EVENT LOGISTICS

HOW WILL I KNOW WHO IS ATTENDING?

The Alumni Association will track all registrations for your service project and will update you on a regular basis to let you know who has registered. The Alumni Association will send out confirmations and any necessary waivers to registrants.

DO I NEED TO SEND ANYTHING TO PARTICIPANTS?

We encourage you to send an email to participants to introduce yourself (we have a template for you to customize). The Alumni Association will send an official confirmation to include:

- Project schedule
- Directions to the site and parking instructions
- Recommended clothing and footwear
- Policies and information on requirements for volunteers under 18
- Waivers – if needed

WHAT SUPPLIES WILL I NEED?

The Alumni Association will send all registration supplies to the site leader the week of the event including:

- ❑ T-shirts
- ❑ List of volunteers
- ❑ Nametags
- ❑ Event day banner for group photo
- ❑ Discussion questions

PLANNING THE MEAL

You should anticipate planning one meal for the event. Meals can be informal and costs should be kept to a minimum (we recommend $12-15 per person). A breakfast might include fruit, bagels, pastries, and drinks. Lunch could be boxed lunches or pizza.

We will look to you for suggestions of restaurants or caterers that can deliver food or would be conveniently located for you to pick up in advance of the event.

The university will cover the costs of these meals. The Alumni Association can work with you on placing orders and paying for the meals.

Additional things to consider:

- Ensure there is a place to eat at your organization
- Think about dietary concerns including vegetarian and gluten-free
- Make sure you include drinks
- Invite agency staff or the constituents the agency serves who are involved in the program to join you for the meal if appropriate – be aware of power differences and access to food if the group is eating in front of others.

PLANNING THE PROJECT

SAMPLE DAY OF EVENT TIMELINE

There are numerous ways in which to set up your event. We have provided a sample timeline below. This may be adjusted depending on your location and length of activity.

8:00 a.m.	Registration and informal breakfast*
8:25 a.m.	Welcome
8:30 a.m.	Educational orientation led by non-profit agency
9:00 a.m.	Project begins
11:30 a.m.	Discussion and reflection among participants over snacks
12:00 p.m.	Event concludes (Make sure to get a group photo!)

*You may want to organize a lunch following the activity instead of a breakfast prior to the activity.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE A PROJECT?

Explore the issues facing your community and consider issues relevant to alumni peers

- If you are already a volunteer at an agency, ask what needs the alumni volunteers could address.
- Talk to friends and neighbors about community needs and local volunteer organizations.
- Consult with local umbrella organizations such as the United Way.
- Reach out to fellow alumni who work in the non-profit sector – the Alumni Association can provide you with some alumni to contact.
- Reach out to fellow alumni who sit on agency boards– the Alumni Association can provide you with some alumni to contact.

AGENCY AND PROJECT SELECTION REQUIREMENTS AND TIPS

Criteria for selection of service project

- ❏ Locally-focused organization, committed to sustainable change in the community
- ❏ Project should be mutually beneficial – meets an agency need and will be of interest to alumni
- ❏ Agency has the capacity to support the proposed project (staffing, planning time, materials, etc.)
- ❏ Educational component including overview of the organization, discussion of their mission in the context of the larger community, etc. must be possible
- ❏ May be direct (working with people) or indirect (working with supplies, facilities, etc.) service
- ❏ Consider logistics such as ease of public transportation and parking at the site
- ❏ Consider minimum, ideal, and maximum number of volunteers the project/agency can support
- ❏ Work with agency to create a project that takes 2-3 hours to complete
- ❏ Keep in mind that there is great interest in family friendly sites, so ask about age restrictions and other limitations (consider projects that are kid-friendly as well as those that are less physical for alumni who are older or who have physical limitations)
- ❏ Consider whether the service project will be indoors or outdoors, and any implications for participants, back-up plans for poor weather, etc.

Best practices for service project/agency selection

- Be sure to mention to the agency that your group is taking part in a nationwide initiative entitled WashU Engage - alumni of Washington University will be participating in service projects across the country throughout the year. More in depth than a typical service project, these events will include an educational component and discussion designed to give participants a better understanding of the needs, assets, and challenges within their community
- If the agency's potential projects don't align with site leader goals, scheduling constraints, etc., we encourage you to respectfully move on to a different agency.
- There should never be a fee of any kind to participate in a service project.
- Participants should not be required to bring meals, snacks or supplies for other volunteers or members of the organization.
- Fundraising of any kind is prohibited during service projects.
- Make sure to know what the agency's expectations are around liability waivers or required items needed to volunteer with them.

WHAT QUESTIONS DO I NEED ANSWERED BY MY COMMUNITY PARTNER?

As you build plans with your community partner, be sure to address the following questions. We encourage you to preview the questions below which will help us in publicizing your event, preparing volunteers, and in helping you identify any lingering questions.

