12-2009

Developmental Asset Building in At-Risk Youth: A Mixed Methods Study

Kraig James Lofquist
University of Nebraska - Lincoln, kjlofquist@mpsomaha.org

Developmental Asset Building in At-Risk Youth: A Mixed Methods Study

By

Kraig James Lofquist

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the faculty of

The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor in Education

Major: Educational Administration

Under the Supervision of Professor Larry Dlugosh

Lincoln, Nebraska

December, 2009

Developmental Asset Building in At-Risk Youth: A Mixed Methods Study

Kraig James Lofquist, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 2009

Adviser: Larry Dlugosh

The purpose of this mixed methods triangulation design study was to explore how "service learning" affects "at-risk" student's overall level of Developmental Assets. Quantitative data were obtained by using a pre and post assessment. Specifically, the Developmental Asset Profile (DAP) was used to determine if "service learning" opportunities increased the overall levels of developmental assets experienced by the at-risk student group. Additionally, qualitative data were gained by interviewing service learning participants to supplement the quantitative data collected in the Developmental Asset Profile.

Participants included 37 "at-risk" youth who were selected to participate in a service learning program. The students selected to participate were considered to be "at-risk," because they simultaneously experienced poor behavior, poor attendance, and poor academic performance.

The data indicated that developmental asset levels significantly improved after at-risk students participated in service learning projects. Results indicated a statistically significant difference not only in the overall level of developmental assets but also in each of the eight asset categories as determined by the pre and post test data. The qualitative data obtained from one-on-one interviews substantiated the quantitative results. Three prominent themes regarding service learning and at-risk students emerged

from the qualitative data including a sense of altruism, enjoyment, and associative

learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables

List of Appendices

Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

According to Benson (2006), there has been an abundance of information, research, and programs aimed at reducing the harmful things that the youth in our culture must regularly confront. Wright (2001) noted that violence, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, poverty, dysfunctional families, youth suicide, low self-esteem, school failure/dropout, and gang involvement are among the most difficult issues facing the youth in our culture. Meckler ("Budget Widens Teen-Pregnancy Efforts," 2009) stated that social issues including teen pregnancy remain a political conundrum. Pediatrician and Harvard Assistant Professor, Dr. Victoria McEvoy ("Doctors Alone Cannot Solve," 2009) wrote that childhood obesity is on the rise and cannot be cured by doctors alone.

Benson (2006) stated that there have been copious campaigns to reduce the use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs as well as teen pregnancy. Other initiatives have been aimed at reducing youth violence as well as truancy. Benson (2006) lamented the fact that professionals including educators, prevention specialists, youth development experts, and policymakers continually grind out new information, laws, and programs in search of a panacea regarding these issues. Yet, we continue to struggle as a society to find a succinct answer to assist our youth in developing into responsible, productive citizens. Benson (2006) wrote that when young people participate in research based programs initial results are often clear, then due to a variety of reasons such as funding cuts or the ending of a program, the gains that are achieved regress to prior program implementation levels, and the youth of our nation are relegated to return to the culture that raises them.

Springer (1999) substantiated this fact by noting that "no single curriculum or scientifically validated prevention strategy will replace the skill and judgment of program designers and deliverers in constructing such programs that make sense to schools and communities" (p. 39). He additionally stated that those programs or intervention strategies that have strict boundaries or hierarchical relations between prevention research and practice tend to be less than productive.

Scales et al. (2001) wrote that researchers have focused on prevention strategies and problem based concerns that are "deficit driven" as opposed to focusing on the "strengths" of young people. He suggested that the focus needs to be placed on areas that need to be "developed" as opposed to what needs to be "reduced." Scales et al. view was supported by Buckingham (2001) who wrote that our society has a "fixation with fault and failing" (p. 3). Rath and Clifton (2005) also supported a focus on positivity and state that it increases engagement as well as productivity.

If Benson and others are correct, what should the approach be to assist our young people so they grow up to be responsible, caring adults?

The Search Institute of Minneapolis, Minnesota ("What Are Developmental Assets?" 2009) conducted and compiled an ongoing, strengths-based body of research that suggests young people have "developmental assets." These "developmental assets" are concrete, common sense, positive experiences and qualities essential to becoming successful adults. These "assets" have the power during critical elementary and adolescent years to influence choices young people make to help them become caring, responsible adults.

Developmental Asset research indicates that the more "assets" a young person reports having, the better they do in school and in life (Scales et al., 2006). These assets have the ability to protect young people from being involved in high risk behavior while promoting positive behaviors and attitudes. So, the question becomes, if a student needs more assets, what is the most effective way to build them?

According to the Search Institute ("40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents," 2009), the Developmental Assets can be separated into eight categories, which include Support, Empowerment, Boundaries & Expectations, Constructive Use of Time, Commitment to Learning, Positive Identity, Positive Values, and Social Competencies. One of the individual Developmental Assets is termed "service to others." This asset is found in the category of "Empowerment." If a child consistently serves in the community one hour or more per week, he or she is considered to have experienced this "asset." It is hypothesized that "service to others," when implemented correctly, may simultaneously increase the number of assets in the other seven categories of developmental assets such as "positive values," where "caring" is considered to be an asset, or the category "constructive use of time," which includes "creative activities" as an asset etc.

The results of this study will provide a number of important contributions to further research into "service learning" as well as how it relates to "developmental assets" in working with "at-risk" youth. The implications for future programming are great. If service learning interventions can yield evidence of positive impacts on the amount of developmental assets young people possess, then perhaps this strategy could be incorporated into curriculum and instruction where a greater number of children would benefit.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods triangulation design study was to explore how "service learning" affects "at-risk" students' overall level of Developmental Assets.

Research Questions

1. Do "at risk" students who participate in "service learning" projects report having a significant increase in the total amount of Developmental Assets" as identified on the Developmental Asset Profile (DAP)?

2. After at-risk youth participate in "service learning" opportunities, which of the eight asset categories of the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) shows the greatest increase?

3. Do the data from the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) indicate a specific developmental asset category where schools should place a focus?

4. Through one-to-one interviews, how do at-risk students describe their service learning experiences as they relate to the eight asset categories?

5. What experiences do students identify, through one-to-one interviews, as being critical to making a service learning program successful?

Definition of Terms

In our society the term "at-risk" (Carnegie Council Report, 1992; Kumpfer 1999; Wright, 2001) has numerous definitions. Clarity of this term for this study is of the utmost importance.

At-Risk Youth—Young people who are at-risk of not maturing into responsible adults and enjoying the benefits of adulthood. In this case the youth were identified as having poor school attendance, poor behavior as well as poor academic performance.

Service Learning—Curriculum-based community service done through the schools that integrates classroom instruction with community service activities. The service must:

- Be organized in relation to an academic course or curriculum;

- Have clearly stated learning objectives;

- Address real community needs in a sustained manner over a period of time; and

- Assist students in drawing lessons from the service through regularly scheduled, organized reflection or critical analysis activities, such as classroom discussions, presentations and directed writing.

Developmental Assets—Forty (40) concrete, common sense, positive experiences and qualities essential to raising successful young people.

Developmental Assets Profile (DAP)—A self-report assessment instrument standardized on young people ages eleven to eighteen years of age consisting of fifty-eight questions written at the sixth grade level. The DAP consists of the eight asset categories plus an external, and internal category as well as a total assets score category. Scoring levels include "low," "fair," "good," and "excellent."

Internal Assets—Commitment to nurturing the internal qualities that guide positive choices and foster a sense of confidence, passion, and purpose. This type of wisdom is necessary for young people to make responsible decisions about the present and future. The framework includes four categories of Internal Assets: Commitment to Learning, Positive Values, Social Competencies, and Positive Identity.

External Assets—Focus placed on positive experiences that young people receive from the people and institutions in their lives. Four categories of External Assets are included in the framework: Support, Empowerment, Boundaries & Expectations, and Constructive Use of Time.

Support—Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families, neighbors, and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments.

Empowerment—Valuing of young people by their community; having opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure.

Boundaries and Expectations—Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are "in bounds" and/or "out of bounds."

Constructive Use of Time—Young people are given constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities and youth programs which require time commitments.

Commitment to Learning—Young people demonstrate a lifelong commitment to education and learning through motivation and dedication to school work and learning outside of the traditional classroom.

Positive Identity—Young people demonstrate a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise by reporting strong self-esteem and a positive view of their personal future.

Positive Values—Young people need to develop strong values that guide their choices.

Social Competencies—Young people need skills and competencies that equip

them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life.

Table 1 is a detailed breakdown of the 40 Developmental Asset Framework

complete with each category and specific definition of each of the assets.

Table 1

40 Developmental Asset Framework

Category	Asset Name and Definition
External Assets	.
Support	1. Family support-Family life provides high levels of love and support.
	2. Positive family communication-young person and parent(s) communicate well.
	3. Other adult relationships-Young person receives support from three or more adults.
	4. Caring neighborhood-Young person experiences caring neighbors.
	5. Caring school climate-School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
	6. Parent involvement in schooling-Parent(s) are actively involved in school activity
Empowerment	7. Community values youth-Young person perceives that community values them.
	8. Youth as resources-Young people are given useful roles in the community.
	9. Service to others-Young person serves in the community one or more hours per week.
	10. Safety-Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the neighborhood.
Boundaries & Expectations	11. Family boundaries-Family has clear rules and consequences for behavior.
	12. School boundaries-School provides clear rules and consequences.
	13. Neighborhood boundaries-Neighbors take responsibility for youth behavior.
	14. Adult role models-Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
	15. Positive peer influence-Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
	16. High expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person.

Category	Asset Name and Definition
External Assets (cont'd)	
Constructive Use of Time	17. Creative activities-Young person spends three hours per week in music, theater, etc.
	18. Youth programs-Young person spends three hours per week in community programs.
	19. Religious community-Young person spends one or more hours per week in church.
	20. Time at home-Young person spends wholesome time at home with family.
Internal Assets	
Commitment to Learning	21. Achievement motivation-Young person is motivated to do well in school.
	22. School engagement-Young person is actively engaged in learning.
	23. Homework-Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every day.
	24. Bonding to school-Young person cares about his or her school.
	25. Reading for pleasure-Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.
Positive Values	26. Caring-Young person places high value on helping other people.
	27. Equality and social justice-Young person places high value on promoting equality.
	28. Integrity-Young person acts on convictions and stands up for his or her beliefs.
	29. Honesty-Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.
	30. Responsibility-Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
	31. Restraint-Young person believes it important to abstain from sex, drugs, and alcohol.
Social Competencies	32. Planning and decision making-Young person knows how to plan and make choices.
	33. Interpersonal competence-Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendships.
	34. Cultural competence-Young person is sensitive to people from diverse backgrounds.
	35. Resistance skills-Young person can resist negative peer pressures.
	36. Peaceful conflict resolution-Young person resolves conflict nonviolently.
Positive Identity	37. Personal power-Young person feels he or she has control over life events.
	38. Self-esteem-Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
	39. Sense of purpose-Young person reports that life has a purpose.
	40. Positive view of future-Young person is optimistic about the future.

Methodology

The study utilized a triangulation mixed-methods research approach. A quantitative research component included a pre and post survey using the Developmental Asset Profile (DAP) and the qualitative portion consisted of one-on-one in depth interviews.

The Developmental Assets Profile is a valid, reliable, self-report of the eight Developmental Asset categories that are currently being experienced by adolescents. The assessment instrument was standardized on 2,410 young people eleven to eighteen years of age across the United States in 2002. The DAP consists of fifty-eight questions and provides a way to document, qualify, and portray adolescent's reports of the types and levels of Developmental Assets working in their lives.

The Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) was used to determine the level of assets in each of the eight areas listed above prior to the initiation of "service learning projects" and also after the projects were completed. Also, a qualitative component consisting of in-depth student interviews were completed to help determine if "service to others" did facilitate asset development.

Assumptions of the Study

It is assumed that all participants in the study have the desire and willingness to do their best regarding what is required of them. It is also assumed that the students would tell the truth during the one-to-one interviews. Additionally, it was assumed that the information obtained from the limited sample of "at-risk" participants will transfer to all at-risk students who are facing similar circumstances.

Target Audiences

There were several audiences for this study including: school administrators, school teachers, and civic policy makers. School administrators can benefit by learning specific information to assist in program implementation to make young people who are considered to be "at-risk" successful. Teachers will also benefit by understanding the significance of "service learning" and how it will benefit students to preclude any student from becoming "at-risk". Finally, those in the policy making realm will understand the significance of "service learning" and may promote the positive features of a quality service learning program by developing policies that promote service learning opportunities to help the youth and community.

Delimitations

Delimitations narrow the scope of a study (Creswell, 1994). Bryant (2004) wrote that delimitations are factors that limit a researcher from being able to apply findings to all people in all settings. This study was narrowed to one middle school's service learning program located in a large Midwestern city. The study included thirty-seven middle school students who were in the seventh or eighth grade, and it took place over one school year. The students were identified as being "at-risk" and were selected for this program. The term "at-risk" can have a variety of definitions, and in this case it was defined as a student who has poor school attendance, poor behavior as well as poor academic achievement. Additionally, the qualitative data were drawn from information obtained from one-to-one, in-depth interviews that consisted of questions specific to each of the eight "categories" found on the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP).

Limitations

This study relied on a mixed-methods approach. Therefore, the qualitative component of this research was limited to the data drawn from this group with respect to their respective backgrounds and experiences. There is always a chance that the students who were involved in this study may improve their overall Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) score due to other "asset rich" programs they may simultaneously be involved with outside of the school realm.

Significance of the Study

There are forty developmental assets, and according to Scales (2001) the average young person has about nineteen of these assets. Benson (2006) wrote that the more developmental assets a young person has, the better they do in school and in life. Those young people who have more developmental assets exhibit leadership, maintain good health, value diversity, and succeed in school. This means that student achievement will increase if their level of assets increase, which is certainly a goal for schools. Additionally, young people who report having more developmental assets show a propensity to stay away from harmful activities such as alcohol/drug use, violence, and sexual activity. It is possible that community resources that are allocated to address the social needs of youth could be diverted to other areas of need should "service learning" prove to be a powerful asset builder.

This study demonstrated whether or not "service to others" through "service learning" helped create more developmental assets simultaneously. If students reported having more developmental assets after participating in service learning projects, the implications were truly significant to the institutions within our society. Schools,

businesses and policy makers will then be able to embrace the concept of service to others which would not only build developmental assets within youth, but help create a more positive culture and society.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this literature review was to focus on three bodies of literature. First, the term "at-risk" was explored as it pertains to youth and the challenges that contribute to fully understanding it. Secondly, the vast topic of "service learning" was addressed, including what it is and is not and how it is defined for the purpose of this study. Finally, the research pertaining to "Developmental Assets" was reviewed.

