Student Benefits From Service- Learning

There are many different skill-based learning objectives that can be enhanced while participating in a community-based learning experience, including service-learning. Many students enter into these experiences with a desire to work towards certain goals or outcomes. Listed below are several possible skills and benefits that students may experience as a result of their service work in the community.

Intellectual Development & Academic Learning
  - **Specific Subject Matter Knowledge** - Students acquire expertise by broadening and deepening their understanding of the subject matter and gain a better understanding of how to apply this knowledge in a community context.
  - **Critical Thinking Skills** - Students are able to utilize techniques such as decision-making, problem-solving, and analytical skills in understanding complex social problems from multiple perspectives.
  - **Engages Learner** - Students become more interested and motivated to learn and invest time in education because they better understand the relevance and importance of their academic work in relation to everyday life, career choices, and lifelong learning.
  - **Career Development / Exploration** - Students learn about the range of jobs available in the public service sector and gain some clarity on career choices and how they influence larger lifestyle decisions.
  - **Job Skills** - Students gain experience, knowledge and skills for the workplace.
  - **Networking** - Students may develop valuable contacts and build relationships with individuals who can provide references that they may use in the job search process.
  - **Experience** - Students gain experiences that will help build their resume, thereby becoming more marketable when applying for jobs, graduate school, scholarships, etc.

Social & Civic Development
  - **Social Comfort** - Students are comfortable and competent in a variety of social situations.
  - **Social Sensitivity** - Students gain understanding, appreciation and an ability to relate to people from a wide range of backgrounds and life situations.
  - **Intercultural Competency** - Students respect, appreciate and seek out opportunities to engage in cross-cultural situations.
  - **Intergenerational Connectedness** - Students gain the ability to interact and work cooperatively with familial and non-familial adults and effectively seek advice and learn from people of all ages.
  - **Team Responsibility** - Students value working with a group to accomplish a task and believe a group can often accomplish more than an individual.
  - **Group Process Skills** - Students work well in a group to achieve a task and elicit participation from group members while fully participating.

Awareness of Societal Issues
  - **Citizen Participation Skills** - Students gain a more in-depth understanding of the "political arts," including legislative processes, grassroots organizing, advocacy, etc. and how these skills can be used to affect positive social and political change.
  - **Social Responsibility** - Students believe that members of society are interdependent and have an obligation to work with others to strive for the well-being of all people in all circumstances and for sustaining the earth's living systems.
  - **Civic and Community Responsibility** - Students believe that members of society have an obligation to participate in public affairs, community building activities and initiatives, and governmental processes. They also gain an understanding of the variety of approaches to community work.
  - **Meditation Skills** - Students gain an understanding of and experience with various models to work

with groups or individuals in conflict.
- ➢ **Coalition Building** - Students gain experience organizing various people or organizations around a common set of goals.
- ➢ **Leadership Skills** - Students develop valuable skills which will enhance and strengthen their capacity to be leaders as they work with community organizations.

Personal Growth & Development
- ➢ **Interpersonal Communication Skills** - Students gain perspective on how effectively to communicate (verbally and non-verbally) with others and learn how to improve personal effectiveness.
- ➢ **Active Listening Skills** - Students are responsive to others and demonstrate understanding.
- ➢ **Assertiveness Skills** - Students gain experience behaving assertively by developing their ability to be honest
and direct while expressing their own thoughts, feelings and interests to others.
- ➢ **Individual Empowerment and Initiative** - Students believe they have the personal capacity to make a difference and contribute positively to society.
- ➢ **Moral and Ethical Decisions** - Students gain clarity on moral and ethical issues and dilemmas through values clarification.
- ➢ **Self-Awareness** - Students are able to identify their own culturally influenced feelings and beliefs.
- ➢ **Self-Esteem** - Students feel more worthwhile, confident and competent.
- ➢ **Flexibility** - Students learn to adapt to changes and to tolerate ambiguity.
- ➢ **Willingness to Take Risks** - Students are open to new ideas and processes and are willing to develop and implement them.