



GUIDE FOR “CB” STUDENTS: HOW TO CONNECT WITH A COMMUNITY PARTNER

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STEP 1: MAKE A LIST OF AT LEAST 3-5 POTENTIAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Utilize the Directory of Non-Profit Organizations provided by the Center for Community Engagement & Service: <http://www.american.edu/ocl/volunteer/Nonprofit-Directories.cfm>
- Check the website of each organization and take notes for the following information:
 - What is the organization’s mission? Who is their target audience and what services does the organization offer? What larger issue area does the organization address? What are the organization’s needs for volunteers? Are these issues and services relevant to the themes discussed in class?
- Examples:
 - Class: SIS 350: Political Ecology of Food & Agriculture – Site: DC Central Kitchen
 - Class: HPRM 240: Introduction to Health Promotion – Site: La Clínica del Pueblo
 - Class: MGMT 201: Global Corporate Citizenship – Site: Office on Latino Affairs
 - Class: BIO 110: General Biology I – Site: Peer Health Exchange

STEP 2: CONTACT EACH SITE – email and phone call

Email template:

Hello [name of volunteer coordinator/director],

My name is [your name], and I am a student at American University studying [your area of study]. I’m currently taking a community-based learning class titled, [name of CB course], that requires 20 hours of community service and/or a collaborative project with a community partner whose work aligns with the themes we discuss in class.

I’m writing to ask if I could volunteer with your organization from [start date] to [end date] for a total of 20 hours and/or to collaborate on a project. [Organization’s name]’s mission and work aligns with my class, as well as with my own interests. [Elaborate briefly here with relevant experience or skillsets, if applicable]. I would be happy to help in any capacity that is needed.

Please free to contact me by email or phone at [phone number]. (Optional: My resume is attached for your consideration).

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing from you.

[Your name]

Phone call / Voice mail talking points:

- **Introduce yourself:** Hi, my name is [your name], and I am a student at American University studying [your area of study]. I’m currently taking a community-based learning class titled, [name of CB course], that requires 20 hours of community service and/or a collaborative project with a community partner whose work aligns with the themes we discuss in class.
- **The “Ask”:** Do you have capacity for me to volunteer with your organization from [start date] to [end date] for a total of 20 hours and/or to collaborate on a project?
- **Your own personal interest:** [Organization’s name]’s mission and work aligns with my class, as well as with my own interests. [Elaborate briefly here with relevant experience or skillsets, if applicable]. I would be happy to help in any capacity that is needed.
- **Exchange contact information:** if leaving a voicemail, always leave your name and phone number. If you talk on the phone, record their name and email-address for future communication.

STEP 3: FOLLOW-UP

- If the community partner does not respond within 3-4 days, follow up with a phone call. Continue following up with each of the partners you included on your list.
- If you do not receive any responses from the list of community partners you reached out to, come to the Center for Community Engagement & Service (MGC 273) and we will work with you.