

Volume1, Number 2

Introduction

Once preparation was completed on Volume 1, Number 1 of the new *Information for Action: A Research Journal on Service-Learning with Children and Youth*, we started working on the next edition. Using several articles that had been referred for print, but in need of revisions, and adding a few selected articles that were submitted separately, we began work on editing and organizing the second work. What you are about to read is the result of these second round of articles and their continued contribution to the world of K-12 service-learning research.

One of the challenges of selecting articles concerned how to deal with topics that affected children and youth, but were more focused on adults and their preparation to work with youth in service-learning capacities. Specifically, this meant would/could we accept articles that dealt with teacher preparation and preparation of college students to engage in programs that interacted with young people? Certainly the programs affected children and youth, but the focus of the research/reporting was more on the adult outcomes. We decided as an early volume in the series that we would accept articles that dealt with other populations, but had a direct impact on children and youth. We hope that readers will respond and tell us if these articles are interesting, helpful, and worthy of publication in a journal whose focus is primarily on service-learning with children and youth. An alternative would be to refer these articles to other journals, such as the *Michigan Journal on Community Service Learning* or teacher education journals, for future publications. We, as an editorial group, hope you will tell us what you think.

The articles selected for the Academic Article section include some thoughtful topics. The first article presents a study of service-learning in gifted education. The purpose of the article is to show the relationship between theories of productive creativity in gifted education and theories of needs assessment and product development in service-learning initiatives. The second article deals with issues of culturally based service learning and its impact on teachers and students. The study reveals how students and teachers develop culturally based competencies and how that knowledge leads to even strong outcomes.

Practitioner based research, where some of the researchers are real world practitioners of service learning, presents some very different perspectives on the service-learning process. The first article addresses issues of motivation for new teachers and how service-learning programs affect the skills and development of new instructors. The

article suggests that teachers connect their motivation to teach using service-learning pedagogy with their passion to teach and their “right fit” in selecting such an approach. The second article focuses on migrant, Latino youth and how service-learning can enhance pedagogy and improve outcomes for these populations. Understanding the transient nature of the youth experience, the economic situations migrant families find themselves in, and the family cultural values helps to make the service-learning experience more fulfilling and successful.

The section on youth led research reports on the Youth In Focus (YIF) initiative, located in the San Francisco Bay area, where young people conduct studies on various topics connected to issues of social justice and community empowerment. The article covers the specific steps involved in YIF youth led research, including a case study of a program affiliated with the Gay, Lesbian, Bi-Sexual, and Transgender Community Center in San Francisco.

The final section reviews a new book on youth led research written by Kim Sabo Flores, a leading figure in the participatory youth research field. Written more as a “how to” book on the subject, the author describes various components necessary for high quality work.