

# *Change not Charity: Service in Action*



## P R O F I L E :

### **Bread, Roses and Citizenship**

The *Washington Post* journalist that described Lawrence, Massachusetts as “a desperate wasteland of abandoned mills and boarded-up crack houses”<sup>1</sup> makes only a brief reference to the Bread and Roses strike of 1912, a critical moment in U.S. labor history during which immigrants from many

nations united to demand fairness and decency in the Lawrence mills and community. In this article depicting tensions arising in response to the locating of affordable housing in adjacent, affluent suburbs, there is no mention of the community revitalization driven by Lawrence’s residents, primarily Dominican, Vietnamese, Puerto Rican, and Khmer. And this article does not lead the reader to the doors of the Maria del Pilar Quintana Center at the Lawrence Family Charter Development School.

Open the doors and walk very slowly down the corridor—it is hard not to. The walls are adorned with multilingual posters celebrating The Center’s motto: “Strengthening Family...Building Bridges.” There are photos of kindergartners circled around their first books, and smiling adults arranged portrait-style, certificates of citizenship in hand. In some of these photos one will see students from Phillips Academy in nearby Andover, hunched over a table, shoulder to shoulder with their Dominican adult partner. Their faces are mutually intent as they turn a page in the *Cuaderno para Ciudadania*, the workbook that the student has created to help their partner prepare for their citizenship exam.

The Phillips students prepare for their weekly one-on-one tutoring experiences in an upper level Spanish course, “The Hispanic Presence in the United States.” They study immigration policy and history, engage in dialogue about cultural and democratic values, and hear from speakers on the Dominican experience in the United States, in particular Lawrence. The lesson plans they design prior to each tutoring session contain terms like *l gobierno*, *la rama legislativa*, but more than words emerge when they actually make contact with their adult partners at the Maria del Pilar Quintana Center. Teacher Rebecca McCann describes the time that Imeka\*, a Nigerian-born Phillips student was paired with a woman without written literacy. Unable to use the materials he developed to teach about *la bandera* (the flag), creativity came into play. Imeka removed the t-shirt he was wearing, coincidentally embellished with a flag, and began an animated conversation using this new teaching tool, affirming his partner’s oral literacy in the process.

<sup>1</sup> Grunwald, M. *Pushing Out of a Pocket of Poverty*. The Washington Post. Tuesday, March 9, 1999.

This course and service learning component was initiated, according to Chad Green, Director of the Phillips Academy Community Service Program, on the suggestion of Todd, a former student who had begun an extra-curricular program called project VOICE (Vote on Inner City Empowerment). A Surdna Foundation grant helped establish the pilot program in 1997. "I wanted to do a service learning course in Lawrence a while ago," says McCann, "My idea was to do oral histories with people in Lawrence—but it didn't feel right, it would be 'take take' and no giving back. It wasn't until Todd talked to me that I realized there was a way to do something else."

Phillips Academy has had a "long-term connection" with The Family Development Charter School, says the school's director Pat Karl, which she believes eased the inception of this particular project, and contributes to its success. Karl describes the reciprocity that emerges through the collaboration. "We provide citizenship and education for the Latino community in Lawrence which is primarily immigrant, new and primarily poor. There have not always been opportunities for positive interchange with the non-Hispanic community in Lawrence. Our citizenship participants have the opportunity to develop a one on one relationship with the students from Phillips. The Phillips students have the opportunity to utilize Spanish in a community setting...to[practice] their Spanish in the context of culture...and to learn from people who have lived what it is to come here as an immigrant, to settle in a community and face all those barriers of what life is. The sharing of stories on both sides is powerful." Karl emphasizes that organizations who collaborate on multicultural projects must have some common understandings and values. "We are an organization in a very poor community partnering with an educational facility in a very wealthy community—yet I believe there are core values in sync, and that is why it works."

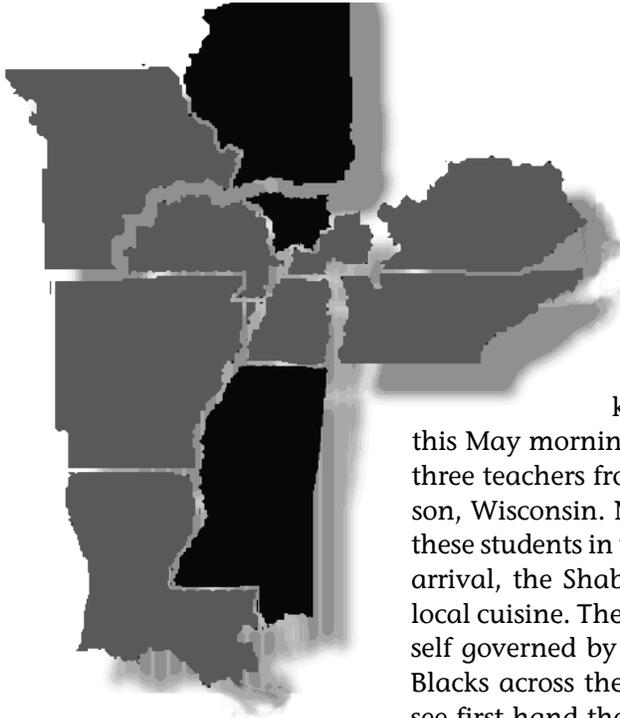
Yet Phillips students come from many walks of life, and this project illuminates this diversity. As Green says, the Patagonia [clothing] on campus can mask the class and ethnic differences. Some day-students have never been to Lawrence, only 10 minutes away. Others from urban centers are much more comfortable in Lawrence than in Andover. Mark\*, a day-student who continues to volunteer at The Family Development Center offers advice to others. "You have to come into the whole situation with an open mind—not only do you have to drop all preconceptions but you have to drop all fears you may have too. When I went there the first time, I was kind of nervous. We don't speak the language, and we would be teaching adults who are three to four times our age—it felt awkward at first." In some cases, Latino students have found this course a way to share elements of their culture with peers. It can also, as Green recalls in the case of a Dominican student from New York, put them in an uncomfortable position. "It puts them in the role of 'well you're from that culture...therefore you are the expert...speak for your people'— and they don't necessarily want to be the spokesperson."

During a culminating discussion in class, the issue of the *Washington Post* portrayal of Lawrence is activated again. "In the article," recalls Liz\* "they just gave the classic rich, white suburban father in Starbucks drinking his coffee saying 'their kids don't deserve to go to school with my kids'—it was really interesting because some kids in the class agreed with that and other kids were like 'no way, they need a fair shot'" Says Alison\*, who spent five weeks of her summer break in the Dominican Republic after the course, " In a lot of ways, [this discussion] spoke well of the class, because they felt like they would express that, even though it is not like the most politically correct." Alison continues "I think the beauty of the course is that instead of looking at things on a national level...or as purely concrete, it actually makes [issues like immigration and language] something that is connected to you...that you think about in terms of your own life."

*PHILLIPS ACADEMY IS A NATIONAL SERVICE LEADER SCHOOL*

\* Pseudonym

# *Change not Charity: Service in Action*



## PROFILE : Service, Delta Style

Milburn Crowe sips a cup of coffee at his kitchen table in Mound Bayou, Mississippi. On this May morning, he awaits a bus carrying twelve students and three teachers from Malcolm Shabazz City High School in Madison, Wisconsin. Mr. Crowe and several of his neighbors will host these students in their homes for several days. The evening of their arrival, the Shabazz contingent will be treated to home-cooked local cuisine. They will learn that Mound Bayou was founded and self governed by freed slaves, and remains a source of pride for Blacks across the nation. Before the visit is completed, they will see first-hand the schools infused with the strong ethic of education instilled by Mound Bayou's founders and carried on by their descendants. In return for the hospitality and oral history, the Madison visitors will help to paint a building or clean up a playground, depending on what their host families have deemed necessary service-learning projects.

This stop in Mound Bayou marks one of several service-oriented visits in a two-week journey to the Mississippi Delta. Other sites along the way do not resonate with the same level of vitality and self-determination as Mound Bayou, where a majority of high school graduates continue on to college. In most communities, they witness the racism and economic segregation that results in European American students attending private academies and African American students in substandard public schools with facilities in grave disrepair. The poverty that inflicts much of the region becomes apparent as the group tutors children at the largest Head Start center in the nation, where two-thirds of the children come from families with an annual income of less than \$3,000. Lending contrast to these scenarios, they gather stories of inspiration as they interview dynamic community members and activists along the way. In Tchula they meet Dr. Myers, a physician, jazz pianist and Baptist minister who runs a medical clinic in an area with the highest infant mortality rate in the country. After a day spent helping Myers with clean-up and filing in his under-staffed office, one student writes "This is probably the most caring man I will ever meet in my life..."<sup>1</sup>

This experiential journey through the Mississippi Delta is part of the Education for Justice course at Malcolm Shabazz City High School -- an alternative public school founded in 1971 whose mission is "to create a safe supportive, multicultural and academically challenging learning community which prepares young people to become active, reflective and compassionate individuals." Before heading South, the Shabazz students spend several months learning about the history, geography, literature, ecology and culture of The Delta.

Three educators at the school, Jane Hammatt Kavaloski, Tenia Jenkins and Gil Richardson unite to teach about the region through their respective disciplines. In Jenkins' social studies class, they study the history of segregation and education in the Delta. They read Anne Moody's *Coming of Age in Mississippi*, and learn songs that are later brought to life with a visit to the Clarksdale Delta Blues Museum. Richardson, a science teacher, prefaces the trip with units that explore the ecology of the region as well as environmental racism perpetuated through the dumping of chemical wastes in several African American communities -- sites they later visit.

Hammatt Kavaloski emphasizes that the three teachers strive to help students "understand the historic struggles for justice, and to affirm the integrity, the spirit, and the people power" that exists in a place where the stronghold of segregation was never fully penetrated by the civil rights movement. The team brings multiple cultural perspectives to the in-class and on-road experiences; Hammatt Kavaloski, the school social worker and service learning coordinator is European American, Jenkins is African American, and Richardson is African and Native American. They have taught and led the Education for Justice class for 14 years. In addition to the Mississippi Delta, their classes have studied and traveled to Native American reservations in Northern Wisconsin and coal mining communities in Appalachia.

