



Student Activists for Service-Learning (SASL) 2004-05

SASL has completed its second school year as a youth-philanthropy board promoting service-learning as a teaching strategy for New Haven County middle and high schools. The SASL board was represented by 13 high school students from eight different New Haven county schools. During monthly meetings, the board organized itself to recruit and fund nine projects, which resulted in about 183 students participating in almost 3,000 hours of service-learning and providing service to about 525 people. SASL is a project of SEE's Youth: Ethics in Service program with partial funding by a federal Learn and Serve Grant.

In September 2004, the student board began by editing its Request for Proposal (RFP) created by the previous SASL board. The RFP was used to recruit mini-grant applicants in both the fall and spring semester. SASL promoted the availability of the grants by directly contacting middle and high schools in New Haven County using fax, phone and personal follow-up. To rank the grants that were received, the SASL board created a grant-evaluation rubric based on the board priorities established in the RFP. Each application was independently scored by a minimum of two scoring teams of the SASL board. Inter-rater reliability was demonstrated to be high during the grant ranking meetings. In some limited cases, SASL board members also sought clarification from selected applicants to help respond to questions raised during the grant review.

Projects funded by SASL included the Learn and Serve categories of Education, Human Needs, Environment and Health/Nutrition. Selected examples include—(1) an education program at Amity High School where a math teacher sponsored a team of high school girls to meet and mentor junior high girls and encourage their interest and ability using math; (2) a health project where a student council led team from Wolcott High school planned and hosted a blood drive (including an information assembly) that resulted in close to 100 blood donors (many of them students) supporting the effort in recognition of a local student who requires many blood transfusions; (3) an education and human needs project led by students from Hopkins High who met weekly with local seniors to interview them about their past and create an anthology of their historical biographies; and (4) an educational and environmental project sponsored by Common Ground High school where students helped in a large landscaping project completed on the school grounds.



Representatives from SASL board attended CT's Service-Learning Conference at Connecticut College May 17, 2005.

Representatives of the SASL board also participated in several other activities that related to their work on this youth philanthropy board. Board members presented the mission and objectives of SASL at a statewide hearing in Hartford about after-school programs, SASL board members engaged in the writing of two different grant applications to help continue funding the SASL project, four board members presented SASL's grant evaluation rubric to peers and adults at a New Haven Youth Development Conference and four board members attended the Connecticut Service-Learning Connections conference at Connecticut College in New London. All of SASL's activities, which account for 352 hours of participation, continue to support the development of leadership skills, an understanding of philanthropy and an ethic of community support and engagement. SASL is demonstrating great effectiveness to keep "ethics in action" and welcomes the application of new student board members from New Haven County high schools.

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