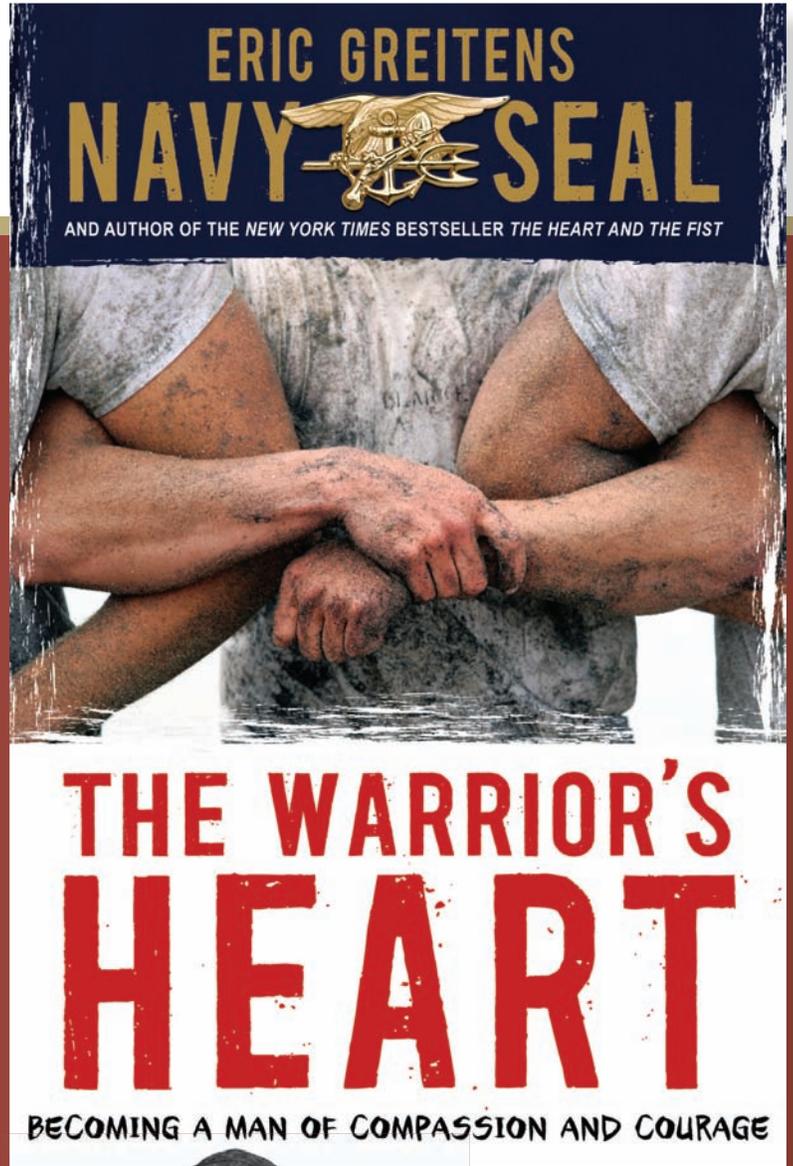




# MISSION PLANNING GUIDE



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

With the help of Youth Service America, one of our country's leading youth service organizations, Eric Greitens has developed a Mission Planning Guide for teachers, students, and volunteers who wish to plan and execute service projects in their community.

This guide can be used as part of a school's service-project requirements or for class projects. It can also be distributed to members of service clubs, religious groups, or any other youth service-oriented organization.

Your mission, and your own adventure, awaits.

★★★★ "The world needs you. Even at your young age, you can start serving in your community right now. You have talents, gifts, and strengths to create positive change. By taking all of your potential and developing it through service, you can become stronger, more courageous, and more compassionate." —Eric Greitens



## PLAN YOUR OWN SERVICE PROJECT

★★★★ "Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve." —Martin Luther King, Jr.





# MISSION PLANNING GUIDE

Because  
Service is  
Power

PASSION  
+ FIRE  
+ ASAP!

GETTING STARTED IS EASY...

## STEP 1: WHAT IS YOUR PASSION?

Think about the things you love to do. What activities make you feel joyful? Energized? Focused? What activities give you a sense of purpose?