During the trip, students keep a daily journal in which they describe their perceptions and feelings along the way. A packet with key words, phrases, and quotes helps to stimulate some of their entries, although the stream of experiences provoke powerful reflection. One student writes, "We all grow up with our own set of ideals or dreams we wish to fulfill in our lifetime. We've come across many elders in our travels...They've shown how it takes an immense amount of discipline and motivation to realize an ideal and to set goals, especially considering the torment and frustration associated with the segregation and racism towards them. They are prime examples of what it takes to dedicate yourself and push yourself not to get discouraged".<sup>2</sup>

The courage and resiliency that these young people witness on The Delta journey may be especially meaningful to those who experience oppression in their own lives. Many students come to Shabazz from other schools after being harassed or marginalized due to their race or culture, physical appearance, or sexual orientation. Others were "at-risk" of not graduating because of academic frustrations, attendance and behavior problems, or mismatches of learning and teaching styles.<sup>3</sup> Over the years, 180 students have participated in the Education for Justice class and service journey. The experience causes many to contemplate the potential they have to be positive contributors to their own communities. As one student reflects, "Everyone always says, 'what can I do?' You can do a lot. Just one person getting involved can affect a whole community."

This reflection is manifested as the returning students take on the role of educators and activists to convey the journey to others in their school and community. They assemble their interviews, photos and reflections into a slide show that they present to parents, to those who supported the trip financially and to 500 students in schools throughout Madison.

The Education for Justice service journey offers an exciting model of community bridging. As Milburn Crowe says, it enables those of diverse cultures to "come together and share" in profound ways, then relate the experience to others, thereby extending the service even further. Other initiatives at the school don't take the students to Milburn Crowe's kitchen, but do effectively link service learning with social justice to promote democratic citizenship education. The infusion of initiatives have led to the school's recognition as a national model in combining academics with civic responsibility. Service learning at Shabazz has not come without hard work and perseverance. Although the staff does grant-writing to support their initiatives, money sometimes hinders efforts, and transportation issues often present challenges to getting students to sites, even locally. The overall commitment of the school, however, means that teachers are flexible about having students pulled out of classes occasionally for a service experience.

Principal Steve Hartley emphasizes that the human rights oriented discussions that accompany many of the service initiatives are in alignment with the school's non-harassment policy, which is formally taught in classes. In addition to seeing topics such as racism and homophobia as "legitimate issues for schools to be taking about," Hartley refers to current laws that place "the onus on the administrator of a school to provide a safe environment for everybody." He notes that phrases such as citizenship education may be more comfortable to some administrators than social justice and says "at some level I am comfortable with interchanging these."

Amidst a recent critique of the quality of civics education in Wisconsin schools, Malcolm Shabazz City High School was praised by the State Superintendent as a "school that is doing it right." Perhaps the most compelling evidence is, says Hartley, that Shabazz initiatives are "engaging kids who don't typically go to school....[Their] parents are thrilled that kids are setting their own alarms."

*MALCOLM SHABAZZ CITY HIGH SCHOOL IS A NATIONAL SERVICE LEARNING LEADER SCHOOL*

Footnote references:

1- Student journal entry. "Youth and the Right Side of History." Metanoia, Newsletter of the Ecumenical Partnership for Peace and Justice. Winter, 1993

2- Jane Hammatt-Kavaloski, Tenia Jenkins, Gil Richardson. "Education for Peace and Justice." Generator. National Youth Leadership Council, 1999.

3-Jane Hammatt-Kavaloski. "Learning Through Service, A Role for School Social Workers in Educating for a Peaceful World" Unpublished Paper, 1999

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Communication and clear expectations between school and agency partners is essential to successful service encounters.

Preparation through research and reflection can pave the way for intercultural communication and appreciation.

On-going, rather than episodic service fosters relationship building among service participants and recipients.

Service experiences will impact participants in different ways, which may be informed by their cultural background and experience.

# QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE

How has our plan for service activities changed since our initial idea, and why?

Does everyone in the class have a role to carry out as part of the service experience?

How are parents and other community members included in our service activities?

How can we use the media to let others know about this service learning initiative?

How will we document our service experiences, eg photos, video, journal, website?

How will we reflect on individual and collective experiences gained through service?

How can we receive regular feedback from service recipients and partners regarding our efforts?

How can we evaluate whether our service activities are addressing the intended need/issue/audience?

# ACTIVITY: WHAT DO I DO WHEN...

*Developed by Deborah Leta Habib and Richard Baruc*

## **Purpose**

This activity can be used by service participants as a form of reflection in between service activities in order to celebrate successes and problem solve challenges. It can also be used by service recipients, or by mixed groups of participants and recipients in order to communicate about and improve on the service experience for all.

## **Materials and Resources**

Index cards with scenarios generated by the group or the facilitator that describe actual incidences of mis-communication, cultural conflict, or another challenge that arose during a service experience. To create these, draw from student reflections (with their permission), or have students concisely describe an incident, omitting names, on an index card. For example, one might be about overhearing a stereotypical comment and another related to communication between two people who do not speak the same language.

## **Process**

- A. Divide into small groups of three to four (be sure that you have enough incident cards, one for each group—it is okay to duplicate some). Each group receives an index card. These should be no more than a few sentences long, and present an incident/scenario without a conclusion.
  
- B. Explain that each group will have 15 minutes to plan how they will present their scenario, with an accompanying response that describes a constructive way of handling this situation. Groups must make sure that each member has a role in the presentation. Groups can choose to act out their scenario and response, verbally present them, or translate them into a poem or rap.
  
- C. After each group presents their scenario, encourage the other participants to analyze the response that the group came up with to deal with the situation. What are the pros and cons of this response? Does anyone have other ideas? Applaud each group's efforts.

## What Do I Do When...

### Discussion Questions

What kinds of preparation (such as more awareness of an issue, culture, or community) for the service might have prevented these incidents from occurring in the first place?

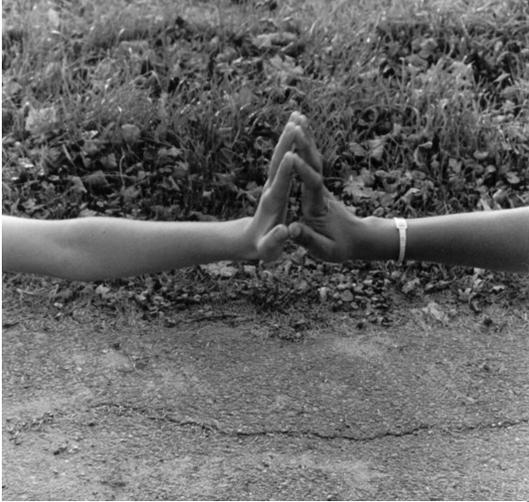
Do you think it would be easy or difficult to respond to these scenarios the way the groups suggested? Why?

What actions can be taken in order to improve future service encounters for all? [e.g. participants and recipients?]

"IT IS NOT ONLY WHAT WE DO, BUT ALSO WHAT WE DO NOT DO FOR WHICH WE ARE ACCOUNTABLE"

-MOLIERE

# Mirrors and Meaning-Making: Reflection



Cori O'Neill

## PROFILE :

### Facing Hatred, Healing Hatred

Meredith Baker hands copies of the poem "Incident" to her students, which they pass around the circle. "Underline the name at the top of the page" says Baker. "This is the author. Is Countee Cullen male or female?" A chorus of students respond with both. "Can you

tell when the poem was written?" As her students offer more guesses, Baker repeats her questions in order to engage the class in a dialogue about making assumptions. Then they read aloud and interpret this classic poem about a young boy's experience of racism on a Baltimore train. Before the period is over, this tenth grade English class will have continued a discussion on the concept of privilege and analyzed chat-room excerpts from the "Stormfront" white supremacist website.

This class period represents one lesson in Baker's "Facing Hatred" unit at Waterford High, a predominantly white, working class community on the Connecticut coast. Twenty five consecutive lessons such as this one engage tenth grade English students in analysis of literature, articles and films that explore stereotypes and discrimination. They read excerpts from books such as *The Diary of Anne Frank* and *Farewell to Manzanar*, and, as one of twelve unit objectives states, "...examine the impact of the Holocaust and the Japanese-American internment camps upon survivors." They interpret and discuss discrimination experienced by Gay and Lesbian high school students through peer-facilitated "Socratic Seminars." Journal entries on the concept of 'bystander,' and recipe poems written in response to personal, painful scenarios engage students in creative writing and critical analysis. The unit culminates, depending on the decisions of the students, in a service learning project such as a workshop on stereotypes taught to sixth graders, or a day-long conference for peers and local community members. At the end of the unit, students write reflection papers that describe the impact the lessons and service experience had on them. Those who wish read these aloud to their classmates. In them, they also suggest and justify the grade they believe they should receive for the unit.

For their service learning project, Jake\* and his classmates decided to plan and teach several workshops on prejudice and stereotypes to sixth graders. Jake describes his group's preparation: "We spent a lot of time developing our thoughts first, like what we wanted to teach them, what impact did we want to make on how they think.

We tried to think how they would be thinking, like what kind of stereotypes we had when we were that young." Ms. B's sixth grade students were the recipients of these lessons. She knew many of these tenth graders when they were in the sixth grade and was impressed that "they had matured and taken on this new role as teacher," and "seemed very interested in getting the sixth graders to understand the concept of intolerance." During the workshops, she observed her students' attentiveness, a testimony to the power of role modeling regarding topics such as these. "They were really listening to them. They wanted to watch them, know who they were. Sixth graders are so sensitive about being offended, and they can easily offend other kids. It helped them to learn how words can really hurt."

