



## HELPING AN ORGANIZATION

(Time varies)

### OBJECTIVE

Students identify an organization working on an issue of concern to them and assist the organization with one of its projects.

### MATERIALS

A list of local, national or international organizations; Internet access; newspaper or magazine articles; information on how to properly conduct an interview

### GET READY

- ✓ The school or the local community may deem some organizations inappropriate for this assignment. You may want to screen students' selections before students complete their research. Another option would be for you to give students a list of organizations to choose from. If possible, encourage students to help in developing the criteria for selecting an organization; let the students know up front the limits to their choices.
- ✓ You will also need to decide whether the organizations for this activity will be local (e.g. senior center, animal shelter, soup kitchen), national (e.g. Habitat for Humanity, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), international (e.g. Red Cross, UNICEF, Amnesty International, Oxfam) or all three. Each provides different types of opportunities in terms of service: direct, indirect or advocacy.
- ✓ Hand out any guidelines you can find about how to properly conduct an interview. (For example:  
<http://www.kosmicki.com/102/htinterview.htm>.)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Have students choose an organization working on an issue of concern to them.
- ✓ Have students research the organization through at least two of the following resources: Internet, organization's publications, newspaper or magazine articles, interviewing someone who works for or with the organization.
- ✓ As part of learning about the organization, ask students to find out what kinds of projects and programs the organization is involved in and how the organization's mission is connected to public policy. Students should consider which of these projects presents an opportunity for them to get involved in helping to make a difference.
- ✓ Students can reflect on and share their efforts with others by creating a photo essay, a poem, or a poster about the organization and the assistance they provided.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What are some of the advantages and/or limitations to different types of service (direct, indirect, and advocacy)?*
- ★ *Did you feel like you were able to assist your organization to the best of your ability?*
- ★ *Would you have wanted more or less time to work on your organization's project?*
- ★ *Did you come away from the project feeling like you made a difference? Why or why not?*
- ★ *What were some of the challenges you faced while working with your organization?*
- ★ *What did you gain from this experience that could help you tackle similar projects down the line?*