



85 Prescott Street
Worcester, MA 01605-2610

(508) 831-5859
FAX: (508) 831-5880

COMMUNITY SERVICE AT MASS ACADEMY

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of community service at Mass Academy is to prepare you to be an active, engaged citizen, to instill in you an awareness of community need, to give you a sense of moral obligation to help those less fortunate, and to help make your community a better place to live. You will also learn a lot about yourself, and meet many new people along the way.

Community service benefits the Academy as a whole. This institution is a school with extraordinary human and material endowment. These resources come from the Commonwealth and WPI. We are obliged to return on this investment.

Community service also can enhance your resume for college. When so many young people apply to college with such strong academic credentials, community service provides an admissions officer with the evidence of initiative, creativity, perseverance, productivity, human tolerance and caring that distinguishes the one-dimensional bright hard-workers from the multi-faceted, thoughtful change-agents who will likely make a difference in the world.

Ideally, community service amounts to work in the public sector where the student directly helps those who are truly in need. **We encourage students to leave their comfort zone and work with individuals and groups who can most benefit from their assistance. A minimum of 10 hours of your 100 hours of service must be in a high needs area.**

II. SERVICE LEARNING, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND VOLUNTEERING

Service learning, community service, and volunteering are all valuable forms of community service. Service learning is more “project-based,” where there is a design phase, an implementation phase with set goals, and an evaluation phase at the end to measure whether the goals and learning objectives were met. There are typically long term relationships established since there is a personal investment in the project (although this could be the case in a long term community service commitment at the same place with the same clients). Service learning usually begins by studying a community need to identify a worthwhile project. The goal of service learning is to understand the social problem that creates the situation and how to better work to create the solution. Community service is usually in a worker role, with a student volunteering to assist and thereby gaining a more in depth awareness and first-hand knowledge of an issue, typically in a long term commitment. Volunteering usually involves assisting at an event and is more short term.

III. **SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES / GUIDELINES**

Ideally, community service is a personal and meaningful undertaking, not a duty or a “task I have to do to get the hours in.” If it is the latter, your attitude will be obvious to the people you are serving. Find an agency to work with or a project to do that meets your interests and skills, and you will find it very rewarding.

IV. **PROPOSAL**

A proposal must be submitted to the Director of the Academy before the Community Service is started. Approval by the Director is required for hours to count toward graduation.

V. **REQUIREMENTS/REFLECTION / CELEBRATION / PRESENTATION**

Students must perform a minimum of 100 hours of community service between new student orientation and two weeks prior to graduation. Prior to the start of senior year, each student must have accumulated at least 50 hours of service in order to continue at the Academy. During the first month of school, the Academy will celebrate service to the community by showcasing reflection presentations of the senior class at a public assembly. Every senior is required to present at the celebration. An additional 50 hours must be certified before graduation (25 of those hours must be completed by the beginning of term C. Reflections must be submitted to the Director of the Academy at that time). **At least 10 hours must be must be in a “high needs” area.**

EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE SITES

City View School*	Audio Journal*	Special Olympics*	Habitat for Humanity *
Worcester Arts Magnet School	Worcester County Food Bank*	Abby’s House*	Camp Sunshine*
Heifer International	Jeremiah’s Inn*	Loaves and Fishes*	Mustard Seed*
NEADS	Ecotarium	Tower Hill	Veterans Inc*
Worcester Animal Rescue League	Seven Hills*	You Inc*	Horizons for Homeless Children*
Boys and Girls Club	Audubon Society	Community Harvest Food Project*	Meals On Wheels*

***A high needs area is working with an agency focusing on underserved populations**