

COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Villages High School is identified as a “Charter School in the Workplace” and operates as a Florida not-for-profit corporation. To support the spirit of volunteerism, at The Villages High School, it is recommended that students accumulate a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) hours of service to their school and/or community in order to be eligible to apply for programs such as the Buffalo Scholarship Foundation, The Villages.net Laptop Awards, the Carlyle Appellate Law Firm Scholarship, the Walter S. McLin Scholarship, The Villages Rotary Club Scholarships and many other scholarships. To check for community service level eligibility concerning Florida’s Bright Futures Scholarships, please check their website: <http://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/ssfad/bf>. Each student’s total hours of community service will be factors in the decision-making process.

Each year all high school students will have an opportunity to be recognized for their community service hours by meeting the following guidelines:

- *Underclassmen will receive a community service special award/certificate at our annual awards ceremony if they have completed forty (40) hours for freshman, eighty (80) hours for sophomores and one hundred and twenty (120) hours for juniors completed by the end of the third nine weeks (check current school calendar for exact date). Hours earned after the end of the third 9 weeks will be credited to the following school year.*
- *Graduating seniors accumulating 150 hours or more of community service hours will receive special recognition at their senior awards ceremony.*
- *Seniors having documented one hundred and fifty (150) hours or more of community service will be given a special cord to wear at graduation to celebrate this achievement.*
- *Each year the top senior earning the most community service hours during their high school career will have their name placed on a permanent plaque located in the trophy case.*

Having at least one hundred and fifty (150) hours of Community Service hours will also assist seniors on their college applications as they apply to the different universities along with the many scholarships available. The Villages High School believes in this program 100% and challenges all high school students to volunteer and earn as many community service hours as possible to give back to our school and community.

Community Service** refers to service that a person performs for the benefit of his or her school and local community. Through this service a sense of community involvement is promoted in our students. A study was done to prove students who maintain a weekly community service record, 85% of the time, are more likely to succeed and have a higher grade point average than those who do none at all. Community service is designed to promote and build character, giving back to our school and community for all the unbelievable opportunities they have given us. **While these recommended one hundred and fifty (150) hours of community service are not a requirement for graduation**, they will help develop a student into an adult who will continuously be involved with their school, university, life and community which will benefit them in the future in many different ways. Volunteerism is something someone chooses to do for their school and community. **Remember that in the future you will not be able to pay-back but presently you can pay-forward and this is an excellent way to do just that!

Examples of community service projects include (but are not limited to):

- ***High school academy class projects or outside service after school, for games and activities or on weekends.***
- ***High school teachers may request student help for class related assistance. Those students who work or assist their teacher will be awarded community service hours along with an extra credit grade for helping with the project. (Extra credit community service projects must be pre-approved by the staff member involved.)***
- ***Cleaning a park***
- ***Collecting much needed items including clothes, shoes, food, blankets, etc.***
- ***Getting involved with Habitat for Humanity***
- ***Cleaning up the side of the highway or road***
- ***Reading to the elderly in nursing homes***
- ***Volunteering within your church***
- ***Helping out at a local fire or police department***
- ***Performing health assessments***
- ***Helping out at a local library***
- ***Tutoring developmentally disabled children for free***
- ***School activities that benefit your school and community***
- ***Aid in local regional relief efforts***

Community service hours must be performed for your school, a non-profit organization or an organization that qualifies for tax-exempt status. Community service hours must be supervised by an adult from the organization. Hours must be completed during the student's high school career (any day after they graduate from middle school). Students who have questions about whether an activity qualifies as community service should speak to their guidance counselor before participating in the activity.

A challenge is presented for all students to achieve not just one hundred and fifty (150) hours, but to exceed that goal by earning many more hours. Earning the most hours within their class sets that student apart from the rest of their peers and gains them that special recognition their senior year. Let's get started!

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