- What is the scope of the work that we should communicate to potential participants?
- What are the: 1) ideal number and 2) minimum number of participants needed and 3) maximum number that can be accommodated for this project?
- Is there an age requirement for volunteers?
- Will it be possible to have someone from the organization lead the educational component for the volunteer group (introduction to the organization's mission, work, and context of the issue in the community context)? This component is critical to helping volunteers contextualize the work they are doing.
- Is there public transportation access? If participants drive to the service project, where should they park?
- Is there an appropriate area where the group can meet to sign-in for the day, get nametags and instructions?
- Is there an appropriate area where the group can meet for the discussion/reflection portion at the end of the project? *(Consider whether this site will have a continental breakfast prior to starting work or a lunch following the work. Is there a location to have the meal? If not, is there one nearby, such as a park? The educational component could possibly take place over a continental breakfast - if the agency doesn't mind. The discussion/reflection portion at the end could take place over a lunch)*
- Are there any supplies that participants should bring on the day of the project? (e.g. work gloves)
- How should participants dress for the project?
- If the project is outdoors, what is the weather plan?
  (Often the work goes forward unless it is pouring rain, but in this case the no-show rate will be fairly high. Try to arrange an indoor alternative activity such as stuffing envelopes for a mailing as a backup or plan the rain date in advance.)
- What are the physical requirements for this project? (must be able to lift 20 lbs., bend over, etc.)

PREPARING FOR MARKETING THE PROJECT

The Alumni Association will take the information you submitted and craft a description which we will use to publicize your event. The description will include a brief description of the agency and the scope of the project. Here is an example:

Project Open Hand is a nonprofit organization that engages the community by providing meals with love to critically ill neighbors and seniors. Every day, Project Open Hand prepares 2,500 nutritious meals and provide 200 bags of healthy groceries to help sustain our clients as they battle serious illnesses, isolation, or the health challenges of old age.

Our group will be helping Project Open Hand prepare meals for their clients. This will include slicing and dicing fresh produce in our kitchen, helping sort and pack food in the warehouse, and other tasks to get the meals and groceries ready to be picked up or delivered.

Agency Name: *Project Open Hand*
Date: *April 9, 2016*
Time: *11:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.*
Project Location: *Project Open Hand*
730 Polk St.
San Francisco, CA 94109
Site Leader:
Site Leader Email:
Number of Participants: *20*
Indoor or Outdoor project: *Indoor*
Attire: *sleeves, long pants, close-toed shoes*
Requirements (physical and age limitations): *Volunteers must be 15 years or older.*

PLANNING THE REFLECTIVE DISCUSSION

Reflection is an essential part of effective service, because it provides context for the service and encourages participants to think more deeply about the issue(s) addressed by the agency and the people/neighborhoods they serve to help them make sense of their experience Reflection can take many forms and can be called wrap-up, debrief, or discussion. In most cases, it will last 20-30 minutes during a meal or snack.

Framework for Reflection Questions: What – So What – Now What
Throughout the course of the reflection, make sure to ask questions that answer

1. WHAT participants saw, what they learned about the agency, the population served, the community issue.
2. SO WHAT- reflect on why these issues matter, what significance or importance did the service have for the organization and surrounding community?
3. NOW WHAT- reflect on next steps after this experience. Are there ways the participants want to stay involved? (Ex: continue to volunteer, share information about the organization with others, donate money or time, serve on a board) How do the issues we addressed today tie into local or national policy, politics, or movements? What would you like to explore further? Closing – Because of my experience today, I will…

Five Tips for Facilitators:

Start with a check in that allows everyone to share

1. **Establish group norms**: Spend a couple of minutes asking participants what rules they want to follow during the conversation. Be ready to share some of your own, such as:
    - What is said here stays here, what is learned here leaves here
    - Listen to understand
    - Assume good intentions
2. **Consider small group work or pairs to spur discussion**: Get people talking by breaking them into small groups, having them answer a question together, and then report out.
3. **Be comfortable with silence**: Sometimes people need time to process; wait 5 seconds longer than you are comfortable with to give people time to respond.
4. **Don't place value statements on any participant's insights**: Saying "good thought" or merely nodding at some people and not others can make people feel like the comments are being valued differently and shut people down.
5. **Keep track of time**: Make sure you're monitoring the time and that everyone gets a chance to participate if they choose.

PUBLICIZING MY PROJECT

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO TO PUBLICIZE THIS EVENT?

The Alumni Association and the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement will use a variety of media to publicize all projects:

- Email blasts bi-weekly to all alumni in your city
- Social media updates on WashU Network and Gephardt pages
- Washington University Alumni Association Website

We encourage you to reach out to classmates and friends to encourage them to participate in your project.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN MY PROJECT?

All members of the Washington University community are welcome to participate. Please note that due to space constraints in most service projects, WashU Engage will initially only be publicized to alumni. If space permits, we will publicize the event to the entire WashU community in your city, including parents and friends of the university.