"At-Risk Youth"

The term "at-risk" in our society is a ubiquitous term that has numerous meanings. Taylor (1994) first traced the roots of the term back to the medical field. The term was used in that realm by health care professional to address children who faced medical and social challenges that seemed to keep them from becoming healthy, productive adults. Since that time, Wright (2001) noted that the term has been used in a variety of ways to address numerous subjects such as poverty, violence, substance abuse, low self-esteem, suicidology, gang involvement, and school failure.

In a report for the United States Department of Education, Owings and colleagues (1992) defined an "at-risk" student as one who was socio-economically disadvantaged or had a parent whose education was limited. They also considered a parent's lack of school involvement to be a significant part of a student being "at-risk." Still other variables included low test scores, English language learners in the home, and poor school attendance.

Certain child development experts such as Kumpfer (1999) argued that children are only at-risk when risk factors outnumber protective factors that the young person may possess. Bensen, Galbraith, and Espeland (1998) suggested that a child is "at-risk" if he or she does not have many developmental assets that can be broken down into eight different areas: support, empowerment, boundaries & expectations, constructive use of time, commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. In the final analysis, child development experts and educational professionals agree that most children experience some level of at-risk criteria. Additionally, they can almost universally agree that "school failure," and/or "dropout rate" is an area that perfectly complements being "at-risk."

Service Learning

Service learning has a significant history in the United States. According to servicelearning.org ("Brief Historical Timeline," 2009) the concept of service learning dates back to 1903. Webster and Worrell (2008) credited social philosopher John Dewey as being the father of service learning, even though he did not use that exact term to express his work. According to Webster and Worrell (2008), Dewey did emphasize the importance of experience, inquiry, and reflection. Webster and Worrell (2008) cited the prior work of Giles and Eyler (1999) as they quoted Dewey as stating "genuine education comes through experience" (p. 171).

Servicelearning.org ("Brief Historical Timeline," 2009) also noted several other significant dates over the past 100 years that pertain to service learning, for example, President John F. Kennedy called for national service, and his leadership lead to the passage of legislation that established the Peace Corp in 1961. Since that time,

servicelearning.org ("Brief Historical Timeline," 2009) noted a myriad of political figures who emphasized the importance of service. Senator Edward Kennedy (1991) in a speech on the Unites States Senate floor stated that giving millions of young people the opportunity to serve may be the most important legislation passed during that year. Senator Kennedy stated "by learning that they can make a difference in the lives of others, students discover the power to control their own lives" and "service learning should be a central component of current efforts to reform education" (p. 772).

Other salient dates noted by servicelearning.org ("Brief Historical Timeline," 2009) included the endorsement of linking "service" with "learning" in 1993 by the Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development. That same year the passage of the National and Community Trust Act also emphasized the importance of serving. Since that time, more schools across the country have attempted to include service learning as a part of the curriculum provided to children. In fact, in a time when schools have been pressured to be more accountable for the learning of all students, Slavkin and Faust (2002) wrote that "Service learning may be a tool that schools can use to meet the needs of students in a time of pressure from departments of education for accountability via standards-based practices" (p. 22).

It is important to note that the terms "service learning" and "community service" are often times confused and are incorrectly used interchangeably. Skinner and Chapman (1999) attempted to differentiate the terms for a study conducted for the United States Department of Education in 1999. Specifically, the terms of their study were defined as follows:

Service Learning is curriculum based community service done through the schools that integrates classroom instruction with community service activities. The service must:

- Be organized in relation to an academic course or curriculum;

- Have clearly stated learning objectives;

- Address real community needs in a sustained manner over a period of time; and

- Assist students in drawing lessons from the service through regularly scheduled, organized reflection or critical analysis activities, such as classroom discussions, presentations, or directed writing (p.3).

Community Service on the other hand is defined by Skinner and Chapman (1999) as activities that are non-curriculum-based and are recognized by and/or arranged through the school. Community service:

- May be mandatory or voluntary;

- Generally does not include explicit learning objectives or organized reflection or critical analysis activities; and

- May include activities that take place off of school grounds or may happen primarily with the school (p. 2).

Still others offered a similar, but different definition of the term. For example, Martin and Markow (2005) defined service learning as "service activities that are integrated into a curriculum that require a student to reflect on that activity" (p. 6). Lankard (1995) defined service learning as "a teaching/learning method connecting meaningful community service experiences with academic learning, personal growth, and

civic responsibility" (p.6). As noted by the Search Institute (2000), the Alliance for Service Learning in Education defined service-learning as "a method by which young people learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences" (p.6).

In her comprehensive assessment of service learning research, Billig (2004) noted after years of attempting to clarify the term "the literature shows that there is still some misunderstanding among researchers, the general public and even practitioners of what service-learning is and is not" (p. 14). She goes on to note that the definition of "service learning" is most frequently confused with the term "community service."

Clearly there is a difference. In 1999 the National Center for Educational Statistics found when using the definitions provided by Skinner and Chapman (1999) only 32% of schools participated in true service learning. This was compared to 64% of school students who participated in activities defined as community service.

There has been a great deal of research written regarding the potential benefits of service learning when implemented correctly in public and private schools. For example, Billig and Klute (2003) found in a large scale study conducted in the State of Michigan that service-learning had numerous positive effects. Specifically, they found that students in grades 7-12 who participated in service learning reported better engagement in language arts class that included putting forth greater efforts. Billig and Klute (2003) also found that Michigan students who participated in the study indicated they had better behavior and cognitive engagement when compared to those who were not involved with service learning. Perhaps more importantly the research showed that fifth grade students scored significantly higher on the state assessments when compared to their

non-participating peers. Statistically significant differences were found in historical, geographical, and decision-making abilities.

Furco (2002) compared students who participated in service learning, community service, and those who did not participate at all. Furco found that students who participated in service learning or community service had higher scores on school surveys pertaining to attitude. The service learning group was found to score higher than the other two groups.

Hecht (2002) studied middle school students who were considered to be "at-risk" due to poor academic performance or behavioral concerns. His research found that the students had an unexpected level of fun and experienced joy during their participation during their service-learning endeavors. He noted that service learning appeared to positively affect student engagement in school. Along the same lines, Billig, Meyer, and Hofschire (2003) found that those students engaged in service learning were more likely to think school was fun, interesting, or even stimulating. Kirkham (2001) found teachers reported that students learned more when service learning was used as opposed to more traditional methods of instruction. Kielsmeier (2000) found that service learning students reported better communication with their parents about school when compared to those students who were not involved in service learning activities.

Scales et al. (2005) conducted a mixed methods research study that addressed partnerships between schools and businesses. The study focused on "urban youth." The researchers thought that "a qualitative method could better address whether students from more distressed backgrounds are able to access the benefit from partnership experiences" (p. 147). This qualitative endeavor was "mixed" with a survey called Profiles of Student

Life: Attitudes and Behaviors survey (A & B), which measures the 40 Developmental

Assets. Scales et al. found that students who had more exposure to these partnerships

reported having higher levels of developmental assets. Specifically, students reported

having better grades, better school attendance, and more academic motivation. "The most

impacted partnership experience emphasized the building of relationships between

students and caring adults" (p. 145). "Caring adults" is identified as asset #3 within the

category of "support" ("40 Developmental Assets for Adolescents," 2009).

Billig (2004) indicated there is great promise for service-learning for those

individuals who are considered to be "at-risk" of school failure. In the final analysis

Billig's (2004) determined that studies show great promise for service learning as an

avenue for increasing student achievement among alternative school students and other

students considered to be "at-risk" of school failure.

Developmental Assets

The Search Institute ("About Us," 2009) a non-profit, non-sectarian, independent

research entity has been in existence since 1958. The mission of this institute is to

"provide leadership, knowledge, and resources to promote healthy children, youth, and

communities."

In 1989 Search began conducting research that continues to this day. In 1990 ("A

New Era," 2009) researchers at the Search Institute identified 30 Developmental Assets

based on research that included work with 350,000 6th to 12th grade students. Researchers

continued to investigate the assets through 1996-97, which at that time included work

with well over two million young people. The Search Institute increased the number of

Developmental Assets from 30 to 40 due to the continued research. All of this research focused on addressing positive adolescent behaviors as well as resiliency factors.

The Search Institute ("What Kids Need: Developmental Assets," 2009) identifies a "framework" for these 40 developmental assets. Specifically, these assets can be delineated into two broad categories known as "External" and "Internal." The External Assets are defined as positive experiences that young people receive from the people and institutions that are active in their lives. This category is further broken down into support, empowerment, boundaries and expectations, and constructive use of time. Internal Assets are defined as internal qualities that guide positive choices and foster a sense of confidence, passion, and purpose. They are further delineated into the areas of commitment to learning, positive values, social competencies, and positive identity. The Search Institute continues to share the asset-building paradigm, as well as evaluate the impact of assets on all ages of young people. They work with all types of organizations and communities to help promote positive culture change in organizations and communities.

As of 2009, the Search Institute ("About Us," 2009) has included over three million young people in the 6th to 12th grades in well over 200 communities nationwide in its research. They have found that the number of assets a child has is a great predictor of behavior and school success. Those young people who experience a greater number of assets are more likely to grow up to be caring, competent, responsible, and resilient. Unfortunately, Benson (2006) wrote that the average young person only experiences about nineteen of the forty assets. The relationship between the number of developmental assets a young person possesses and the positive life choices they make is well

documented for all types of youth, regardless of gender, race, age, or socio-economic status (Benson, 2006).

Further research indicates that intentional asset building can have a positive effect on school performance. For example, Scales and Roehlkepartain (2003) found a strong correlation between the number of reported developmental assets and a student's grade point average, both on a concurrent and longitudinal basis. They found that having more developmental assets "may actually have as much or more positive impact on academic outcomes" (p. 9) when compared to the obvious and traditional strategies for boosting student achievement.

Benson et al. (2003) hypothesized that community-level interventions to build developmental supports and opportunities will benefit all or almost all youth. They found that community strategies should focus on changing the environment for young people and understand that no single strategy will work for all kids. The research also showed that community based endeavors should not focus only on those kids who will more than likely "show up."

Scales and Roehlkepartain (2004) updated the comparable benchmark study originally conducted by Skinner and Chapman (1999) for the Unites States Department of Education. They looked at the trend analysis for "service learning" and "community service." The data showed that those schools who were engaged in "service learning" slipped to 28%, while those engaged in "community service" increased to almost 70%. Scales and Roehlkepartain (2004) wrote that "virtually all respondents see service-learning as being powerful in many areas of students' lives, including academic achievement" (p. 6).

Finally, Roehlkepartain, Scales and Benson (2007) suggested that one can enrich service learning in youth by being "intentional," placing a focus on what you are already doing and placing an emphasis on building relationships.

Summary of Literature Review

The term "at-risk" is used a great deal in our society. School failure, whether it includes poor grades or the potential for dropping out of school, is almost universally cited in the research. Service learning is different than community service, and research strongly suggests that, when done correctly, it benefits students who are participating in programs that provide service learning. Finally, the "developmental assets" are common sense positive experiences and relationships that young people need to be successful in our society. Far too many young people do not experience these assets, which increase positive behavior and protect young people from the deleterious aspects of our culture.

Need for Study

There is a significant need for this mixed methods study, because it will use the Developmental Asset Profile (DAP), a standardized assessment instrument. The research thus far does not use a standardized assessment instrument. Also, the Developmental Asset Profile (DAP) will show areas that schools and communities can use to address or to help assist young people to become better students and adults. This study will also use one-on-one, in-depth interviews to help understand the thoughts and feelings of those "at-risk" students who participate in a well defined service learning endeavor. The results of the interviews will be compared and contrasted with the standardized assessment instrument to obtain more meaningful results.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Characteristics of Mixed-Methods Research and the Triangulation Design

Mixed methods research includes collecting and analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data and can be done in a variety of ways depending on the nuances of the research. For example, primary quantitative data can be collected and supplemented by secondary qualitative data. Conversely, qualitative data can be gathered and complemented by quantitative data. Furthermore, both types of data can be considered equal in importance and gathered simultaneously, then merged. This study used a mixed methods triangulation design with an emphasis on converging data.

According to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007), a mixed method design is a "research design with philosophical assumptions as well as a method of inquiry" (p. 5). These philosophical assumptions guide the direction of data collection as well as data analysis. Such a design is used to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem when compared to only one research option such as quantitative or qualitative approaches. The rationale for mixing or "converging" qualitative and quantitative data is done when neither type of research method is sufficient to answer the research questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). It is well documented that, when used together, quantitative and qualitative methods can complement each other and allow for a more complete analysis of the data and understanding of the research questions (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

Gravetter and Wallnau (2004) wrote that when one uses quantitative research, the investigator relies on a standardized set of procedures that use numerical data "bringing

order to chaos" (p. 4). They also state that the results are done in such a uniform manner that any researcher can analyze and understand the results.

Conversely, Morse and Richards (2002), citing the work of van Manen, wrote that qualitative research is "descriptive, reflective, interpretive and an engaging mode of inquiry from which to derive the essence of the experience" (p. 44). Creswell (1994) also wrote that qualitative research uses inductive logic where categories emerge from participants who provide rich "context-bound" data that emerge to help explain a phenomenon. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) wrote that mixed methods research is closer to what researchers actually use in practice.

Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) stated that during the qualitative portion of a mixed methods research project, the researcher collects data from only a few individuals, because "more individuals participating in a study means that the researcher will obtain less depth from each participant" (p. 30). Conversely, quantitative data benefits by larger sample sizes.

The quantitative portion of this study focused on determining whether or not there is a significant difference between the eight categories of developmental assets when comparing pre and post assessment results of at-risk youth. Although the survey is statistically reliable and valid, it is only one source of information that will assist in answering the research questions. The researcher also conducted the one-to-one interviews with the at-risk youth and tabulated the pre and post assessments results of the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP). The data were then converged.

The Role of the Researcher

Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) stated that "one must understand one's own worldview or paradigm" (p. 22), which means how the researchers view the world and this affects how they go about conducting research (p. 5). In short, they have a certain set of beliefs or "assumptions" that are brought to the research project and they need to be understood and duly noted (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

The researcher for this study brought a worldview considered to be postpositivist in nature, which includes a cause and effect thought process and focuses on a few select variables, the testing of theories that are refined over time, and detailed observation as noted by Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007). It is important to note that while the researcher does not work directly with the subjects in this study, he has promoted the Developmental Assets as a part of the district's strategic plan and was responsible for bringing the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) assessment instrument to each of the district's ten secondary schools.

Target Population

The study took place in a large mid-western city within a middle school environment. Each seventh and eighth grade student who were the focus of this study were considered to be at-risk by simultaneously experiencing poor school attendance, poor school behavior and poor academic performance. The service learning projects completed by the students included a relation to academic coursework (including objectives), a need in the community, and a critical analysis requirement. The critical analysis requirement included researching the problem, reflective writing, presenting information to peers, and working in the community on location.

