic development. Of the 1,152,059 reported participants in 2003, approximately 71 percent were at the elementary and secondary school levels. The table below shows the diversity of Learn and Serve America programs compared to the U.S. population. In addition, programs reported that, in 2003, 27 percent of programs were located in schools where at least 50 percent of the students qualified for a school lunch program, and, on average, 14 percent of participants in a program were disabled.

Learn and Serve America: Reflecting on the Past, Focusing on the Future

Exhibit 5

Diversity in Learn and Serve America in 2002-2003

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Participants[5]	Percent of U.S. Population[6]
White	65.4	75.1
African-American/Black	21	12.3
Latino/Hispanic	8.5	12.5
Asian-American	2.2	3.6
Native American/Alaskan Native	1.2	2.4
More than two races	0.8	0.9
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.3	0.1

Impacts of Learn and Serve America Programs

According to an evaluation of Learn and Serve America programs published in 1999, middle and high school students participating in Learn and Serve America programs contribute, on average, 73 hours of service to their community annually. In addition, the vast majority of service-learning participants (95 percent) reported that they were satisfied with their community service experience, while 99.5 percent of the school and community agencies where students conducted their service reported that their overall experience with the program was good or excellent.[7] The intensive service experience of Learn and Serve America programs has been shown to produce a positive and statistically significant impact on school engagement, acceptance of cultural diversity, service leadership, and the overall measure of civic attitudes.[8,9,10] These positive impacts have been shown to be even stronger among minority and economically disadvantaged students — two populations that Learn and Serve America programs have been shown to effectively engage in service.[11] When these opportunities are combined with in-class discussion (service-learning), the benefits are even greater.[12] Among high school and college volunteers, those given the opportunity to reflect on their experiences in a classroom are more than twice as likely to volunteer regularly as those not given the opportunity.[13]

Research also demonstrates that there is a strong impact of youth service on the volunteering habits of adults. According to Independent Sector, two-thirds of adult volunteers began volunteering their time when they were young (under the age of 18).[14] Based on the most recent evaluation by the federal government on service-learning in 1999, a third of all public schools, including nearly half of all high schools, have organized service-learning activities for their students and 57 percent of all public schools have organized community service activities.[15] Learn and Serve America continues to seek ways of expanding and institutionalizing the practice of service-learning. In the 2003 grant competition, 33 of 84 competitive grants went to organizations new to Learn and Serve America, and nearly all of the remaining competitive grants went to consortia that, in turn, subgrant to new schools, colleges, and organizations. Through the implementation of a performance measurement system and technical assistance in capacity-building techniques, Learn and Serve America will work with these new grantees to institutionalize service-learning, promote an ethic of service, and strengthen long-term, positive impacts for its grantees and service-learning participants. G2G

1. 1990 was not the first time the federal government made an investment in youth service. ACTION operated youth and higher education service and service-learning programs during the 1970s and 1980s. ACTION also published a magazine, *Synergist*, devoted to highlighting research and effective practices about service and service-learning in education and other youth-serving organizations.

2. Data based on Learn and Serve America's annual reporting instrument, the LASSIE survey. For 2002-03, N=1591.

3. 51 commissions are eligible for formula grants, including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico and excluding South Dakota. In the 2003 competition, Wyoming was the only eligible state not to apply.

4. Participant data based on 2002-03 LASSIE survey.

5. Percentages based on 2002-03 LASSIE; N=979 (with a total of 604,590 service-learning participants).

6. Percentages based on 2000 U.S. Census.

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Service-Learning
Policy

Jennifer Piscatelli, Researcher, Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship

Introduction

As service-learning becomes a more common practice in America's schools, the availability of high-quality service-learning opportunities and the methods for sustaining service-learning are receiving attention from service-learning advocates and policy-makers. One approach for sustaining and increasing service-learning opportunities is through policy. Policies supporting, encouraging and mandating service-learning are being introduced at the state and district levels.

