Career/College Planning

**What things should I be trying to add to my resume throughout high school?**

**\*Strong Academics** - You don’t have to be the class valedictorian, but most colleges and employers will take into consideration your overall commitment to academics. Some college scholarships will require a minimum GPA, but many don’t. That said, a strong GPA alone does not always indicate that you take your education seriously. Colleges and employers take into account course load. You need to be registering for courses that are related to your career interests and are challenging. Taking easier classes to boost your GPA will not impress colleges or employers.

**\*Work Experience/Community Service** - Responsibility and initiative-taking can be demonstrated through your work history, as well as through letters of recommendation from your employers. An internship is also a great way to demonstrate that you are serious about your future. Like paid work, volunteerism and community service are great ways to enhance your resume. This could include tutoring at the local elementary school, volunteering at the nursing home, organizing a neighborhood food drive etc. Those experiences indicate that you are civic-minded and care about causes beyond yourself.

**\*Leadership** – Being in a club or organization is always an admirable activity worth adding to your resume, but it is more impressive to achieve significant accomplishments and/or hold rank within that organization or club. For instance, being a member of the local Young Leaders Group is a laudable involvement; however, being a co-chair or event director of your branch further demonstrates commitment, leadership and success, all of which are qualities of a deserving scholarship recipient. While leadership positions like student body president are impressive on your resume, even more important is how you utilize your leadership abilities to help others or to bring about change. Maintaining a committed participation to one or a few groups over a period of time versus a string of short stints at multiple organizations shows leadership and commitment.

Benefits of Community Service

Volunteering teaches:

• a sense of responsibility. By volunteering, you learn what it means to make and keep a commitment. You learn how to be on time for a job, do your best, and be proud of the results. But you also learn that, ultimately, we are responsible for the well-being of our entire community.

• the knowledge that one person can make a difference. A wonderful, empowering message for a person is that you are important enough to have an impact on someone or something else.

• tolerance. Working in community service can bring you in touch with people of different backgrounds, abilities, ethnicities, ages, and education and income levels. You will likely find that even the most diverse individuals can be united by common values.

• job skills. Community service can help you decide on your future careers. Learning to work as a team member, taking on leadership roles, setting project goals – these are all skills that can be gained by volunteering and will serve you well in any future career.

Top 3 Reasons to Volunteer:

• Meet new like-minded people

• Change someone else’s life as well as your own.

• Feel a sense of accomplishment and self fulfillment.

\*Adapted from http://wvde.state.wv.us/counselors/links/advisors/lesson-plans.html

Current Research says:

• community service has favorable effects on depression, life satisfaction, and wellbeing (Jenkinson, et al., 2013).

• community service can lead to faster employment (Goic & Jeroncic, 2012).

• community service has a positive impact on student academic learning (Eyler, et al., 2001)

References

Eyler, J., Giles, D., Stenson, C., & Gray, C. (2001). At a glance: What we know about the effects

of service-learning on college students, faculty, institutions and communities. Retrieved

 from: http://www.servicelearning.org/filemanager/download/aag.pdf

Goic, S. & Jeroncic, R. (2012). Volunteering as the way for productivity and employability

 improvement. International Journal of Management Cases, 14(1), 421-433.

Jenkinson, C. E., Dickens, A. P., Jones, K., Thompson-Coon, J., Taylor, R. S., Rogers, M., & ...

Richards, S. H. (2013). Is volunteering a public health intervention? A systematic review

 and meta-analysis of the health and survival of volunteers. BMC Public Health, 13(1), 1-

10. doi:10.1186/1471-2458-13-773

For community service ideas check out the following websites:

http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/serviceideas.shtml

http://voices.yahoo.com/10-community-service-ideas-high-school-students-8923047.html

http://www.kidactivities.net/category/community-service-middle-high-school.aspx

https://www.teenlife.com/pages/volunteer/

www.gvfoundation.org

Check out these videos for ideas and motivation:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acK2aQp5-zM - Hoops for Hope
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJeO9IcU9Zc - Free the Children
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nJeO9IcU9Zc - Kids versus Global Warming.com