All thirty-seven at-risk students who participated in service learning projects originally took the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) during August of 2008 when school began. During May of 2009, they were given the assessment again after completing service learning projects over the course of the school-year. This was also a requirement of the target population.

The Research Sample

The quantitative research sample included thirty-seven students who were considered to be "at-risk" due to simultaneously experiencing poor school attendance, poor school behavior and academic performance. All students were in either the seventh or eighth grade and participated in a school based service learning program. Specifically, there were 20 seventh graders and 17 eighth graders. There were 23 males and 14 females in the sample. Of the thirty-seven, there were thirty-two Caucasians, two African-Americans, two Hispanics, and one Asian. Of the thirty-seven participants, eight students received free and reduced priced meals. See Table 2 Research Participant Demographics for more information.

Each of the thirty-seven students was invited to be in the qualitative portion of the study that consisted of one-on-one interviews; thirteen students assented to be a part of this portion of the study after obtaining parental permission. Of the thirteen students who were interviewed, seven students were in the seventh grade. Four were male and three were female. There were six eighth graders, including five males and one female. Of the thirteen, five received free or reduced price meals. Eleven of the thirteen were Caucasian and two were African-American. See Table 2 for details.

Finally, it is worth noting there was a total of three-hundred seventh graders and three hundred eighth graders in the middle school where the study was completed. Therefore, the research sample was a small percentage of the school's larger population.

Quantitative Research Approach

Permission in concordance with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's Institutional Review Board requirements was requested and given by the school's administration for the researcher to analyze the pre and post Developmental Asset Profile (DAP) scores of the thirty-seven at-risk middle school students. The assessment had been administered by the school in August of 2008 and May of 2009. The researcher analyzed the student data drawn from the assessment instrument to help answer the research questions, but only after completing one-on-one interviews with thirteen of the thirty-seven students who agreed to be interviewed after parental consent as well as their own assent was obtained.

On each occasion when the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) was administered, students were required to answer fifty-eight questions by selecting from the following choices: "not at all or rarely," "somewhat or sometimes," "very or often," and "extremely or almost always." Questions that were answered with "not at all or rarely" receive a score of zero. Those questions that were answered as "somewhat or sometimes" were scored with a score of one. A score of two was used if the young person selected the "very or often" choice. Finally, a score of three was given if a student selected "extremely or almost always."

The assessment yielded quantitative scores for the eight asset categories and was considered to be a useful descriptive tool. The eight asset category scores that were

achieved were compiled and categorized into "levels" as follows: Low=0-14, Fair=15-20, Good=21-25 and Excellent=26-30. These levels were also used for the "external" and "internal" categories. The "total" score used the following levels: Low=0-29, Fair=30-40, Good=41-50 and Excellent=51-60.

Results from the pre and post Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) were entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Specifically, the eight asset categories scores as well as the internal, external, and total scores were entered. These data accompanied a unique identification student number used to ensure anonymity.

A repeated measures t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference when comparing the at-risk group's "averaged" pre and post Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) data. Specifically, the repeated measures t-test was used to compare the group's average scores obtained in each of the eight categories found within the survey instrument as well as the external, internal, and total asset score categories. An alpha level of .01 was used to control for type I errors, because multiple tests were conducted.

Qualitative Research Approach

The qualitative portion of the research project consisted of one-on-one detailed interviews. First, consent and assent was obtained by sending letters to the parents of each of the at-risk students in the service learning program. Thirteen students returned their signed forms and assented to the interview.

The one-on-one interviews were conducted in a conference room at the student's middle school. Instructional time was not adversely affected. Students were told they

could take breaks during the interview as needed. They were also told that they could decline to answer any questions or end the interview at any time.

A general introduction was read to the participants prior to starting the interviews. Then, several "ice-breaker" questions designed to create trust and comfort started the interview process. These were followed by a series of open-ended questions designed to receive the greatest feedback possible. Specifically, the thirteen students who participated were asked questions that were designed to elicit answers directly related to the eight developmental assets categories as well as the student's service learning projects. According to the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level Readability Assessment, the median "grade level" score of the questions asked of students equaled a grade level score of 5.9.

Follow up questions were asked when clarification was needed and to ensure that the researcher obtained a rich, thick description of the service learning experiences. Each interview lasted between thirty and sixty minutes. The audio recorded interviews were then transcribed by the interviewer to assist in analyzing the data.

According to Creswell (2002), qualitative data analysis might have several components. He stated that "It is an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytic questions, and writing memos throughout the study" (p. 190). The transcribed interviews were perused for clarity. Then the interviews were re-read several times to extract significant statements, and three themes eventually emerged from the data.

To ensure validity, the process of "triangulation" and "member checking" were used for this study. Triangulation entails being submerged in the data and evaluating it from multiple perspectives. It also includes cross referencing information from multiple

data sources, in this case the thirteen interviews. Creswell and Plano-Clark (2007) write that triangulation is a systematic process of sorting through multiple data to find common themes. "Member checking" was also used to validate the qualitative portion of this study by asking each research participant to clarify what they meant in the event the researcher had questions to help ensure appropriate context and accuracy.

Ethical Considerations

The research project met the specific specifications set forth by the University of Nebraska Institutional Review Board (IRB). These criteria included: Project Title, Investigator Information/Contact Information, Student Status (Doctoral Candidate), Type of Research, Source of Funding, Start and completion dates, Description of Subjects/Characteristics, Type of Participants (19 years and under), Description of Significance of the Project, Methods and Procedures, Subject Recruitment, Descriptions of Risk and Benefits, Compensation, Informed Consent, How confidentiality would be maintained, and Copies of Questionnaires and assessment instruments.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research findings. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section titled 4a Quantitative Results addresses the quantitative data obtained from the Developmental Asset Profile. The second section is titled 4b Qualitative Results and addresses the qualitative data obtained in the one-on-one interviews. Finally, section 4c Merging the Data blends the qualitative and quantitative results.

At this point, it may be helpful to reemphasize that the purpose of this mixed methods triangulation design study was to explore how "service learning" affects "at-risk" students' overall level of Developmental Assets. The research questions are listed again below to help provide focus.

Research Questions

1. Do "at risk" students who participate in "service learning" projects have a significant increase in the total amount of Developmental Assets as identified on the Developmental Asset Profile (DAP)?

2. After at-risk youth participate in "service learning" opportunities, which of the eight asset categories of the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) shows the greatest increase?

3. Do the data from the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) indicate a specific developmental asset category where schools should place a focus?

4. Through one-to-one interviews, how do at-risk students describe their service learning experiences as they relate to the eight asset categories?

5. What experiences do students identify, through one-to-one interviews, as being critical to making a service learning program successful?

Quantitative Results

Table 2 gives a more in-depth description of the participants by sharing demographic data. Specifically, there were twenty-four male participants, twelve from grade seven and twelve from grade eight. Grade seven was represented by nine male Caucasians, one African-American, one Hispanic, and one Asian. Of the twelve, four received free or reduced priced meals.

Of the eighth grade male participants, eleven were Caucasian and one participant was of African-American descent. Three of the twelve eighth grade students received free or reduced priced meals. Thirteen females participated in the study. Seven students represented by this gender were in the seventh grade and six were in the eighth grade. There were six female Caucasian students in grade seven and one Hispanic, while all eighth grade females were of Caucasian descent. Of all of the thirteen female students who participated, only one seventh-grader received free or reduced priced meals.

As seen in Table 3, the data show the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the "Support" category after participating in "service learning projects."

The results indicated that the Support category post-test scores ($M = 21.30$, $SD = 6.93$) were statistically significantly higher than the Support category pre-test scores ($M = 16.65$, $SD = 6.14$), $t(36) = 7.05$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed), $d = 0.71$.

Table 4 shows the at-risk students also demonstrated a significant difference in the "Empowerment" category after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 2

Research Participant Demographics

	Grade	Number of Students	Number of Free/Reduced Lunch	Ethnicity	Number by Ethnicity
Male	7	12	4	Caucasian	9
				African American	1
				Hispanic American	1
				Asian American	1
	8	12	3	Caucasian	11
				African American	1
				Hispanic American	0
				Asian American	0
Female	7	7	1	Caucasian	6
				African American	0
				Hispanic American	1
				Asian American	0
	8	6	0	Caucasian	6
				African American	0
				Hispanic American	0
				Asian American	0

Table 3

Support

	Pre-test		Post-test				
Source of Data	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Effect Size	*t*	*P*
	16.65	6.14	21.30	6.93	0.71	7.05	<.001

Table 4

Empowerment

	Pre-test		Post-test				
Source of Data	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Effect Size	*t*	*P*
	16.22	5.73	21.32	6.54	0.83	6.17	<.001

The results indicated that the Empowerment category post-test scores (*M* = 21.32, *SD* = 6.54) were statistically significantly higher than the Empowerment category pre-test scores (*M* = 16.22, *SD* = 5.73), *t* (36) = 6.17, *p* < .001 (one-tailed), *d* = 0.83.

Table 5 shows the data that the at-risk students demonstrated in the "Boundaries/Expectations" category. Again, this category showed a significant difference after at risk students participated in "service learning projects."

Table 5

Boundaries/Expectations

	Pre-test		Post-test				
Source of Data	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Effect Size	*t*	*P*
	16.97	6.97	21.14	6.09	0.65	5.55	<.001

The results indicated that the Boundaries/Expectations category post-test scores (M = 21.14, SD = 6.09) were statistically significantly higher than the Boundaries/Expectations category pre-test scores (M = 16.97, SD = 6.97), t (36) = 5.55, p < .001 (one-tailed), d = 0.65.

Table 6 shows the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the category known as "Constructive Use of Time" after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 6

Constructive Use of Time

Source of Data	Pre-test		Post-test		Effect Size	t	P
	M	SD	M	SD			
	11.70	6.87	16.84	6.46	0.77	6.86	<.001

The results indicated that the Constructive Use of Time category post-test scores *(M = 16.84, SD = 6.46)* were statistically significantly higher than the Constructive Use of Time category pre-test scores (M = 11.70, SD = 6.87*), t (36) = 6.86, p* < .001 (one-tailed*), d* = 0.77.

Table 7 shows the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the "External Assets" category after participating in "service learning projects."

The results indicated that the External Assets category post-test scores (M = 20.15, SD = 5.79) were statistically significantly higher than the External Assets category pre-test scores (M = 15.39, SD = 5.50), t (36) = 8.05, p < .001 (one-tailed), d = 0.84.

Table 7

External Assets

Source of Data	Pre-test		Post-test		Effect Size	t	P
	M	SD	M	SD			
	15.39	5.50	20.15	5.79	0.84	8.05	<.001

Table 8 addresses the category of Positive Identity. The data show the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the "Positive Identity" category after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 8

Positive Identity

Source of Data	Pre-test		Post-test		Effect Size	t	P
	M	SD	M	SD			
	16.51	4.78	21.46	6.96	0.84	5.82	<.001

The results indicated that the Positive Identity category post-test scores *(M =* 21.46, *SD =* 6.96*)* were statistically significantly higher than the Positive Identity category pre-test scores (*M* = 16.51, *SD =* 4.78*), t (36) =* 5.82, *p* < .001 (one-tailed*), d =* 0.84.

The results for the "Positive Values" category are found in Table 9. The data demonstrate that the at-risk students made a significant increase in the "Positive Values" category after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 9

Positive Values

Source of Data	Pre-test		Post-test		Effect Size	t	P
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
	16.22	5.20	19.89	5.00	0.72	6.53	<.001

The results indicated that the Positive Values category post-test scores *(M =* 19.89, *SD =* 5.00*)* were statistically significantly higher than the Positive Values category pre-test scores (*M* = 16.22, *SD* = 5.20)*, t (36)* = 6.53, *p* < .001 (one-tailed*), d* = 0.72.

As seen in Table 10, the data show the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the "Commitment to Learning" category after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 10

Commitment to Learning

Source of Data	Pre-test		Post-test		Effect Size	t	P
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
	13.14	6.05	18.86	5.02	1.04	7.22	<.001

The results indicated that the Commitment to Learning category post-test scores *(M =* 18.86, *SD =* 5.02*)* were statistically significantly higher than the Commitment to Learning category pre-test scores (*M* = 13.14, *SD* = 6.05)*, t (36)* = 7.22, *p* < .001 (one-tailed*), d* = 1.04.

Table 11 shows the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the "Social Competencies" category after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 11

Social Competencies

	Pre-test		Post-test				
Source of Data	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Effect Size	*t*	*P*
	16.30	5.57	20.54	4.58	0.84	6.44	<.001

The results indicated that the Social Competencies category post-test scores *(M =* 20.54, *SD* = 4.58*)* were statistically significantly higher than the Social Competencies category pre-test scores (*M* = 16.30, *SD* = 5.57*), t (36) = 6.44, p < .001 (one-tailed), d =* 0.84.

As seen in Table 12, the data show the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the "Internal Assets" category after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 12

Internal Assets

	Pre-test		Post-test				
Source of Data	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	Effect Size	*t*	*P*
	15.54	5.25	20.19	4.32	0.97	8.47	<.001

The results indicated that the Internal Assets category post-test scores *(M = 20.19, SD = 4.32)* were statistically significantly higher than the Internal Assets category pre-test scores (*M* = 15.54, *SD* = 5.25)*, t (36)* = 8.47, *p* < .001 (one-tailed)*, d* = 0.97.

Table 13 shows the at-risk students demonstrated a significant difference in the "Total Assets" category after participating in "service learning projects."

Table 13

Total Assets

Source of Data	Pre-test		Post-test		Effect Size	*t*	*P*
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*			
	31.38	9.39	40.62	10.54	0.93	8.67	<.001

The results indicated that the Total Assets category post-test scores *(M = 40.62, SD = 10.54)* were statistically significantly higher than the Total Assets category pre-test scores (*M* = 31.38, *SD* = 9.39)*, t (36)* = 8.67, *p* < .001 (one-tailed)*, d* = 0.93.

Summary of Quantitative Results

According to the results of the Developmental Assets Profile, those "at-risk" students who participated in "service learning" projects report having a significant increase in their total amount of developmental assets as identified by the Developmental Assets Profile. Specifically, "at-risk" students showed a significant increase in each of the eight asset categories as well as the Internal and External categories that constitute the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) when comparing pre-test and post-test data. Again, the results for the Total Assets Category showed there was a significant difference in the

Total Assets category pre-test (M = 31.38, SD = 9.39) when compared to the Total Assets category post-test (M =40.62, SD = 10.54), t (36) = 8.67, p < .001 (one-tailed), d = 0.93.