### COMMON PASSIONS INCLUDE:

- Creative Arts (music, art, writing, dance, cooking)
- Sports (football, track and field, golf, ice skating)
- Learning (languages, science, math)
- Reading
- Spirituality, religion
- Nature, the environment
- Animal welfare (pets or wild animals)
- Tutoring/mentoring younger children



# STEP 2: WHAT FIRES YOU UP?

Set aside your passions for now (we'll come back to them!) to think about local, national, and global issues that you care about. What problems do you want to solve? What conditions make you sad? What conditions do you want to change to make the world better? What would you change about the world if you could wave a magic wand?

We face big challenges around the world—fortunately, young people care about them. Common issues that youth address through service include:

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## EDUCATION

- Mentoring/tutoring
- Literacy
- Dropout rate
- School climate
- Access to education

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## ENVIRONMENT

- Water
- Energy conservation
- Recycling
- Protecting wildlife, habitats, and endangered species
- Increasing green space

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## HEALTH

- Physical activity
- Healthy eating & nutrition
- Disease prevention
- Access to health care

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## POVERTY, HUNGER, HOMELESSNESS

- Financial literacy
- Workforce readiness
- Emergency food provisions
- Affordable housing

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## OTHER HUMAN SERVICES & COMMUNITY RENEWAL

- Senior citizens
- Public safety

- Beautification
  - Helping vulnerable groups (immigrants, refugees, etc.)
  - Animal welfare
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### **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE**

- Disaster preparedness & education
  - Immediate disaster response
  - Long term disaster recovery
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### **VETERANS & MILITARY**

- Active troops
  - Supporting military families
  - Veterans
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Think about these questions to identify issues that are important to you:

- Have you witnessed an act of kindness that inspired you?
- Have you read an article or watched a television show/movie/video that made you feel a strong sense of compassion, curiosity, or concern?
- Did you experience or learn about an injustice that compelled you to take action?
- Do you wonder why a certain problem exists or persists in your neighborhood?
- Has something about your community made you sad, disappointed, or even angry?
- Is there a service organization in your town that you are proud of, or an organization that interests you?
- Have you, a family member, or a friend been hurt by something that is preventable?
- Do you have a family member or friend who had a great volunteering experience? Would you like to volunteer with them?
- What legacy might you like to leave in your school or community?
- Are you aware of a young person who is making a great impact on your community?

## **THE PROBLEM I WANT TO SOLVE IS**

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# STEP 3: PASSION + FIRE + ASAP!

Now, it is time to combine your passion and the issue you care about. YSA is pleased to present our new model—ASAP! ASAP typically stands for “right away”, which is appropriate since the world needs youth engagement now, not in a distant tomorrow. ASAP also stands for four effective strategies—Awareness, Service, Advocacy, and Philanthropy—that you can adopt to apply your passion to your issue and solve the problem.

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**AWARENESS** Youth are powerful when they create Awareness about critical issues to change behaviors.

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**SERVICE** Youth are powerful when they Serve, using their passion, creativity, and idealism to solve problems.

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**ADVOCACY** Youth are powerful when they Advocate to change policies and laws.

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**PHILANTHROPY** Youth are powerful when they are Philanthropists, generating financial support to improve lives.

## PASSION + FIRE + ASAP! IN ACTION

**How does it look when you put Passion, Fire, and ASAP together? The story of Jess Davis illustrates how one teen used her passion for dance to help kids stay away from drugs and crime.**

**PASSION** For as long as she could remember, Jess Davis knew that dancing was her Passion. As she grew older, her love of dancing led her to take classes at local dance studios. Through these classes, she found great mentors to guide her through her life, and a community of other teenagers who were dedicated to the art of dance. One of those friends was Jackie Rotman, the founder of a nonprofit called Everybody Dance Now!

**ISSUE/FIRE** Everybody Dance Now! is a nonprofit that brings dance to youth who would otherwise lack access to such opportunities. They provide transportation, support, and funds for these kids to attend

dance classes. Through dance, kids have a healthy, positive outlet for their creative energies. It also builds self-esteem and provides a safe place after school, keeping kids away from crime, gangs, and drugs.

