Spotlight on Service-Learning

by: Beth Smith, Consultant, generationOn Indiana

June is "Busting Out All Over" with eLearning

The summer is finally here – no more cold, snow, and eLearning Days. Preparing for eLearning days has become an integral part of the month of June. There are eLearning conferences throughout the state as a part of the Summer of eLearning through the IDOE; we have sessions at some of the conferences. The FREE website resources available on Learning to Give and generationOn connect eLearning and service-learning by providing project ideation and digital content that aligns with all content areas and Indiana's Academic Standards while involving students in civic engagement. Educators can explore the website resources on both sites as they prepare for dynamic and engaging lessons for the next school year.

So, I know that it seems counterintuitive to think about service-learning in terms of eLearning, but eLearning is actually enhanced when it is partnered with service-learning and philanthropy education (e-service-learning). e-service-learning can be mutually beneficial for service-learning and online learning when educators promote the integration of technology, philanthropy education, and content knowledge to facilitate quality online learning that promotes leadership skills, employability skills, critical academic standards, empathy, and student engagement. As a part of the new Indiana Graduation Pathways, planning to incorporate service-learning is essential.; e-service-learning is one avenue for exploration.

- **e-service-learning occurs when the instructional component, the service component, or both are conducted online.**   Educators can utilize the resources on both websites to present content and a related service-learning project. There are multiple ways that students can deliver their service component both in person and through digital responses.
- **e-service-learning frees service-learning from geographical constraints. e-service-learning also overcomes a key limitation to online learning—a lack of interaction.**   The key elements of engaged learning in an online course include students establishing their own learning goals, students teaming with others, and students exploring resources, which can all be accomplished through e-service-learning. Students see themselves as global citizens as the world is literally at their fingertips!
- **e-service-learning addresses student engagement and real world application for learning by providing meaningful questions, by connecting to real-world issues, and by performing service for community partner(s).** Students experience a greater level of achievement and learn that they can make a difference.
- **LTG lessons can be part of a unit or "stand alone" as one day lessons.** The lessons can be utilized as eLearning Day content.

As educational consultant, I – or any of our four field representatives across the state- can present information to a district or school during professional development days, staff meetings, or PLCs. We can make connections to key instructional strategies: Problem-Based Learning, STEM, Universal Design for Learning, Project Lead the Way, and other connections, including e-service-learning.

Colonel John Wheeler Middle School in Crown Point, Indiana integrated eLearning and service-learning in their project "Exploring Community Non-Profits". Teacher Darlene Maas worked with three 8th grade English classes to achieve the goal of social awareness and empathetic behaviors. To introduce non-profits and philanthropy, Darleen utilized the Blue-Sky Envisioning Activity on the Learning to Give website. The students created a PowerPoint presentation about a non-profit organization and presented it to the class. The top three groups presented to staff members and the top presentation was selected as the organization that would be the subject of the service-learning project. The chosen Non-Profit was the American Red Cross. With the help of a generationOn Indiana mini grant, students worked to acquire needed goods for disaster relief kits for the ARC. Darleen Maas incorporated technology and the free digital resources into the service-learning experience. Darleen reflected on the overall project, "It has been enlightening to me to be able to incorporate lesson plans from Learning to Give within my class time. This has allowed me to seamlessly implement and encourage my students to recognize the connection between learning from the past and changing the future."

Brooke Stewart, Project Lead the Way/Science teacher at South Central Junior/Senior High School in Corydon also integrated technology and service learning in her Service-Learning Expo. Brooke incorporated the LTG lesson Exploring Community Non-Profits, and students presented a prototype to benefit the local community organization that they had chosen. They also created a brochure about their nonprofit to hand out during their expo presentations. The chosen project and non-profit from the expo was then adopted as the service-learning project/community partner for the class. Brooke's classes also received a mini grant to help fund the final project.

Utilize your opportunity to **"bust out all over"** with e-service-learning. Your school can integrate service-learning and eLearning, too! Check out our Service-Learning – eLearning PowerPoint to learn more. Indiana educators and schools are invited to register on generationOn and begin using their service and service-learning resources; in addition, educators can register on Learning to Give where there are over 1700+ K-12 FREE Philanthropy lessons. For more information, contact Joan Belschwender, Director generationOn Indiana at generationOn@iasp.org.

See our generationOn Indiana page for more information on the IASP website: www.iasp.org/affiliates/genon/ and the IMLEA website: www.imlea.org