Sarah\* has taken on the task of editing video footage from the day-long event that she and her classmates organized as their service project. She describes the impact of this experience, as well as connections she made to current events as a result of extensive class time spent in preparation and reflection. "We had a holocaust survivor speak at the workshop we set up for other English classes and the community. When he spoke it was the same time as they were trying to move the Albanians out of Yugoslavia, so it hit, that this is what has been going on.... I also realized that I myself have a lot more stereotypes than I thought-- I've changed a lot since then, just realizing that, y'know, walking down the hallway and hearing someone say 'oh that was gay.' When you say it you don't think of it as as much of an insult as it really is and how hurtful it is to people. [The class] made me think about what I say before I say it, and to be sure that if I have an opinion of someone, it is based on something." Sarah and Jake's reflections resonate with Baker's perspective that she is "not doing the unit to teach students what their values should be, but [to look at] what they think they are. [I want them] to examine what they hold dear and what they want for their lives."

Jen Ryley Welsh, Service Learning Program Coordinator for the Waterford Public Schools stresses the importance of a support system for teachers such as Baker, who courageously and creatively link service learning with social justice. She sees this as part of her own role, and also notes the support that Baker has within her own department. Says Ryley Welsh, "When you are dealing with issues in a community that have been festering for a long time, you are going to open some wounds sometimes, and it is important for a teacher to be able to say 'I need help,' not just figuring out the project, but talking to students, dealing with parents."

Ryley Welsh supports teachers throughout the district in conceptualizing and implementing service learning initiatives, and also matches students with community sites for co-curricular service. But she does not do it all alone. An enthusiastic advocate of student leadership, Ryley Welsh orchestrates a 15 member Student Steering Committee. Some serve as faculty or community liaisons while others explain the service learning requirement to incoming freshman. The Student Steering Committee public relations chair enters Ryley Welsh's inviting office and reminds her of an upcoming press opportunity. "He is in here all of the time," says Ryley Welsh. "[The Committee] is an interesting cross section of the school population -- to the cheerleader who is always involved in everything to a couple of Freshman who have never been involved in everything."

Ryley Welsh describes Meredith Baker's service learning unit through a "student leadership lens." "When Meredith was introducing the [service component] of the unit, I did get to see students rolling their eyes. First they get over the 'okay we have to do a service project,' then Meredith asks 'what is it you want to do?' The students say 'you are asking us?'...Up until they have to design a service project, [the class activities] are something they have to do for Ms. Baker, but now they really have to step back to deal with some issues that are uncomfortable, in order to develop lesson plans for others. They realize that they have to convey some serious messages here..it is amazing; many of the students who were not [previously] leaders really step up to the challenge."

*WATERFORD HIGH SCHOOL IS A NATIONAL SERVICE LEARNING LEADER SCHOOL*

*\*pseudonym*

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Reflection before, during and after a service experience is essential in order to elicit and examine assumptions or stereotypes held by participants (as well as recipients).

Reflection is critical for teachers as well as students.

Reflection can occur through multiple literary, artistic and communication mediums, and therefore appeals to diverse learning styles, which may be influenced by culture.

Reflection can help students draw critical connections among different social justice issues, and between their own lives and communities and those of others.

"IF YOU ARE UNWILLING TO CHANGE, YOU'VE  
ALREADY REACHED YOUR MAXIMUM POTENTIAL"  
— UNKNOWN

# QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE:

What mediums and techniques will we use to reflect on our on-going experiences while appealing to diverse learning styles?

What “ground rules” should we discuss in order to create a safe yet honest setting to share and analyze diverse opinions and multiple perspectives on issues?

How can we use our reflection sessions to discuss issues of oppression, privilege, and power relationships and structures in our school, community, and society?

How can students be involved in the design and facilitation of reflection sessions?

Can we incorporate an opportunity to reflect with service recipients and partners?

How will we individually and collectively document and archive our reflective expressions (as formal or informal assessment of our learning)?

# ACTIVITY: LIGHT THE WAY

*Based on the activity Lighthouse in The Growing Classroom by Gary Appel and Roberta Jaffe, Addison Wesley, 1982, adapted by Deborah L. Habib*

## **Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to discuss concepts related to discrimination and justice, examine stereotypes and their sources, and to generate ideas for interrupting stereotypes. It can be used to discuss concepts related to equality and discrimination at all phases of the service learning process, or as an activity that service participants can do with others in a class or workshop if the opportunity arises.

## **Materials and Resources**

A blindfold, 8.5 x 11 cards, each labeled with one of these terms: stereotypes, discrimination, inequality, violence, racism, sexism, classism, homophobia and heterosexism, anti-Semitism, ableism, ageism, linguicism, and/or others that you would like to address; two additional cards with strings attached so they can be worn around the neck, one reads “peace and justice boat” and the other “youth leadership.”

## **Process**

In this activity, one person plays the role of the lighthouse (wearing the card “youth leadership”). Another is the boat (peace and justice), who will be blindfolded. The other participants play the role of obstacles in the sea, and choose a card with a different term (stereotype, racism, etc.). Be sure to create enough cards for each participant—you can replicate terms if necessary.

- A. Choose an open area (approximately 15'-20' feet long) where the “obstacles” will be comfortable laying or sitting on the floor. The peace and justice boat stands at one end of the playing area (the sea) and the lighthouse (youth leadership) at the other end, on shore.
- B. Each “obstacle” reads the term on their card, and offers a definition. Other participants and the group leader can help shape each definition as necessary. Then they choose a position, sitting, laying down, or standing between the boat and the lighthouse. “Peace and Justice” and “Youth Leadership” can define themselves as well.
- C. Once all obstacles are in place, the youth leadership lighthouse must verbally lead the peace and justice boat (who is blindfolded) to shore across the obstacles in the sea. This is accomplished as the lighthouse offers verbal directions to the boat. The facilitator witnesses to be sure that directions are clear, and no one gets stepped on, supporting the lighthouse and boat as necessary.
- D. This game can be played several times with participants switching roles. The debriefing should draw out the metaphor of the activity, affirming the power of youth leadership as activists (guiding lights) for peace and justice, while recognizing the challenges to justice (the obstacles) that we face.

## **Light the Way**

### **Discussion Questions:**

What was challenging about bringing the boat to shore?

What can we do, in actuality, when we encounter obstacles such as these in real life?

What communication skills were important in this activity? How are these important to youth leaders?

What other skills are important for youth leaders to learn and practice as you work for justice?



### The Day Wore On

The day wore on and the marchers kept marching.  
The people kept demanding, not asking, for a voice.

The day wore on and the marchers kept marching.  
the people kept demanding the right to personal choice.

The day wore into night, the marchers kept on  
marching.  
The people kept demanding that we see things that aren't  
right.

The day wore on...Where were you? by Sarah C.

*I am standing in line, waiting for an ice cream cone at the general store take-out counter, busy on this first warm Sunday of the season. I silently read the back of the slightly faded black t-shirt in front*

*of me. It's 50ish, muscular owner and his wife had parked their Harley next to me, and I subconsciously expect the shirt to be a souvenir from a motorcycle rally at Loudon or Sturgis. Instead, the caption "Battle in Seattle, 1999" is written below an image of a man swinging a sledge, a United Steel Workers banner in the background. The man turns, soft serv twist in hand. Motioning towards his shirt I ask, "were you there?" "Yeah, and in DC too" he says. "You're a steel worker" I add, after I order ice cream for my husband and kid. "I was, now I'm with the union, mostly lobbying" "The media coverage of the union presence was terrible," I say. He nods "There were 15,000 of us, plus the environmentalists and a lot of others." Like young people, I think as he walks across the parking lot.*

*I could see the crowd from a mile away,  
It was then I knew I had to stay.  
People shouting 'fair trade,'  
With a human barricade.*

*Determination on their face,  
Everyone from every race.  
There they were joined together,  
In a protest that will be remembered forever.*

*Excerpt from an untitled poem by April S.*

# Youth Voice, Youth Leadership

photos: Javiera Benavente



## PROFILE : Expression Against Oppression

April's and Sarah's poems and photos are among the pieces in *STAND BACK!*, a collection of essays, poems and artwork written by students at Middle College High School in Seattle, Washington. The magazine chronicles the student's reflections and reactions to the Millennium Round Ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and accompanying international protests in Seattle in December of 1999.

Unlike much of the popular media, these students, facilitated by teachers Wayne Au and Alonzo Ybarra researched and critically analyzed the social, environmental and economic issues at hand in preparation for these meetings. In what Au describes as "a crash course in imperialism, globalization, labor rights, environmental protection and the role of the WTO," students examined questions such as: How does our global economy work; Who benefits from existing trade relationships; and What impact do current trade practices have on the environment and workers. Videos, books, and activities on international trade provided the springboard for discussions; local teach-ins and the increased activist presence in Seattle invigorated the student's sense of being part of this history-making event.

Several Middle College High students, most of whom are from Black, white and Asian working-class families, voluntarily attended the demonstrations to be, as one student describes, "in all the positivity of the protests." The creation of *STAND BACK!* served as a literary and artistic venue for students to make meaning of their research and in some cases, first hand experience. The words contained within recount the thrill of being part of non-violent protest as well as their frustration with acts of vandalism and the police brutality they witnessed. Students who did not attend submitted interviews with their peers or essays with titles like "Stop and Think," "U.S Layoffs" and "Dolphins vs. the WTO."

A core group of students took responsibility for collecting and compiling the photos, interviews, poems and artwork into *STAND BACK!* which was distributed to all

students in the school, progressive teachers in the area, and some union activists. *STAND BACK!* is not Au's first attempt at producing a magazine. "If you have the basic know-how," he explains, "you can put together something pretty nice, and the students are always extremely proud of their work." Although student's academic demands and personal lives necessitated that Au maintain an active role in organization and layout, he emphasizes that "it's all about student voice and the closer we can stay with that in all aspects of production, the better."

