LSU

Center for Community Engagement, Learning & Leadership

E-Service Opportunities[1]

Big and Mini

This program connects senior citizens with younger people so they can engage in conversation and quality time to combat feelings of loneliness in a time of increased isolation in nursing homes that cannot allow visitors. Students can register and schedule hours on their website. See https://bigandmini.org/howitworks for more information. <u>Courses / areas of interest</u>: aging, relationship building, psychology, or health and stress, among others.

You Will Rise Project

This service facilitates volunteers creating art, writing, music performances, and more creative "deliverables" to be shared with patients fighting COVID-19. More information can be found at https://youwillriseproject.com. <u>Courses / areas of interest</u>: creative arts, writing, music and music education, design, and health or public health, among others.

Omprakash

Omprakash provides a database of opportunities to be an online volunteer. You can narrow your search according to region (across the globe), focus (health and wellness; environment; education; economic development; construction/rebuilding; rights and advocacy; disabilities; refugees and migration), types of work (accounting, curriculum development, data analysis, grant research/writing, language teaching or tutoring, leadership and strategy, monitoring and evaluation, multimedia and design, research literature review, software training, storytelling and showing impact, translation, web development, web presence improvement), among other factors such as hours per week and language preference. You can find out more at https://www.omprakash.org/search. <u>Courses / areas of interest</u>: construction or construction management, education, health, advocacy, web design and programming, marketing, research methods, languages, leadership or human development, migration and immigration, demography, disability studies, gender or sexuality studies, race and ethnicity, evaluation research, creative writing, theatre, creative arts, international studies or international relations, political science, mass communications, and many more.

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[1] Last updated July 23, 2020

GivePulse

Givepulse helps link faculty members and individuals with organizations taking on face-to-face or virtual service volunteers. You can search by location at https://www.givepulse.com. Link for Baton Rouge: https://www.givepulse.com/search?SearchForm%5Blocation%5D=baton+rouge. Courses / areas of interest: Similar to Omprakash, the list of service area opportunities is pretty long. We encourage you to do a preliminary search to see what's there that might fit your class or your skill set and interest area.

Amnesty International

AI needs volunteers for their "Amnesty Decoders" project. It involves sifting through pictures, information, and documents from home to help track global human rights violations. Visit https://decoders.amnesty.org for more information. Courses/areas of interest: Political Science, International Studies, peacekeeping, international relations, research methods, and more.

Black Lives Matter

One specific way to support #BlackLivesMatter right now is explained on the following website: https://blacklivesmatter.com/help-us-fight-disinformation/. The campaign has been targeted by disinformation efforts on social media and elsewhere. Finding, documenting, and sending suspicious sites, stories, ads, accounts, and more that are out there to BLM on their website is a way to fight against the false accounts being spread about the many organizations that are a part of this broader moment/movement. Courses / areas of interest: critical scholarship, media studies, mass communications, marketing, social sciences, and more.

Zooniverse

Zooniverse is a research-based platform that links volunteers up with a variety of projects in many interest areas. You can go to https://www.zooniverse.org/projects to learn more about available projects. Courses / areas of interest: They have work available in the arts, biology, climate, history, language, literature, medicine, nature, physics, social science, and space.

Catchafire

This organization, like some of the others on this list, helps match people with topical area volunteer opportunities to do from home. Visit https://www.catchafire.org to learn more. Interest areas available include: animals, arts and culture, civil rights, community and economic development, disaster relief, disease and medical research, diversity and inclusion, education, employment services, environment, health and nutrition, housing and homelessness, human services, international affairs, justice and legal services, LGBTQ, maternal health, military and veterans affairs, philanthropy and capacity building, religion and spirituality, science and technology, violence prevention, women's issues, and youth development. Courses / areas of interest: Just about any course or interest area LSU offers.

