

Junior High Community Service



The Junior High years are a great time to explore options in the community for places to serve. Obviously, Junior High students cannot drive, so this means **you**, as a parent, will be part of this exploration. **Your encouragement** to come alongside your student to serve and to try many settings will be a great help. Your goal as a parent at this stage: study your student and begin to help him find an interest that fits his abilities, gifts, and passion. Colleges love to see students who show **initiative** and **leadership**. You can help your student **now** by starting the discussion of ways he can be helpful in our local community. A great exercise to grow a creative problem-solver is to practice brainstorming solutions to issues noted in our community. During grades 10-12, we would love to see a student committed to one or two significant areas of service. Many students at this point can even try out settings that reflect vocational interests. Most importantly, “the cheerful giver” is the winner in this process. Community Service should not be resume work, or drudgery, or something to check off a list, but rather a place of true enjoyment, education, and interest. A college interviewer can quickly sort the resume built out of duty. Passionate enthusiasm about an area of service is the goal.

How do I find my student's interest?

Is your student an athlete? Does he have a musical interest? Has he expressed any desire for vocation? Is there something he loves to do? Is he artistic? Does he love to help build things? Is he good with technology? Can he organize things efficiently and with ease? Does he have a merciful heart? Is he a

good student and can explain things well to others? Does he have special relational gifts with a particular age group? Does he love serving outdoors? All of the above could point a student in a particular direction of service. As a parent and as a family, you may have to try out spots with your student as many community settings have age limits which would prohibit your student from serving alone. Serving as a lifestyle of your family helps ignite the interests of your student and give him the confidence to try other new tasks. Many church youth groups try different areas of service in the community, and this is another excellent way for young teens to be exposed to various settings. A teen should enjoy a setting and begin to see how he can help in that setting. All settings are not for all people! It is perfectly fine for a teen to pull back from a setting and decide that it is not for him.



Is Community Service required at Jackson Prep?

No, **Community Service is not required for graduation.** Community Service is voluntary. However, we believe as a school that our students have been blessed beyond measure, and we encourage them to serve out of their abundance. We also believe Community Service is an excellent classroom without walls where important skills may be tested and honed. Finally, we know that Community Service does matter to colleges; recruiters love to see that student who took the initiative to serve especially when that student delights in a particular setting.

Bottom Line: **In the Community Service realm, tell your student to do what he loves.**



What about Community Service records, hours, awards?

In your handbook and on the Web site of Jackson Prep, under School **Life** and **Community Service**, you will see posted the hours required for particular Community Service Awards. These awards are given each year in Class Day and Honors Forums to encourage students who take the time to serve.

Community Service Records are kept for each student. These records are the Community Service logs a student produces. These logs are printed off the Web site. Go to School Life, and then Community Service. You will see a tab to click for Community Service Form. These logs are due 3 times a year, and this year's due dates are August 27, January 18, and April 8. The awards are given in the spring based on the records from these logs. A student does not have to produce a log, ever, if he so chooses not to do so. This is a voluntary action on his part, and the keeping of a record for him is purely another service offered to your student by Jackson Prep.



What does Jackson Prep “count” as Community Service?

For the Community Service awards at Honors Forums and Class Days, we ask that students submit hours of service for work done on campus (up to 5 hours total for helpers with landscaping/beautification of campus –“Green Thumb Helpers”), and in the community in many capacities. The work should be local work in the **Greater Metro Jackson Area**. Ten hours total of mission trip work may be submitted **as our emphasis is local**. Please do not submit work done in conjunction with membership in another organization such as Boy Scouts (Eagle Scout projects or meetings, etc.) or religious organizations (i.e.,

singing in the choir, teaching V.B.S., or teaching Sunday school).

Questions?

Contact Anne Duncan, Director of Community Service at aduncan@jacksonprep.net

