

Miami Dade College Student Ambassador Program



INDEX

The Power of Student Leaders in Service-Learning at Miami-Dade College.....	2 - 3
The Student Ambassador Program Overview.....	4
Job Description/Application Procedures.....	5
Service-Learning Student Ambassador Application.....	6
Student Ambassador Letter To Students.....	7
Student Ambassador Responsibilities.....	8
Service-Learning Call Log.....	9
Telephone Check-In Guidelines.....	10
Telephone Check-In Form.....	11 - 12
Student Ambassador Thank You Letter.....	13

The Power of Student Leaders in Service-Learning at Miami-Dade College

Peer education has been proven again and again to be the best method to encourage learning when choice is involved. One always learns most concretely from a “teacher” who is prepared, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and most importantly, accessible and understanding of their “student’s” life situation. In an academic setting such as a college or university, and especially in an extremely diverse institution like Miami-Dade College, these connections make a huge impact on a student’s decision to join a service-learning project. Miami-Dade College accomplishes this task with a corps of young enthusiastic student leaders – the Student Ambassadors.

Interested, community-focused students apply for positions as Student Ambassadors with the Center for Community Involvement. These individuals are civic-minded, intelligent, dynamic, diverse students who are themselves juggling school, work, family, relationships, and the struggles of life just like any college student, yet feel compelled to serve and share the power of service with their entire campus body. What an amazing gift to their community!

Once an Ambassador is brought into the program, the training begins. Student Ambassadors come together for staff meetings throughout the academic term to cover topics ranging from a beginning of the year service-learning overview, ongoing trainings, and refreshers. Student Ambassadors are oriented to the mission, goals, objectives, methodologies, and philosophy of the Center for Community Involvement and service-learning in general. The Center for Community Involvement Director conducts a formal training on the service-learning classroom presentation that is geared toward Miami-Dade College students that occurs in classrooms in which the faculty choose to integrate service-learning into their curriculum. Role-playing and experience sharing also occurs during the training to provide Student Ambassadors with all necessary information and insight to fully communicate the power of service. Service histories are shared among the team, as these experiences often inspire new service-learning students to serve – in fact Student Ambassadors have actually begun serving together as a way to build their knowledge, connection as a team, and spirit to serve. Presentations are then scheduled, faculty are assigned to each Student Ambassador (4 to 5 faculty per term) and the team is off and running!

Typically, 60 to 80 service-learning classroom presentations occur on each Miami-Dade College campus each semester. Student Ambassadors first shadow the Center for Community Involvement Director, then team present to peer educate on service-learning and the Miami-Dade College service-learning procedure. Student Ambassadors also share their personal connections with service and the community and make themselves available to talk to individual students during the Student Ambassador office hours at the Center for Community Involvement (3 to 5 hours a week) or via phone or email. Student Ambassadors correspond with their assigned faculty members to offer support, guidance, participation and to troubleshoot whenever necessary. Student correspondence continues throughout the semester to students in classes with their assigned faculty. Student Ambassadors monitor student paperwork, enter their students into the database, manage class due dates and turn-in policies, notify students or faculty of timelines, and assist in recognizing service-learning students at the end of the term.

While these Student Ambassadors play an enormous role in the everyday operation of the Center for Community Involvement office, the energy they contribute to all Center for Community

Involvement events is invaluable and irreplaceable. Student Ambassadors are intricately involved with the creating, developing, implementing, staffing, and evaluation of various campus and community-wide events. Everything from Volunteer Fairs to clothing drives to Forums on Civic Responsibility are coordinated with leadership from our Student Ambassadors. The peer education piece of the Student Ambassador program within the Center for Community Involvement is key – college students know best what will affect and impact college students – incorporating their developmentally appropriate expertise is fundamental to success.

Success though is marked not in number of presentations, or number of hours served by these Student Ambassadors, it is in the leadership skills, professionalism, experience, concrete learning, and exposure these Student Ambassadors accomplish from their time with the Center for Community Involvement. It is not unusual to see marked change in the Student Ambassadors after serving as a Student Ambassador. With guidance and mentoring from the Center for Community Involvement Director, these Student Ambassadors have a diverse experience which allows them to truly earn on-the-job training in all walks of life – to learn from numerous presentations, collaborate with service agencies, work with students, prepare professional materials, conduct themselves as a professional for the first time, attend business meetings, learn how to function in a business setting and to communicate effectively and thoroughly, follow-through, and the list goes on and on. Ultimately though, the greatest gifts are the ones they have given themselves in their personal growth and their ability to inspire others.