After at-risk youth participate in "service learning" opportunities, the asset category showing the greatest increase was the category known as "Commitment to Learning." The data indicate that schools can intentionally build assets by focusing on any of the asset categories. However, the data showing the greatest increase in the number of assets is the category of Commitment to Learning which is defined as the need for young people to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning. If schools were to pick only one of the eight asset categories on which to focus, it would be this category.

Qualitative Results

Three prominent themes emerged from the qualitative data. First, students reported a strong sense of "altruism", a selfless devotion to the welfare of the individuals they served during their service learning projects. Secondly, the at-risk students who participated reported that the service learning projects were "enjoyable." Finally, the at-risk students who participated in service learning projects experienced "associative learning" or the ability to link what they learned in theory to real life experiences.

Table 14 represents the questions that were asked of students in each of the eight developmental assets categories. Salient responses relating to the "altruism" theme are also found within the table.

Table 14

Altruism

Support	Question 1: Tell me how you shared your service learning project with your parents or guardians?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"They said it was good you helped the community and that you helped people that need the extra help to get through stuff."
	#4	"They said it was good that I was helping people."
	#6	"They thought it was a good idea and a good way to help people."
	#9	"They said that's great. I am proud. Tell me how it is when you come back."
	#12	"I told them we were going to (location) to help out and they said that was really cool."
	#13	"They think it's good for me to do that, to help out in the community."

Question 2: Tell me how your school encourages you to be involved in service learning projects?	
Student ID #	Supporting Response
#3	"They just let people know that they can make a change in the community and that if you help them, I can make a difference."
#4	"My teacher (name), he encouraged us to do the local one because he has helped homeless people before and that is fun."
#7	"The teachers encouraged us to be involved and said it was important."
#9	"They said that it's important that you volunteer and do extra activities and stuff like that."
#13	"They encouraged us to do it, and told us the benefits of doing it."

Question 3: Tell me how service learning has made you feel connected to your school.	
Student ID #	Supporting Response
#3	"Well, I felt great after helping them (the homeless). I did not make the lunches. I did the dishes and I set up the bar where everyone gets their food, and I helped carry the dishes and get the desserts."
#6	"It made me feel connected because I got to help people, and I kind of like helping people. It's a good thing to do."
#13	"It made me feel like a better person, a better student, because I helped out in the community."

Empowerment	Question 1: How do you think people in the community feel about your service learning projects? Do you think they value your work?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"I think they see us as doing something very helpful."
	#4	"The manager down at the shelter was very excited that we were going to come and help her because there are only a few people that help her with it."
	#6	"They are probably happy. They are happy because they don't, it takes a little work off from their shoulders, and you can help them out."
	#7	"I think they think it's cool, it's good because we are helping the community."
	#12	"I think that a lot of people think that it's a good thing to have us do this kind of thing. Because as we say here at this school, it's building assets and a lot of us are helping out with things in the community."
	#13	"They thought that it was really nice, that we came over there to help them out."

Question 2: Does service learning change your thoughts on how the community sees you and all youth?

	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"They just let people know that they can make a change in the community and that if you help them, I can make a difference."
	#4	"My teacher (name), he encouraged us to do the local one because he has helped homeless people before and that is fun."
	#7	"The teachers encouraged us to be involved and said it was important."
	#9	"They said that it's important that you volunteer and do extra activities and stuff like that."
	#13	"They encouraged us to do it, and told us the benefits of doing it."

Question 3: Tell me how service learning has made you feel connected to your school.

	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#4	"Yes, it's something good we do, instead of getting into trouble. We are helping people. It's positive."
	#9	"I think so, because, like, a lot of people have had bad experiences with kids doing this and doing that, and when they find out that kids are doing stuff like this to help or to be a part of something that's good, I think it changes the vision of how kids are."
	#12	"Well, I think they thought that we are helpful probably. I don't think they think we are the typical teenagers going around breaking things."

Empowerment (cont'd)	Question 3: In the future, tell me what your plans will be as far as being involved in your community?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"It has changed me. It taught me what to do to help."
	#9	"I don't know, like I would like to help, like elderly or people with disabilities, do fund raising and helping out, you know. I want to do stuff like that."
	#11	"I want to help feed homeless people and help animals."
	#12	"I know I plan on being involved, but I am not sure how yet. I think that having this experience has helped push me out there to be involved."
Boundaries & Expectations	Question 1: Tell me about some positive role models or positive behaviors you have learned by being involved with service learning.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#4	"My teacher is positive and all my classmates in my homeroom are always positive and help people with stuff."
	#6	"I learned that even someone who is a bad person can help someone out."
	#8	"They liked what they were doing, and they were doing good stuff, and it is something that everyone should be doing, doing what they like, helping other people."
	#11	"She was working for Habitat for Humanity and she helped out those people."
	Question 2: How has service learning developed better behavior in your friends and acquaintances?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"Now they are more willing to work and help."
	#6	"It probably helped make them a little more supportive of other people because they got to see how other people are and how they live. So, it made them feel they could do a little something to help them out."
	#11	"Well like my friend "C", she likes helping people too. She learned she liked to help people too."
	#13	"I feel more connected to my friends who helped out at the library. We behaved ourselves so we could help again in the future."

Table 14 continues

Boundaries & Expectations (cont'd)	Question 3: How do teachers encourage you to do well when you are involved with service learning projects?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"It's kind of hard to answer, because they are always saying that you can make a difference. I like to make differences. If something is not going right, I always like to help."
	#4	"They told us instead of getting in trouble and stuff, that it would be better for us to do something good for others, and have a good feeling and stuff."
	#13	"They tell us that it will be cool to do it, and that you should do it because it's a great thing to do to help out the community."
Constructive Use of Time	Question 1: Tell me about your favorite part of service learning.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#4	"My favorite part was, just uh, packing the stuff and handing it out to the homeless people."
	#6	"I went to the project because, we would go on the computer and look up all this stuff and we wouldn't have to do school work all the time, and we'd get to help out people."
	#8	"I like helping other people."
	Question 2: How does service learning make you more responsible with your time?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#1	"Serving other people."
	#4	"Like I said, instead of getting in trouble, you can go help people out. You can help the environment and people."
	#9	"I know I will not be out causing trouble with my friends. You know I'll be inside doing something positive helping people out. I am also helping myself out."
Positive Identity	Question 1: Does service learning improve someone's self esteem? If so, how does that happen?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"Yes. I don't know really, it just makes them feel better for helping."
	#6	"It kind of improved mine because I used to let everything everyone said make me blow up. Now, that I think about those other people out there that need more help than me, so I have now calmed down a little bit."
	#8	"I think it does, I mean, I think you get a good feeling when you help another person."

Table 14 continues

Positive Identity (cont'd)	Question 1: Does service learning improve someone's self esteem? If so, how does that happen?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#11	"Well, if they helped out they would, help out a lot because they would actually be doing something good for people."
	#12	"Well, they might feel better about themselves, because they are helping people."
	#13	"Yes, it can make them feel better about themselves. You feel like a better person after you have helped someone."
	Question 2: How can service learning increase a person's sense of purpose in their life?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#11	"Well, I think whenever I help people out, it should help other people feel good about it and make them have a purpose."
	#13	"Because you can help out the community without getting anything in return makes you feel better about yourself, like a better person."
	Question 3: How do these service learning activities make you feel about your personal future?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#1	"It makes me want to be a better person. Uh, be nicer and more helpful."
	#5	"I think it makes me feel good that I am helping with the community."
	#7	"If you are involved with service, um, you can feel good about your future because you are helping others."
	#11	"Well, like in the future I hope that I still help people out and make people feel good or something."
Positive Values	Question 1: Tell me what service learning has taught you about helping other people.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"It has taught me to like, understand people more, and to be patient."
	#4	"At first when we did it, I wasn't really like that interested. But when like they started tell us stuff about it, when we got down there, it was actually really fun instead of just sitting like some people do. It's fun and it's great knowing you helped people."
	#5	"It has helped because it gives you details about people and how they are living and how they are not living. You can determine how to help them."

Positive Values (cont'd)	Question 1: Tell me what service learning has taught you about helping other people.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#6	"Um, helping other people like, I don't know how to put it. Even though you may have it rough, they may have it a little rougher. It can give you confidence to help them out and others."
	#8	"It taught me to help out people that are less fortunate than you."
	#9	"Uh like, if you help somebody, it will come back to you, you know. I like to help people out you know, I care for people. I will help people if they need it."
	#10	"It tells me if someone needs help, don't be afraid to ask them. Help them out no matter what."
	#13	"I should do it a lot more often, because it feels good to help out people."

Question 2: What has service learning taught you about issues such as equality, hunger and poverty?

Student ID #	Supporting Response
#1	"We need to help more people."
#2	"We need to end it."
#5	"It's taught me that some people don't have homes and can't do anything about it, sometimes can't get a job, or they are ejected from their house. It teaches me valuable lessons. It teaches me to keep a job and keep a family."
#8	"It sort of taught me that this isn't fair, but it's just going to happen, so you do whatever you can to make things better."
#9	"It taught me a lot seriously, because I used to think the reason why people are so hungry is because they don't have no job or they are too lazy to get up and go find one. But, a lot of those cases, it's really because they have a problem and they need help and they are just not getting the proper help that they need."
#13	"It tells me that it's not a good thing, and that we should be able to help the homeless people with food and things."

Question 3: Do you think service learning helps people take responsibility?

Student ID #	Supporting Response
#2	"Yes, because if you are not doing anything for your city or anything, then your city is going to be the same or it's going to be even worse, because there are not more people helping it."
#13	"Yes. It will help. It'll help make them want to help out the community more."

Table 14 continues

Social Competencies	Question 1: Tell me how service learning has made you better at interacting with other people.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#9	"Well, I was born a talkative person and can go up to somebody and say "how are you doing?" It helps me now to see that if someone needs help, I can help them."
Commitment to Learning	Question 1: Does service learning make you feel more connected or happy with school?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#6	"Because if I do well in school, then I will be able to help others, because if I have good grades, then I am smart and I finish my homework on time, then I will have more free time to help other people out."
	#13	"It helps me with my grades because I have helped people, and when I have helped people I do my homework because I feel good about myself."
	Question 2: Does service learning make you feel more connected or happy with school?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#4	"Yes, because when we came back to school, it was like, it made me feel good and stuff like, that I helped people down there. It seemed like the school was a better place when I got back."
	#11	"Yes, and it makes me feel happy that I did something right. Like, whenever I do something nice for others, I feel excited about it, because I helped people out."

The first question relating to "support" was designed to produce feedback from the students regarding two of the developmental assets. Particularly, asset #2, "positive family communication" and asset #6 "parent involvement in schooling." Asset #2 is defined as: "Young person and his or her family communicate positively" and asset #6 is defined as: "Parents are actively involved in helping a young person succeed in school."

The data suggest the vast majority of those who participated in the interviews have these assets in their lives, at least in part due to the service learning activities. For example, when asked about how the students shared their service learning projects with their parents or guardian, student #12 said, "I told them we were going to (location) to

help out and they said that was really cool." The responses clearly show that the service learning experiences engaged students and parents in conversations that were not superficial in nature, and the responses from parents were overwhelmingly positive. For example, student #3 reported his parents as saying, "They said it was good you helped the community and that you helped people that need the extra help to get through stuff." Student #9 alluded to having future conversations with his parents when he reported, "They said that's great. I am proud. Tell me how it is when you come back." One can deduce that these conversations not only strengthen the assets in the "support" category but also make the students feel empowered. Finally, the conversations relating to family and school support suggest that they, the school and family, help to build the sense of altruism demonstrated by the students.

The question "Tell me how your school encourages you to be involved in service learning projects?" was intended to see if students reported having a caring school climate. "Caring school climate" which is asset # 5, is defined by "A young person who reports a school who provides a caring, encouraging environment." According to the student responses, the school staff was overwhelmingly supportive of students who participated in the service learning program. They encouraged and promoted the youth to be involved and told them it would be fun, educational and they would have an impact on the community. While this type of professional behavior is expected, only a small percentage of youth across America say they have this particular asset in their lives. The help and guidance from the staff members not only enabled the students to report having this asset in their lives, it is deduced that it also helped the students develop the sense of altruism that became a theme of the qualitative portion of this research.

Question #3 is also directly related to asset #5, "caring school climate." This question helped to elucidate the theme of altruism. For example, student #3 shared, "I felt great being in a situation where I could help others." Student #6 stated "It made me feel connected because I got to help people, and I kind of like helping people", and student #13 shared that "It made me feel like a better person, a better student, because I helped out in the community." The service learning actually made them feel connected to their school which in turn increased their engagement.

Students were then asked a series of three questions relating to the category of "Empowerment." It is important to note that asset #9 is called "service to others" and falls within the category of empowerment. Obviously, the service learning projects were designed to build this particular asset as well as others. The questions were designed to elicit utterances that relate to asset #7, "Community values youth" and "Youth as resources" both which fall within the category of "Empowerment."

When the students were asked how they felt the community viewed them regarding their service learning projects, the responses were again overwhelmingly positive. The vast majority of students indicated they felt the community was pleased with their work. Two of the thirteen students said the community "probably" valued their work and one student reported that some community members would care while others would not.

Of those who reported positive statements, several of them could be related to the promotion of "altruism." Specifically, students reported that they felt the adults in the community and those in charge of the service learning environments found the students to be "helpful."

When the students were asked "Does service learning change your thoughts on how the community sees you and all youth?", each student with the exception of one answered in the affirmative. Those students that elaborated included student #9 whose insight was intriguing. He stated, "I think so, because, like, a lot of people have had bad experiences with kids doing this and doing that, and when they find out that kids are doing stuff like this to help or to be a part of something that's good, I think it changes the vision of how kids are." From this participant's perspective, service learning has the power to change how adults view young people. In brief, adults can look as students who are resources, not just those that take up resources. This is further substantiated by student #12 who said, "Well, I think they thought that we are helpful probably. I don't think they think we are the typical teenagers going around breaking things."

Finally, when the students were asked what their future plans were regarding service in their communities, every student indicated they would be involved in some capacity. For example, student #3 said "It has changed me. It taught me what to do to help." Student #9 stated he would like to be involved with helping the elderly or the disabled. Student #11 shared that he would like to "feed homeless people or help animals." Finally, student #12 stated "I know I plan on being involved, but I am not sure how yet. I think that having this experience has helped push me out there to be involved." This statement is exactly what "altruism" is about, a selfless devotion to others, whatever it may be.

The next series of questions were related to the category of "Boundaries and Expectations." All students with the exception of two stated they learned positive behaviors from the people they worked with including their teachers. Student #8 said that

"they were doing good stuff, and it is something that everyone should be doing, doing what they like, helping other people." So, the teachers and other adults were positive role models for the at-risk youth who participated.