State Policy Innovations

The Education Commission of the States' National Center for Learning and Citizenship (NCLC), with support from the Kellogg Foundation through its Learning In Deed project, created a 50-State Service-Learning Policy Scan in 2001. The scan reviewed state policy as it is presented in state constitutions, state statutes, state codes or regulations, and state board of education regulations. Currently, only one state has a service-learning graduation requirement (Maryland), although eight other states allow service-learning to be applied toward graduation requirements. NCLC will conduct a comprehensive update of the policy scan in 2004. (See www.ecs.org/nclc for updated information.)

In the 2003 legislative session, unlike previous years where state legislatures mandated service-learning and community service opportunities for K-12 students, many of the service-learning and community service initiatives passed were directives to other bodies, such as state boards of education and higher education governing boards, to establish rules, guidelines or programs related to service-learning.

For example, the Arizona legislature directed the Arizona Board of Education to establish guidelines to promote volunteerism and community service. The bill required that the state board of education adopt guidelines to "Encourage pupils in grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve to volunteer twenty hours of community service before graduation from high school" (Arizona Statute 15-203). The law states that community service may include service-learning.

Even states that typically offer great latitude in education policy-making to local school districts have begun encouraging service-learning through state policy. Although all high school graduation requirements in Iowa are determined at the district level, in 2003 the Iowa legislature enacted House File 180, which states, "The board of directors of a school district or the authorities in charge of a non-public school may require a certain number of service-learning units as a condition for the inclusion of a service-learning endorsement on a student's diploma or as a requirement for graduation from the district or school."

Legislative action in several states also acknowledged the importance of service-learning in post-secondary education. Texas passed Senate Concurrent Resolution 12, which urges "public and private institutions of higher education in the State of Texas to adopt service-learning as an important pedagogical tool and as a central form of engagement, civic outreach and citizenship education." Passage of West Virginia's House Bill 4362 requires each higher education institution's governing board to establish and implement a policy through which college students may obtain credit toward graduation for service performed in public schools as tutors, student advisors and mentors.

Service-Learning and Civic Education

Service-learning continues to be viewed as an effective method to engage students in citizenship education. Maine and New Hampshire established commissions to study citizenship education within their states. The charge of Maine's "Commission to Study the Scope and Quality of Citizenship Education" includes studying "the extent to which citizenship education, including service-learning, is currently included in the visions, missions, values and practices of Maine school administrative districts and institutions of higher education." The Commission has recently begun its work and will make recommendations for policy changes to the legislature once its study is complete.

The Commission to Examine and Assess the Status of Civic Education in New Hampshire, established by House Bill 1151, recently released its final report. The Commission identified service-learning as one of seven approaches to civic education present within the state, and noted that of schools responding to their survey, 40 percent of

Service-Learning Policy

high schools, 63 percent of middle schools and 45 percent of elementary schools in New Hampshire report offering service-learning opportunities for their students.

District Policy

The relationship between local, district and state policy is not necessarily linear when it comes to service-learning. Local school districts continue to enhance and implement state policy require-ments through their own policies and practices, such as including questions about service-learning in teacher interviews and evaluations and including service-learning in new teacher orientations.

Many local districts have begun looking toward formalized district policy as an avenue to institutionalize or sustain service-learning as a regular component of the school experience within their district.

Some approaches districts have taken to sustain service-learning through policy include:

• Passage of school board resolutions supporting the use of service-learning (non-binding);

• Inclusion of service-learning in district and school mission statements, goals and strategic plans;

• Passage of specific district-wide service-learning policies by the local school board, such as requiring service-learning opportunities for all students, requiring a service-learning

component be included in district-provided professional development, or providing transportation for service-learning projects; and

• Adoption of flexible scheduling to allow for service-learning activities.

As schools and districts recognize the value of integrating service-learning into the curriculum, they will seek opportunities to sustain service-learning through policy at the state and district level. G2G

Service-Learning in the United States

1. The state permits community service or service-learning activities to be applied toward graduation requirements.

2. Service-learning is a requirement for graduation.

3. Statutes, rules, regulations, creation, or purpose of programs relating to service-learning.

4. The state encourages the use of service-learning as a mecha-nism for increasing student achievement and engagement.

5. Service-learning is included in the state's education standards.

6. The authorization of funding appropriations, and the creation of service-learning activities and programs.

Glossary of Terms

Character Education: Promoting core values, proactive strategies, and practices that help children not only understand core, ethical values, but also care about and act upon them in all phases of school life (from the Service-Learning Clearinghouse).