**ASAP!** Within a few months of joining Everybody Dance Now!, Jess was teaching classes to other kids who were only a little younger than she was (Service). She also worked on developing budgets for the organization and writing grants (Philanthropy). Today, she serves as Everybody Dance Now!’s executive director and continues to impact the lives of thousands of kids through her leadership.

What are other ways to serve? Here are a few examples that might spark a project for you:

PASSION	ISSUE (FIRE)	STRATEGY (ASAP!)	PROJECT
Drawing	Healthy Eating	Awareness	Host a poster contest to promote messages about good nutrition. Display entries in a public venue
Acting	Violence Prevention	Awareness	Recruit fellow actors and put on a play for local elementary schools to display effective conflict resolution strategies
Animals	Endangered Species	Awareness	Organize and promote social media messages about a particular endangered species and promote a specific action
History	Military Families/ Veterans	Service	Invite military families and veterans to restore a historic local cemetery or maintain a battlefield
Football	Mentoring	Service	Help coach a football team for younger kids. Get to know the kids on and off the field, and serve as a positive role model
Science	Dropout Prevention	Service	Stage hands-on science displays for middle school students to spread the message that science can be fun
Spirituality	Increasing Green Space	Advocacy	Host an interfaith dialogue to explore common values about environmental stewardship; visit local leaders to advocate for more green space in your community
Writing	Affordable Housing	Advocacy	Organize a campaign to write letters and stories to your Congressmen to advocate for innovative affordable housing strategies
Cooking/ Baking	Hunger	Philanthropy	Organize a bake sale to raise money for a local food pantry
Music	Disaster Relief	Philanthropy	Gather friends to host a concert to raise money for the American Red Cross
Reading	Literacy	Philanthropy	Host a summer read-a-thon and donate money to your local library

Now that you've decided on a project, how do you make it great? YSA can help you move into action with our IPARD/C model. This stands for:

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### **INVESTIGATE THE PROBLEM (PICK ONE OR MORE BELOW)**

- Identify and research the problem in your city or in the world
  - Research and collect statistics and stories
  - Design a survey and conduct interviews
  - Use different media—books and the internet
  - Draw from personal experiences and observations
  - Find out about other related successful projects or campaigns
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### **PREPARE AND PLAN YOUR PROJECT (PICK ONE OR MORE BELOW)**

- Develop your goal(s)
  - Create a project plan, timeline, and budget
  - Organize into teams and determine roles and responsibilities
  - Recruit friends, classmates, neighbors, or families to volunteer
  - Fundraise
  - Promote your project
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### **ACT AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE (PICK ONE OR MORE BELOW)**

- Do your service project
  - Publicize your project
  - Invite the media and local officials to your project
  - Take pictures
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### **REFLECT ON YOUR PROJECT (PICK ONE OR MORE BELOW)**

- Reflect before, during, and after your project
  - Write your thoughts in a diary, an essay, or on a blog
  - Document and take pictures
  - Host a “talk show” about your service project, and record and post it on YouTube
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### **DEMONSTRATE AND CELEBRATE (PICK ONE OR MORE BELOW)**

- Blog and post videos and pictures
  - Present your impact and results to your community
  - Send thank you notes to volunteers, media, and donors
  - Write an article for your local newspaper
  - Present your project results to government officials and advocate for further action
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You don't need to do everything listed here, but by picking just a few items from each category, you can put together a successful project strategy.

## IPARD/C IN ACTION

**What does this look like in practice? Let's take a look at the work that Daniel Feldman did to fight child hunger. From the moment he could use his hands, Daniel knew that he loved baking. While watching the Food Network one day, he saw a commercial from Betty Crocker that featured an organization called Share our Strength, a nonprofit that fights child hunger. The commercial asked kids to write and submit a response to the question, "Why is ending child hunger in America important to you?"**

**INVESTIGATION:** While Daniel had always worked at soup kitchens and been aware of child hunger, he did not know that it was such a huge problem. After Daniel was selected as one of the contest winners, he was flown to the kitchens of Betty Crocker. He met members of Share our Strength, who spoke to him about child hunger and provided literature on the issue. One of the facts that really struck home for Daniel was that seventeen million kids—kids who were just like him—did not have enough to eat. After Daniel returned home, he continued to do extensive internet research so he could learn more.

