



Community Service Office

Gephardt Institute for Public Service

Principles for Community Service Washington University in St. Louis

The Community Service Office at Washington University aims to provide meaningful opportunities for students to volunteer their time and energy in response to voiced community needs. We understand that community service takes many forms – including volunteerism, advocacy, education, and philanthropy – which, when integrated, create the greatest possibility for community development and student learning. To assure that the community service our students provide is beneficial and effective for both our student volunteers and the communities they serve, we are committed to the following principles.

- We value projects that are mutually beneficial to the community and that enhance the educational mission of the University. We support all projects that respond to community needs, and we encourage attention to communities that are marginalized or in greatest need of our support.
- We encourage sustained partnerships that provide reliable resources to the community and that challenge our students to grow intellectually and emotionally through involvement in complicated social issues. We support short-term projects that provide students exposure to community challenges and inspiration to deepen their participation in community service.
- We believe that effective community service is based in sincere motives to listen and respond to the needs of the community; constant movement toward social justice; shared purpose; and attention to community strengths and human dignity.
- We recognize our responsibility and desire to be good neighbors in St. Louis, and we seek to provide our students the opportunity to understand and experience the richness and complexity of the region and apply this knowledge and sensitivity to their awareness of global issues.
- We commit ourselves to providing experiential learning opportunities for our students to explore civic issues, to deepen their comprehension of these issues through academic study, interpersonal discussion, and introspection, and to make a life-long commitment to responsible citizenship and community involvement.