

Q & A: Fundraisers, Service Projects, Planning Meetings

What is a Fundraiser?

A fundraiser is an opportunity for the youth to be actively involved in making their trip possible, with the support of advisors and parents. A number of fundraisers are necessary each year to raise the dollars needed to financially support the three mission immersion trips. In past years, depending upon the size of the trips, we have needed over \$40,000 to fund the trips. Along with a tuition fee (scholarships are available), each dollar raised goes directly to trip expenses and in some cases a donation to the various agencies we are serving. Examples from past years are the Pasta Supper, Battle of the Bands, Dough-for-Dough (formerly Cookie Dough) sales. See descriptions below of some of the events.

What is a Service Project?

A service learning project is an opportunity to use our skills and gifts to make a difference to a local non-profit agency which serves the needs of others in our community or our region. Often students are involved in working with clients or other work that puts them in touch with those in need and gives them a first person view of how the agency is working to meet that need and the kind of difference it may make to a client. Examples from past years are our trip to Common Cathedral, Homeless Awareness Sleep-out, Arm2Arm Haitian Medical Supply collection.

What about other kinds of service my student supports?

We feel all service is important, but look at the service learning and fundraising efforts that we've selected a bit differently. The difference between our program and the service opportunities such as GHS Key Club or Scouts or any worthy group with which your student may be affiliated, is quite simply that we understand our call to serve as a call to discipleship through the community of faith in response to God's love and care for us. During these experiences, we can ask, "When did you witness God's presence today?" "How is God working in that woman's life?" etc. Equally important, we believe that it is important to be involved not individually, but within the community we form. For this reason, activities such as teaching Church School, Key Club, or Scouts don't meet our service learning requirements.

How many fundraisers and service project are we required to do?

The emphasis is not "require," but "desire." We encourage students to participate as often as their schedule allows, but we assess their true desire by meeting the minimal expectations of **two** fundraisers and **two** service projects. It is vital that students make a commitment to the community that is being formed throughout the year. When we arrive on a worksite, we need to be able to communicate effectively, care for one another, trust one another, support one another, and know one another on a deeper level. Thus, students who do not show their desire by fulfilling this requirement will not go on the trip.

How many trip planning meetings are students required to attend?

We expect students to attend all planning meetings, which generally occur once a month during the year. These meetings are critical to planning the trip, building community, getting to know each other and the trip advisors, learning necessary skills, and demonstrating commitment to the trip. The meetings are planned alternately on Sunday and Wednesday

evenings to accommodate different schedules. We recognize that there may be isolated times when a student cannot attend a meeting. When this happens, the student (not the parent!) must call their advisor ahead of time to let them know.

What fundraisers and service projects are we planning for this ministry year?

The YM fundraisers and service projects are still under construction. The same slate was to be implemented from last year but after the "Putting the You in Youth" and first BDE board meeting including the new Youth representatives, some new ideas and changes are being considered.