Citizenship education: A comprehensive approach aimed at instilling in students the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for effective civic participation — rather than only describing responsibilities of citizenship such as voting. (Education Commission of the States)

Civic education: Deepening the experience of service by connecting it to such fundamental American values as liberty, responsibility, and freedom. (Constitutional Rights Foundation, Citizenship Toolkit)

Community service: Service to the community that is not formally linked to the curricular objectives of a school or community-based organization.

Community youth development (CYD): A strategy of youth engagement where youths advance community development goals resulting in benefit to both youths and the community.

Community-based organization (CBO): An organization that is representative of a community or significant segments of a community and provides education or other services to promote community well-being.

Developmental assets: A research-based framework which measures positive relationships, opportunities, skills, and personal qualities that help young people thrive, avoid a wide range of high-risk behaviors, and become healthy, caring, and responsible members of society.

Formal, Informal and Nonformal Education: A set of terms used to capture the span of learning contexts for acquiring knowledge and skills: formal (as in schooling), nonformal (activities or programs organized outside the school context but directed to definite educational objectives, such as in community-based organizations) and informal (through self-directed, lifelong learning activities such as reading, and social contact where, for example, children learn adult roles by observing, assisting and imitating).

Higher order thinking: Thinking that stresses analysis, comparison, interpretation, application, debate, innovation, problem-solving, or evaluation of a line of thinking (from International Reading Association).

Meta-analysis: The analysis of the results of a collection of individual studies in order to draw general conclusions, develop support for hypotheses, and/or produce an estimate of overall program effects.

Multiple Intelligences: A theory by Howard Gardner that describes the broad range of capabilities (intelligences) used by humans in solving problems and creating things and ideas. Emphasizes the need to recognize learner differences in instructional design. Includes eight intelligences: verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, visual/spatial, bodily/kinesthetic, musical/rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist.

Service-Learning: A philosophy, pedagogy, and model for community development that integrates community service with intentional academic or personal development goals to enhance cognitive and social development, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Social Capital: A concept advanced by sociologist James Coleman and political scientist Robert Putnam referring to the processes between people, which establish networks, norms, and social trust, and facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.

Statistical significance: The level at which an investigator can conclude that observed differences are not due to chance alone; for example, a "p" value of .05 (also called significance at the .05 level) indicates that there is about 1 chance in 20 that the differences observed occurred by chance alone.

Title I: Federal Program that provides additional education services for student achievement for low income students and families.

Trend-level Analysis: Analysis of changes over time that do not necessarily reflect statistical significance at the 0.5 level.

Essential Elements of
Service-Learning

The "Essential Elements of Service-Learning" was published by the National Youth Leadership Council in 1999 in response to a request from the Corporation for National Service (CNS) to provide a guide to creating, maintaining, and continuing improvement of service-learning programs. The essential elements were identified over a period of three years with the support and input of members of the National Service-Learning Cooperative, a group of 13 organizations funded by CNS and convened by NYLC to provide service-learning technical assistance. They have provided a basis for the creation of assessment tools and survey instruments to determine the quality of service-learning practice and level of organizational support at local, state, and national levels. For a complete copy of the "Essential Elements of Service-Learning," contact NYLC at (651) 631-3672 or visit www.nylc.org.

The Essential Elements of Effective Service-Learning Practice:

- **Curriculum Integration:** Strengthens the connection between academic learning, including state and local standards, and service.

- **Academically and developmentally appropriate service:** Provides opportunities for students to learn skills and think critically.

- **Student assessment:** Is integrated into program design as an instructional tool, providing constructive feedback to enhance learning.