**PLAN:** As part of his visit to Share our Strength, Daniel received advice from staff about how to carry out bake sales that would raise money to help feed others. He then began to plan where, how, and when he'd hold his bake sale. To prepare, he called bakeries to ask for donations and called up companies for sponsorships. When they committed to donate, his parents drove him to pick up the baked goods. He then contacted the local government to request permission to sell along the Ocean City Boardwalk.

**ACT:** On the day of the bake sale, he set up a tent on the Ocean City Boardwalk. People who walked by on Family Night purchased his goods. As they did, Daniel told them the facts and statistics that he had learned about child poverty. By the end of the night, he had raised \$2,196. The local newspaper also came out to cover the bake sale. Daniel would go on to create a nonprofit called Kids Feeding Kids. Over the next five years, Kids Feeding Kids would raise close to \$100,000, enough money to provide more than 50,000 nutritious meals.

**REFLECT:** Daniel's mom kept a scrapbook of photographs and articles over the years that allowed Daniel to look back and reflect on his experiences. As others joined him, he also had volunteers think about why they were involved in service.

**DEMONSTRATE/CELEBRATE:** Through his website, Daniel posted photographs and shared stories of his bake sales. He also shared what he had learned with the mayor and councilpersons of Ocean City, as well as the US Senators of his state of New Jersey.

# YSA CAN HELP!

**YSA (YOUTH SERVICE AMERICA)** improves communities by increasing the number and the diversity of young people, ages 5-25, serving in substantive roles. Here is what they offer:

## ACTIVATE

**GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY** is the largest service event in the world. Held in April and extending across all 50 states and more than 100 countries on six continents, GYSD is the only occasion dedicated to celebrating the contributions that children and youth make 365 days of the year.

**SEMESTER OF SERVICE** is a youth-led school and after-school program built around a service-learning experience of at least 70 hours. Projects must be of local, national, or global importance, and must connect substantive service with intentional learning goals and/or academic standards.

**GET UR GOOD ON** is a direct outreach to engage youth using celebrities, grants, and special events.

**SERVICEVOTE** is a civic-engagement strategy that links service and voting during Presidential Elections.

**GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE NETWORK** is YSA's partnership structure of thousands of individuals, organizations, schools, and government agencies that support the youth service movement.

## FUND

**YSA GRANTS** support youth-led service and service-learning initiatives around the world. This year, YSA will provide over \$1 million in small grants to nearly 1,000 schools and organizations through support from corporate sponsors. YSA works closely with each of our corporate partners to tailor a branded program that matches their giving interests and core business needs, including State Farm, UnitedHealth Group; Sodexo; Starkey Hearing; Disney; and IBM.

## TRAIN

The **YOUTH SERVICE INSTITUTE** (YSI) builds the capacity of partners and grantees to engage young people as partners in community development, particularly around the implementation of Semester of Service and Global Youth Service Day.

**SEMESTER OF SERVICE STRATEGY GUIDE** provides step-by-step instruction for teachers, professors, and youth leaders on how to develop and implement meaningful service linked with meaningful learning.

**ISSUE-BASED SERVICE-LEARNING RESOURCES & TOOLKITS** are designed to provide guidance and support for programs implemented during a Semester of Service or Global Youth Service Day.

**YSA WEBINARS** are regular online training courses to expand capacity and effectiveness.

## RECOGNIZE

**HARRIS WOFFORD AWARDS** honor former Senator Harris Wofford and recognize extraordinary achievement in five categories: Youth, Organizations, Media, Public Officials, and Teachers.

The **YSA LIST OF THE 25 MOST POWERFUL & INFLUENTIAL YOUTH** illustrates that service is power, so YSA recognizes 25 youth from around the world who are directly impacting critical issues in their community, their country, or globally.

**EVERYDAY YOUNG HERO PROGRAM** highlights outstanding youth from around the world, ages 5 – 25, every week who are making extraordinary contributions and commitments to service in their community.

**THE PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD** is a partnership with the White House where YSA is authorized to recognize the contributions that young Americans make through service and volunteering.

## GET CONNECTED

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