What does it mean to be a community partner (CP) with the Norwich University Service-Learning (NUSL) Program?

A community partner:

- Is a non-profit or a group serving a community need.
- Has a project, vision or idea for improvements, growth, or a need.
- Identifies and quantifies the need (including resources needed)
- Works collaboratively with students and faculty.

How does a CP get started?

1. Identify your need.
2. Get "buy-in" from the necessary staff, Board members, or volunteers.
3. Contact NUSL:
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   Norwich University
   Northfield, VT 05663
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What are the expectations of a CP during a project?

- Help staff and students understand the need/project and the organization
- Designate a consistent representative
- The representative needs to attend any meetings and supervise students on site
- Provide support to students and the project as needed
- Participate in post-project follow up

This brochure was compiled by the NUSL Community Partners.

NUSL Community Partners are involved members of the Vermont community who have been trained in service-learning.

Community Partners bring valuable perspective and experience to the NUSL Program and better connect NU faculty, staff, and students to the community-at-large. They participate in activities, as required by the Program, to generate a deeper understanding of service-learning.

Community Partners recognize that service-learning is both a valuable part of the Norwich experience and a benefit to Vermont and the local communities.

Norwich University Service-Learning (NUSL) Program

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NUSL Community Partners

The vision of the Service-Learning Program is to create a campus environment in which service-learning is a fundamental component of the Norwich educational experience – it being the thread that connects academic, student, and community life.

What is service-learning?

Norwich University defines service-learning as the *incorporation of service into the curriculum.* Norwich recognizes that service-learning must include:

- Explicit connections between the service and course objectives. (Course credit is given for learning, not service hours.)
- Students meeting real community needs and/or goals.
- Structured opportunities for students to critically reflect on their experience.

How is service-learning different than volunteerism or internships?

Volunteerism is service provided to a community on an individual's own time.

Service-Learning is the incorporation of service into the curriculum.

Internships are career-based experiences often for credit or pay and often with a for-profit company.

At NU, you can approach the NUSL Program, the Office of Volunteer Programs, or Internship Coordinators. This brochure is designed to help you determine if service-learning could best fit your need.

The Process

Designing the Project
A professor, community partner (CP), or student may show interest in SL or identify a community need.

NUSL helps make a match between an NU course and your community need.

You and the professor meet to identify the need, describe the course, design the project expectations, and desired outcome. NUSL can facilitate these conversations.

The design stage could last for a few weeks or more than a year, depending on the need and course.

Implementing the Project
You might visit the class or arrange meeting times with the students.

Students could be working at the organization, on site, or on campus.

Students are responsible for completing the project, but if any problems arise, please contact the professor first, then NUSL.

NU students have performed between 4 and 180 hours on individual projects before.

Post-Project
Students or the professor should complete the final project before the end of the semester, unless agreed otherwise.

Keeping in mind that the students are learning, the final project should be completed acceptably and successfully.

The NUSL Program will contact you after the project to perform a brief evaluation.

Project Examples

Service-Learners are students performing service within a course. You'll find SL most helpful when a need requires skilled or discipline-specific knowledge. The examples below illustrate the potential:

- **Physical Education and Special Olympics**—PE students serve as the Games Management Team for two VT Special Olympics events each year.
- **Teacher Education and local youth**—TE students serve, educate, and mentor at Northfield Elementary School, Barre Town Schools, and the Northfield Boys & Girls Club
- **Communications and Radio PSAs**—Radio Productions students created public service announcements for almost a dozen local organizations
- **Civil Engineers are statewide!**—CE students have conducted SL projects for the Green Mountain Boy Scouts, Cross VT Trails, the Central VT Planning Commission, and the town of Roxbury, to name a few. They have surveyed, designed wastewater treatment facilities and a skate park, and evaluated flood causes.

Please contact NUSL to brainstorm any need you might have. We'll do our best to connect you with the right people and see how our curriculum might benefit the community!