Students also reported being better self-behaved because they did not want to jeopardize their involvement with the service learning projects, especially working in the field where they had the opportunity to interact with others. Under the asset category of "Boundaries and Expectations", asset #12 is school boundaries, asset #14 is adult role models and asset #15 is positive peer influence. Finally, asset #16 is "high expectations" which appeared easy to meet because the students wanted to be involved. So, based on the responses relative to role models and behavior the students did well which helped foster their sense of caring and altruism.

The series of questions related to the category of "Constructive Use of Time" followed those related to "Boundaries and Expectations." Student responses in this category really revealed the sense of altruism because the questions were very simple and direct. For example, when student #8 was asked what her favorite part of service learning entailed, he responded by saying, "I liked helping other people." Student #6 alluded to the "enjoyment" theme and the "altruism" theme when he said, "I went to the project because, we would go on the computer and look up all this stuff and we wouldn't have to do school work all the time, and we'd get to help out people." Finally, as another example, student #4 stated, "My favorite part was, just uh, packing the stuff and handing it out to the homeless people." Again, the altruism theme was present where there was a sense of helping others in need.

When asked how service learning makes the students more responsible with their time, several students shared that the projects kept them productive. For example, student #4 alluded to the fact that when one is serving others, there is no time to get into trouble. This sentiment was echoed by student #9. Finally, when one is passionate about what they are doing, as the students indicated, especially serving others, and spending their time, one can deduce a connection to the altruism theme.

The series of questions relating to the category of "Positive Identity" also illuminated the theme of altruism. The positive identity category consists of four developmental assets including: personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose and having a positive view of one's personal future.

When the students were asked if service learning improved their self-esteem, ten students said "yes", two said "no" and one said "maybe." The students who answered in the affirmative stated they felt better for helping others and talked about getting a "good feeling" due to their involvement. They talked about doing something good for people and how it made them feel better about themselves. For example, student #3 said, "Yes. I don't know really, it just makes them feel better for helping." Student #13 answered with "Yes, it can make them feel better about themselves. You feel like a better person after you have helped someone."

When the students were asked if service learning could increase a person's sense of purpose in life, several students had to ask for clarification. After clarification, most students answered in the affirmative. Student #11 stated that it should not only help them with their sense of purpose, but also those individuals who knew about the service being

performed. Student #13 reiterated that when you assist others in need, you feel better about yourself.

Finally in the Positive Identity category, the question was asked as to how the student's service learning activities made them feel about their own personal futures. Of the thirteen students who participated in the one-on-one interviews, twelve stated they felt that service learning gave them a positive view of their personal future. Again, this was related to the altruism theme. Student #1 said "It makes me want to be a better person. Uh, be nicer and more helpful." Student #7 stated, "If you are involved with service, um, you can feel good about your future because you are helping others", and student #11 said, "Well, like in the future I hope that I still help people out and make people feel good or something."

The next section of Table 14 addressed the category of "Positive Values" which includes the assets of caring, equality & social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility and restraint. The questions in this category brought forth numerous comments that directly related to the altruism theme. For example, when students were asked what service learning had taught them about helping other people, student #8 stated, "It taught me to help out people that are less fortunate than you." Student #2 shared, "It has taught me to like, understand people more, and to be patient." Student #4 shared his epiphany when he answered the question by saying, "At first when we did it, I wasn't really like that interested. But when like they started to tell us stuff about it, when we got down there, it was actually really fun instead of just sitting like some people do. It's fun and it's great knowing you helped people." Student #13 said, "I should do it a lot more often, because it feels good to help out people."

When the students were asked about equality, hunger and poverty, they again responded with compassion. Student #1 said, "We need to help more people", and student #2 said "We need to end it" (meaning hunger). Student #5 responded with great insight due to his experience by saying "It's taught me that some people don't have homes and can't do anything about it, sometimes can't get a job, or they are ejected from their house. It teaches me valuable lessons. It teaches me to keep a job and keep a family." Finally, student #13 said, "It tells me that it's not a good thing, and that we should be able to help the homeless people with food and things."

The final question for this asset category consisted of "Do you think service learning helps people take responsibility?" Most students simply answered by saying "yes" and not adding much detail. However, student #2 said, "Yes, because if you are not doing anything for your city or anything, then your city is going to be the same or it's going to be even worse, because there are not more people helping it." So, student #2 felt a sense of urgency to take some responsibility. Student #13 had a similar response when he said, "It will help. It'll help make them want to help out the community more."

The category of "Social Competencies" had the least amount of data pertaining to the theme of altruism. Student #9 stated, "Well, I was born a talkative person and can go up to somebody and say "how are you doing?" It helps me now to see that if someone needs help, I can help them." Other than that, the category revealed a dearth of information pertaining to altruism.

The final category of "Commitment to Learning" also revealed evidence related to the theme of altruism. Commitment to learning is comprised of achievement motivation, school engagement, homework, bonding to school and reading for pleasure.

The first question pertained to student motivation. Specifically, students were asked how service learning has motivated them to do well in school. Eleven students answered that service learning did increase their motivation to do well. One student said that they were not sure and one said their motivation was not increased. Student #6 and student #13 shared they were motivated so they could continue to assist others through service. Specifically, student #6 stated, "If I do well in school, then I will be able to help others, because if I have good grades, then I am smart and I finish my homework on time, then I will have more free time to help other people out" and student #13 said, "It helps me with my grades because I have helped people, and when I have helped people I do my homework because I feel good about myself."

The second question in the category of "Commitment to Learning" consisted of Does service learning make you feel more connected or happy with school? Each of the thirteen students agreed that service learning did make them feel more connected to their school. While most student responses were brief, student #4 expounded on the topic and demonstrated a correlation to altruism by saying, "Yes, because when we came back to school, it was like, it made me feel good and stuff like, that I helped people down there. It seemed like the school was a better place when I got back." Finally, student #11 shared information along the same lines by saying, "Yes, and it makes me feel happy that I did something right. Like, whenever I do something nice for others, I feel excited about it, because I helped people out."

Table 15 addresses the theme of "enjoyment." Specifically, all students stated that service learning was fun which helped them stay engaged in the learning process. The

Table 15

Enjoyment

Support	Question 1: Tell me how you have communicated your service learning project to your parents (or guardians?)	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"I went home and told them, "hey, guess what I did today!?""
	#4	"I told them about the location, and what I wanted to do when I get there."
	Question 2: Can you tell me how your school tells you to be involved in service learning projects?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#3	"I really don't know, but it was fun."
	#4	"He encouraged us to do the local one because he has helped homeless people before and that is fun, and it was fun."
	#8	"I don't know what kind of word I would use for that, but it was fun."
Boundaries & Expectations	Question 1: How has service learning developed better behavior in your friends and acquaintances?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#9	"Well, my friend, well they got smarter. They like to be a part of stuff like service learning so they behaved."
	#13	"I feel more connected to my friends who helped out at the library. We behaved ourselves so we could do the work again in the future."
Constructive Use of Time	Question 1: "Tell me about your favorite part of service learning."	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#1	"When you go on outings, you get away from school."
	#2	"My favorite part was packing the stuff and handing it out to the homeless people."
	#6	"I went to the project because, we would go on the computer and look up all this stuff and we wouldn't have to do school work all the time, and we'd get to help out people."
	#9	"Just doing different things, stepping out of the ordinary stuff we do now. I like doing the new things, not doing the same old things."
	#10	"Well, I told my teacher that we should have, if we have kids doing service learning more than what they are doing now, we would all want to be in school. We'd like to stay in school. Service learning is a good thing to do."

Positive Values	Question 1: Tell me what service learning has taught you about helping other people.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#4	"At first when we did it, I wasn't really like that interested. But when like they started tell us stuff about it, when we got down there, it was actually really fun instead of just sitting like some people do. It's fun and it's great knowing you helped people."
Commitment to Learning	Question 1: How has service learning motivated you to do well in school?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"It's helped me to do better, because I wanted to keep doing service learning. Once I learned what it was about, it was fun. I liked the specific jobs we were given."
	Question 2: Does service learning make you feel more connected or happy with school?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"Yes, because Friday's I know what's going to happen after school cause I get to be involved with the fun part of the project."
	#7	"Yes, because the project was fun."
	#9	"Yes it does, absolutely."
	#10	"Yes, definitely."
	#12	"Yes, because it feels more like they want us to do better, so they are having us go work with different people and do different stuff."

comments within Table 15 were extracted from the one-on-one interviews to substantiate this theme. The comments were drawn from five of the eight asset categories.

First, in the Support category, some students shared their cheerful eagerness regarding service learning to their parents. For example, student #3 demonstrated excitement about the service learning experience when he shared with his parents, "Hey, guess what I did today?" Student #5 also sounded enthused when he shared with his parents, "I told them about the location, and what I wanted to do when I get there."

The students also indicated that service learning was a fun experience when they were asked how their school encourages them to be involved in service learning projects.

Student #4 alluding to his teacher said, "He encouraged us to do the local one because he has helped homeless people before and that is fun, and it was fun." When asked the same question, student #3 shared "I really don't know, but it was fun." Finally, student #8 supported the "enjoyment" theme by saying, "I don't know what kind of word I would use for that, but it was fun."

There were no statements made by the students pertaining to fun or enjoyment in the Empowerment category. However, students did share information relating to the "enjoyment" theme when they were asked question relating to the Boundaries and Expectations category. For example, when student #9 was asked, "How has service learning developed better behavior in your friends and acquaintances?" He responded by saying, "Well, my friend, well they got smarter. They like to be a part of stuff like service learning so they behaved." Student #9 and his friends knew that if they had good behavior, and adhered to the "Boundaries and Expectations" set forth by those running the service learning projects; they would continue to be involved in the service learning projects, because they were enjoyable. When asked the same question, student #13 also demonstrated the assets within the category of Boundaries and Expectations when he said, "I feel more connected to my friends who helped out at the (location). We behaved ourselves so we could do the work again in the future."

The students were then asked a series of questions relative to the "Constructive Use of Time" category. The supporting responses in this case were numerous and directly linked to the theme of "enjoyment." When asked what their favorite part of the experience was, each student expressed the fact that they liked working in the field during their service learning projects. Some positive comments included student #1 who

said, "When you go on outings, you get away from school." Student #2 said, "My favorite part was packing the stuff and handing it out to the homeless people." Student #9 and #10 made the point of "enjoyment" when they stated the following two comments respectively. "Just doing different things, stepping out of the ordinary stuff we do now. I like doing the new things, not doing the same old things" and "Well, I told my teacher that we should have, if we have kids doing service learning more than what they are doing now, we would all want to be in school. We'd like to stay in school. Service learning is a good thing to do."

Conversely, the students stated that the least favorite part of service learning included the traditional methods of learning. For example, true service learning has a research component to it. Student #4 lamented the fact that their team had to research economies in other nations and compare them to the United States. When student #12 was asked his least favorite part of the service learning project, he said it was "researching" the project. Student #11 stated, "We had to write a lot of stuff" and that was their least favorite. All methods of traditional learning were noted as the student's least favorite part of the service learning endeavors.

The next category that elicited results in the "enjoyment" theme included Positive Values. When students were asked what service learning had taught them about helping other people, student #4 said, "At first when we did it, I wasn't really like that interested. But when like they started tell us stuff about it, when we got down there, it was actually really fun instead of just sitting like some people do. It's fun and it's great knowing you helped people."

Finally, the category of "Commitment to Learning" also included questions that facilitated statements from students related to the theme of "enjoyment." First students were asked, "How has service learning motivated you to do well in school?" Student #2 said, "It's helped me to do better, because I wanted to keep doing service learning. Once I learned what it was about, it was fun. I liked the specific jobs we were given." When students were asked "Does service learning make you feel more connected or happy with school?", student #2 said, "Yes, because Friday's I know what's going to happen after school cause I get to be involved with the fun part of the project." Student #7 shared "Yes, because the project was fun." Students #9 and #10 simply confirmed that service learning made them feel more connected to their school. Table 16 addresses interview questions and responses relating to the "associative learning" theme. Seven of the eight asset categories are included. The one category that was not represented is "commitment to learning."

The theme "associative learning" is defined as a learning process in which discrete ideas become linked to one another." In the case of this research "associative learning" meant that the students were able to link what they had learned to what they experienced during their service learning projects. While the data received from the students were indeed associative learning, the responses were also synonymous with the cognitive level of students who are of middle school age.

In the category of "Support" students answered three questions. The first question related to the asset of "Positive Family Communication". Specifically, the students were asked, "Tell me how you have communicated your service learning projects to your

Table 16

Associative Learning

Support	Question 1: Tell me how you have communicated your service learning project to your parents (or guardians?)	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#10	"I told my mom about how you know. I talked to her about why my aunt smokes too much, because I like told them that drugs here won't do anything better. I told them that you will only experience loss."
	Question 2: Tell me how your school encourages you to be involved in service learning projects?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#10	"Well, the thing is, they want, what they do is like, they just get me into a program. I like to be in a program that keeps me from bad things such as drugs and that kind of stuff."
	Question 3: Tell me how service learning has made you feel connected to your school.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"I have learned more about business from the (service learning) project."
	#4	"I did not do any sports before, like I didn't do any sports like wrestling or anything before I did that (service learning). The one thing that really helped, it kind of got me more interested in school, so I went out for track and football."
Empowerment	Question 1: "How do you think people in the community feel about your service learning projects? Do you think they value your work?"	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#9	"I think so, because, like, a lot of people have had bad experiences with kids doing this and doing that, and when they find out that kids are doing stuff like this to help or to be a part of something that's good, I think it changes the vision of how kids are."
	#12	"Well, I think they thought that we are helpful probably. I don't think they think we are the typical teenagers going around breaking things."
	#13	"Yes, I think they learned to respect me better, like treat me better as a person."

Boundaries & Expectations	Question 1: Tell me about some positive role models or positive behaviors you have learned by being involved with service learning.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#12	"We had people at the daycare teach us what to do and what not to do with little kids, things that you have to be careful with. Teachers, or leaders, they were good role models."
	Question 2: How has service learning developed better behavior in your friends and acquaintances?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#6	"It probably helped make them a little more supportive of other people because they got to see how other people are and how they live. So, it made them feel they could do a little something to help them out."
	#7	"We learned that, we talked to people we never would have talked to if we had not done the service learning, and it's o.k. to be nice to people you don't know or don't see every day."
	#10	"Some people really did not care about how drugs have an effect, but now, you know the service learning has changed some minds as to how they are, what they can do to you."
Constructive Use of Time	Question 1: How does service learning make you more responsible with your time?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"You don't have enough time on your hands, you make better choices because you are busy when you are involved with projects."
	#9	"I know I will not be out causing trouble with my friends. You know I'll be inside doing something positive helping people out. I am also helping myself out."
Positive Identity	Question 1: Does service learning improve someone's self esteem? If so, how does that happen?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"Yes, because, before service learning, you can look at something one way and then afterword you can see things from a different way. You can see things from both sides."
	#9	"Yes, I say it does. Like, well some kids don't feel they can do this or they can do that, but when service learning comes into it, they like, think "wow, I can do this, I am happy, I am doing this, I am doing that. Like, I thought I wasn't able to do anything like this. I didn't know. I was like one of those people that put myself down, and I be like, I can't do this. But, service learning helped me out a lot."