In addition to being a powerful medium for youth expression, the magazine served as an assessment tool. Says Au, "The pieces definitely demonstrated what the students had integrated into themselves and their thinking over the course of the quarter. Plus, some of the pieces were re-writes of [earlier] work." It may be too soon to assess how their WTO research, activism, and community education impacts future involvement in other social and environmental issues, but Au observes that some of his students "...had their fires lit a little bit. They're more aware, more conscious of politics and they show more emotional investment when we discuss political issues."

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Several hours south of Seattle, and many months before the "Battle in Seattle," a gathering against corporate globalization was brewing in Portland, Oregon. With the support of teachers and community members involved in the "Rethinking Schools" study group, students organized a conference on globalization, social justice and environment they called "Day in May."

Student Chris Brummer counted several hundred students, teachers and community members at the conference, which was held at the Lewis and Clark college campus. Chris co-lead a seminar on "trade and human rights, and how trade policies can violate human rights." His choice was fueled by readings, activities and discussions in his global studies class with Sandra Childs at Franklin High School in Portland. In response to their explorations of human rights, labor, and environmental issues around the globe, Childs has all of her students "do some sort of project that takes what they learn outside of the classroom." The realization that their soccer ball was made by Pakistani child labor, or that the extraction of oil that fuels their family's SUV devastates lives and homelands in Nigeria can be depressing to young people. Childs stresses that "it is important to help [students] recognize that there are people out there working for change, and that there are solutions, and that they can be one of those people." Some of her students chose to create coloring story books and share these with grade-schoolers, others wrote letters to oil company CEO's or the Secretary of Trade. Some, like Chris, who says planning a workshop with a peer enabled him to "explore some new ideas of how to exchange information" organized and presented at the conference.

Amanda Weber-Welch, teacher at Gresham High School in Portland describes the conference as a way for students across schools to plan and organize something together. She notes the exciting spectrum of local-to-global issues presented, ranging from the fairness of state testing policy to environmental racism. Greg Smith teaches at Lewis and Clark, takes part in the "Rethinking Schools" discussion group, and attended the conference. Being on the college campus, the first time for many students, gave the experience legitimacy and helped them to take it all seriously, says Smith. As a participant, he felt the knowledge base that the teachers had facilitated in their classes resulted in the students coming to the day "pretty sophisticated about the issues, and able to look at separate issues in a broader context."

As an advisor and ally, Weber-Welch notes that it is challenging yet crucial for adults to allow young people to make mistakes as part of the learning process. Seemingly undaunted by six

months of meetings and bus trips across the city to meet with peers from other schools, Chris advises others to “be persistent— along the way there are always hurdles, but we kept plugging away.” The “Youth for Change” groups that formed at several of the participating schools after the conference indicate that successes outweighed challenges.

Yet not everyone will be an enthusiastic proponent of youth voice, particularly when young people challenge institutionalized structures and the status quo. At the last minute, an administrator at one of the Portland area high schools prevented a teacher from bringing her students to the conference, due to a scheduled presentation that questioned statewide standardized testing practices. And while most of the responses to STAND BACK! were positive, one community member, whose irrational comments verged on violent, accused the student creators of fascism.

## SERVICE IN ACTION/ACTION AS SERVICE

These two profiles raise critical questions related to the relationship between youth activism and service learning. The reader of this piece may be intrigued by the stories of youth voice, but be looking for more familiar models of service, wondering if a magazine and conference fit the bill. This may explain why Au, Childs, Weber Welsh and other progressive, critical educators across the country may not name what they do as service learning. Yet their focus on authentic issues and skillful integration of critical thinking and reflection resemble aspects of service-learning in practice, particularly when looking through a social justice lens. Au comments on whether he sees activism as a form of service:

“In the current canon of service learning and community service, you will not have serious youth activism be included in the discussion, at least not around here...I think youth activism is the only/ most valuable form of service to one’s community because students make the choice themselves to be invested in the issues — unlike service learning which is being required. Youth activism always takes place in a meaningful context of youth empowerment, youth voice. It is a commitment to themselves and their communities. Rarely could I say the same of “regular” community service.”

Au’s perspective reflects the commonly held view of service as occasional acts of charity, rather than a mechanism for meaningful change. He uses service-learning and community service interchangeably— a helpful reminder that the distinction still needs to be demonstrated, particularly in efforts to engage more social justice educators in the service-learning movement.

Chris contemplates the potential impact of the event he helped organize as his global studies project. “I would have to say yes [the conference was a form of service]. If it doesn’t actually attract people to join a social cause, at least it makes people aware of what is going on outside their own lives—how their actions everyday affect other people.” Speaking from a classroom management perspective, Childs notes that the time and energy put into the conference process went “above and beyond” her student’s project assignment and her previous service learning endeavors, causing her to question whether it fit a typical model. “When I think of service learning, I think of it as something you can manage within the classroom every year...put in x number of hours...and that is not what this conference was—the conference was a several month plan of activities.”

Is an emphasis on youth leadership and youth voice a common denominator that can bridge service learning and multicultural, social justice education methodologies and practitioners? Whatever we name it, critically contextualized service-learning and community activism can have

a profound impact on young people, particularly those who are disenfranchised. As Au writes in the preface to *STAND BACK!*, "Our students, most of whom in the past have felt powerless in their lives, their jobs and their education, joined others downtown, let their voices be heard, and for the first time felt their personal power as active agents of change."

## Key Considerations

Youth directed service learning can resemble youth activism.

Concrete outcomes are critical to building a sense of ownership of a project, and enable young people to share their process and perspectives with others.

Youth participation on advisory structures builds leadership and contributes important perspectives to implementation and dissemination efforts.

There may be resistance from school or community members when youth actually gain change-making power, or challenge the status quo.

"PERHAPS A NEW SPIRIT IS RISING AMONG US.  
IF IT IS, LET US TRACE ITS MOVEMENTS WELL  
AND PRAY THAT OUR OWN INNER BEING MAY BE  
SENSITIVE TO ITS GUIDANCE, FOR WE ARE DEEPLY  
IN NEED OF A NEW WAY BEYOND THE DARKNESS  
THAT SEEMS SO CLOSE AROUND US."

REVEREND DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.  
EXCERPTED FROM THE SPEECH "BEYOND VIETNAM"  
RIVERSIDE CHURCH, NY, APRIL, 1967

# QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE

What leadership and activism skills do we (youth as well as adults) hope to gain through this project and process?

What existing youth groups in our school and community may be able to offer suggestions and strategies for promoting youth leadership?

What national or international youth organizations have resources that can support our efforts/project?

What resources and support can teachers and other adults offer, while not overpowering youth vision and decision-making?

How will communication and decision making take place among youth, and between youth and adult allies?

What specific roles will youth hold throughout this project, as well as in regards to a broad service-learning leadership structure in our school?

What challenges might or have been encountered through this project that interrupt or pose resistance to youth voice and youth leadership? How do we address these challenges?

# ACTIVITY: YOUTH ACTIVISTS: THEM AND US

*Developed by Deborah L. Habib and Javiera Benavente*

## **Purpose**

This is a two part activity. In part one, "THEM," students analyze stories of youth activism in order to elicit and discuss the processes of others, and gain inspiration. In part two, "US", they develop their own activism model.

## **Part One: THEM**

### **Materials and Resources**

Dingerson, Leigh and Sarah H. Hay. *The Co-Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change*. Alliance for Justice, 1998

Hoose, Philip. *It's Our World, Too!* Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1993.

The profiles contained within this guide, or other stories of youth activism from magazines or the internet.

### **Process**

A. Choose and read aloud one of the stories or profiles of youth activism from the books listed above, or another source.

B. As a large group, analyze the story for the following information:

What was the issue that this youth activist was responding to?

What action or actions were taken (circulating a petition, writing an editorial, organizing a meeting, etc.....)?

What were the steps that the activist took to carry out the action(s)?

What were the results of their actions?

Keep a written list of the responses to these questions to refer to in part two of this activity.

C. Repeat this process with several profiles/stories as it is useful to compare and contrast different youth activists, issues addressed, and choices of actions. In order to accomplish this, several stories can be read aloud and collectively analyzed or, break into small groups with each group responsible for analyzing a different story, then presenting back to the class.

## Discussion Questions

What made the efforts of these youth activists succeed? What were some of the challenges they faced?

Have you ever taken action on something you believed in? What was the issue? What was the action taken?

There are many ways to “get involved.” What does it mean to be an Ally? An Advocate? An Activist? How do you choose when to do what?

When have you acted as an ally? An advocate? An activist? Another role?

Who considers themselves to be a social justice activist now? Why or why not?

