Service Learning
And Professional Development

Chinwe Pamela Ekenna
Parasol Lab, Texas A&M University

http://parasol.tamu.edu
Presentation Outline

• What is service learning
• What are the personal and career advantages
• How to determine good service learning
• TAMU Service Learning Resources
• Personal Experience
What is Service Learning

- Combining learning goals and community service in ways that can enhance both student growth and the common good

  ~National Service-Learning Clearinghouse

- Integrate meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.
...still some more on Service Learning

In the process, students link personal and social development with academic and cognitive development. . . experience enhances understanding; understanding leads to more effective action.”
Student Benefits of Community Engagement/Service Learning

- Students are exposed to cooperative (rather than competitive) experiences in order to promote teamwork skills, community involvement, and citizenship.

- Students are encouraged to address complex problems in complex settings (rather than simplified problems in isolation).

- They offer opportunities to engage in problem-solving by requiring students to gain knowledge of the specific context of their service learning activity and community challenges.
They promote deeper learning because the results are immediate and uncontrived.

• Personally meaningful, generate emotional consequences, and challenge values and ideas.

• Service learning is meant to enhance the community through the service provided, but also result in student learning as a result of providing a service.
Career Development

Social Merit Award

- Connections with professionals and community members for learning and career opportunities
- Greater academic learning, leadership skills, and personal efficacy can lead to greater opportunity
Social Outcomes

- Reduced stereotypes and greater inter-cultural understanding
- Improved social responsibility and citizenship skills
- Greater involvement in community service after graduation
How can you determine the quality of a service-learning experience?

• Do you have opportunities to do important work and take important responsibilities in community service placements?

• Are there close connections between academic subject matter and what you are doing in the community?

• Is reflection about the service integrated into class through frequent opportunities for discussion and written analysis or projects?

• Does reflection challenge you to go beyond description and sharing of feelings to analysis and action planning?

• Are community projects developed in partnership with the community?
TAMU and other Service-learning resources

- **Texas A&M Leadership & Service Center**
- **AggieServe, Volunteer Opportunities Fair.**
- Support student-led service opportunities such as The Big Event and Aggie Replant.
**TAMU and other Service-learning resources**

- **AggieServe database**

  Connects Texas A&M University students, faculty, and staff to agencies and opportunities in the Bryan/College Station area (introductory video available and various other resources)
TAMU and other Service-learning resources

- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse - Link
  Offers thousands of free online resources related to service-learning, including resources specific to higher education.

- Campus Compact – Link
  Provides many resources for faculty including sample syllabi, service-learning models, and lists of resources from other organizations.
Engineering Service Learning Opportunities

- Aggie Challenge : AggiE_Challenge is a program designed to actively engage undergraduate students with multidisciplinary team projects related to the engineering challenges facing our society.

Expected outcomes are:
- Improved promotion and recruitment of students
- Improved ability to apply mathematics, science, and engineering knowledge on real world problems
- Lifelong learning

- Engineering Honors --Global Grand Challenge Scholars

url =https://engineering.tamu.edu/easa/areas/enrichment/aggie-challenge
Engineering Service Learning Opportunities

• **EPICS**: Engineering Projects in Community Service
  ENGR 270 / 470 Engineering Projects In Community Service (1-3 credit hours).
  You get credit for community service *Win-Win !!!*

  Students use basic engineering principles and process to deliver a design for a real-world project of value to a community partner.

  *https://engineering.tamu.edu/easa/areas/enrichment/epics*
Personal Service Learning Experience

BSc in Computer Science Covenant University, Nigeria

Service Learning : Project 1 Million, Ifund
Project 1 Million

Benefits:
• Met with Mayors of cities, Chancellor of the University,
• Friends currently employed via this avenue,
• Opportunity to visit orphanages (Self rewarding).
Benefits:
• Opportunity for Graduate School
• Source Funds to student projects
ICRA 2015 : Developing Countries Forum

Benefits :
• Inter-continent collaborations
• Journal Editorial Board
• Mentors
• Awareness about developing country research opportunities
Conclusion

● It Pays to Serve.
● It builds your professional and personal relationships
● Personal and professional development
● You can get credit

● etc...,