

# **PARENTS' ASSOCIATION GRANT PROPOSAL**

**Program Title: Service Learning Program**

**Submitted by: Associated Students of the University of Arizona**

**Jim Drnek, Associate Dean**

**520.621.2782**

**Bookstore 325W**

**drnek@u.arizona.edu**

**Bldg 19, Suite 325W, Tucson AZ. 85721**

**Steven Gerner, ASUA Senator**

**480.213.7573**

**Bookstore 325W**

**sgerner@u.arizona.edu**

**Bldg 19, Suite 325W, Tucson AZ. 85721**

**UA Foundation Account Number: 02 – 11010 – 1103**

**"Service-learning is education in action."  
— Senator John Glenn**



## OVERVIEW OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA:

Since 1914, the Associated Students of the University of Arizona (ASUA) has represented the interests and needs of the student body. Working with the University Administration, the Arizona Board of Regents, state and local officials, and the Arizona State Legislature, ASUA ensures the voice of students is effectively heard. ASUA offers a wide variety of programs and services that students utilize including reducing textbook costs, raising funds for scholarships, and free evening motor vehicle transportation.

## GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY:

The Service Learning Program seeks to enrich theoretical academic curriculum, further the educational goals of students, prepare students for a competitive workplace, and improve the quality of life in communities across the state of Arizona by facilitating opportunities for students to perform and reflect on meaningful community service. We are seeking funding for the initial trial phase of this project.

## STATEMENT OF NEED:

Recent advances in understanding the human brain, intelligence, and how we learn indicate that successful schools need to provide opportunities for experiential learning to promote construction of knowledge and understanding; opportunities to develop both intelligence and skills through mediated learning; and opportunities to transfer learning through reflection<sup>1</sup>. Over the past several decades the University of Arizona has made significant advances in the educational methodology utilized; however, the learning models currently used at the University do not reflect this new understanding of learning. Learning models based on experiential education through service effectively fulfill these newly understand requirements for effective learning. The University of Arizona's own experience bears witness to the benefits of experiential education.

As Arizona's first public university and a land grant institution, the University of Arizona has a tradition and responsibility of service to the community. Over the past 121 years of the University's history, Students have innovatively fulfilled that responsibility. Research has shown those students participating in community service not only provide a significant benefit to the community but also more effectively meet learning objectives and academic standards<sup>2</sup>. However, only a small segment of the student population traditionally has the economic resources and time to devote to service. Furthermore, those students engaged in service lack structured opportunities to reflect on the relationship between theoretical knowledge and the practical application of that knowledge through service. A clear need exists for an experiential education program to ensure the University of Arizona is providing the highest quality education which effectively meets the changing needs of students and to ensure the University is staying nationally competitive by integrating up to date educational models into the current learning framework. A program based on service learning fulfills this need.

---

<sup>1</sup> Robin Fogarty, "The Intelligence-Friendly Classroom," (Phi Delta Kappan, May 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Astin & Sax, 1998; Tartter, 1996; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000.



## WHAT IS SERVICE LEARNING?

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that combines the principles of experiential learning with service to the community. Through service learning, students develop as citizens, learn problem solving skills, and experience a sense of social responsibility by engaging in thoughtful action to help their communities. As Senator Glenn explains, "Service-learning is education in action".

Picking up trash on a riverbank is *service*. Studying water samples under a microscope is *learning*. When science students collect and analyze water samples, document their results, and present findings to a local pollution control agency... this is *service learning*.

Service-learning is a teaching method that enriches learning by engaging students in meaningful service to their schools and communities. Students apply academic skills to solving real-world issues, linking established learning objectives with genuine needs. Students lead the process applying critical thinking and problem-solving skills to concerns such as hunger, pollution, and diversity.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

The service learning program will connect individual or small groups of students with community and not-for-profit organizations that lack specific technical expertise, knowledge or human resources. Students and community organizations will connect through a web-based system that will allow community organizations to present a particular problem needing assistance; individuals or groups of students will apply for the right to solve that problem. Typical projects may include but are not limited to: developing a public relations plan for a not-for-profit, engineering a computer network for an after-school program, identifying toxins or pollutants contaminating a local water source, or assisting a community group through the legislative process. Projects must have a clear link to furthering educational goals of a student's major(s) and will not consist of routine or rudimentary tasks. Projects must also conform to national standards which have been established, implemented, and revised at institutions across the nations over the past twenty years.

Students will have the opportunity to select, design, implement and evaluate their service activity with assistance from a faculty member and final approval by the community organization; this method encourages relevancy and sustained interest by all parties involved. Upon completion of the project, students will receive credit for service learning activities similar to internship credit, which will be applicable towards their major(s). In conjunction with faculty, learning objectives for each project will be clearly outlined. Credit is earned for the learning that students demonstrate, as measured by their capacity to fulfill the established learning objectives, not for the service itself. Students may complete service-learning throughout the course of their undergraduate or graduate career. Once a student has fulfilled a community need, the student must enroll in a reflection course and write a reflection paper that elaborates on the connection between the theoretical and practical learning. The University will not charge tuition on any units earned through service learning in accordance with the University's responsibility as a land-grant institution.

