

STEPS OF PREPARATION

- 1. Identify** and analyze problems in the community by conducting a needs assessment.
 - > Identify the problems/needs of the community.
 - > Analyze the root-causes of these problems.
 - > Meet with organizations or community leaders to verify your conclusions.
- 2. Select** a service project that meets the needs and addresses the problems identified.
 - > Of all the needs identified, determine which will be your area of focus.
 - > Brainstorm projects that will address this need.
 - > Determine an achievable objective. (Keep in mind the realistic number of volunteers that you can recruit, funds you can raise, and the time-table available for planning and implementing your initiative.)
- 3. Plan** the project.
 - > Develop partnerships with local community groups and other campus organizations.
 - > Involve partners from the start of your planning process. Reassess your area of focus in light of insights from these partners.
 - > Create an action plan. An action plan outlines all of the necessary components of your project, including resources, funding, publicity, etc.
 - > Divide responsibilities. (Determine who is doing what, when, where and how.)
 - > Establish regular communication with the stakeholders in your project. Effective communication with community members, partners and volunteers should take place throughout the planning process.
 - > Take a proactive approach to problem solving. Discuss the “what if’s” in advance and allow ample time for preparation.
- 4. Learn** the skills needed for the project.
 - > Prior to the start of the project, orient volunteers about the community and how this project will meet their needs.
 - > Train volunteers: Inform them of their tasks and teach any skills required for them to be successful when they serve.

