

Service Projects from Past Fellows

Creating PSAs through a public access youth program

This Fellow partnered with a program called "Young Lenses: Girl's Eye View," which helped her youth create Public Service Announcements to educate their community about a number of important issues, including the effects of mainstream media on young women. A local news station generously offered the group access to their equipment, as well as the technical training they needed to realize their vision.

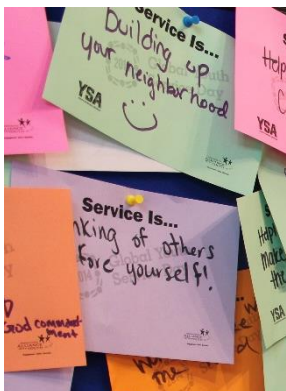
*... our students learned how to operate a heavy duty camera for recording purposes, how to story board their PSA's, and were given proper resources for creating an effective video. All in all, this was a very successful service learning project as **my kids were given the opportunity to learn new skills and develop new interests**, while optimizing their creativity in the creation of their PSA's.*

The youth later broadcasted their PSAs on CTV, a public access television network. [Click here](#) to watch one of the videos they made. To learn more about this program, visit [Young Lenses' website](#), or take a look at [this list](#) of public access stations throughout Minnesota to reach out to a community network near you.



Supporting the Humane Society and writing donation letters

This Fellow's youth chose to support their local Animal Humane Society by creating fleece dog toys and collecting newspaper to donate. The Fellow also walked her youth through the process of requesting further donations from nearby businesses.



*The students wanted to get treats for the new pet owners to take home with their animal. So we decided to write a donation letter to a local hardware store which carried pet supplies as well. **Students learned about the process of writing donation letters** and wrote their own as a class... Later in April they took their donation letter to the hardware store and one of our students presented [on] our project and made the request for donations. **The student who made the presentation gained a lot of confidence by talking with the manager about the project** and felt very good about it afterwards. Once we got the donations, the students assembled [them] into little gift bags for adopting families.*

The Fellow then brought her youth to the Humane Society, where they presented their donations and learned more about the organization's work. While the young people were meeting the animals, she observed that a few of the tougher students "*let their guard down a little*," while some of her shy students "*came out of their shell and interacted with each other a little more, bonding over the animals.*"

Visiting local nursing homes

After having some concerns about her youth's ability to stay on-task, this Fellow was able to focus their energy by dividing them into small groups, each with their own project. One of the small groups chose to connect with senior citizens in their community. Here's a brief outline of what they planned.

We will be going to a nursing home where the girls will create Christmas cards and read with the seniors. They are also going to perform a small skit for the seniors. One student in particular is really into what we are doing. Without my having to ask or assign any homework she went home and wrote up a list of everything we need to do to make our [project] successful. It's great to be able to give these girls the opportunity to do this kind of activity and I am excited to see how it turns out.

Several other Fellows have engaged their youth in service at nursing homes and retirement communities. One chose to pair each of her youth with a senior, to spend the afternoon "chatting, playing cards, painting nails, and eating snacks." The stories they exchanged helped both parties identify with one another in new and meaningful ways.

*I watched [youth] listening intently as the elderly adults told of what life was like when they were in middle school. The kids said they were shocked to hear that many of the adults had attended the same middle school as them, many years ago. The adults had much to learn from the youth as well. The [youth] shared what their dreams and aspirations were and what plans they had to achieve them. The adults later told me how impressed they were with the youth. They said they hadn't expected them to be so interested in their future let alone have passions and goals that they are already working on. Both generations shared that **they were surprised at how many similar interests they had and how much both generations had to teach one another.***



Advocating healthy relationships for Valentine's Day

In preparation for Valentine's Day, this Fellow's youth researched the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships and then launched their own awareness campaign to share what they had learned with others.



They created materials to hand out to fellow students and other people [at their] community center. They also designed a bulletin board that is visible to the school and the community focusing on the phrase "Love is..." As a part of this bulletin board, students went around the building describing their project and asking others what they thought love is and provided resources for people in unhealthy relationships. The bulletin board was complete by Valentine's Day in time for the students to pass out Valentines they made with additional information about maintaining healthy relationships.

In the discussion that followed their service project, the Fellow's youth remarked on how much they had learned about relationships and how this would empower them to inform more people in the future. According to the Fellow, the students also said that "**they really enjoyed going throughout the building and letting others know about their project and felt very proud of the work that they did.**"