



To: James A. Mason,
Associate Dean

Kelly Masters,
Service Learning Coordinator

From: Martin A. Orłowski, Director,
Institutional Planning & Analysis

Subject: Service Learning Program, Agency Feedback Evaluation

Date: March 2, 1994

The Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis has completed the agency feedback evaluation for the Service Learning Program. The report presents our findings based on in-depth interviews with the representatives, board members and employees of the local agencies which participated in the program.

Staff in the Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis wish to thank you and all those involved in the program for their assistance in conducting this study. We hope that the evaluation will assist you in both validation of the current program and in planning for the future. If we can provide any further assistance, please do not hesitate to call us at 7746.

Attachment: Service Learning Program, Agency Feedback Evaluation

pc: C. Kozell
G. Keith
D. Jaksen

/s

Final Report
2/28/94

**OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM
AGENCY FEEDBACK EVALUATION**

**Prepared by:
The Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis, February 1994**

OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM AGENCY FEEDBACK EVALUATION

INTRODUCTION

This evaluation was conducted in February, 1994 by the Office of Institutional Planning & Analysis at Oakland Community College in order to determine the effectiveness of the College's Service Learning Program, presented during the Fall, 1993 term.

METHODOLOGY

In January, 1994 telephone interviews were conducted with representatives of each of the agencies who participated in the Service Learning Program. Names of appropriate representatives were obtained from the coordinator of the program and from the agencies themselves. The individuals interviewed occupied different positions within the agencies and had experienced varying degrees of involvement with the program. The interviews focused on the degree to which agencies benefitted from participation in the program, evaluation of specific aspects of the program, preparation levels of the students and the degree to which the program met the agencies' expectations.

ANALYSIS

Participation:

When asked if participation in the program was worthwhile for their organization all of the representatives interviewed indicated that they believed it was extremely valuable. Typical sentiments were expressed by Ann Kucera, Project Development Board Member of Volunteer Impact, who indicated that their participation in the Service Learning Program was of crucial importance in completing a major project. This project involved the students in organizing a survey of 500 service agencies to determine how they utilize volunteers in their operations. The students developed mailing lists and labels, stuffed envelopes, and completed the mechanics of the project. The task would have been difficult to complete without the additional assistance as Volunteer Impact is a volunteer operation with only one full time administrator. Carolyn Iwrey, President of Volunteer Impact, commented that she saw this project as the beginning of a long-term relationship.

The representatives of Detroit Baptist Manor had similar comments. Mary O'Neal explained that the volunteers were able to provide valuable programming for senior residents which was normally beyond the organization's capability, given time and staffing constraints. Olive Plaxton, President of the Alpha Residence Council indicated that the volunteers were effective in influencing seniors to turn out and participate in the social activities provided. She estimated that almost half the approximately 150 residents were involved in and enjoyed the volunteer organized activities.

Melinda Kuhn, of Orchards Children's Services, also commented that her organization found the work of the students in the program extremely valuable. They were involved in the planning and staging of a holiday party for foster families served by the organization. Without this help it would have been difficult to serve as many children's needs as effectively.

Specific Aspects:

When asked which specific aspects of the program were most and least beneficial to their organization comments were varied. Ann Kucera of Volunteer Impact commented that to them just having the volunteers there was the most valuable aspect. However, she felt that they were mainly involved in rote work and would have liked to use them more for idea and project development. She did invite them to attend committee meetings with this object in mind but was uncertain if they wanted this degree of involvement or were suffering from time scheduling problems. Deborah Duyck of the same agency praised the volunteers' organizational skills; they demonstrated the requisite skills to collate different sources of information and to coordinate the mailing effort. Carolyn Iwrey saw long term positive benefit from the students' involvement and the interest they could generate in others for community involvement.

Detroit Baptist Manor representative, Mary O'Neal found the most beneficial aspect of the program to be the fact that the students were able to work independently and take responsibility for the programming organization. She would have liked more time to work with the volunteers but was prevented by her own schedule and time constraints. Olive Plaxton of the same organization commented that the lively, outgoing spirit shown by the students was especially appreciated by the senior citizens.

Preparation:

Respondents were asked to comment on the extent to which the OCC participants were prepared to work in their organization. Ann Kucera and Carolyn Iwrey of Volunteer Impact were impressed by the work ethic shown by their volunteers. They arrived on time, worked consistently and cooperatively and demonstrated good organizational skills in devising an information system. Deborah Duyck found the volunteers' willingness to be flexible another valuable attribute. She also praised their ability to stay on task and maintain their effort.

The Detroit Baptist Manor representatives agreed that the volunteers were well prepared. Olive Plaxton reported that after an initial meeting with her the students devised a survey to determine the needs and wishes of members of the organization. When this survey failed to generate the expected response, they went ahead and devised a plan on their own initiative in consultation with her. She appreciated the way in which they worked with her in all aspects of the program.

Expectations:

When asked if the OCC program lived up to their original expectations the respondents from the service agencies were uniformly in agreement that it had. Carolyn Iwrey of Volunteer Impact felt the program was well structured and praised the fact that it is dynamic, capable of adapting and making changes in the way in which it is run. The representative of the seniors at Detroit Baptist Manor commented that residents had asked if the volunteer group could return.

SUMMARY

It would appear from the interviews carried out with representatives of the service agencies involved in the Service Learning Program that the program was very successful in meeting the needs and expectations of the agencies. In each case the volunteers made it possible to carry out valuable projects or activities that otherwise may not have taken place or have been less effective. One element of the program which was consistently praised was that of good organization. The respondents had few suggestions for improvement although Volunteer Impact representatives did comment that they would have liked to use the volunteers for more critical thinking and less rote work. Time and scheduling constraints obviously affected these type of considerations.

APPENDIX A
AGENCY SURVEY

OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM
AGENCY FEEDBACK

1. Was participation in the program worthwhile for your organization? *(Focus on how the program benefitted the organization not the individual being interviewed.)*
2. Which specific aspects of the program were (most and least) beneficial to your organization?
3. To what extent were the OCC volunteers prepared to work in your organization?
4. Did the OCC program live up to your original expectations? *(Focus on reason why or why not)*
5. Who else in your organization would you suggest we could contact to get their feedback on the OCC program?

APPENDIX B
AGENCIES SURVEYED

OAKLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SERVICE LEARNING PROGRAM
AGENCIES SURVEYED

Volunteer Impact
(810) 424-9000

Deborah Duyck (Administrator)
Carolyn Iwrey (President)
Ann Kucera (Project Development Board Member)

Detroit Baptist Manor
(810) 539-3131

Mary O'Neal
Olive Plaxton (President, Alpha Residence Council)

Orchard Children's Services
30215 Southfield Road,
Southfield MI 48076
(810) 433-8600

Melinda Kuhn
Harriet Orley

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