Table 16 continues

Positive Identity (cont'd)	Question 2: How can service learning increase a person's sense of purpose in their life?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#8	"I think that it shows that you might not be able to do some things, but you can do something to make somebody else's life better. That sort of gives you some sort of reason or purpose."

	Question 3: How do these service learning activities make you feel about your personal future?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"I wanted to grow up to be someone who was paid a lot, and now I have more variety, because I want my job to be fun and I want my job to be flexible with schedules."
	#9	"I think it makes me feel good, great. Uh, I feel like I have a better purpose, more choices in life."
	#10	"It makes me feel how, how I should not be afraid of anything. I should stand up for what I believe in and don't like get into things I don't want to be in and stuff and stay in the right place."

Positive Values	Question 1: What has service learning taught you about issues such as equality, hunger and poverty?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"If like you see a hungry person, don't just look at them, feel bad and then walk away. You try to help them."
	#4	"That we need to end it, and if they need help, we need to provide help."
	#5	"Um, like you really know it can be bad and stuff, like the people don't have clothes and stuff, like that some people don't have something to eat. You can give them food so they don't starve."
	#6	"That there are a lot of people out there struggling. There is another service learning project out there and they walked, to like to help get Africa water."
	#8	"It sort of taught me that this isn't fair, but it's just going to happen, so you do whatever you can to make things better."
	#9	"It taught me a lot seriously, because I used to think the reason why people are so hunger is because they don't have no job or they are too lazy to get up and go find one. But, a lot of those cases, it's really because they have a problem and they need help and they are just not getting the proper help that they need."

Positive Values (cont'd)	Question 2: Do you think service learning helps people take responsibility?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#2	"Yes, because if you are not doing anything for your city or anything, then your city is going to be the same or it's going to be even worse, because there are not more people helping it."
Social Competencies	Question 1: Tell me how service learning has affected your ability to plan ahead and make decisions?	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#4	"Like making good decisions and understanding that good decisions will get me farther in life, instead of making bad decisions, so I won't end up in jail or something like that."
	#9	"It helped me set goals for myself, like what I would like to do, gives me more of a look at what I want to do in my future."
	#10	"It has made me think about what I will be when I grow up, what will the qualities be that I have on my way and stuff."
	Question 2: Tell me how service learning has made you better at interacting with other people.	
	Student ID #	Supporting Response
	#5	"I think it helps me with trust, and keeps me from judging others."
	#12	"I learned a lot about little kids. I had to visit with those in charge, and the leaders. I had to know what to say and how to say it to them."

parents." Student #10 stated, "I told my mom about how you know, I talked to her about why my aunt smokes too much, because I like told them that drugs here won't do anything better. I told them that you will only experience loss."

The second question asked of students in the Support category included, "Tell me how your school encourages you to be involved in service learning projects." Student #10 stated he understood the benefits of service learning by saying, "Well, the thing is, they want, what they do is like, they just get me into a program. I like to be in a program that keeps me from bad things such as drugs and that kind of stuff."

The last question related to "Support" that facilitated responses associated with "associative learning" was, "Tell me how service learning has made you feel connected to your school." Student #2 said "I have learned more about business from the (service learning) project" and student #4 stated, "I did not do any sports before, like I didn't do any sports like wrestling or anything before I did that (service learning). The one thing that really helped, it kind of got me more interested in school, so I went out for track and football." Student #4 understood that the power of service learning had gotten them involved in other activities, which happens to be asset #18, youth programs.

The category of "Empowerment" also helped extract student responses associated to "associative learning." For example, when the students were asked, "How do you think people in the community feel about your service learning projects? Do you think they value your work?", student #9 said, "I think so, because, like, a lot of people have had bad experiences with kids doing this and doing that, and when they find out that kids are doing stuff like this to help or to be a part of something that's good, I think it changes the vision of how kids are." When analyzed this statement indicates that the student is able to reflect on past experiences and also demonstrates a sense of empathy from the viewpoint of an adult.

In the category of Boundaries and Expectations, student #12 stated "We had people at the daycare teach us what to do and what not to do with little kids, things that you have to be careful with. Teachers, or leaders, they were good role models." This was in response to the question "Tell me about some positive role models or positive behaviors you have learned by being involved with service learning."

The "Boundaries and Expectation" category brought forth three student statements that related to "associative learning." Specifically, when students were asked, "How has service learning developed better behavior in your friends and acquaintances?" they responded with the following statements. Student #6 said, "It probably helped make them a little more supportive of other people, because they got to see how other people are and how they live. So, it made them feel they could do a little something to help them out." Student #7 stated, "We learned that, we talked to people we never would have talked to if we had not done the service learning, and it's okay to be nice to people you don't know or don't see every day." Finally, student #10 said, "Some people really did not care about how drugs have an effect, but now, you know the service learning has changed some minds as to how they are, what they (the drugs) can do to you."

Two student statements were extracted from the data in the "Constructive Use of Time" category relating to "associative learning." When students were asked, "How does service learning make you more responsible with your time?" student #2 insightfully said, "You don't have enough time on your hands, you make better choices because you are busy when you are involved with projects." Student #9 shared a similar statement by saying, "I know I will not be out causing trouble with my friends. You know I'll be inside doing something positive helping people out. I am also helping myself out."

Several statements relating to the associative learning theme were taken from the Positive Identity category. When students were asked, "Does service learning improve someone's self esteem? If so, how does that happen?" several statements were shared. For example, student #2 answered in the affirmative, "Yes, because, before service learning, you can look at something one way and then afterword you can see things from

a different way. You can see things from both sides." This exemplifies a greater

understanding due to the service learning projects. Student #9 shared that service learning

made him (and his friends) more confident and it gave them a greater insight into their

own abilities by saying, "Yes, I say it does. Like, well some kids don't feel they can do

this or they can do that, but when service learning comes into it, they like, think "Wow, I

can do this, I am happy, I am doing this, I am doing that. Like, I thought I wasn't able to

do anything like this. I didn't know. I was like one of those people that put myself down,

and I be like, I can't do this. But, service learning helped me out a lot."

The next question in the Positive Identity category that facilitated responses to

"associative learning" was "How can service learning increase a person's sense of

purpose in their life?" Student #8 responded by saying, "I think that it shows that you

might not be able to do some things, but you can do something to make somebody else's

life better. That sort of gives you some sort of reason or purpose."

The final question in this category included, "How do these service learning

activities make you feel about your personal future?" Student #2 reflected when

answering this question. The student specifically stated, "I wanted to grow up to be

someone who was paid a lot, and now I have more variety, because I want my job to be

fun and I want my job to be flexible with schedules." Service learning made this young

person think about the reality of work, schedules and variety. After service learning

activities, student #9 simply stated that he felt he had "more choices in life." Finally,

student #10 said, "It makes me feel how, how I should not be afraid of anything. I should

stand up for what I believe in and don't like get into things I don't want to be in and stuff

and stay in the right place." This response also considered some forethought, related to the importance of making good decisions.

There were more responses related to "associative learning" in the "Positive Values" category than any other. Students gave insightful, well thought responses when asked, "What has service learning taught you about issues such as equality, hunger and poverty?" For example, student #2 said, "If like, you see a hungry person, don't just look at them, feel bad and then walk away. You try to help them." Student #4 answered this question after being involved with service learning by saying, "We need to end it, and if they need help, we need to provide help." Student #6 understood the prevalence of the problem and answered the question as follows: "That there are a lot of people out there struggling. There is another service learning project out there and they walked, to help get Africa water." Student #8 said, "It sort of taught me that this isn't fair, but it's just going to happen, so you do whatever you can to make things better." The last example for this question belonged to student #9. He stated, "It taught me a lot seriously, because I used to think the reason why people are so hungry is because they don't have no job or they are too lazy to get up and go find one. But, a lot of those cases, it's really because they have a problem and they need help and they are just not getting the proper help that they need."

One response relating to associative learning was given to the question, "Do you think service learning helps people take responsibility?" "Yes, because if you are not doing anything for your city or anything, then your city is going to be the same or it's going to be even worse, because there are not more people helping it."

The final category that had responses relating to associative learning was Social Competencies. When students were asked, "Tell me how service learning has affected

your ability to plan ahead and make decisions?" they again responded with insight.

Student #9 said, "It helped me set goals for myself, like what I would like to do, gives me more of a look at what I want to do in my future." Student #10 responded by saying, "It has made me think about what I will be when I grow up, what will the qualities be that I have on my way and stuff."

The last statement that garnered responses relating to the associative learning theme was "Tell me how service learning has made you better at interacting with other people." Student #5 said, "I think it helps me with trust, and keeps me from judging others." Student #12 said, "I learned a lot about little kids. I had to visit with those in charge, and the leaders. I had to know what to say and how to say it to them."

Merging the Data

The focus of this section was to "merge" the quantitative and qualitative data. The data for both quantitative and qualitative were divided by asset category, so the focus of this section will be to merge the data by categories.

Support

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to the category of "Support." The qualitative data complemented this difference in the category of "Support." Specifically, quantitative results indicated that the "Support" category post-test scores ($M = 21.30$, $SD = 6.93$) were statistically significantly higher than the "Support" category pre-test scores ($M = 16.65$, $SD = 6.14$), $t(36) = 7.05$, $p <$ .001 (one-tailed), $d = 0.71$. The qualitative data related to "Support" included a large majority of students who reported having "positive family communication," "family

support," "parent involvement in schooling," as well as a "caring school climate" through the interview process.

Empowerment

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to the category of "Empowerment." Specifically, results indicate that the "Empowerment" category post-test scores ($M = 21.32$, $SD = 6.54$) were statistically significantly higher than the "Empowerment" category pre-test scores ($M = 16.22$, $SD = 5.73$), $t (36) = 6.17$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed), $d = 0.83$. The qualitative data indicated that the students clearly possessed the asset of "service to others." The qualitative data also indicated that the vast majority of students reported having the following two assets, "community values youth" and "youth as resources."

Boundaries and Expectations

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to the category of "Boundaries and Expectations." Specifically, results indicate that the "Boundaries and Expectations" category post-test scores ($M = 21.14$, $SD = 6.79$) were statistically significantly higher than the "Boundaries and Expectations" category pre-test scores, ($M = 16.97$, $SD = 6.09$), $t (36) = 5.55$, $p < .001$ (one-tailed), $d = 0.65$. The qualitative data indicated that the students clearly possessed the asset of "school boundaries," "adult role models," "positive peer influence," and "high expectations."

Constructive Use of Time

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to the category of "Constructive Use of Time." Specifically, results indicate that the "Constructive Use of Time" category post-test scores *($M = 16.84$, $SD = 6.46$)* were

statistically significantly higher than the "Constructive Use of Time" category pre-test

scores (*M* = 11.70, *SD* = 6.87)*, t (36) = 6.86, p < .001 (one-tailed), d* = 0.77. The

qualitative data indicated that many of the students who were interviewed understood the

importance of being involved in youth programs or creative activities. Several of the

students also indicated they understood the importance of "time at home" or using their

time productively. However, the qualitative questions were asked in such a way that it

could not be determined with any level of confidence that the at-risk students possessed

any of the "Constructive Use of Time" assets as they pertain to the qualitative data.

Therefore, the importance of the quantitative data in this category cannot be understated.

Positive Identity

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to

the category of "Positive Identity." Specifically, results indicate that the "Positive

Identity" category post-test scores *(M* = 21.46, *SD* = 6.96)* were statistically significantly

higher than the "Positive Identity" category pre-test scores (*M* = 16.51, *SD* = 4.78)*, t (36)*

= 5.82*, p < .*001 (one-tailed)*, d* = 0.84. The qualitative data overwhelmingly indicated

that the students have the assets "personal power," "self-esteem," "sense of purpose," and

a "positive view of their personal futures."

Positive Values

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to

the category of "Positive Values." Specifically, results indicate that the "Positive Values"

category post-test scores *(M* = 19.89, *SD* = 5.00)* were statistically significantly higher

than the "Positive Values" category pre-test scores (*M* = 16.22, *SD* = 5.20)*, t (36) = 6.53,*

*p < .*001 (one-tailed)*, d* = 0.72. The qualitative data indicated that the students as a group

clearly had the assets of "caring" after participating is service learning projects. The

young people also demonstrated "integrity" and a sense of "responsibility", all assets in

the "Positive Values" category. Finally, the qualitative data indicated the students had the

asset of "equality and social justice" or understanding the importance of promoting

equality as well as reducing hunger and poverty.

Commitment to Learning

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to

the category of "Commitment to Learning." Specifically, results indicate that the

"Commitment to Learning" category post-test scores *(M* = 18.86, *SD* = 5.02*)* were

statistically significantly higher than the "Commitment to Learning" category pre-test

scores (*M* = 13.14, *SD* = 6.05*), t (36)* = 7.22, *p* < .001 (one-tailed*), d* = 1.04. The

qualitative data indicated the students had the following assets: "achievement

motivation," "school engagement," and "bonding to school."

Social Competencies

There was a statistically significant difference in the quantitative data related to

the category of "Social Competencies." Specifically, results indicate that the "Social

Competencies" category post-test scores *(M* = 20.54, *SD* = 4.58*)* were statistically

significantly higher than the "Social Competencies" category pre-test scores (*M* = 16.30,

SD = 5.57*), t (36)* = 6.44, *p* < .001 (one-tailed*), d* = 0.84. The qualitative data clearly

indicated the students as a group had the assets known as "planning and decision making"

and "interpersonal competence." The students also showed they had the asset of "cultural

competence," which is defined as knowledge of and comfort with people of different

backgrounds. The qualitative data also alluded to the fact that the students understood the

importance of "restraint," although it was not demonstrated through the interview

process.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

The purpose of this mixed methods triangulation design study was to explore how "service learning" affects "at-risk" students' overall level of Developmental Assets.

The evidence brought forth in this study is clear: at-risk students report having more Developmental Assets after they participate in service learning projects. Both forms of data, quantitative and qualitative, substantiated this fact. It is also clear that placing a focus on service learning helps to build assets in each of the eight asset categories. If parents, educators, policy makers, and other members of the community were cognizant of this fact, student engagement as well as community participation would increase and create unique win-win situations and relationships.

In the final analysis, all asset categories showed a significant difference. In almost every case, each of the eight categories moved into a different "level" as indicated on the Developmental Assets Profile; however, no category ended within the "Excellent" level after the students participated in the service learning projects. The following is a recapitulation that demonstrates this fact for each of the Developmental Asset categories. The categories are listed, along with discussion points, starting with the external assets and ending with the internal assets.

