

2017-18

12th Grade Community Experience:

One of the elements of active citizenship is developing an awareness of the problems within our community and our country. These problems range from access to high-quality child care to the efforts to maintain democracy, to nurturing our environment to finding effective and compassionate care for our elderly citizens.

In order to foster the above goal, students in Participation in Government are required to engage themselves in a community project which includes:

- Researching a particular problem facing our community and its people and organizations working to address that problem
- Contributing **10 hours** of volunteer service to an organization addressing that problem
 - The **first 5 hours** are subject to the following:
 - Must be in our **LOCAL community**
 - Must address the needs of people
 - Must be in:
 - 501 c/3 non-profit organization (Salvation Army, League of Women Voters, The Samaritan Center, etc.) **OR**
 - a local government entity (Town of Dewitt) **OR**
 - a political entity (campaign, political headquarters, etc.)

PLEASE NOTE: For the first 5 hours the following activities, though laudable and useful, do not meet the requirements:

- Animal walking/grooming/care
- Sports camps that act as feeders for high school athletics
- Internships, research opportunities, job-shadowing, or other experiences not open to everyone.
- If you choose to work through a religious organization - church, temple, mosque, youth group - *the work you do must focus on addressing the needs of people in the general population rather than on the religious aspect of the work*
- The **final 5 hours** (which are NOT subject to the above requirements) May be at any non-profit **501(c)3 of your choosing**
 - You may be having a great experience at the first location and choose to remain there for your last 5 hours or
 - You may choose to do something else

PLEASE NOTE: your 2nd community opportunity must also be approved by your teacher

After you have done your work, you will write a 3-5 page paper about the problem, organization, and experience and give a short, in-class presentation about your involvement.

WHAT YOU WILL DO:

FIRST:

- Select one of those organizations within *our local community* with which to do your community work
- Write a proposal to your teacher identifying your plan for community involvement...you must know the problem/issue they work to address
- *AFTER* you have had your proposal approved, contact the agency and set up an appointment to discuss the opportunity and to interview the coordinator of the program

THEN:

Research the problem/need (i.e. homelessness, refugee concerns, literacy) and write a short paper (1-2 pages) focusing on that problem. In the paper you will:

- Describe the problem your organization works to address:
 - What are some of the reasons for the problem? What are some of the short-term and long-term impacts of the problem for the person(s) and for the community?
 - **Your paper must include data and statistics about the problem locally, state-wide, and nationally**

FINALLY:

Using the information from your research, your interview, and your volunteer experience:

- Write a comprehensive final paper
 - This 3-5 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt font paper is meant to be a comprehensive picture of an issue the people of our community face. It should connect your experience, your research, and the themes of this class.
- Give a brief presentation to your fellow students about your project.

Requirements for Organizations at which you volunteer:

- All service hours must be completed at a **non-profit organization**.
- Your chosen organization **MAY NOT BE AT A LOCATION WHERE YOU ALSO WORK FOR PAY**...even if you do indeed volunteer your time.
- **Your parent/close relative may not be the supervisor overseeing/signing off on your work**

Be sure to choose an opportunity in which you can have a diversity of experiences and do meaningful work with people. Some suggestions for problems to address and ways in which to address the problems are below:

- The care and nurturing of children you may choose to work in an after-school program at a local youth center such as the Northside Refugee Center or in a non-profit pre-school, such as The Salvation Army Daycare Center
- The rights of Minority populations; you might like to work for the NAACP, the Pride Agenda or the local chapter of NOW
- Peace and justice issues; you may choose the Syr. Peace Council, Peace Action, The American Civil Liberties Union or The A. Phillip Randolph institute
- Disaster and support services; you may like to work with The American Red Cross, Operation Northern Comfort or the Presbyterian Disaster Relief Services
- Homelessness and hunger; you may choose to work with the Rescue Mission, Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels, Samaritan Center, or The Oxford Inn
- Elderly citizens; you might like working in an assisted living community or nursing home, such as Loretto, a hospital, or an end of life center, such as The Francis House
- Veteran's issues; you may choose to volunteer at the VA hospital or with the Disabled American Veterans Association, Wounded Warrior Project
- Politics and elections; you might like working on a campaign or intern with a political party or an elected official

When choosing your opportunity ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this a non profit? How do you know?
- What is/are the big problem(s) that this organization addresses?
- How do you know or evaluate that the organization is achieving these goals?
- Research the agency:
 - Look at their website
 - read some of their materials (pamphlets, etc)
 - Look at charity calculator to learn about how well they use their \$\$
- When I work with this organization how will my community be improved?