SITE LEADER TIMELINE

*Items the Site Leaders are responsible for are listed in red.

Three months prior to the project date

- ❑ Identify a need in your local community and contact agency to discuss feasibility of hosting a service project.
- ❑ Seek approval from the Alumni Association on preferred agency and scope of project, before confirming participation with agency. The Alumni Association will also confirm dates of other scheduled events in that city.
- ❑ Submit all project information to the Alumni Association. Project information will be gathered by working with the agency to answer "What questions do I need answered by my community partner."

6-8 weeks prior to project date

- ❑ All registration links go live and marketing begins.
- ❑ Help promote even on social media. See guide to assist with social media marketing (in this handbook).
- ❑ Attend agency orientation sessions if requested and sign any additional waivers required by agency for your group.
- ❑ Confirm final details of the service projects and gather information for confirmation email to volunteers - directions, parking, meeting place, how to dress, etc.
- ❑ Work with your Alumni Association representative to plan breakfast or lunch.
- ❑ Coordinate location for meal, educational component, and discussion/reflection with agency and Alumni Association.
- ❑ You will be receiving updates on registrants for your site from the Alumni Association, continue to reach out to new registrants and introduce yourself.

2 weeks prior to event

- ❑ Work with the Alumni Association to confirm meal and delivery for day of event.
- ❑ Confirm your address for the supplies box from the Alumni Association (no PO Boxes.)

1 week prior to event

- ❑ Alumni Association sends you final participant list along with box of supplies for event.

- ❏ Alumni Association sends email confirmation to volunteers including any necessary waivers, supplies needed, and suggested dress.

DAY OF EVENT LOGISTICS & FOLLOW UP

Day of Event

- ❏ Arrive at least one hour early to meet and greet both agency representative/educator and volunteers.
- ❏ You may be picking up the meal on the way to the agency/site or meet delivery person with the meal.
- ❏ Hand out nametags/check off guest list, add any walk-in names.
- ❏ Collect waivers required by agency.
- ❏ Welcome volunteers, make announcements, and introduce educator.
- ❏ Hand out t-shirts.
- ❏ Take photos and video, and post on social media.
- ❏ Facilitate discussion over meal or snack.

Follow Up

- ❏ Send thank you notes to volunteers and the partner organization (provided by the Alumni Association.)
- ❏ Send guest list and receipts to Alumni Association in provided business reply envelope.
- ❏ Gather testimonials for use in future marketing.
- ❏ Send any feedback from you or volunteers to Alumni Association.
- ❏ Alumni Association will send an event evaluation to all participants.

THE VOLUNTEER TEAM

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE SITE LEADER?

You will play an essential role in WashU Engage by coordinating plans at the local level. This position may be held by one or more alumni who share the duties and responsibilities outlined below.

- Identify a need in the local community and collaborate closely with a non-profit to organize a service project.
- Coordinate with agency staff to set a date for the project during a time which is convenient for you and which does not conflict with other events in the city.
- Work with agency staff to plan a brief educational orientation to the service project, the agency, and the need in the community for the service.
- Work with agency staff to compile necessary information about the agency and the service project for communication and marketing materials.
- Serve as a communications liaison between agency staff, local alumni volunteers, and the Alumni Association.
- Attend any orientations required by the agency prior to the service project. Communicate information from this orientation to the Alumni Association and other alumni volunteers.
- Assist in recruiting volunteers by reaching out to personal networks and classmates.
- Arrange appropriate meals, snacks, or drinks, which may include a continental breakfast prior to the service project, lunch following the service project, water for outdoor projects, etc.
- If required, ensure waivers are collected for all participants,
- Help to inform alumni what to expect before arriving
- Facilitate and lead discussion and reflection following the service project. Questions will be provided, and ideally this discussion can be co-facilitated with agency staff.

HOW DO I ASSEMBLE A TEAM?

You may decide to delegate roles to include others on a leadership team:

Educator – This person, associated with the agency, will inform the volunteers of the agency's history, mission, and scope of their service. If a Washington University alumnus/a is associated with the agency, this will be great role for them to fill.

Social Media Liaison – This volunteer will serve as the liaison between the Alumni Association Marketing Coordinator and the site leader. The social media liaison will utilize Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram leading up to and during the project to increase participation and excitement for WashU Engage in their city. They will take and post photos during or after the event on social media. See Social Media tip sheet included in this handbook.

Discussion Leader - Facilitate and lead discussion and reflection among project participants following the service project using questions provided in this handbook.

Washington University in St. Louis
Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement

Washington University ALUMNI

KEY CONTACTS

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THANK YOU!

We are grateful for your involvement as a site leader, and we want to make this experience as manageable, enjoyable, and meaningful for you as possible. Please, don't hesitate to reach out to us if we can support you in any way. Thank you for helping us build this initiative into a Washington University alumni tradition!