## Part Two: US

### Materials and Resources

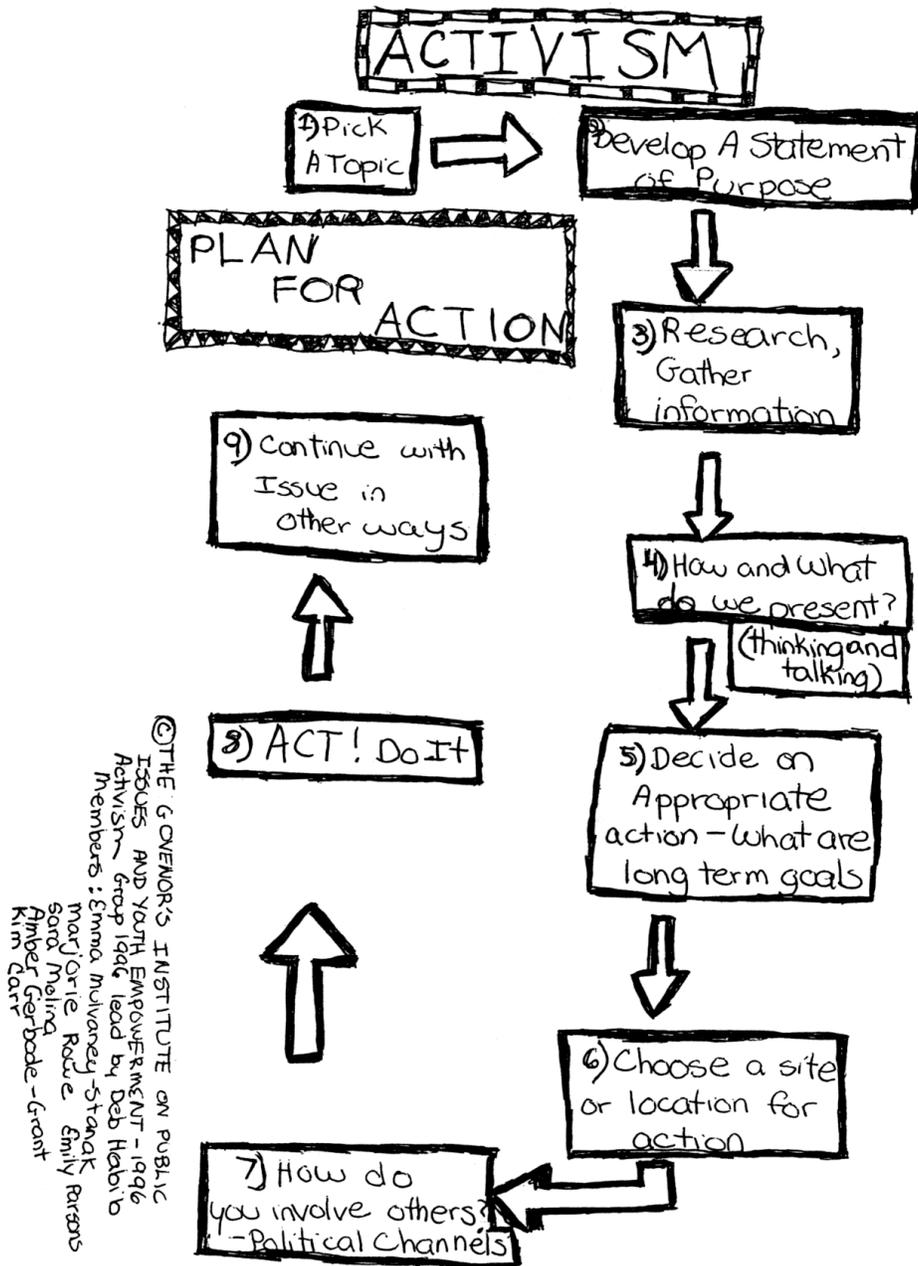
Newsprint and marking pens, lists of issues and actions from Part One of this activity.

### Process

- A. Review the steps that the youth in the stories took in order to think through and carry out an action. One way to do this is to have participants pretend that they are speaking to another group of young people, describing steps to initiating and carrying out an action. As these are articulated, add to or change the previous list as necessary.
- B. In a graphic, flowchart form, sequence these steps from start to finish. Below is an example of a sequence that one group of young people came up with, although there are many possibilities.
  - 1) Pick a topic
  - 2) Develop a statement of purpose
  - 3) Gather information/research
  - 4) Think and talk about it, and find support people ( allies)
  - 5) Decide on an appropriate action
  - 6) Choose a site or location for action
  - 7) Involve others
  - 8) Act! Do it!
  - 9) Let people know about the outcome
  - 10) Find ways to stay involved with the issue
- C. Test your flowchart by brainstorming an issue that is important to members of the

group, perhaps one connected to your service learning project. Plug it into your flowchart and see how it works, adding or changing steps as necessary. Try this with several issues, to test and refine the model.

- D. Neatly re-draw the flowchart by hand or using a computer, personalizing it with graphics, on a sheet of paper that is easily reproducible, such as 8.5 x 11. Add a title to the flowchart, and have each group member sign their name, or write the group name on the bottom before copying. Use it! Distribute it! Add it to your service-learning portfolio!



## **Youth Activists**

### **Discussion Questions**

What is exciting or scary to you about taking action on things you believe in?

What kind of support do you need from other youth or adult allies in order to take actions on issues?

What advice would you give other young people on how to be leaders and activists in their communities?

How are service and activism similar to or different from each other?

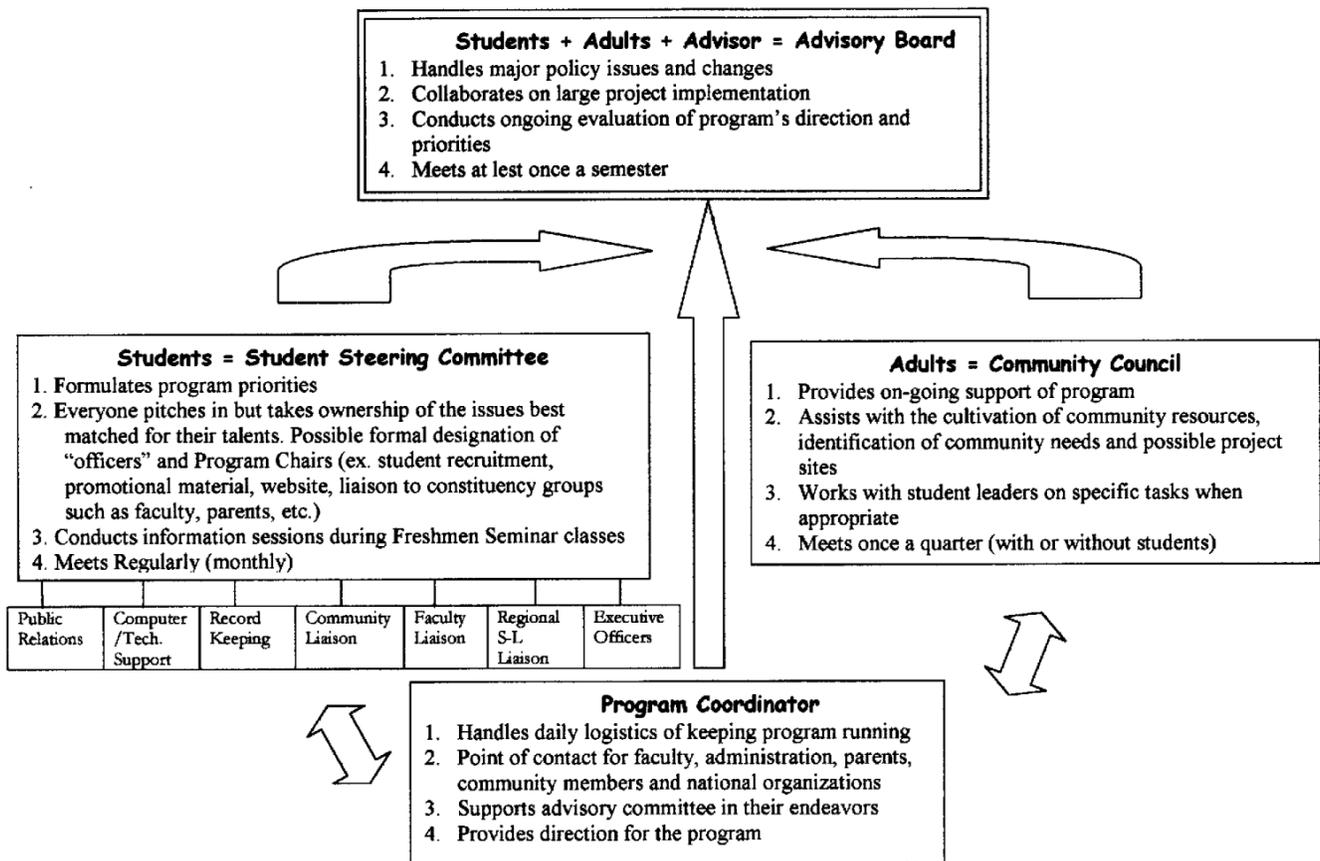
### **Notes to Facilitator:**

Not all forms of activism are non-violent, nor support a social justice agenda. If the facilitators are comfortable, they can bring in articles and news clippings that describe such organizations and actions in order to introduce multiple perspectives and encourage participants to think critically about the meaning of activism. Facilitators should be sensitive to the fact that participant's families may hold diverse opinions on social issues. If participants become excited and feel empowered from these activities, they may want to carry out some action. The facilitators role is crucial here, so that the action is carried out responsibly, and that the youth have ample time to plan and reflect on the experience.

Youth participation on advisory structures builds leadership and contributes important perspectives to implementation and dissemination efforts. Here is one school's model.

## WATERFORD (CT) HIGH SCHOOL LEARNING THROUGH SERVICE ADVISORY STRUCTURE

Jen Ryley Welsh, Program Coordinator 860-437-6956 [jwelsh@waterford-schools.org](mailto:jwelsh@waterford-schools.org)



## *Creative Collaborations : Partnerships*



### **PROFILE:** **Make Child Labor History**

Some teenagers crawl malls to adorn themselves in GAP and Nike wear. Others stage “un-fashion shows” to educate their peers and communities about global sweatshops and child labor. Instead of attracting

attention to their labels for vanity, they do so to illuminate the unglamorous, oppressive conditions under which these clothes are sewn. In fact, it is a student movement that has invigorated campaigns against child labor and global sweatshops. United Students Against Sweatshops has chapters at over 200 campuses across the nation, and the student-organized Workers Rights Consortium engages human rights groups to monitor working conditions in factories. And, the Anti-Sweatshop Movement is fashionable in high schools as well.

Tim Kipp is a veteran teacher of history, law, and political science at Brattleboro Union High School in Southern Vermont. His U.S. History curriculum has always included a study of labor issues and movement history, and he has emphasized child labor since its visible emergence as a critical labor and human rights issue. Kipp describes how he contextualizes these discussions in his classes. “We talk about U.S. labor history—16 hour workdays, coal mines, strikes... Then I’ll make the connection, [that] child labor is still happening here, but more so on a global level.” As Isaac, a former student attests, “we talk about workers, labor unions, socio-economic class...we do a much more in-depth analysis than textbooks.”

