

## FAQ's about Service Learning Activity

### What is Service Learning?

Service-learning is a method under which students learn through thoughtfully-organized service that is a) conducted in a community, b) helps foster civic responsibility; c) is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students; and d) includes structured time for students to reflect on the service experience. There are three basic components to effective service-learning:

- sufficient preparation, which includes setting objectives and planning projects so they contribute to learning at the same time work gets done.
- performing service.
- the participant attempts to analyze the experience and draw lessons, through such means as discussion with others and reflection on the work.

### How do I find the appropriate agencies in this community?

The community physician will likely have contacts and the AHEC staff knows the community.

### How is the schedule made?

At the beginning of the rotation (or if possible, prior to arriving in the community), the student and community physician will determine what will be the focus of the student's community work and where this community time fits into the overall schedule.

### What are the expectations of what I will do for the agency(ies)?

This unique opportunity will allow the various community agencies to use the medical students as a resource. At the same time we hope to avoid unrealistic expectations or demands on students. It will be important to identify a point person in the agency who can orient the student on the first day and provide assistance to the student in determining appropriate activities.

### With what type of activities or agencies can I get involved?

We encourage student creativity. If you have any questions, check with the Course Director.

Below are possible activities

- Give a health-related presentation to a local agency staff, a group of students, or to families through a community agency. This presentation should be on some topic related to health or development. Examples include:
  - Nutrition and Obesity-prevention
  - Immunizations: why the need; and what's new
  - "Going to the doctor"
  - Car seat safety
  - Sun safety – cancer prevention
  - Gun safety
- Find out how you can assist the local Head Start staff or the Women's Infants, Children (WIC) staff, while at the same time learning about one of these agencies
- Participate at a Health Fair booth. Provide health education and health screenings.
- Volunteer your time with children. This could be during school (in partnership with the school) or with an after-school program (e.g. after-school tutoring, playing sports; teaching about health)
- Participate with sports physicals or health screenings at a local school
- Teach first aid or a health-related merit badge group of Boy Scouts, Venturers, or Girl Scouts.
- Volunteer at the local library, and combine literacy development and health awareness in your work.
- Provide health education to patients in a public health clinic.
- Volunteer at a Meals on Wheels program.
- Go on home visits with home health agency staff and provide patient education.

### Where can I find more information about service-learning?

A website on service-learning can be found at [http://www.etxahec.org/hpsp/service\\_learning/index.htm](http://www.etxahec.org/hpsp/service_learning/index.htm). It provides a description, goals, and outcomes of service learning as well as links to service-learning organizations and higher education institutions with structured service-learning programs.