We are seeking initial funding for phase one of the Service Learning Program. Between August, 2006 and December, 2006 we will evaluate effective Service Learning models at peer universities and



modify those models to the educational methodology of the University of Arizona. Between January, 2007 and May, 2007 we will implement a small scale service learning program in targeted departments. During May, 2007 and June, 2007 we will review the merits and limitations of the initial implementations and make necessary modification for large scale implementations of the project during phase two beginning August, 2007.

## **BENEFITS TO STUDENTS:**

Research findings conclude Service Learning provides some of the following benefits to students.

- ✓ Enhances the value of education from the University of Arizona through experiential education which reinforces theoretical academic curriculum through practical application.<sup>3</sup>
- ✓ Prepare students for the workforce by engaging students in selecting, designing, implementing, and evaluating a genuine community need.<sup>4</sup>
- ✓ Develops a student's level of awareness regarding issues affecting the community at large while improving their knowledge and skills within their particular field of study.<sup>5</sup>
- ✓ Contextualizes knowledge by requiring participants to engage in problem-solving involving the specific context of their service-learning activity and community challenges, rather than only drawing upon abstract textbook or theoretical knowledge.<sup>6</sup>
- ✓ Promotes critical thinking and the ability to identify the most important questions and practical solutions in a real-world situation.<sup>7</sup>
- ✓ Empowers the notion of "student voice" by allowing individuals or groups of students to rely on their own creative and innovative ideas when designing and implementing solutions.<sup>8</sup>

## **PROGRAM OUTCOMES:**

- ✓ Improve the capacity of students to recall and apply knowledge linked to established learning objectives and academic standards.
- ✓ Ensure the presence and development of at least three essential skills necessary to the student's chosen field of study.
- ✓ Identify and fulfill one genuine and unique community need per service learning team in consultation with relevant community organizations.

---

<sup>3</sup> Astin & Sax, 1998; Balazadeh, 1996; Blackwell, 1996 (dissertation); Boss, 1994; Burr, 1997 (dissertation); Cohen & Kinsey, 1994; Driscoll, Holland, Gelmon, & Kerrigan, 1996; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Eyler, Root, & Giles, 1998;

<sup>4</sup> Sledge, Shelburne, & Jones, 1993; Smedick, 1996 (dissertation); Tarter, 1996; Vogelgesang & Astin, 2000; VCU, 1997; Western Washington University, 1994.

<sup>5</sup> Eyler, Giles & Braxton, 1997; Fenzel & Leary, 1997; Giles & Eyler, 1994; Gray, et al. 1998; Johnson & Bozeman, 1998; Keen, & Keen, 1998; Kendrick, 1996; Mabry, 1998; McElhaney, 1998 (dissertation);

<sup>6</sup> Batchelder & Root, 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Eyler, Root, & Giles, 1998; Osborne, Hammerich, Hensley, 1998.

<sup>7</sup> Bacon, 1997 (dissertation); Balazadeh, 1996; Cohen & Kinsey 1994; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Fenzel & Leary, 1997; Foreman, 1996; Gelmon, Holland, and Shinnamon, 1998; Gray, et al., 1998; Hall, 1996 (dissertation);

<sup>8</sup> Keen, & Keen, 1998; Kendrick, 1996; Loewen, 1998 (dissertation); Markus, Howard, & King 1993; McMahon, 1998; Ostrow, 1995; Peterson, 1998; Rauner, 1995 (dissertation); Rhoads, 1997; Rockquemore & Schaffer 2000;

**ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY:**

The program will be assessed through two methods, pre and post evaluations and comparative evaluations as appropriate for each of the desired program objectives. Prior to and after participating in the program, a required survey will be administered to each student, gathering information relevant to the program's objectives. Additionally, program participants will be compared to the general student population in terms of broader measures of academic success (such as semester grade point average). Results of the pre and post survey and comparison between the control and experimental group will be analyzed to determine the relative effectiveness of the program. Discussion is currently underway with the Department of Higher Education to identify potential graduate students who may be interested in participating in this assessment as part of their research.

**PROJECTED BUDGET:**

Projected Expenses:

Item	Description	Cost	Total Cost
Benchmarking	Costs associated with researching peer institutions policies and site visits.	\$1370.00	\$1370.00
Student Assessment	Collecting selective and campus wide feedback regarding SLP through focus groups and on-line survey.	\$180.00	\$180.00
Online System	Implementing online collaboration system to pair UA Students and community organizations with SLP projects.	\$2400.00	\$2400.00
Marketing	Advertising and Marketing to Students and potential Community Partners.	\$230.00	\$230.00
Project Manager	Students worker to oversee designing and implementation of SLP.	\$1000.00	\$1000.00
Assistant	Students worker to assist in implementing SLP.	\$500.00	\$500.00
Program Assessment & Evaluation	Assessment of Pilot Program Outcomes and Modification of Curriculum for large scale implementation.	\$1270.00	\$1270.00
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$6950.00</b>

Potential Funding Sources:

Grants & Corporate Support– ASUA is actively pursuing the following grants:

Ikon Grant

Learn and Server American Grant

State Farm Good Neighbor Service-Learning Grant

The Corporation for National Service (AmeriCorps) Grant

The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) Grant

University of Arizona Foundation Board of Director Grant

Xerox Grant