Subsequently, Kipp’s students want to do something. As with the other public issues his students explore, they research and write papers, and gain familiarity with local and national organizations. Then they decide on a service oriented action in their school or surrounding community. Kipp has found child labor to be “a good organizing subject, [because] it is not an abstraction. What do you wear, what do we wear? It is very difficult to find clean clothes.” He builds a 15 hour service requirement into his class. Anything over this can be used towards a graduation requirement of ten hours of service per year. Over the past several years, his students have conducted letter writing campaigns, written and circulated petitions, organized candle-light vigils, and taught elementary school classes. Some of Kipp’s students traveled to the State Capitol to speak at a congressional meeting on child labor.

Four years of student driven service and informed actions may have contributed to their Congressman, Bernie Sanders, pursuing funding for a partnership between Brattleboro Union High School and the School for International Training (SIT), also in

Brattleboro. The Child Labor Education and Action Project (CLEA) is a three year project funded by the United States Departments of Education and Labor in collaboration with the AFL-CIO Solidarity Center. CLEA aims to create a network of knowledgeable youth activists who will take leadership in promoting community-based educational and advocacy efforts throughout Vermont and regionally. A website is updated regularly by students, and a curriculum resource center based at the high school makes materials available to teachers and student groups around the state. A conference of 150 students from Vermont's rural and small urban communities, held at SIT in May of 2000 broke ground for the CLEA network of peer educators. The student led workshops included social action training, techniques for forming a CLEA chapter, and one describing plans to build a school in Central America. According to Kipp, the school would serve kids liberated from child labor, or those who do not have access to a school. "We send kids all over the place for French and Spanish trips...why can't we do it for child labor? Then, when it is built they can go and work for a week as a teachers aide."

The collaboration benefits both institutions. A relatively small school district does not have the infrastructure to channel large grants such as this, so the administrative, technical, staffing and funding aspects are managed through the School for International Training, enabling Kipp and his students to focus on content and dissemination. And the international, human rights orientation is aligned with the mission of the School for International Training. John Ungerleider, SIT faculty and co-author of the CLEA initiative describes how graduate students put theory into practice through this partnership as they work with high school students to help them develop understandings of social justice and global economics.

Ungerleider also directs the Vermont Governor's Institute on Current Issues and Youth Activism at SIT. Kipp and CLEA project coordinator Mary Gannon are on the faculty. This week-long summer institute provides advocacy and activism training for 40 Vermont high school students each year. A service element is embedded in the Institute itself, and participants, with the support of a faculty member, design a service project to practice their activism skills beyond the one-week intensive. The Institute, which often overlaps with sessions for teenagers from countries such as Cyprus and Ireland, will focus part of it's curriculum on child labor throughout the grant period.

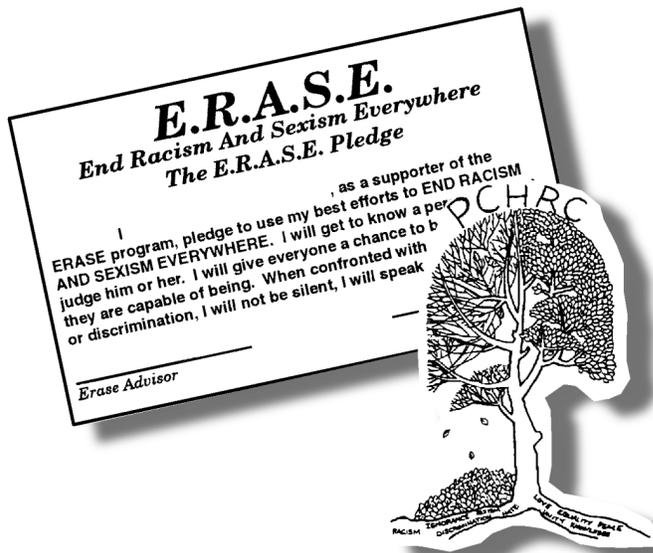
Laura, a Brattleboro Union High student attended the Governors Institute and is now a CLEA participant. "There is power in numbers" she writes, " and we believe that the more people we have behind our cause, the more powerful our message will be." Rob, another student leader describes the intention of the CLEA resource center and student network of educators: "We believe that through these actions we will be able to bring the topic [ of child labor] into the consciousness of many Vermonters, and make it harder for corporations to get away with this tremendous injustice".<sup>1</sup>

"Child labor is an entree to understanding many issues," suggests Ungerleider. " It touches people in a very human way, about injustices and oppression, and in a way, especially that kids can understand, about what is right and what is wrong. It is about lack of power and use of power. It touches a nerve—and they can do something about it." Along these lines, a policy -oriented goal of the CLEA project will support the youth participants in developing a resolution against child labor. Says Ungerleider, "the United States is one of only two countries that has not signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The other is Somalia and they don't have a government. Cambridge and Berkeley have adopted it. We want to get the state of Vermont to adopt it."

Footnote:

<sup>1</sup>Child Labor Education and Action Project (CLEA) website, <http://clea.sit.edu/about.html>

# Creative Collaborations: Partnerships



## PROFILE: Eracism

Amidst the early morning bustle of the Passaic County, New Jersey Superintendent's Office, informal, pre-meeting conversation is made in a small conference room. "Has a date been set for the next Youth Summit?" "A lot of good Unity 2000 mini-grants are coming in this year...word has re-

ally gotten around." Coffee is poured and a plate of cookies are passed around the table. Seated are Aybecquel Jackie Trejos, chair of the Passaic County Human Relations Commission (PCHRC); Sargeant Daniel Reed, Cynthia Miller, PCHRC Vice-Chair and Physical Education/Health teacher at Manchester Regional High School; Dennis Cox, Northern Regional Planning Associate; and Marion Blakeley, PCHRC secretary and central contact for the E.R.A.S.E. (End Racism and Sexism in Schools Everywhere) program. While there is business to attend to, it is clear from the atmosphere of familiarity that these individuals and others from their respective offices have hashed out ideas around many tables throughout the evolution of two connected programs, E.R.A.S.E. and Unity 2000.

The first E.R.A.S.E. site at Lakeland Regional High School was formed in 1992 and gained momentum rapidly. In a booklet created by students, their advisor and social studies teacher Sandra Putnam recounts the initiation of E.R.A.S.E. One Friday morning, several of her students arrived at school outraged over racist slurs and an 800 number for a white supremacy group that they spotted on a train overpass while on their way to school. Although this racist invitation was quickly painted over, students wanted to take more of a stand. They discussed options for action, met with their principal the following Monday, and the first E.R.A.S.E. chapter was launched. Soon afterwards, Putnam saw Sargent Daniel Reed (although his face was blurred to maintain his anonymity) on a local cable show talking about hate crimes. She called the number on the screen—the County Prosecutors Office, and invited Reed to speak to their E.R.A.S.E. group about bias crime. In turn, he asked these student leaders to attend a meeting of the newly formed Passaic County Human Relations Commission. The E.R.A.S.E message spread to other schools. Marion Blakeley, then on staff at Manchester Regional High School recalls the PTA dinner where she viewed a disturbing slide presentation on hate crimes by Sargent Reed, who now teaches at William Patterson College. Recalls Blakeley, "he said 'I don't know if I should show you this before dinner or after dinner'" Blakeley was compelled to initiate an E.R.A.S.E. chapter at Manchester Regional High.

There are now E.R.A.S.E. chapters in 21 small urban and suburban middle and high schools in Passaic County. The first post-secondary chapter was recently initiated at William Paterson University with Daniel Reed serving as the advisor. Student members of E.R.A.S.E. take an instrumental role in educating others about racism and sexism in their schools and communities. At a youth summit held twice each year, hundreds of E.R.A.S.E. members problem-solve strategies for making schools safe and violence free. In a video entitled "Teach the Children Well," which was distributed to all Parent Teacher Associations, E.R.A.S.E. members dramatize incidents from their own life. According to Reed who served as advisor on the project, the students wrote a script with questions like 'When we pull into the gas station run by the Pakistanis, why does dad only open the window a little bit?' Then the student producers "talk it out" on the video. Community agencies contact E.R.A.S.E. members for their expertise as educators. E.R.A.S.E. students from Manchester Regional High gave a presentation on peer mediation to the Passaic County Municipal Mediation Program. A letter of acknowledgment reads: "...The reaction to this presentation was absolutely overwhelming. [We] were not only impressed with the maturity of these students, but also their commitment to ending racism in our society."

Unity 2000 complements the student driven service and activism evidenced through E.R.A.S.E. by encouraging K-12 educators and administrators to integrate multicultural education and conflict resolution lessons into their curriculum. A handbook with lessons and activities for promoting anti-bias and human relations studies was compiled by educators, administrators, law enforcement officials and community members and distributed to every school district in the county. Since the distribution of this handbook in 1993, a mini-grant program has awarded teachers \$500 grants to "implement new and innovative ideas, approaches and strategies...that promote cultural cohesiveness in schools and reduce bias crimes in the community." Although the Unity 2000 initiative has not explicitly stated service-learning as a methodology, many of the projects proposed and implemented by teachers resemble service-learning practice. For example, physical education teacher and E.R.A.S.E. advisor Cindy Miller designed a project to link her students with those in a multiple handicap class. These students united to develop a design and budget for a courtyard garden, shopped together at nurseries, and planted and cared for the area. The project linked people of varied abilities and experiences in a collaborative venture, fostering appreciation for diversity while meeting a real need at the school.

Kim, Mary and Robin live in different suburban towns in the county. All three are actively involved in the E.R.A.S.E. chapter at Manchester Regional High School, which has a Middle Eastern and Asian, especially Circasian population, as well as Latino, African American and European American students. Manchester Regional serves students diverse in socioeconomic background as well. Kim explains that high school "is like a whole different perspective" as her neighborhood schools were much less diverse. They describe how involvement in E.R.A.S.E. has impacted them. "In the past," says Robin, "If someone said something weird I would say 'what are you, communist?' or something like that, little comments that I just picked up from other people. In E.R.A.S.E., you learn to be more aware." Mary, whose family is from Egypt adds, "even if you don't think you are, there is always a little bit of prejudice in everybody. I guess I learned to give everybody a chance, to not judge before I know somebody." In regards to addressing racism in the curriculum, Robin says "I think [teachers] need to not be so afraid of it—like people aren't afraid to talk about sex anymore because it is opened up, same with drugs. I think we need to do the same thing with racism and sexism, don't be afraid to let people talk about it."