The Smithsonian

The Smithsonian is looking for people to help with transcription, or Wikipedia entries relevant to a wide variety of topical areas. See more at https://www.si.edu/volunteer/DigitalVolunteers. Courses / areas of interest: Virtually any. Visit https://transcription.si.edu and click on the drop-down menu under "Browse Projects" to find some in your course/interest area.

Translators Without Borders

This project involves helping translate documents and run projects and do marketing for their organization. Visit https://translatorswithoutborders.org/volunteer/ for more information. Courses / areas of interest: Foreign languages, international studies, business, graphic or web design, research methods, and more.

Crisis Text Line

This organization trains you to become a crisis counselor for their free, 24/7 crisis line in the U.S. It builds active listening skills, collaborative problem solving skills, and safety planning knowledge. Visit https://www.crisistextline.org/become-a-volunteer/ to learn more. Courses / areas of interest: Clinical mental health counseling, social work, psychology, and more.

Project Gutenberg

This organization helps create a larger volume of free e-books for public consumption. So far, they have amassed 59,000 since their founding in 1971. You can donate eligible materials, transcribe books to digital form, or proofread others' work. You can learn more at: https://www.gutenberg.org/wiki/Gutenberg:Volunteering_for_Project_Gutenberg. Courses / areas of interest: English, writing, creative writing, history, African and African American Studies, social sciences, and more.

Do Something

This youth-led organization has long been connecting young people with opportunities to make a difference. Visit https://www.dosomething.org/us to learn more about their potential projects. Courses / areas of interest: a wide variety – visit their website to learn more.

Idealist.org

This website allows you to search for e-service opportunities by geographical area. Go to https://www.idealist.org/en/?remoteOk=YES&sort=relevance&type=VOLOP and select "Volunteer" from their menu and then search by keyword, skill, or interest, and add your location if you want to search for something close by. You can also click on the toggle button for "virtual/remote only" if you want to work from home. Courses / areas of interest: a wide variety – visit their website to learn more.

VolunteerMatch

This organization helps link people up with local opportunities to volunteer. If you visit https://www.volunteermatch.org and click on "Virtual opportunities" at the top of their page, you will see there are almost 700,000 opportunities available in advocacy and human rights, animals, arts and culture, children and youth, community, computers and technology, education and literacy, health and medicine, seniors, board development, crisis support, disaster relief, emergency and safety, employment, environment, faith-based, homelessness and housing, hunger, immigrants and refugees, international, justice and legal, LGBTQ+, people with diabilities, race and ethnicity, sports and recreation, veterans and military families, and women. Courses / areas of interest: a wide variety – visit their website to learn more.

All for Good

Like many other organizations on this list, All For Good helps people find ways to support in their local area. You can click on "Volunteer From Home" on their main page to see available e-service options https://www.allforgood.org. This one requires going through opportunities by scrolling, though, so it takes longer to find those in your topical area. Courses / areas of interest: a wide variety – visit their website to learn more.

Zeiter Literacy Center

The University of Nevada Las Vegas and Gayle Zeiter Literacy Center responded to stay-at-home orders and school closures in Spring 2020 by creating a YouTube channel and online repository of homemade "read-aloud" videos from people across the globe that are publicly shared with school-age children everywhere. The project continues to accept new read-alouds on an ongoing basis. You can choose a book they do not have a read-aloud for (or that they need a read-aloud in another language for) for them to post to their collection. To learn more about this opportunity and how to participate, visit https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtWAv4a1ZkajlKbCdXaauxQ or email them at danica.hays@unlv.edu or kenneth.varner@unlv.edu. Courses / areas of interest: literature, children's literature, childhood and youth, education, literacy, social sciences, social work, family studies, and more.

Creating an e-service option with your existing community partner

There might be ways to retain your current community partner, but to transform the work so that volunteering can be done remotely, according to what your community partner says they need or want. A few ideas include:

- Writing a short report on what current research says about "best practices" for something your community partner does or is thinking about doing. Can be done in teams or solo.
- Creating digital content for a community partner, such as website changes, press releases, or social media posts.
- Creating printable products for a community partner, such as flyers or brochures, informational handouts, or posters.

