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Helping Others Can Help You

Volunteering has a meaningful, positive impact on your community. But did you know that it can have many benefits for you, too? You may have heard that volunteering helps you get into college, but keep in mind they're not just looking for a list of organizations and dates. Colleges want to see a complete picture of you, and real examples of your commitment, dedication, and interests.

Gain Valuable Life Experiences and Skills

Whether you build houses for the homeless or mail flyers for a local politician, you'll experience the real world through hands-on work. You can use this experience to explore your major or career interests.

Meet Interesting People

Volunteering brings together a variety of people. Both the recipients of your volunteer efforts and your co-workers can be rich sources of insight. For example, maybe you'll learn about the legal profession from a former lawyer you visit at a convalescent center.

Get Academic Credit

Some schools offer academic credit for volunteer work through "service-learning." This is a teaching method that integrates hands-on learning (through service to the community) into the school curriculum. It's available in high schools and colleges, as well as in earlier grades. HCHS students may receive one-half credit (for each 75 hours served) in voluntary public service course or voluntary school/community service up to one total credit. You **MUST** get this approved through your guidance counselor **PRIOR** to doing the work.

Send a Signal to Colleges

Colleges pay attention to your life inside and outside the classroom. Your extracurricular activities reveal a great deal about you, such as what your interests are, whether you can manage your priorities and maintain a long-term commitment, what diversity you'd bring to the student body, and how you've made a meaningful contribution to something. Keep in mind, colleges are not interested in seeing you do it all. It's more meaningful to colleges to see your dedication to one or two causes or activities than to see that you've spread yourself thin.

HCHS Community Service Program Student Application

IMPORTANT!!!

The following two (2) forms must be completed and submitted to the Career Lab BEFORE you start your community service hours:

- 1) Community Service Program - STUDENT APPLICATION**
- 2) Community Service Program - AGENCY APPLICATION**

An AGENCY APPLICATION must be submitted for EACH organization you volunteer at before ANY hours are served at each new agency. This is the only form you must complete multiple times.

Hours completed before you submit your application to Mrs. Roberts in the Career Lab at HCHS (863-421-3674) will not be accepted.

There are three parts of the Community Service Program. Any hour volunteered may count for any one or all three parts of the program.

THE FLORIDA BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Students wishing to meet the Florida Academic Scholar Award requirements must serve 75 hours of community service between grades 9-12. They must provide an action plan which describes the social problem being served, the plan for personal involvement, and a final evaluation of the volunteer experience.

The Florida Academic Scholar Award is the only scholarship under the Bright Futures Program that requires 75 hours of community service. Refer to the Bright Futures brochure for the academic requirements for the Florida Academic Scholar Award.

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT PROGRAM

High school students may receive one-half credit (for each 75 hours served) in voluntary public service course (05003700) or voluntary school/community service (21043300) up to a maximum of one total credit. For seniors wishing to use the credit program during the senior year:

- Application must be made before March 1 of the senior year.
- Hours are not counted after the last day seniors attend classes.

GRADUATION HONORS PROGRAM

Medallion and Silver Cord awarded in senior year to wear at graduation for students accumulating 250 hours or more during grades 9 – 12.

Exceeding Expectations Medal awarded to students accumulating 1000 hours or more during grades 9-12.

Hours That Can Be Counted

- United Way agencies
- Non-profit agencies
- Special Olympics
- School Volunteer programs
- Chamber of Commerce
- Political action
- Nursing homes, hospitals
- Museums
- Libraries
- Service club activities that provide a benefit to the community
- Vacation Bible School - except Bible studies.
- Rehearsal time for community theaters and youth symphonies (up to 20 hours)
- Elderly and disabled persons, with prior approval
- Service work for churches – but not during worship services (up to 20 hours)
- If you have an agency that you think may qualify, ask Mrs. Roberts first.

Hours That Cannot Be Counted

- Volunteering for family members.
- Regular practice time and meeting times for extra-curricular activities and clubs
- Saturday School or any detention/work detail, or court ordered service
- Time served in the Executive Leadership Program and Exploratory Teaching Program
- Church-related activity related to worship and evangelization.
- Rehearsal time for school music or dramatic productions when used for credit
- Service performed for pay
- Service related to armed services recruitment requirements
- Babysitting
- Doctors Offices & Veterinary Clinics – *Unless Non-Profit Clinics*
- Any service done at a for-profit business
- Day Care Centers – unless through a non-profit organization

Only hours completed at non-profit organizations will be accepted.