On your first day:

- Present the volunteer letter in this packet to your supervisor and have her/him sign the confirmation sheet
- Introduce yourself to the volunteer coordinator or director of the agency and *spend some time interviewing* one of the coordinators of the organization so that you have background about the organization, its mission, and its challenges (see interview questions in this packet, but feel free to ask additional or follow-up questions for better understanding).
- ***Each time you volunteer***, you will be required to fill out the Volunteer Log and have it signed by the person supervising your generous gift of time. Please do not leave all of the signing until the end as this puts the supervisor in the awkward position of having to remember all of the dates and times you worked or of having to sign a document based on your “word”. You will turn in a letter of verification on agency letterhead with the final paper.

REMEMBER: You are JD’s representatives to the community and as such are expected to uphold the standards of excellence people have come to expect from a JD student.

These standards include (but are not limited to):

- Creating a schedule for your participation
- Showing up-on time! when scheduled, ready to give of yourself
- Calling if something comes up and you cannot make it. Organizations depend on volunteers and when they don’t show up, the clients’ needs are not served and important tasks are not accomplished
- Treating all people with whom you come in contact with respect and appreciation...the people with whom you may be in contact are dignified, intelligent, caring people who have friendship to offer, humor to access, and lessons to teach
- Maintaining the confidentiality of clients, volunteers, and supporters

**If, for some reason, you need to change your project, don’t leave the organization wondering. Be sure to let the supervisor know you will not be returning. You will then be required to submit a new proposal.

Choose something you are truly interested in to make this into a meaningful experience!

Give this to the Volunteer Leader when you arrange your service!!!!!!!!!!!!

Dear Volunteer Leader,

Thank you for accepting our student as a volunteer in your organization.

JD High School is committed to improving our community through volunteer work with many important organizations in the community. To that end, our 12th grade Participation in Government students are required to perform 10 hours of community service during the semester.

For many students, this requirement provides them with their first sustained engagement in their community. It has been our experience that students who have a productive and meaningful first experience are people who choose to continue doing the work that will benefit society. Therefore, whenever possible, please try to engage them in activities that integrate them with the people being served by the organization.

Below is an excerpt of the student guidelines. You can expect the student to live up to these stated guidelines. Please feel free to contact us if these guidelines are not upheld.

**Thank you, again, for hosting a student this semester,
David Bunyan, Andrew Cottet, Donna Oppedisano
*Participation in Government Teachers
Jamesville-Dewitt High School***

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- ❑ Treating all people with whom you come in contact with respect and appreciation...the people with whom you may be in contact are dignified, intelligent, caring people who have friendship to offer, humor to access, even lessons to teach
- ❑ Maintaining the confidentiality of clients, volunteers, and supporters

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Agency Representative Interview Questions

Please give a broad overview of your organization.

What societal issue(s) or problem(s) does your organization address?

What are some of the short-term and long-term impacts of these problems on the community or individuals in the community?

What is the mission statement of your organization? (write it in below or attach separately)

How does your organization fulfill its mission?

From where does your organization get its funding?

What are some of the challenges faced by organizations such as yours?

How does having volunteers help your organization to address the needs expressed above?

How does or might the government support the work of your organization?

What else do you want the community to know about your organization?

Public Service Proposal

I, _____, confirm that I will be volunteering at
_____ for **first 5 hours** **second 5 hours** **full 10 hours**
(circle one option) during this semester.

I am aware that I will be required to submit the **signed Log Sheet** detailing the dates and times
of my service to this organization. The first session of this experience will be on _____ /
_____ / _____.

Student Signature _____

I acknowledge having received the JDHS volunteer guidelines

Supervisor Signature _____

[This may not be a parent or immediate family member]

Phone number _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

*****I certify that I do not/have not worked in this organization as a paid
employee***** _____ (initial)