With such a large district-wide initiative, concrete mechanisms have been developed to give students and advisors a sense of being part of a larger whole. E.R.A.S.E. members carry a card that reads:

***I, as a supporter of the E.R.A.S.E. program, pledge to use my best efforts to END RACISM AND SEXISM EVERYWHERE. I will get to know a person before I judge him or her, I will give everyone a chance to become all that they are capable of being. When confronted with acts of prejudice or discrimination, I will not be silent, I will speak out***

Each chapter elects student members to the E.R.A.S.E. Representative Assembly which serves as a youth leadership forum and helps unite the chapters at each of the schools across the county. Importantly, adult advisors actively reach out to kids who “aren’t only straight A” to get involved and become leaders.

The collaboration that has led to such a widespread effort is unusual. The extraordinary meeting of minds and commitment to justice demonstrated by Dr. Maria Nuccetelli, the Superintendent of Schools and Ronald Fava, the Passaic County Prosecutor does not occur in every county in the United States. But unfortunately, intolerance does. The introduction to the guide, “*Responding to Hate at School*”<sup>1</sup> reads “Most schools have plans in place for responding to fires, hazardous weather, weapons possession, fights, medical emergencies and other situations that call for quick assessment and decisive action. Unfortunately, when bias-motivated incidents occur, many educators discover that they have not planned ahead.”<sup>1</sup> E.R.A.S.E and Unity 2000 are the result of political, educational, community, and student leaders engaged in purposeful collaboration over several years time. One teacher in one classroom can reach many students, but at the current rate of one hate crime per hour in America, district and state-wide efforts that promote love and respect over intolerance serve as models and inspiration.

Footnote:

<sup>1</sup>Teaching Tolerance/Sothern Poverty Law Center, 1999

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

A social justice issue can serve as a common core around which diverse individuals and organizations can collaborate.

Allies such as colleagues, parents, administrators, and community members add essential support, guidance and multiple cultural perspectives to a project.

Involvement in collaborations and networks encourages young people to practice leadership skills in authentic contexts.

Support from community and state political leaders adds clout, validity and often resources to initiatives.

Networks and impact can expand when schools partner with organizations with similar goals, such as a community-based agency, county office or university.

# QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE

Who are the potential partners in this service learning partnership, and what can they offer to and gain from the partnership?

How will communication among partners be structured and maintained throughout the service learning initiative?

How are the participants, recipients, and other community members who are impacted by this service learning initiative represented in the leadership structure created to carry out this and other initiatives?

How can representatives from other relevant initiatives, such as school to career or an extra-curricular cultural club be included as advisors to offer perspectives and resources?

What are any potential challenges, or conflicts of interest or needs that might be encountered between partners?

# ACTIVITY: QUESTION AUTHORITY: INTERVIEWS

## Purpose

This activity can inspire discussion about what makes for good interview questions, and how to develop an interview protocol so one can respectfully gather information from community resources, partners, and other "authorities" on topics.

## Materials

Paper and pens, tape recorder or video (optional)

## Process

- A. As a group, have students discuss the concept of an interview and interview questions by naming any times they have been interviewed, or interviewed someone else. These may be formal and structured as an interview, such as for a newspaper article or job, or informal--to get to know someone, such as on a date, or to question actions or motives, such as by parents, a school administrator, or by a police officer. Have students offer examples from their own life experience of questions that produced useful information, and questions that did not produce useful information and why/why not.
- B. As a group, choose someone connected to your service learning project that you would like to, or have the opportunity to interview. This may be, for example, the director of an agency that you would like to collaborate with, or an advocate or opponent of an issue you are exploring. Have each student generate two questions that they would like to ask this person. List these on the board or newsprint.
- C. As a group, or in small groups, analyze the questions for clarity, and to see which may produce productive information. Edit, clarify, rephrase, or eliminate questions until you have a manageable list of 5-10 key questions. Re-order the list of questions so that they flow from easier to answer opening questions, to more provocative, to closure questions. Pair up, and have students practice these interview questions on each other, in order to test them for clarity. Come back together as a whole group, and refine the questions once more based on the practice sessions.
- D. This list can be used as your interview guide. However, before pursuing interviews, have a discussion using the questions that follow regarding interview protocol.

## Question Authority: Interviews

### Discussion Questions

Some interviewers compose a letter of agreement for interviewees to sign beforehand the interview that introduces the interviewer, describes the purpose of the interview and how information will be used. If you choose to do this, what should be included in your letter?

Will you keep track of the interview by writing notes, taping the interview, or video? What are the pros and cons of each?

What efforts need to be taken to promote cultural respect and sensitivity, such as translation of interview questions, and a translator present during the interview?

What are some communication skills that students bring to the interview process? Which communication skills do students feel they need to work on? ( This can be discussed before as well as reflected on after the interview).

# Making the Grade: Student Assessment



Research papers on child labor \*  
Power-point multi-media presentations for elementary school students \*  
Written and edited morning public service announcements on cultural events \*  
A test with student written questions \*  
The design of a slide show for community members \*  
A mathematical graph collectively produced by a small group\*  
Lesson plans on citizenship, bound into an illustrated curriculum unit. \*  
A poem for a class magazine \*  
Weekly journal entries describing experiences with stereotypes and prejudice....

...are some of the many methods used to assess student learning described in the profiles contained within Schools Serving for Social Justice.

...are some of the many methods used to assess student learning described in the profiles contained within Schools Serving for Social Justice.

## KEY CONSIDERATIONS

A multitude of creative methods, which often foster reflection, can be utilized towards assessment of student learning.

Student work that counts towards assessment can be produced and evaluated throughout a project, not just at the end.

Students can be actively involved in deciding which skills and concepts developed through the service learning process will be assessed towards grades, and how this learning will be demonstrated. Rubrics are a good tool for framing skill development and topic comprehension.

Students can critique and evaluate their own and each others contributions towards assessment, which increases investment, fosters collaborative power, and teaches valuable analytical skills.

# QUESTIONS TO CONTEMPLATE

How will we assess and document skills gained through the service experience?

How can a variety of assessment methods be used in order to appeal to diverse learning styles?

How can students participate in self assessment, and how will this count towards grading?

At what points during the service learning experience will students contribute work and /or self evaluation towards their assessment?

How can project partners, or peers and teachers not directly involved in the project support the assessment process (for example, by reviewing portfolios of student work)?

"SUCCESS IS A JOURNEY, NOT A DESTINATION"

UNKNOWN

# ACTIVITY: MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

*Adapted from an unknown source by Deborah L. Habib and Margaret Collins*

## Purpose

This activity promotes reflection as it supports diverse learning styles and multiple intelligences (as coined by educator and author Howard Gardner) particularly those related to creativity and physical movement. Plus, it demonstrates how an assessment process can be integrated into reflective activity.

## Preparation

The facilitator will need to decide ahead of time on the mediums of expression they will offer the group, and any materials needed. Suggested mediums include: Drama, Poetry, Storytelling, Music (simple shakers or pots and pans are good props), Visual Arts (crayons, markers, paper, paints, collage materials).

## Process

This activity works well with a block-scheduling, long class period, or it can be divided in half and carried out over two classes.

- A. Explain that participants will work in small groups to reflect on and express something they learned through the service learning experience, using drama, poetry, storytelling, music, or visual arts. Allow students to self select groups according to these medium groups, encouraging participants to try one that they are less familiar with for fun and the challenge. It is best if there is no more than 4-5 per group, so there may end up being, for example, two music groups or two poetry groups.
  
- B. Once the class has divided into groups, explain the task: Members of each group will briefly share something memorable that they learned during the service learning experience. The group will decide on one of these to recreate through their chosen medium of expression. The group will work together for 15-20 minutes to develop a poem, skit, poster or story (depending on the medium chosen) to present to the rest of the class, that expresses the memorable learning.

But that's not all-- As they are planning their presentation, each group decides on three criteria that they would like the class and teacher to consider in evaluating their presentation. If students are familiar with rubrics and similar assessment tools, they might generate criteria on their own. Alternately, the facilitator can generate a list ahead of time that the groups select from. These might include, for example,

-Group models cooperation

-Main idea is clearly conveyed

-Group demonstrates creativity

-Group demonstrates originality

-Group demonstrates oral or written communication

- C. Each group does their presentation, with the facilitator or another teacher or administrator acting as the MC, to introduce each group. Prior to each presentation, the group should read or post ( if written on newsprint) their chosen assessment criteria. After the presentations, groups can self assess ( in a paragraph as a homework assignment) based on the criteria they posed, and/or the teacher can use the criteria to evaluate the presentations and apply these towards student grades.

# Celebrate and Evaluate

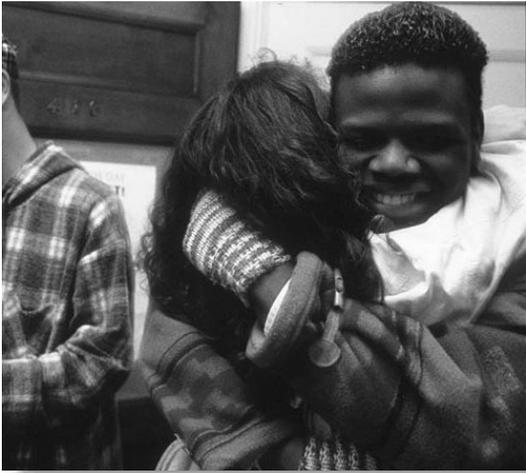


photo © Dan Habib

Like many of the other elements of a service learning project, celebration and evaluation can take place throughout the process, not only at the end.