Of the eight asset categories found in the Developmental Assets Profile, the category of "Support" was determined to have the second largest increase behind the category of "Commitment to Learning." The "Support" pre-test score placed the student's score toward the lower end of the "Fair" level. After the service learning projects were

completed the mean score obtained by the group was 21.30, which is located in the "Good" level. The qualitative data also showed that the students experienced "Support" from their school and parents.

Of the eight asset categories, the category of "Empowerment" was rated six of the eight when determining which asset category showed the greatest gain. The "Empowerment" pre-test score placed the student's score in the lower end of the "Fair" level. After the service learning projects were completed the mean score obtained by the group's post-test score was 21.32, which is located in the lower portion of the "Good" level. It is important to note that asset #9, "service to others" is located within this category. The increase to this category was substantiated by the qualitative data as students reported themselves and their work as being valued by the community. However, the quantitative data, again, shows that the post-test scores fall within the "Good" level.

The "Boundaries and Expectations" pre-test score was also determined to be located in the lower end of the "Fair" level. After the service learning projects were completed the mean score for "Boundaries and Expectations" obtained by the group was 21.14, which is located within the "Good" level.

Of the eight categories, it is worth noting that this category was determined to show the least growth of all the Developmental Asset categories. Although there was a significant difference with the category of "Boundaries and Expectations," the quantitative data suggest that service learning projects helped this category the least. The qualitative data suggest that the students knew and understood the boundaries and what was expected of them. They even went out of their way to behave or follow the

established rules, because they reported they did not want to miss out on the fun aspects of working in the field. The "Boundaries and Expectations" category encompasses several aspects of the community, such as family, schools, and neighborhoods. It is unknown which community sector has the lowest score, and signifies a need for a greater understanding of how to build assets within this category.

When attempting to determine which asset category had the greatest increase, the data showed that the "Constructive Use of Time" category was third when comparing all of the eight asset categories. It is also worth noting that this was the lowest pre-test score and included a mean of only 11.70, which is considered to be in the "Low" level of the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP). The post-test mean of 16.84 placed the student's average score for "Constructive Use of Time" within the "Fair" level of Developmental Assets.

This category deserves significant scrutiny. Does being involved with service learning projects constitute a healthy "constructive use of time?" Obviously, a reasonable person would think that students serving others in the community would score higher on the post-test than the pre-test due to their involvement with service learning. However, the Developmental Assets listed in this category are as follows: "Creative Activities," "Youth Programs," Religious Community," and "Time at Home." None of the assets in this category addresses school related activities unless the school is providing "Youth Programs," which are often defined as extra-curricular in nature.

So, the service learning projects are a school related activity and do not match the requirements of "Constructive Use of Time." This may be why this category showed the least level of increase. It is also worth noting that the nuances of American culture often

times preclude "Constructive Use of Time." For example, Semuels (2009) reported that 151 hours is now the average amount of time an American watches television during a given month. This is actually an increase of 3.6% when compared to the 2008 data. This doesn't even include the time that kids spend on their computers or cell phones. One could deduce that the culture is a major part of the problem regarding the "Low" level pre-test score as well as the "Fair" level post-test score for this category.

Finally, it is worth noting that the qualitative questions did facilitate answers from students that service learning had given them the confidence to be involved in other activities, but a majority of the students who were interviewed did not report this.

The External Assets category is made up of the following asset categories: Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations, and Constructive Use of Time. The scores for this category were determined by averaging the four aforementioned categories for each student. An aggregate mean was then determined for all student's "External Assets" score. While the "External Asset" score is important, it is not a part of determining which asset category experienced the greatest increase. Still, it is worth noting the "Pre-Test" for the "External Assets" level moved from the "Low" level to the highest point in the "Fair" level, a score of 20.15.

While the "Positive Identity" category had a significant increase, the significance was found to only be seventh of the eight asset categories tested. However, moving from a pre-test mean of 16.51, which is in the lower end of the "Fair" level of assets, to a post-test mean of 21.46, which places the student's mean in the "Good" level of assets, is not bad news. The data from the qualitative data clearly showed that students felt better about

themselves due to the service learning projects. In fact, there were numerous students who reported feeling good about themselves after being involved in the projects.

The "Positive Values" category was rated fourth out of the eight. The pre-test mean of 16.22 placed the students as a group within the lower portion of the "Fair" level of Developmental Assets. The post-test mean of 19.89 placed the student mean within the upper portion of the "Fair" level of Developmental Assets, the same level. While there was a significant increase in the number of assets, the "Positive Values" category remained in the "Fair" level. This is striking due to the qualitative results. Students overwhelmingly reported having several of the assets in this category including "caring," "equality and social justice," "responsibility," and "restraint."

When compared to the other seven categories of Developmental Assets, "Commitment to Learning" showed the greatest increase when pre-test to post-test results were analyzed. Unfortunately, the "Commitment to Learning" pre-test fell within the "Low" level of Developmental Assets. The Post-Test score for the "Commitment to Learning" category fell within the "Fair" level of Developmental Assets. This means the scores were at the lowest level before service learning took place. While the "Commitment to Learning" category only increased to the next level, "Fair," there is good news. Schools have significant control over the assets found in this asset category.

Of the eight asset categories, "Social Competencies" showed the fifth most improvement when compared to the other seven asset categories. The pre-test mean of 16.30 placed the group within the "Fair" level of assets. The post test mean of 20.54 placed the group within upper limits of the same category, "Fair." So, growth did occur,

but not to a new level as indicated by the Developmental Assets Profile. These data were consistent with the limited data received from the qualitative portion of the research.

The Internal Assets category is made up of the following asset categories: Positive Identity, Positive Values, Commitment to Learning, and Social Competencies. The scores for this category were determined by averaging the four aforementioned categories for each student. An aggregate mean was then determined for all student's "Internal Assets" score. While the "Internal Asset" score is important, it is not a part of determining which asset category experienced the greatest increase. Still, it is worth noting the "pre-test" for the "Internal Assets" category moved from the lower portion of the "Fair" level to the highest point in the "Fair" level, a score of 20.32.

Finally, the "Total Assets" category is made up of each of the eight asset categories. The scores for the Total Assets category were determined by averaging the eight aforementioned categories for the group of at-risk student's scores. The pre-test aggregate score of 31.38 was obtained, and the post-test score was 40.62. This means that a significant increase took place, but only moved the students from the "Fair" level of Developmental Assets to the lower portion of the "Good" level of Developmental Assets.

It is important to note that schools do not have direct control or influence over the promotion of certain Developmental Assets. For example, "family support" is an asset found in the "Support" category. Another example includes "religious community," found in the "Constructive Use of Time" category. This lack of control may have some bearing on why no categories ended in the "Excellent" category of the Developmental Asset Profile. The importance of the gains that were achieved and reported should not be ignored or minimized, especially for this student population. One thing that needs to be

strongly considered due to the results of this study is that more community sectors need to be involved in the building of Developmental Assets.

Recommendations

It is recommended that future research be conducted in several areas using the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) as well as service learning. First, there is a need to expand the research to other students who are considered to be at-risk, including those that are from different age and grade levels. This study focused only on a small student population in a Midwestern city. There is also a need to study young people considered to be at-risk over a longer period of time to determine if the level of Developmental Assets would increase, decrease, or remain constant over time after they participate in service learning projects.

Finally, if service learning works to build Developmental Assets in at-risk youth, it can be hypothesized that service learning would help build assets in those young people who are not considered to be at-risk. As a standardized assessment instrument, the Developmental Asset Profile would assist in quantifying data in each of the asset categories as it did in this study. This would also allow future research opportunities to place a focus on areas of need determined by the DAP. Further research may also show where significant differences lie between those groups that are considered to be at-risk and those that are not. Ideas could then be generated on how to close the gap, if any is determined to exist.

It is also recommended that administrators, teachers, policy makers, and any other people serving young people learn about the power of service learning as demonstrated in this study. An emphasis would have to be placed on the differences of service learning

and community service as they are clearly not synonymous. Additionally, any adults who work with youth should be encouraged to look at young people as resources, not those that take up resources.

Also, because schools cannot directly affect each of the Developmental Assets, there would be significant value in building stronger community partnerships and coalitions between schools and those who serve the youth in the community. For example, coaches, instructors, probation officers, judges, healthcare workers, business owners, and others could be educated on the Developmental Assets. A focus would need to be placed on using a "common language" to assist all sectors in building better, stronger young people who thrive. The Developmental Asset framework can provide such a common language.

The Developmental Asset Profile (DAP) is an instrument that could help facilitate a common language and stronger community coalitions and partnerships. Its use is not limited to the school environment and it could also assist in building the common language component that is necessary for those individuals and institutions that work with youth.

References

Barber, B., & Eccles, J.S. (1997) Student council, volunteering, basketball, or marching band: What kind of extracurricular involvement matters? Symposium paper presented at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research on Child Development, Washington, D.C.

Benson, P. (2006) All kids are our kids: what communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents. Josey Bass, San Francisco, CA

Benson, Peter L. Galbraith, Judy and Espeland, Pamela (1998) What teens need to succeed. Free Spirit Publishing, Minneapolis, MN

Benson, P.L., Leffert, N., Scales, P.C., & Blyth, D.A. (1998). Beyond the village rhetoric: Creating healthy communiti8es for children and adolescents. Applied Developmental Science, 2, 138-159.

Benson, Peter, Scales, Peter, Hamilton, Stephen, Sesma, Jr., Arturo (2006) Positive youth development so far: Core hypotheses and their implications for policy and practice. Insights and Evidence, November 2006, Vol 3, No. 1

Billig, Shelley, H. (2004) Heads, hearts and hands: the research on k-12 service learning. Growing to Greatness 2004, National Youth Leadership Council

Billig, Shelley and Klute, M., M. (2003) The impact of service-learning on meap: a large-scale study of Michigan learn and serve grantees. Presentation at National Service Learning Conference, Minneapolis, MN

Blum, R.W., & Rinehart, P.M. (1997). Reducing the risk: connections that make a difference in the lives of at-risk youth. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota, Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health.

Bordelon, Thomas D. & Phillips, Iris (2006) Service learning: what students have to say. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, Ca Vol. 7 (2) 143-153

Bryant, Miles (2004) The portable dissertation advisor. Corwin Press, sage publications, Thousand Oaks, CA

Buckingham, Marcus & Clifton, Donald (2001) Now, discover your strengths. Free Press, New York, NY

Buckingham, Marcus (2007) Go put your strengths to work: 6 powerful steps to achieve outstanding performance. Free Press, New York, NY

California Department of Education (1999) Getting results: developing safe and healthy kids update 1: positive youth development: research, commentary, and action. Sacramento, CA

Creswell, John W. (1994) Research design: qualitative & quantitative approaches, sage publications, Thousand Oaks, CA

Creswell, John W., and Plano Clark, Vicki L., (2007) Designing and conducting mixed methods research, sage publications, Thousand Oaks, CA

Furco, Andrew (2002) Is service-learning really better than community service? A study of high school service learning, Furco & S.H. Billig (EDS.) Advances in service-learning research. Vol.1 Service-learning: The essence of the pedagogy (pp. 23-50). Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishers.

Grobe, T, Niles, J and Weisstein, E (2001) Helping all youth succeed: building youth development systems in our communities. Boston, MA and education, commonwealth Corporation, 2001.Center for youth development.

Hecht, D. (2002) The missing link: explaining the context of learning in service-learning. Presentation at 2nd International Service-Learning Research conference, Nashvill, TN.

Hoyle R, John and Collier, Virginia (2006) Urban ceo superintendents' alternative strategies in reducing school dropouts, Education and Urban Society. Volume 39 Number 1 November 2006, 69-70.

Kerka, Sandra (2003) Alternatives for at-risk and out of school youth. ERIC Clearinghouse on adult career and vocational educaton. Columbus, OH.

Kirkham, M (2001) Sustaining service-learning in wisconsin: what principals, teachers, and students say about service-learning. Madison WI, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction: http://www.dpi.state.wi.us//dpi/dltcl/bbfcsp/pdf

Kumpfer, K.L. (1999). Factors and processes contributing to resilience. Resiliency and development: Positive life applications. New York, NY Kluwer academic publishers.

Learner, Richard, et. al. (2005) Positive youth development: a view of the issues. The Journal of Early Adolescence 2005, p10-16.

Mannes, Marc, Roehlkepartain, Eugene C. and Benson, Peter (2005) Unleashing the power of community to strengthen the well-being of children, youth, and families: an asset building approach. Child Welfare League of America 233-250.

Martin, Suzanne, and Markow, Dana (2005) The national survey of service-learning and transitioning to adulthood. Trends & Tudes, Volume 5, issue 4, April 2006.

McEvoy, Victoria (2008) Doctors alone cannot solve kids' weight problems, The Boston Globe,(Retrieved,May22,2009)

http://www.boston.com/news/science/articles/2008/01/14/doctors_alone_cant_solve_kids_weight_problems/

Meckler, Laura (2009) Budget Widens Teen-Pregnancy-Efforts Wall Street Journal

(Retrieved May 7, 2009)

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124171750523696797.html

National Center for Educational Statistics (2007) http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2007/dropout05/

National Center for Educational Statistics- U.S. Department of Education Institute of

Educational Sciences.

http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/frss/publications/1999043/index.asp?sectionid=5

National Service Learning Clearinghouse (2009) What is service learning?

http://www.servicelearning.org/

National Youth Leadership Council (2009) http://www.nylc.org/

Nelson, Judith a, and Eckstein, Danial (2006) A service-learing model for at-risk

adolescents. West Virginia University Press, Morgantown, WV

Owings, Jeffery (1992) Characteristics of at-risk students. Center for Educational

Statistics: U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences.

http://nces.ed.gov/

Senator Edward Kennedy (1991) Phi Delta Kappan pp. 771-773

Rath, Tom & and Clifton, Donald O., (2005) How full is your bucket? positive strategies

for work and life, Gallup Press, New York, NY

Richards, Lyn and Morse, Janice M. (2002) Read me first:a user's guide to qualitative

methods, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA

RMC. Impacts of service-learning on k-12 participants. Scotts Valley, CA: Learn and
Serve America's National Service-Learning Clearinghouse, 2003-2007

Roehlkepartain, Eugene, Scales, Peter and Benson, Peter, (2007) Developmental assets: a
framework for enriching service-learning, Scotts Valley, CA: Learn and Serve
America's National Service Learning Clearinghouse.

Roehlkepartain, Eugene, Hong, Kay and Scales, Peter (2005) Boosting student
achievement by building developmental assets: new research strengthens the case,
the Minnesota School Board Journal, November, 2005.