The Center for Community Involvement also utilizes another gifted corps of students in the Community Service Federal Work Study students as Student Assistants. As a program run without secretarial support, and therefore dependent upon student workers entirely, the Center for Community Involvement is a solid believer in the power of a small group of dedicated student workers.

Community Service Federal Work Study dollars were established to provide opportunities for college students to earn money during their college career by doing work which directly supports their community. Our Student Assistants do this everyday. Student Assistants greet and serve students, faculty, college administration, and community members in the Center for Community Involvement offices. All department administration and documentation flows through their capable hands. Whether it be events, resource development, fund raising, or building community partnerships, these students do it all.

We can truly say that the Center for Community Involvement would not be the service-learning leader it is without the commitment and determination of our Student Ambassadors and Student Assistants. These students drive the program to continue to grow and explore new connections and new avenues of engagement as they inspire the Center for Community Involvement Directors, service-learning faculty, and Miami-Dade College administration as well. The shared experience contributed is amazing and speaks so eloquently of the power of mentoring and cultivating student leaders – they can take us where we need to go to effectively serve our diverse, ever-changing campus, college, and greater community.

The Student Ambassador Program

Miami-Dade College

The Student Ambassador program at Miami-Dade College (MDC) was started 1995 by the Center for Community Involvement. It was housed at the Medical Campus, and has since spread to the Kendall, Wolfson, and North campuses. It was first used as a way to get students to volunteer with the Center for Community Involvement, the office that hosts the service-learning program at MDC, and as a way to honor those students who had contributed significantly to service on campus.

Throughout the years, the ambassador program has grown, offering students more travel opportunities, chances to learn leadership skills, and public speaking opportunities. What started as a program with 2 students in 1995 now has more than 20 Students Ambassadors college-wide. They have all taken the role of a leader, listening to students, providing words of encouragement, assisting professors, and, most importantly, helping run the program. Each has had public speaking opportunities at faculty training, conferences, agency training, etc. Each year, 2-3 Ambassadors have the opportunity to participate in the COOL Leaders program.

The ambassadors' primary responsibilities are the following:

- Tracking approximately 100 students (calling, e-mailing, visiting their classes), and keeping a log of the students, and the contracts they have with these students;
- Assisting 4-5 professors each semester with their service-learning projects- monitoring students, collecting paperwork, assisting professors and students with any questions with regards to service-learning;
- Making class presentations each semester to orient new students to service-learning;
- Recruiting new faculty to utilize service-learning;
- Spending 2 hours per week in the office assisting the staff with the day-to-day functions of service-learning.

Student ambassadors also assist with campus activities such as the Forum on Civic Responsibility, Job Fair, Volunteer Fair, agency trainings, faculty trainings and more.

In appreciation for the hard work and efforts, each ambassador receives a t-shirt with the Student Ambassador logo (that they wear to class presentations and the above functions), a \$250 stipend each semester, and a thank you letter from the College President for their portfolios. Their pictures are prominently displayed in the service-learning office. In addition, the ambassadors are nominated for statewide and national awards including the Campus Compact's Henry J. Swearer Award, the President's Student Service Award, and the Points of Light Foundation Award for service.

It is an honor to be a Student Ambassador; and as the program has grown, so has its popularity. The Ambassadors form the backbone of the service-learning program at Miami-Dade College, and the rewards they receive for participating are invaluable to them as well for their personal, professional, and academic development.

Service-Learning Student Ambassador Job Description/Application Procedures

Student Ambassadors will be selected based on their commitment to service and scholarship, and will play a key role in promoting the ethic of service at Miami-Dade College. They will be supervised and supported by the Center for Community Involvement and will assist in all facets of the Center's activities.

EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

1. Complete the Student Ambassador application.
2. Commit to at least one semester.
3. Be in good academic standing.
4. Have successfully completed a service-learning project.
5. Have good leadership skills and leadership potential.
6. Be dependable.