Procedures and Guidelines

1. The student must apply to the school's Community Service Coordinator to enroll in any part of the program. The guidance counselor will also work with those students seeking credit or participating in the Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program for the Academic Scholars Award Program.
2. The student's parent must sign a permission form upon enrollment. **(This form must be submitted BEFORE you begin volunteering).**
3. The student must obtain permission from the agency to volunteer before his or her application may be approved. **(This form must be submitted BEFORE you begin volunteering).**
4. The student should turn in a report of hours served on a regular basis. Each school's coordinator may set guidelines for reporting hours. Your hours should be turned in during the year you serve them. Do **NOT** serve hours in 9th grade and wait until 10th to turn them in all of the paperwork – they may not be accepted. You should turn them in every other month so you'll know just how many hours you have accumulated. Extra Record of Volunteer Hours forms are in the Career Lab.
5. All Code of Conduct and School Board rules apply while the student is doing community service hours.
6. The principal of the school has the authority to dismiss a student from the Community Service Program.
7. The school coordinator and school principal have the authority to verify hours reported.
8. Hours may be accumulated during the summer preceeding the 9th grade year – once paperwork is filed with community service coordinator.
9. No volunteer service can be earned during regular school hours without prior approval.
10. The district office contacts for the three parts to the program are:
 - Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program – Kay Noble, District Guidance Resource Specialist (phone 534-0027)
 - Polk County Honor at Graduation – Margaret Anne Wheeler (phone 534-0636)
 - High School Credit – David Lewis, Director of Secondary Education (phone 534-0624)

COMMUNITY SERVICE PLAN/EVALUATION

FLORIDA ACADEMIC SCHOLAR AWARD APPLICATION

HIGH SCHOOL CREDIT

Instructions: Write a paragraph on each of the following topics. The first two should be written before the community service is begun and the last after it is completed. The school's community service coordinator should keep this form.

Student Name _____ ID# _____ Class of: _____

1. Identification of Social Problem/Concern (that Generates a Need for Community Service):

2. Plan for Personal Involvement (to Alleviate the Social Problem/Concern):

3. Evaluation/Reflection (*to be completed before graduation*):

**** RETURN THIS FORM BEFORE SERVING HOURS ****

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM

STUDENT APPLICATION

Student Name: _____ ID#: _____ Birthdate: _____

Class of: _____ Grade: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____ Emergency Phone Number: _____

Usual Method of Transportation to Community Service Project: _____

PURPOSE(S): (check the program(s) to which you would like to have your hours applied.)

Florida Academic Scholar Polk County Honor Graduate High School Credit

PLAN: (List agency, supervisor and phone number.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

STUDENT PLEDGE

I understand that it is my responsibility to submit ALL application documents (student, parent, agency) PRIOR to beginning volunteer hours. Record of Volunteer Service Hours form must be turned in by April 15.

I agree to fulfill the duties and time commitments as listed in the agency job description including training sessions and to provide adequate notice if I am unable to meet my time commitment.

I also agree to adhere to the rules of the agency I will be volunteering for and abide by the procedures including any record keeping required and maintain the confidentiality of agency and client information. I understand that the code of conduct is in effect during Community Service Program time.

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

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PARENT APPROVAL

(TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN)

I give my permission for _____ to serve as a volunteer in the Community Service Program.

I understand that he/she will be making a valuable and needed contribution to our community. I also understand that he/she will not receive monetary compensation for his/her services.

We have accident insurance with _____ (Name of Insurance Co.) which will cover my son/daughter in the event of accidental injury while engaging in this activity. I will assume responsibility for the medical expenses for treatment of any injury my son/daughter might suffer while participating in this activity.

I understand that inexpensive student accident insurance is available for purchase at any time during the school year and that I may download enrollment brochures and claim forms as well as review "Frequently Asked Questions" directly from the company's website at: www.floridaschoolinsurance.com

PARENT/GUARDIAN SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

**** RETURN THIS FORM BEFORE SERVING HOURS ****

Student # _____
Student Name _____
Class of: _____

**COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM
NON-PROFIT AGENCY APPLICATION**

A non-profit organization is defined as: An entity with the following characteristics that distinguish it from a business enterprise: (a) contributions of significant amounts of resources from providers who do not expect proportionate return, (b) operating purposes other than to provide goods or services at a profit, and (c) absence of ownership interests like those of business enterprises.

Only hours completed at non-profit organizations will be accepted.

(To be completed by Agency Volunteer Coordinator/Director supervising the project.)

Name of Agency/Project: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Contact Person – Printed _____

(This should be the name of the person who can verify the volunteer's hours and the quality of the volunteer's work.)

Contact Person - Signature: _____

Title/Position: _____

Days and hours scheduled for volunteer: _____

Brief description of volunteer's job: _____

Date: _____