- Conducting a program evaluation or assessment for a community partner through surveys done via phone, Zoom conference, email, or online platform such as Qualtrics.
- Conducting background or historical research on the neighborhood or community the community partner is situated in and/or serves.
- Providing online or phone-based consultation with clients the community partner serves.
- Creating videos or recordings the community partner can use to benefit the populations they work alongside and/or serve.

Creating a course-specific e-service option with or without a specific community partner

It might make sense to temporarily adopt a broad definition of community when developing a community-engaged option for service or a service-learning course. You could find ways to allow students to create their own service work with this kind of approach, that builds on course content (click here to see an example of this from Spring 2020). Alternatively, you could design an assignment that requires students to cultivate a specific skill set and/or create a specific type of deliverable that builds on or uses course content and is shared with online or in-person communities (with or without a specific community partner). Prioritizing tactile and non-computer-based work in a time when we are spending so many hours behind screens will give the added benefit of getting students an experience that can enhance their own social/emotional health and well-being. Examples include:

- ***Picking up litter*** – Using gloves and avoiding physical proximity to others, volunteers can pick up litter in one of the communities they belong to, such as their neighborhood, their family member's neighborhood, where they go to school, where they attend church, where they work, or where they drive. Reflecting on the process and/or any reactions they get from others who see or hear of what they are doing can help them think critically about: the meaning of community, collective well-being, environmental issues, recycling availability, city services, and more. Paired with research into how litter is handled by the city/parish/state/church/school they are in, it could lead to a robust service assignment for courses in environmental science, urban planning, social sciences, writing, and more.

- ***Recording "how-to" or educational videos*** – Course content can often enhance the public good if more widely available in accessible formats. Helping bridge the academia / "real world" gap, service-learning students can create video content for social media or an organization's webpage. Students in any discipline could do this kind of work. For example, students in nutrition-related classes or majors might create videos of cooking a recipe and talking about nutrition education at the same time, to share with a local soup kitchen, food bank, youth organization, and/or their personal and familial networks. Reflections could focus on the experience, on public reaction(s) to their work, and/or on background research on health and nutrition they do as a part of the assignment.

- *Art share* – Students in classes covering art, art history, creative writing, poetry, design, web programming, and a variety of other scholarly and career areas requiring creative work can identify a community partner of their choice for whom they will create art deliverables. For example, they might do t-shirt design for a local nonprofit, engage in an online poetry share, or make holiday decorations.

- *Food Bank Drive* – Local food banks are facing increased demand due to the current crisis. In many classes, students can work to collect donations or to support their local food bank in ways that capitalize on their course-based skill cultivation and knowledge. For example, a marketing class can make materials for a campaign that results in safe (physically distant) donation drop offs for a food bank in any location. Doing background research into the food bank and its rules and requirements for donations would ensure volunteers are meeting locally-articulated need. Studying local food access issues could complement the project in a wide variety of courses.

- *Podcasting* – In addition to developing a wide variety of skills, such as writing, public speaking, research, and utilizing technologies for virtual communication, podcasting assignments can serve the public good if designed to help students or volunteers share useful information with others. Even something as simple as facilitating human connection or empathy in a time of crisis can work to benefit quality of life for a variety of communities.

- *Matching up with a local community partner* – For many reasons, service-learning faculty sometimes avoid the route of letting students find their own community partners. In a time of crisis, however, temporarily adopting an assignment that uses course content and skills to benefit a community partner wherever the student happens to be might be advantageous. For example, depending on the class, students could be asked to find a local organization or group that would give them an opportunity to engage in physically distant, outdoor, hands-on service such as: cleanup of schools or playgrounds, landscaping, house painting, exercising together, or leading an exercise class. Since we cannot be sure our students will be on campus (at all or for the full semester), letting them choose their own partner but still complete hands-on work with reflection assignments for the class that are uniform could be more adaptable than having a single community partner in one location.

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