STUDENT AMBASSADOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Commit to approximately 3-4 hours a week (minimum) over the course of the semester, assisting with the following activities:

1. **Service-Learning (you will be assigned one or more service-learning classes):**
 - Meet with the faculty member for each class, and then visit each class with a service-learning staff member early in the semester;
 - Call all students in your assigned class during the first three weeks of the semester to assist and encourage them in finding service placements;
 - Check-in with your students in assigned classes that have turned in all the required paperwork;
 - Contact all students again at mid-semester to monitor quality and satisfaction;
 - Help prepare end-of-term, letters, certificates, and reports;
 - Serve as a representative and advocate for service-learning at Miami-Dade College, including assisting at service-learning workshops and presentations when possible.
2. **Community Service Activities (working closely with other ambassadors and program staff):**
 - Help organize one major service event per term to correspond with "Make A Difference Day," "National Youth Service Day," or other community events that pay tribute to volunteers;
 - Help organize a student leadership symposium to be held in the winter term.

All students chosen as Service-Learning Student ambassadors will receive:

1. Orientation, training, and on-going supervision and support;
2. A \$250 stipend per term;
3. The opportunity to travel to a state or national service conference;
4. Recognition (letter of recommendation, award banquets, framed photo displayed in center, etc.);
5. A Student Ambassador polo shirt;
6. The admiration and appreciation of Miami-Dade College students & administration – and most of all, the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to our College and Community.

(For further information, contact Josh Young at jyoung@mdc.edu)

Student Ambassador Responsibilities

If you are the ambassador for a faculty member then you are responsible for:

1. Ensuring that everything related to service-learning is in order with that professor and her/his classes.
2. Setting up a file for each of her/his classes.
3. Making sure the Faculty Grid is kept current.
4. Obtaining a class role and stapling it in the file.
5. Making sure her/his students are entered in Access and the files are in order.
6. Making sure that all names are spelled correctly in the database.
7. Helping with class presentations and follow-up visits.
8. Communicating with the professor at least every two weeks.
9. Giving the professor an update of her/his students at least every two weeks.
10. Making sure thank you letters and certificates are done.
11. Communicating with the students if possible, via email, class visits, thank you letters, etc.

Instructions for meeting with professors:

1. Find out when their office hours are and stop by.
2. Your role is to serve them on behalf of our office.

Things to do when you talk/meet with them:

3. Review the list of students who have turned in applications.
4. Review the Faculty Grid to make sure it is up to date and correct.
5. Remind them about the Volunteer Fair and other events.
6. Tell them about the President's Student Service Award for students who do 100 hrs.
7. Ask them how our office can support them...what do they need from us, etc.
8. If it isn't too much trouble, get a copy of their syllabus and/or service-learning assignment to put in their file.

Date

Dear fellow service-learning participant,

As your Student Ambassador for the service-learning program, I am interested to hear about your activities up to this point in time. Having formally participated in the service-learning program, I know how essential it can be to have someone available to address any concerns that may arise.

We hope that you are creating enjoyment as well as benefit from your experience. Please feel free to let me know if any issues present themselves that you would like to discuss or if you have any questions. I may be reached via e-mail (_____) or through the service-learning office (____)____-_____.

We would be very interested in any photographs that you take during your service-learning experience. They will be proudly displayed in our office for other students to better understand the value of this program (Be certain to write your name and the agency name in pencil on the back.). Thank you in advance for your interest in this exciting program. I trust you will find it as worthwhile as I did.

Sincerely,

(Name)
Student Ambassador
_____ Campus

Service-Learning – Call Log

Professor: _____ Class & Reference: _____ Mandatory: _____

Day/Time: _____ Room: _____ Hours Required: _____

Presentation Date: _____ Student Ambassador: _____

Student's Name	Phone #(s)	Placement Site	Date of Calls	Student's Comments	Hours/Paperwork Turned In?
				1. 2. 3.	
				1. 2. 3.	
				1. 2. 3.	
				1. 2. 3.	

TELEPHONE CHECK-IN GUIDELINES

Hello, my name is _____ and I work at Miami-Dade College with the service-learning program. You are doing a service-learning project for Professor _____ (name of class); is that correct? As part of this project, we try to call all the students to check in and see how things are going. I just have a few questions for you to make sure everything is going well and that you are satisfied with your placement.

Call #1: You are doing your service-learning project at _____, correct? How is it going? When did you start? What are you doing? Did you receive adequate orientation? Are they taking care of you/looking out for you/making you feel welcome? How does what you are doing relate to your _____ class?

ALWAYS SAY "THANK YOU" IN A SINCERE AND MEANINGFUL WAY!

*If the students are having problems with scheduling, not having enough to do, or are doing work unrelated to their Miami-Dade College course, encourage them to work out a reasonable solution with their supervisors. Ninety-five percent of the time, a solution can be found simply by having the student speak to the supervisor. If the same problems persist, however, have them visit or call the Service-Learning Center.

