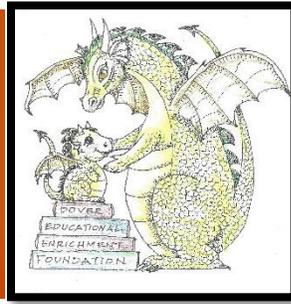


Dover Union Free School District

Second to None



DEEP Matters

A Newsletter of the Dover Education Enrichment Program (DEEP)

an education enrichment fund of

Berkshire Taconic
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Dover Middle/High School Community Service Fair: Igniting the Spark of Service Learning in Future Citizen Leaders

“If you walk in the footsteps of a stranger, you’ll learn things you never knew you never knew.” - Pocahontas from the Disney film, “Pocahontas”

In the book, “Common Fire: Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World” (Daloz et al, 1996), researchers interviewed 100 community volunteers to better understand the impact of volunteerism upon their lives. Findings suggest volunteerism that begins in adolescence was one of the factors that promotes the likelihood of future citizen leaders.

More than a decade ago, the School District instituted the requirement of completing 90 hours of community service for high school graduation. To help students learn about the missions and programs of Dover-based service organization, the Town of Dover Lions Club utilized DEEP grants to coordinate community service fairs

During students’ lunch periods, representatives of 12 local helping agencies shared information about volunteer opportunities available for community service hours. More than 300 students participated and by the end of the day’s lunch periods, nearly every organization had filled a sign-up list with names of student volunteers.



Dover Union Free School District
Second to None

got community service?
to do!

Are you a
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT
needing to earn
COMMUNITY SERVICE
Hour Credit?

According to the “Common Fire” authors, adolescence is the time of life when perspective-taking, or the ability to hold another person’s point of view at the same time as one’s own, begins to emerge. Volunteer experiences, especially at human service and nonprofit helping organizations, can often help students see the unique challenges of vulnerable individuals and families outside the purview of their own life experience. With perspective-taking, they can develop compassion, a central trait of committed citizen leaders.

During adolescence, teens also develop the capacity for abstract thought. With deeper understanding that “home” is a physical reality and a metaphor for belonging in the world, volunteer experiences can help students reflect on issues of social injustice.

Committed citizen leaders frequently mentioned the impact of “threshold people” or mentors who engaged them in transformational relationships that helped shaped their future convictions to serve the greater good. Since 1948, generations of members of the Town of Dover Lions Club have served the community’s greater good with the simple motto: “We Serve.” Thanks to DEEP, community service fairs help students cross the life-transforming threshold from meeting a committed citizen leader to the future reality of becoming one.