**CELEBRATING** small and large outcomes along the way will enrich the experience and sustain enthusiasm and energy. Some celebrations highlight friendships and achievements gained through partnerships, such as the party in Lawrence, Massachusetts after the Dominican immigrants passed their citizenship exam. A celebration can also be a form or extension of service. In Miami, Oklahoma, a book signing of the Tar Creek Anthology publicly ac-

knowledged this important student contribution, and served as an educational event to distribute the information contained within to community members. The presence of peers, teachers, parents and community members and the local press at such events adds validity and enhances outreach.

## Questions to Contemplate:

What are some ways we will reflect on successes and challenges along the way, and celebrate these efforts among ourselves?

At what points will we publicly celebrate outcomes with partners, supporters, and the press or other community media [especially if the service learning project is long in duration]?

How will students be involved in planning celebrations?

How can recipients and partners be involved in planning celebrations?

How can we use this celebration as a tool to bring public awareness to the social justice issue or multicultural concepts that we have explored through this service learning project?

**EVALUATION** of project impact is generally the least addressed element of service learning projects. Yet evaluation can be a wonderful means of developing research and analysis skills, and reflecting on overall successes and challenges. Importantly, ideas for other projects can emerge through the evaluation process. And, the insights gained through your evaluation can help others plan, implement and evaluate their projects.

An action research evaluation process that involves student, teachers and community members in collecting and analyzing information is in keeping with a multicultural/social justice education philosophy. In contrast with the traditional perception of evaluative research as something that an outsider does with “subjects,” action research values the stories and experiences of the various stakeholders in a project—and recognizes that the stakeholders themselves, such as teachers, service participants and recipients, are well-suited to collect and critically analyze these insights.

### **Questions to Contemplate**

What are the overall goals of our project, in regards to the social justice/multicultural issues addressed, impact on the school or surrounding community, and/or shifts in attitudes and understandings among participants?

What, specifically do we want to know or learn more about (evaluate), in regards to one or all of these goals? (Frame this as a question(s) and remember, less is more as each question implies a research process.)

Are there resources, such as a community based organization that carries out evaluations, or graduate students, that can help us design an evaluation?

Who will work on designing and carrying out the evaluation? The whole class? A small group as a special project? College students or agency personnel working as mentors with students?

What will we do with the findings and lessons learned through this evaluation? With who will we share our insights?

How might the lessons learned through this evaluation contribute to the fields of service learning, multicultural, and social justice education? In other words, what is the broad significance of this proposed evaluation?

# ACTIVITY: PANEL DISCUSSION

*Adapted from the Cultural Identity Group Curriculum, P. Brown, D. Habib, P. Labanowski*

## **Purpose:**

This activity has multiple purposes and potential outcomes: It can serve as an opportunity for participants to make meaning of their service learning experiences as they develop leadership and build self-esteem through public speaking; The panel itself can constitute a form of service if participants share research and information discovered through service with peers, parents and community members; it offers an opportunity to receive feedback from others, which can contribute towards project evaluation.

## **Preparation:**

Students, service recipients, and partners who took part in the service learning initiative will have the option of participating on a panel. In structuring the panel, attention should be paid to racial, class, age and gender balance in order to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented. Those who do not end up being on the panel should have another opportunity for public speaking, such as presenting on the project to another school, or being interviewed by a newspaper, on video, or local cable TV.

Flyers with the date and time of this event should go out to parents and community members well in advance. Decide on who will moderate the dialogue. We recommend having two individuals moderate the panel and discussion, perhaps one youth and one adult, a male and female, of differing cultural backgrounds.

If desired, the service-learning project participants can generate ideas for good questions then the moderator can select from these for use with the panel. Those who will speak on the panel should meet with the moderators in advance of the event. The questions that the panel moderators will ask should be made available to participants at this time, so that they can contemplate responses.

Arrange in advance for translation. Parents that do not usually attend school events will often come when their daughters/sons are involved. This event is an opportunity to celebrate multilingualism in the group and community. Translators should be located prominently and available not only to those attending, but panel members who may be able to express themselves more passionately and comfortably in their first language.

## **Process**

- A. This is one suggested format for the panel. During opening introductions, explain the format of the evening to the audience.
  - 1) Members of the panel will introduce themselves.
  - 2) Moderators ask questions of the panel members.

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- 3) Audience asks questions of the panel members.
  - 4) Panel members ask questions of the audience and each other.
- B. Each panel member introduces themselves, their grade or age, and the roles they were responsible for in the service-learning initiative.
  - C. Moderators direct questions, one by one, to panel members. Moderators attempt to ensure that participant's voices are equally heard. Questions should be designed to progress from easier to answer to more difficult. Avoid questions that can be answered with yes or no. Moderators can prompt participants to elaborate on a response as necessary.
  - D. Invite questions from audience to panel, then panel to audience or each other. Allow some time for each panel member to make closing comments.

# OUR COMMUNITY RESOURCES

*Use this page to keep notes, numbers and addresses for local resources and organizations that can support your initiatives.*

ELECTED OFFICIALS

CLERGY (Muslim, Buddhist, Christian, Jewish And Other Faiths)

NEWSPAPER AND TELEVISION CONTACTS

CULTURAL, SOCIAL SERVICE, ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVISTS

Local:

Regional, National, International:

RESOURCE PEOPLE & EXPERTISE

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following list of publications, organizations and clearinghouses is neither comprehensive nor inclusive of all possible resources available in the fields of service learning and social justice/multicultural education. Materials that merge these fields of theory and practice are limited, so as a reader of this guide you will need to do some cross-pollination on your own!

## BOOKS, CURRICULA, ARTICLES:

### Some Selected Titles:

Dingerson, Leigh and Sarah Hay. *The CoMotion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change*. Washington DC: Alliance For Justice, 1998.

Hooks, Bell. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Hoose, Philip. *It's Our World, Too!: Stories of Young People Who Are Making a Difference*. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1993.

Kahne, Joseph and Joel Westheimer. "Education for Action: Preparing Youth for Participatory Democracy." *Teaching for Social Justice*. Eds. W. Ayers, J. Hunt and T. Quinn. New York: The New Press, 1998.

Kaye, Catherine Berger. *The Service Learning Bookshelf: An Annotated Bibliography of Fiction and Nonfiction to Inspire Learning and Action*.

Lee, Enid, Deborah Menkart and Margo Okazawa-Rey. *Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Anti-Racist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development*. Washington DC: Network of Educators on the Americas, 1998.

National Helpers Network. *Community Problem Solvers: Youth Leading Change*. New York: National Helpers Network, 1996.

Nieto, Sonia. *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education*. New York: Longman, 1992.

Nieto, Sonia. *The Light in Their Eyes: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1999.

Ogden, Curtis and Jeff Claus. *Service Learning for Youth Empowerment and Social Change*. New York: Peter Lang, 1999.

Steinberg, Adria and David Stephen. *Cityworks: Exploring Your Community, A Workbook*. New York: The New Press, 1999.

Wade, Rahima. *Community Service Learning: A Guide to Including Service in the Public School Curriculum*. New York: SUNY Press, 1997.

Weah, Wokie Roberts. "Service Learning Honors Cultural Diversity." *Enriching the Curriculum Through Service Learning*. Eds. Carol Kinsley and Kate McPherson. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 1995.

## RESOURCE CENTERS, CLEARINGHOUSES, ORGANIZATIONS

Activism 2000 Project  
PO Box E  
Kensington, MD 20895  
1-800-Kid-Power  
[www.youthactivism.com](http://www.youthactivism.com)

Alliance for Justice  
2000P St. NW, Suite 712  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.afj.org](http://www.afj.org)

Community Alliance for Youth Action ( CAYA)  
2008 Tenth St. NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
[www.empoweryouth.org](http://www.empoweryouth.org)

Constitutional Rights Foundation  
601 South Kingsley Dr.  
Los Angeles, CA 90005  
[www.crf-usa.org](http://www.crf-usa.org)

Disability History Museum and Learning Resource Center  
Straight Ahead Pictures  
Conway, MA 01341  
[www.straightaheadpictures.org](http://www.straightaheadpictures.org)

Do Something  
423 West 55th St, 8th FL  
New York, NY 10019  
[www.dosomething.org](http://www.dosomething.org)

Equity and Excellence in Education [journal]  
Greenwood Publishing Group  
[www.eee-journal.com](http://www.eee-journal.com)

National Conference for Community and Justice  
475 Park Ave. S. 19th Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
[www.nccj.org](http://www.nccj.org)

National Dropout Prevention Center  
Clemson University  
209 Martin St  
Clemson, SC  
[www.dropoutprevention.org](http://www.dropoutprevention.org)

National Indian Youth Leadership Project  
PO Box 2140  
Gallup, NM 87301  
505-722-9176

National Service Learning Clearinghouse  
<http://www.nicsl.coled.umn.edu>  
(800) 808-SERVE

National Youth Leadership Council  
1910 West County Road B  
ST Paul, MN 55113-1337  
[www.nylc.org](http://www.nylc.org)

National Service Resource Center  
ETR Associates  
PO Box 1830  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061-1830

NECA/Teaching for Change  
PO box 73038  
Washington, DC 20056  
[www.teachingforchange.org](http://www.teachingforchange.org)

Not in Our Town  
The Working Group  
PO Box 10326  
Oakland, CA 94610  
[www.igc.org/an/niot](http://www.igc.org/an/niot)

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG)  
1101 14th St. NW, Suite 1030  
Washington, DC 20005  
[www.pflag.org](http://www.pflag.org)

Resource Center of the Americas  
317 Seventeenth Ave SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55414-2077  
[www.americas.org](http://www.americas.org)

Rethinking Schools  
1001 E. Keese Ave.  
Milwaukee, WI 53212

Teaching Tolerance  
(Southern Poverty Law Center)  
400 Washington Ave.  
Montgomery, AL 36104  
[www.teachingtolerance.org](http://www.teachingtolerance.org)