Call #2: Remind them of the following items:

- Keep track of hours using the Student Service-Learning Hour Report (located on page 9 of the Service-Learning Handbook) and turn into your instructor by _____
- Have the agency supervisor complete Student Evaluation Form at end of semester (located on page 10 of the Service-Learning Student Handbook) and turn into your instructor by _____.
- Complete Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (located on pages 11-12, in the Service-Learning Handbook) and turn into instructor by _____

ALWAYS SAY "THANK YOU" IN A SINCERE AND MEANINGFUL WAY!

Call #3: *THANK THEM FOR THE SERVICE THEY ARE DOING!!!!!!*

On behalf of the College and the Service-Learning Program, I want to thank you for being involved in service-learning. We really appreciate what you are doing.

Let them know that they can call or visit us anytime if they need any assistance!

TELEPHONE CHECK-IN FORM #1

STUDENT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

PROFESSOR'S NAME: _____

CLASS REFERENCE: _____

AGENCY: _____

Hello, my name is _____ and I work at Miami-Dade College in the service-learning program. You are doing a service-learning project for Professor _____ (name of class); is that correct? As part of this project, we try to call all the students to check in and see how things are going. I just have a few questions for you to make sure everything is going well and that you are satisfied with your placement.

Call #1: You are doing your service-learning project at _____, correct? How is it going? When did you start? What are you doing? Did you receive adequate orientation? Are they taking care of you/looking out for you/making you feel welcome? How does what you are doing relate to your _____ class?

ALWAYS SAY "THANK YOU" IN A SINCERE AND MEANINGFUL WAY!

*If the students are having problems with scheduling, not having enough to do, or are doing work unrelated to their Miami-Dade College course, encourage them to work out a reasonable solution with their supervisors. Ninety-five percent of the time, a solution can be found simply by having the student speak to the supervisor. If the same problems persist, however, have them visit or call the Service-Learning Center.

TELEPHONE CHECK-IN FORM #2

STUDENT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

PROFESSOR'S NAME: _____

CLASS REFERENCE: _____

AGENCY: _____

Hello, my name is _____ and I work at Miami-Dade College in the service-learning program. You are doing a service-learning project for professor _____ name of class _____; is that correct? As part of this project, we try to call all the students to check in and see how things are going. I just have a few questions for you to make sure everything is going well and that you are satisfied with your placement.

Call #2: Remind them of the following items:

- Keep track of hours using the Student Service-Learning Hour Report (located on page 9 of the Service-Learning Handbook) and turn into your instructor by _____.
- Have the agency supervisor complete Student Evaluation Form at end of semester (located on page 10 of the Service-Learning Student Handbook) and turn into your instructor by _____.
- Complete Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (located on pages 11-12, in the Service-Learning Handbook) and turn into instructor by _____.

ALWAYS SAY "THANK YOU" IN A SINCERE AND MEANINGFUL WAY!

Call #3: THANK THEM FOR THE SERVICE THEY ARE DOING!!!!!!

On behalf of the College and the Service-Learning Program, I want to thank you for being involved in service-learning. We really appreciate what you are doing.

Let them know that they can call or visit us anytime if they need any assistance!

[Letterhead]

[Date]

[Student's Name]

Student Ambassador
Center for Community Involvement
Miami-Dade College
11011 Southwest 104th Street, Room 6219-15
Miami, Florida 33176

Dear [Name],

Please allow me to extend my sincerest gratitude for your work as a Student Ambassador for the Center for Community Involvement for the [year] academic year. I commend you for your outstanding assistance for this important program.

Your contribution to the Center for Community Involvement has been tremendous – the number of hours you volunteered at this office, the aid you have given to [number of faculty members] faculty members, the outreach you have provided for the campus and the help you have collectively provided to almost [number of students] students enrolled in service-learning classes has been invaluable. It is because of you and your fellow ambassadors that the _____ Campus' program has grown substantially.

I hope that your participation as a Student Ambassador has helped you to develop your leadership skills and has enhanced your education at Miami-Dade College. I trust you will share the valuable skills you have gained as an Ambassador with your fellow students.

Service-learning is a vital part of _____ Campus' academic programs. On behalf of the entire staff at Miami-Dade College _____ Campus, congratulations on a job well done.

Sincerely,

_____ Campus Director
Center for Community Involvement

c: [Dean _____]
Josh Young, College-wide Directors