

Community Partner Phone Call Tips and Scripts

So you need to find a community site where you can serve and gain experience for a service-learning class or program? Read on!

Before you call:

- Determine your availability.** Make sure you know what days/times will work for you consistently throughout the semester. Know the deadlines for class projects and when you should have your service completed by.
- Check out their website.** Community Partners want to know that you care about working with THEM. Learn as much as you can about their mission, services, and staff. See if the times that they need volunteers fit with your schedule.
- Partner up.** If you know other students who will be working with the same community partner, consider partnering with them for transportation, training and/or service. This could make scheduling easier for your community partner.

Making the Call:

- Be formal.** Being formal is a GOOD thing when first introducing yourself. Address the Community Partner Contact as Mr./Ms. _____, and try to avoid using slang.
- Be upfront.** If you are under 18, many sites need to know for liability/safety reasons, so you should let them know on your first call.
- Follow up.** Odds are that your community partner is VERY busy and might not return your message or call immediately. If you still have not heard back after 2-3 days, try calling again.

Script

Leaving a Message:

Hi! My name is [**your name**], and I am an Academic Service-Learning student at St. Norbert College. This semester, I am taking [**class name**], and [**the agency's name**] was listed as one of the possible community partners. I am really [**excited about/interested in- choose one**] partnering with your organization and would like to talk with you about the next steps. You can reach me at [**your phone number, including area code**] and [**time you are free**]. If I cannot answer, I will be sure to get back to you as soon as possible. Again, my name is [**your name**] and my phone number is [**your phone number, including area code**]. Thank you very much, and I look forward to talking to you soon!

Someone Answers the Phone:

You: Hello! My name is [**your name**], and I am an Academic Service-Learning student at St. Norbert College. May I please speak to [**contact's first and last name**].

[Either (a) person is the contact, (b) they will find that person for you, or (c) they will connect you to the contact's voicemail.]

If **(a)** or **(b)**:

You: Hi, **[Mr./Ms. Last Name]**. **(If this is a new person introduce yourself and say you are an Academic-Service Learning student at St. Norbert College.)**

This semester, I am taking **[class name]**, and **[the agency's name]** was listed as one of the possible Community Partners. I am really **[excited about/interested in- choose one of these phrases]** partnering with your organization because **[give reason why you want to work with the agency]**. I would need to serve at your organization for **[number]** hours by **[date]**. Would you have availability?

Community Partner: Yes! We'd love to have you.

*You: Great! My instructor wants me to have an experience that will allow me to.... **[Tell the community partner what YOU are supposed to gain from the experience- what are the learning goals?]**. Will that work? Can I be helpful to your organization?*

*Community Partner: Sure- I think we can provide an experience that will assist with those goals, and for your experience, I would suggest that you work with... **[Be sure to write down their response]***

Now it's time for you to ask a detailed question:

You:

- Is there a separate application form I need to complete to serve at your organization? Is there anything else I need to do before I start? (This may include a background check.)
- Do I need to go through a training to serve at your site? When is the training offered? Where will it be held?
- What time(s) are available for me to serve at your site? (Make sure you have your availability and schedule ready.)
- What is your address? Where should I go/what should I do when I arrive?

If **(c)** :

Use the script for leaving a message.

Adapted from Inver Hills Community College Community-Based Learning [website](#).