- **Genuine community needs:** Involves students in tasks that have clear goals, meeting genuine community needs identified by students and approved by the community, which is part of the students' learning process and integral to the program design.

- **Program evaluation:** Involves all participants, and is summative (evaluating the end result) and formative (for ongoing program improvement).

- **Student voice:** Students hwave decision-making power regarding the selection, design, implementation, and evaluation of service projects. The teacher's role is as a mentor, coach, motivator, and facilitator.

- **Diversity:** Participation in service projects that involve diverse groups is encouraged to enhance students' ability to work with, learn from, understand, and communicate in positive ways with people whose backgrounds are different from their own.

- **Partnerships with community:** Clear communication of expectations among partners concerning outcomes, rules, roles, and responsibilities.

- **Preparation:** Students and teachers must understand their roles, the skills and information required, safety precautions, and sensitivity to the people they will meet in the community.

- **Reflection:** Students learn higher order thinking skills to connect their service experience to curricular objectives. Reflection activities must occur throughout the process — before, during, and after the service experience — and engage all participants.

- **Validation:** Post service acknowledgement and celebration of students' service, as well as documentation of student service in academic transcripts.

The Essential Elements of Organization Support for Service-Learning:

■ Effective service-learning is connected to and relevant to the district's mission: Service-learning as part of school- and district-wide curricula.

■ School and district policies designed to promote quality service-learning practice: service-learning linked to the district and/or school mission statement.

■ Organizational structure and resources:
  • Service-learning funded through the school and/or district budget;
  • District provides transportation for service-learning activities;
  • Schedule accommodates service-learning;
  • Administration actively supports service-learning;
  • School risk management plan covers service-learning; and
  • Provision is made for the coordination of school and/or district service-learning.

■ Professional Development: Staff training in service-learning philosophy and pedagogy. Ongoing opportunities for staff to refine their service-learning practice.

Resources
Organizations

The following sampling of organizations and projects offer resources on service-learning, including curriculum guides, evaluation tools, funding sources, and other forms for support. Please see profiles in this report for additional resources. If readers know of additional useful resources, please contact mneal@nylc.org.

Academy for Educational Development
www.aed.org

American Youth Policy Forum
www.aypf.org

America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth
www.americaspromise.org

Campus Compact
www.compact.org

Compendium of Assessment and Research Tools (C.A.R.T.)
www.cart.rmcdenver.com

Center for Youth as Resources
www.cyar.org

CIRCLE (Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning & Engagement)
www.civicyouth.org

Close-Up Foundation
www.closeup.org

Corporation for National & Community Service
www.nationalservice.org

Education Commission of the States
www.ecs.org

Exemplary Youth Ministry
www.exemplarym.com

Independent Sector
www.independentsector.org

The Innovation Center for Community & Youth Development
www.theinnovationcenter.org

John Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities
gardnercenter.stanford.edu

John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy
www.glenninstitute.org

National 4-H Council
www.n4h.org

National Commission on Service-Learning
www.servicelearningcommission.org

National Crime Prevention Council
www.ncpc.org

National Dropout Prevention Center
www.dropoutprevention.org

National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
www.servicelearning.org

National Service-Learning Partnership
www.service-learningpartnership.org

National Youth Leadership Council
www.nylc.org

Points of Light Foundation
www.pointsoflight.org

Project Ignition
www.sfprojectignition.com

Search Institute
www.search-institute.org

State Education Agency K-12 Service-Learning Network (SEANet)
www.seanetonline.org

State Farm Companies Foundation
www.statefarm.com

USA Freedom Corps
www.usafreedomscorps.gov

University of Berkeley Service-Learning Research and Development Center
www.gse.berkeley.edu/research/slc/

W.K. Kellogg Foundation – Learning In Deed
www.learningindeed.org

Youth Action Net
www.youthactionnet.org

Youth Action Research Institute/Institute for Community Research.
www.incommunityresearch.org/research/yarao.htm

Youth Activism Project
www.youthactivism.com

Youth on Board
www.youthonboard.org

Youth Service America
www.ysa.org

Youth Venture
www.youthventure.org