

OUR GOALS FOR YOUR TRIPS

The Appalachian Institute realizes that each group is diverse and brings in their own plans and objectives; however, we have some basic goals for each trip in order to see sincere learning and development for each student and positive change in the communities they serve.

Pre-Trip Goals:

- **Individual Design of a Trip**—there is no set way to design an Appalachian Immersion through the Institute. We hope to encourage the individual school to work with us, or other supporting partners, to patent their trip based on the skills and goals of their students with the needs and capabilities of Appalachian community partners. Individualized attention to the planning of the trip will allow for a more unique and transformative experience for the students and for those they are serving with.
- **Knowledge through Training and Orientation**—by educating students on the needs and issues of Appalachia beforehand, the students will be better equipped to make real, lasting change in the lives they encounter.
- **Specific Skill Training**—if a particular trip requires the training of a specific ability (ie: CPR, First Aid, Presentation Skills, etc.) we expect the group leaders to adequately train them so that they are prepared at the beginning of the immersion experience.
- **Individual Goals Set Before Trip**—allowing the students to concretely set what they personally want to gain from the trip helps them to pursue those goals as soon as they step onto their service site.

Trip Goals

- **Connection with the Community is EQUALLY as Important as Connection with the Group**—while we agree that bonding between individuals within the immersion group is necessary for further positive development, it must never get in the way of building sincere relationships with those in the community.
- **Realizing the Seed Planted is Sometimes More Important than the Seed Sown**—on countless trips, it is said that the students have gained more from the experience than those they are serving. However, a sincere realization of the transformation in their minds and hearts is necessary for growth when they go home.
- **Quality Over Quantity**—the importance of the lessons learned and the relationships built are just as important, if not more, than the number of homes built or the number of mouths fed on an immersion trip.

Post-Trip Goals

- **The Multiple Faces of Advocacy**—allowing students to understand the countless ways that advocates bring about change and how they, as individuals, can plug into these efforts when they return home is vital to the outcome of a trip.
- **Opportunities to Reunite with Each Other**—as students return back to tests, sports, due dates, and social functions, it is easy for them to push back the realizations and changes that were made in them over their immersion experiences. By giving them opportunities to reunite with each other through group dinners, group service experiences, and other group outings, they can remind each other of the promises they made within their own hearts to fight for change.
- **Spread the Word**—setting up public speaking opportunities (forums, newspaper articles, etc.) will allow students to spread the message of what they have learned on their trip and take them to the next step in advocacy, after personal realization—raising awareness in others.

PRE-TRIP PLANNING

: allows groups to gather information and training in order to make their trip unique and profound for each student. Proper planning saves trips from being stuck in a rut year after year with no real distinctiveness and positive growth.

- ***Goal Setting (leaders)***

1. Within each aspect below, what do you want each of your students to accomplish during the immersion experience?

Spiritual:

Educational:

Emotional:

Physical:

2. As you design your trip, consider if you want a sweat-labor (service on behalf of others), direct service involvement (working directly with people in poverty), or an experiential learning activity (serving and/or hearing from experts on topics related to Appalachian poverty)? Compare and contrast the benefits of each of these types of service experiences.

- *Trip Material Preparation*

After you have determined who is coming on the trip, distribute preparation material, along with training sessions, that go over specifics of Appalachia.***

Cultural Awareness

<u>Movies:</u>
<i>Fiddles, Snakes, and Dog Days</i> , Gerald Milnes
<i>Twisted Laurel</i> , Gerald Milnes
<u>Books:</u>
<i>Storming Heaven</i> , Denise Giardina
<i>This is Where My Teeth Landed</i> , Dave Shombert
<i>The United States of Appalachia</i> , Jeff Biggers
<u>Websites:</u>
Augusta Heritage: www.augustaheritage.com
Appalachian Heritage Alliance: www.appalachianheritagealliance.org
WV Division of Culture and History: www.wvculture.org

Stereotyping

<u>Movies:</u>
<i>Dancing Outlaw</i> , Jacob Young
<i>Beyond Measure: Appalachian Culture and Economy</i> , Herb Smith
<u>Books:</u>
<i>Back Talk from Appalachia</i> , Dwight Billings
<i>Hillbilly Land</i> , J.W. Williamson

Environment and Health Care Impacts

<u>Films:</u>
<i>Burning the Future: Coal in America</i> , David Novack
<i>Crimes Against Nature: the Movie</i> , Claire Bingham
<i>Razing Appalachia</i> , Sasha Waters
<i>Sludge</i> , Robert Salyers
<i>Moving Mountains</i> , Virginia Moore
<u>Books:</u>
<i>Big Coal</i> , Jeff Biggers
<i>Strange as this Weather has Been: A Novel</i> , Ann Pancake
<i>A Church that Heals: A Pastoral Letter</i> , Reverend Michael J. Bransfield
<i>This Land is Home to Me</i> , Edwin Daschbach SVD
<i>Appalachian Cultural Competency: A guide for medical, mental health, and social service professionals</i> , Susan E. Keefe
<u>Websites:</u>
Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition: www.ovec.org
Keeper of the Mountains: www.mountainkeeper.org
Appalachian Voices: www.appvoices.org
WV Coalfield Communities: www.wvcoalfield.com
Coal Tattoo: www.blogs.wvgazette.com/coalattoo
Appalachian Regional Commission (Drug Abuse): http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=1750

*****To purchase or rent these books/DVDs use university interlibrary loan resources or www.appalshop.org**

- ***Individual Goal Setting (students)***

Based on the leaders' original goals, allow students to clearly define their ideal trip on a personal level.

WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND WHY???

This exercise is better done at the beginning of the planning of the trip, if possible, weeks to months in advance. Ask the students to answer these simple questions, specifically focusing on the last—WHY. These questions will be asked to them countless times before, during, and after the trip by those who are curious. By allowing the students to think and answer each they will better equipped to explain (and possibly impact) those who are questioning them. Also, ask the students to elaborate on each question by thinking of different questions people may ask throughout the process of the trip

WHO: Who are you? Who are you working with? Who are you serving?

WHAT: What are you doing? What are you expecting? What are you scared of?

WHEN: When will you be serving?

WHERE: Where are you serving? (Know specifics about the area where you are going.)

WHY: Why are you doing this? Why are you giving up your break to sleep on a floor/build a house/explore Appalachia/provide health care to the poor/etc.

HELP WANTED

Create a job profile with traits that you want each volunteer to have. Rather than concrete characteristics like typing skills and filing ability, use more abstract qualities such as flexibility, positive attitude, willingness to help and put yourself in an uncomfortable situation. (You can follow up this pre-trip profile with a post-trip resume where the students evaluate the skills and attributes they have learned throughout the week that would help them be a good match to fill the job.)

DEAR ME,

Have each student write a letter to themselves expressing their goals, expectations, and apprehensions for the upcoming trip. What sort of stereotypes are you coming in with? What qualities will help you serve better on this trip? (Follow up can be a post trip letter to themselves, in order to see the transformation they have had over the week.)

REFLECTION

: is a crucial part of service, which allows volunteers to look back on, think critically about, and learn from their service experience. Reflection may include acknowledging and/or sharing of reactions, feelings, observations, and ideas about anything regarding the activity. Reflection can happen through writing, speaking, listening, reading, drawing, acting, and any other way you can imagine. It should be a time to examine how an individual's faith was strengthened, weakened, and otherwise developed through what they experienced during a trip.

"A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions."
—Oliver Wendall Holmes

The primary purpose of reflections is to listen.

The main role of a Team Leader is to listen and offer reflections. Leaders are also present to facilitate and model the processes so that all feel welcome and free to speak in the group.

Reflection Outline

I. Short, quiet period for recollection and remembering. Announce that you will take a short period of silence to think about the topic and the issues as mentioned in the introduction.

II. Introductions and restatement of ground rules for discussion. Remind everyone of the ground rules for the group process and explain the time limits. Thus, each person must be mindful of the time so that each person will have a chance to speak.

III. First reflection is usually offered by the Team Leader—but not always! It may be necessary for a Team Leader to begin the reflection by speaking first. This gives the new students an example of the method of the reflection that we are using.

IV. Make sure that all in the small group who wish to speak have time to offer their reflection, Respect the right not to speak.

V. If all who wish to speak have spoken, and time remains, a group discussion may follow.

VI. Close with silence, a reflective song, or however appropriate as determined by the leaders.

- *Ideas for Reflection...*

EXPRESS YOURSELF UNITY CANDLE

Allow each student to create a small, flat representation of themselves out of clay. This can be a symbol, word, picture, etc. Each student must explain their creation and why it is unique to them. Bake the clay until hardened, then using double sided tape or super glue, adhere the symbols to a large unity candle. Each night, before reflection, light the candle to symbolize the uniqueness of the individual and the common goal of support each other in order to shine light to the world.

SAY WHAT???

Use each of these questions to reflect on the day of service:

WHAT?-- Start with your senses--what you saw, heard, felt, smelled, etc. Then remember what happened, what you did, the funny and serious things that were planned *and* unplanned. Finally, discuss your feelings during the service and how you dealt with them.

SO WHAT?— Use the three R's:

Reality—what's the big picture of what conditions are really like?
Look for a connection between what you saw (reality) and the next R...

Reasons—larger social issues that are in place.

Repond—explore what's actually being done to deal with problem and its causes.

NOW WHAT?—What are you going to do with what you've seen, experienced, and learned from the service? Decide how you can continue to be involved in your community, and start planning your next project.

YARN WEB

Stand in a circle with a ball of yarn. Each person throws it to another and says one word that explains what they will bring to the next project, what they appreciated in the person they are throwing it to, what they learned, etc. The yarn forms a web supported by the group. Use a thicker string, lower it, and have someone climb on, and try to support a person! (Use caution!)

ALL ON THE WALL

Put a large piece of paper up on one or all walls around the room. Participants write or draw feelings/thoughts/learnings on the paper. Facilitator leads discussion based on writings.

REFLECTION CARDS

On a set of index cards write a reflection question on each. (ie: What is the most difficult aspect of this service experience? or What connections do you see between this experience and what you've learned in your college courses?) Put the cards into a hat or bag. Have each student blindly choose one. Give a few minutes to think, and then allow each student to answer their question.

