What is Service-Learning?

The information below can be found on www.nylc.org

**WORKING DEFINITION OF SERVICE-LEARNING**

Cleaning up a river is service.

Sitting in a science classroom, looking at water samples under a microscope is learning.

Students taking samples from local water sources, analyzing the samples, documenting the results and presenting scientific findings to a local pollution control agency is service-learning.

**COMPONENTS**

- student leadership
- genuine community need
- school/community partnerships preparation
- reflection, recognition
- clear connections to curricular learning objectives

**CRITERIA FOR SERVICE-LEARNING**

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy through which young people learn and develop by designing, organizing and participating in meaningful service experiences:

- That meet actual community needs;
- That are coordinated in collaboration with the school and community;
- That are integrated into the students' academic curriculum;
- That provide structured time for thinking, writing and talking about what is seen and done in the service-learning process;
- That enhance what is taught in the classroom by providing opportunities for students to apply new academic knowledge and skills in real life situations in their own communities; and
- That help to foster the development of a sense of caring for others.

**ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS**

The essential components of the effective service-learning model are:

- Preparation,
- Service,
- Reflection/evaluation, and
- Celebration/recognition.