



## **Activities for Integrating Scholar Reflection into Service Projects**

We know that all service projects “are not created equal!” According to research, the most valuable service projects have three qualities in common:

1. Students have a say in choosing service projects that are meaningful to them.
2. The service projects take place over time or occur in a way that allows students to have a relationship with those they are serving.
3. There is an opportunity for students to reflect on their experiences when they are completed.

Given already-busy schedules, it’s completely understandable that often #3 gets short shrift. If you can think ahead of time about some simple, but meaningful ways to encourage reflection among your CFES Scholars, it can help to enrich their leadership-through-service experiences, as well as develop the habit of reflective practice.

Here are a few ideas to get you started:

1. Have a group debriefing after an event; this can take place over snacks at the end of the event, on the bus ride home, or at a later date. Have each Scholar share what was most meaningful about the event and why. Discuss what worked and what didn’t, and what you would do differently if you were to do the event again.
2. Keep a leadership-through-service journal during the year. Entries can be brief but might focus on some of the following questions in relation to each service activity, or the same activity (such as mentoring, adopting a grandparent, the backpack project) over time: What is meaningful about this event/activity and why? What am I learning about myself by participating? What am I learning about others? What skills or attitudes gained from participating in this service may be useful for me to apply to my studies...to college...to my career? What challenges me most about this service activity and why?
3. Use a more visual/symbolic means of reflecting by having Scholars bring a photo, object, or artifact that relates to their service activity and have them explain what it is and why it is important to them.
4. Have the group write a reflective summary of their leadership-through-service activities and what they learned, and post it on the CFES website.
5. Make a video documenting your service events and share with others what you have learned that could help them be successful in their leadership-through-service activities.
6. Have one or more Scholars interview others to gain their perspectives on the completed leadership-through-service activities and write up a story for their newspaper, website, local paper, and/or CFES website.
7. Create a leadership-through-service workshop for younger students to help them navigate a step-by-step process, from brainstorming a service activity to reflecting upon it.
8. Create a written guide for younger students to teach them the steps of successful creation, implementation, and assessment of a service project.