Scales, Peter, Foster, Karen C., Mannes, Marc, Horst, Megan, Pinto, Kristina C., and
Rutherford, Audra (2005) School-business partnerships, developmental assets,
and positive outcomes among urban high school students: a mixed-methods study.
Urban Education 144-189. Sage Publications, sagepublications.com

Scales, Peter, et. al. (2006) The role of developmental assets in predicting academic
achievement: a longitudinal study. Journal of Adolescence, October 2006, Vol. 29
issue 5 pp. 691-700

Scales, Peter, and Roehlkepartain, Eugene (2003) Insights and evidence: boosting student
achievement: new research on the power of developmental assets. October 2003,
Vol 1, No.1

Scales, Peter, and Roehlkepartain, Eugene (2004) Community service and service-
learning in u.s. public schools, 2004, National Youth leadership Council

Scales et.al. (2001) The role of neighborhood and community in building developmental
assets for children and youth: a national study of social norms among american
adults. Journal of Community Psychology, Vol. 29. p 703-727.

Servicelearning.org (2009) Brief historical timeline. Retrieved November 1, 2009 from

    http://www.servicelearning.org/what_is_service-learning/history/index.php

Semuels, Alana (2009) Television viewing at all-time high: nielsen's "three screen

    report" for the fourth quarter says the average American now watches more than

    151 hours of t.v. per month. The Los Angelos Times (Retrieved October 20,

    2009)

Skinner, Rebecca, and Chapman, Christopher (1999) Service-learning and community

    service in k-12 public schools. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for

    Education Statistics, Fast Response Survey System "National Student Service

    Learning and Community Service Survey, FRSS 71, 1999

Slavkin, Michael and Norma Faust (2002) Meeting the requirements of standards-based

    accountability: matching curriculum with service-learning to benefit the needs of

    at-risk students. The Generator, Vol. 21, No. 2.

Springer, Fred (1999) Beyond the magic bullet: how we can achieve science-based

    prevention. California Department of Education, Sacramento, CA

Stanton, Timothy (1990) Service learning: groping toward a definition. National Society

    for Experiential Education, Alexandria, VA

Taccogna, Judy (2003) Powerful teaching: developmental assets in curriculum and

    instruction, The Search Institute Press, Minneapolis, MN

Tashakkori, Abbas and Teddlie, Charles (1998) Mixed methodology: combining

    qualitative and quantitative approaches. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, CA

Taylor, S. (1994). Round kids, square schools. Unpublished Manuscript. Francis Marion

    University, South Carolina.

The Search Institute (2000) An asset builders guide to service learning, The Search
Institute, Minneapolis, MN

The Search Institute (2009) 40 developmental assets for adolescents. Retrieved
November 1, 2009 from http://www.search-institute.org/content/40-
developmental-assets-adolescents-ages-12-18

The Search Institute (2009) About Us. Retrieved November 1, 2009 from
http://www.search-institute.org/about

The Search Institute (2009) A new era. Retrieved November 1, 2009 from
http://www.search-institute.org/about/history

The Search Institute (2009) How many assets do young people have? Retrieved
November 1, 2009 from http://www.search-institute.org/research/assets/asset-
levels

The Search Institute (2009) How many youth experience each asset? Retrieved
November 1, 2009 from http://www.search-institute.org/research/assets/assetfreq

The Search Institute (2009) The power of assets. Retrieved November 1, 2009 from
http://www.search-institute.org/research/assets/assetpower

The Search Institute (2009) What are developmental assets? Retrieved November 1, 2009
from http://www.search-institute.org/developmental-assets

The Search Institute (2009) Where the asset framework comes from? Retrieved
November 1, 2009 from http://www.search-
institute.org/research/assets/background

United States Department of Education. Making the case for social and emotional
learning and service learning, collaborative for academic, social and emotional

learning education commission of the states and laboratory for student success.

http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/training/connect/school_pg25.html

Webster, Nicole, S. and Worrell, Frank, C. (2008) Academically talented student's

attitudes toward service in the community. Gifted Child Quarterly, Vol. 52,

Number 2, Spring 2008, pp. 170-179.

Wright, Paul S. (2001) Effect of an asset-based recreation curriculum on developmental

assets of court-supervised youth, Dissertation, University of Utah Library

Appendix A

IRB Approval Letter

University of Nebraska
Lincoln

May 22, 2009

Kraig Lofquist
Department of Educational Administration
16910 Holmes Cir Omaha, NE 68135-1443

Larry Dlugosh
Department of Educational Administration
141C TEAC UNL 68588-0360

IRB Number: 2009058053 EX
Project ID: 8053
Project Title: Developmental Asset Building in At-Risk Youth: A Mixed Methods Study

Dear Kraig:

This letter is to officially notify you of the approval of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board's opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study based on the information provided. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution's Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as exempt.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Final Approval: 05/22/2009. This approval is Valid Until: 05/21/2010.

1. The approved informed consent forms have been uploaded to NUgrant (Loftquist Parent ICF-Approved.pdf and Loftquist Student Assent-Approved.pdf files). Please use these forms to distribute to participants. If you need to make changes to the informed consent forms, please submit the revised form to the IRB for review and approval prior to using them.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:
• Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
• Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
• Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;

• Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
• Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board. For projects which continue beyond one year from the starting date, the IRB will request continuing review and update of the research project. Your study will be due for continuing review as indicated above. The investigator must also advise the Board when this study is finished or discontinued by completing the enclosed Protocol Final Report form and returning it to the Institutional Review Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

Mario Scalora, Ph.D.
Chair for the IRB

Appendix B

Developmental Assets Profile Questionnaire

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS PROFILE
Self-Report for Ages 11-18

NAME / ID: _____   **TODAY'S DATE:** Mo: _____   Day: _____
Yr: _____

SEX: ☐ Male ☐ Female **AGE:** _____   **GRADE:** _____   **BIRTH DATE:**   Mo: _____   Day: _____
Yr: _____

RACE/ETHNICITY (Check all that apply):   ☐American Indian or Alaska Native   ☐ Asian
☐ Black or African American   ☐ Hispanic or Latino/Latina   ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other
Pacific Islander
☐ White   ☐ Other (*please specify*):

INSTRUCTIONS: Below is a list of positive things that you might have in *yourself, your family, friends, neighborhood,*
school, and community. For each item that describes you **now or within the past 3 months**, check if the item is true:

           Not At All or Rarely   **Somewhat or Sometimes**   **Very or Often**   **Extremely or Almost Always**

If you do not want to answer an item, leave it blank. But please try to answer all items as best you can.

Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always	**I . . .**
☐	☐	☐	☐	1. Stand up for what I believe in.
☐	☐	☐	☐	2. Feel in control of my life and future.
☐	☐	☐	☐	3. Feel good about myself.
☐	☐	☐	☐	4. Avoid things that are dangerous or unhealthy.
☐	☐	☐	☐	5. Enjoy reading or being read to.
☐	☐	☐	☐	6. Build friendships with other people.
☐	☐	☐	☐	7. Care about school.
☐	☐	☐	☐	8. Do my homework.
☐	☐	☐	☐	9. Stay away from tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs.
☐	☐	☐	☐	10. Enjoy learning.
☐	☐	☐	☐	11. Express my feelings in a proper way.
☐	☐	☐	☐	12. Feel good about my future.
☐	☐	☐	☐	13. Seek advice from my parents.
☐	☐	☐	☐	14. Deal with frustration in positive ways.
☐	☐	☐	☐	15. Overcome challenges in positive ways.
☐	☐	☐	☐	16. Think it is important to help other people.
☐	☐	☐	☐	17. Feel safe and secure at home.

☐	☐	☐	☐	18. Plan ahead and make good choices.
☐	☐	☐	☐	19. Resist bad influences.
☐	☐	☐	☐	20. Resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt.
☐	☐	☐	☐	21. Feel valued and appreciated by others.
☐	☐	☐	☐	22. Take responsibility for what I do.
☐	☐	☐	☐	23. Tell the truth even when it is not easy.
☐	☐	☐	☐	24. Accept people who are different from me.
☐	☐	☐	☐	25. Feel safe at school.

_____

PLEASE TURN OVER AND COMPLETE THE BACK.

Not At All or Rarely	Somewhat or Sometimes	Very or Often	Extremely or Almost Always	
				I AM . . .
☐	☐	☐	☐	26. Actively engaged in learning new things.
☐	☐	☐	☐	27. Developing a sense of purpose in my life.
☐	☐	☐	☐	28. Encouraged to try things that might be good for me.
☐	☐	☐	☐	29. Included in family tasks and decisions.
☐	☐	☐	☐	30. Helping to make my community a better place.
☐	☐	☐	☐	31. Involved in a religious group or activity.
☐	☐	☐	☐	32. Developing good health habits.
☐	☐	☐	☐	33. Encouraged to help others.
☐	☐	☐	☐	34. Involved in a sport, club, or other group.
☐	☐	☐	☐	35. Trying to help solve social problems.
☐	☐	☐	☐	36. Given useful roles and responsibilities.
☐	☐	☐	☐	37. Developing respect for other people.
☐	☐	☐	☐	38. Eager to do well in school and other activities.
☐	☐	☐	☐	39. Sensitive to the needs and feelings of others.
☐	☐	☐	☐	40. Involved in creative things such as music, theater or art.
☐	☐	☐	☐	41. Serving others in my community.
☐	☐	☐	☐	42. Spending quality time at home with my parent(s).
				I HAVE . . .
☐	☐	☐	☐	43. Friends who set good examples for me.
☐	☐	☐	☐	44. A school that gives students clear rules.
☐	☐	☐	☐	45. Adults who are good role models for me.
☐	☐	☐	☐	46. A safe neighborhood.
☐	☐	☐	☐	47. Parent(s) who try to help me succeed.
☐	☐	☐	☐	48. Good neighbors who care about me.
☐	☐	☐	☐	49. A school that cares about kids and encourages them.

☐	☐	☐	☐	50. Teachers who urge me to develop and achieve.
☐	☐	☐	☐	51. Support from adults other than my parents.
☐	☐	☐	☐	52. A family that provides me with clear rules.
☐	☐	☐	☐	53. Parent(s) who urge me to do well in school.
☐	☐	☐	☐	54. A family that gives me love and support.
☐	☐	☐	☐	55. Neighbors who help watch out for me.
☐	☐	☐	☐	56. Parent(s) who are good at talking with me about things.
☐	☐	☐	☐	57. A school that enforces rules fairly.
☐	☐	☐	☐	fifty-eight. A family that knows where I am and what I am doing.

_____

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS FORM.

Appendix C

Developmental Asset Profile Answer Sheet

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS PROFILE
YOUTH REPORT - CATEGORY VIEW
VERSION 1.0

ID:
Name:
Date:

Gender:
Age:
Grade:

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	LOW

EXTERNAL ASSETS

INTERNAL ASSETS

I.
SUPPORT
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 13 Advise parents
___ 47 Parents help
___ 48 Good neighbors
___ 49 Caring school
___ 51 Adult support
___ 54 Family support
___ 56 Parents talk
0 RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

II.
EMPOWERMENT
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 17 Safe at home
___ 21 Feels valued
___ 25 Safe at school
___ 29 Family tasks
___ 36 Useful roles
___ 46 Safe neighbor
0 RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

III.
BOUNDARIES & EXPECTATIONS
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 43 Peer role models
___ 44 Clear school rules
___ 45 Adult role models
___ 50 Teachers encourage
___ 52 Clear family rules
___ 53 Parents encourage
___ 55 Neighbors monitor
___ 57 Fair school rules
___ 58 Family monitors
0 RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

IV.
CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 31 Religious activity
___ 34 Sport, club, group
___ 40 Creative activities
___ 42 Time at home
RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

V.
COMMITMENT TO LEARNING
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 5 Enjoys reading
___ 7 Cares about school
___ 8 Does homework
___ 10 Enjoys learning
___ 26 Engaged learning
___ 28 Encouraged new
___ 38 Motivated
0 RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

VI.
POSITIVE VALUES
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 1 Stands up for beliefs
___ 9 Avoids alcohol
___ 16 Values helping
___ 22 Takes responsibility
___ 23 Values honest
___ 30 Help community
___ 32 Healthy habits
___ 33 Encouraged to help
___ 35 Help solve problems
___ 37 Respect others
___ 41 Serving others
0 RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

VII.
SOCIAL COMPETENCIES
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 4 Avoids unhealthy
___ 6 Builds friendships
___ 11 Expresses feelings
___ 18 Plans ahead
___ 19 Resists pressure
___ 20 Resolves conflicts
___ 24 Accepts others
___ 39 Sensitive to others
0 RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

VIII.
POSITIVE IDENTITY
SCALE SCORE ___
___ 2 Feels in control
___ 3 Positive self esteem
___ 12 Good future
___ 14 Manages frustration
___ 15 Overcomes challenges
___ 27 Sense of purpose
0 RAW SUM (A)
0 # OF ITEMS (B)

SCALE SCORE = (A/B) x 10 ROUND TO INTEGER
SEE USER MANUAL FOR SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	LOW

Appendix D

Service Learning Interview Protocol

Developmental Asset Building in At-Risk Youth: A Mixed Method Study

Service Learning Interview Protocol

Student#: _____   Date: _____

> **Central Question:** Does "service learning" increase the amount of Developmental Assets in young people?

The purpose of this study is to determine if the number of Developmental Assets a student possesses is increased by their participation in service learning projects.

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me today. I will be recording and transcribing our interview. Because accuracy is important, I might ask you to review some of my notes. I want to make sure I am representing your views correctly.

I am interested in finding out more about your experience with "service learning." I really want to know your perspective so please feel free to discuss your views. I may ask you some additional questions as we go along in order to clarify for me what you mean. Are you ready to start?

Questions to Start

What was your favorite service learning project/activity?

Describe how you did research for your service learning project?

Tell me about the tools you used to do the research such as the internet and other sources.

SUPPORT	Notes
Tell me how you have communicated your service learning project to your parents (or guardians?) Tell me how your school encourages you to be involved in service learning projects? Tell me how service learning has made you feel connected to your school.	
EMPOWERMENT	
How do you think people in the community feel about your service learning projects? Do you think they value your work? Does service learning change your thoughts on how the community sees you and all youth? In the future, tell me what your plans will be as far as being involved in your community?	
BOUNDARIES/EXPECTATIONS	
Tell me about some positive role models or positive behaviors you have learned by being involved with service learning. How has service learning developed better behavior in your friends and acquaintances? How do teachers encourage you to do well when you are involved with service learning projects?	
CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF TIME	
Tell me about your favorite part of service learning. Tell me about your least favorite part of service learning. How does service learning make you more responsible with your time?	
POSITIVE IDENTITY	
Does service learning improve someone's self esteem? If so, how does that happen? How can service learning increase a person's sense of purpose in their life?	

How do these service learning activities make you feel about your personal future?	
POSITIVE VALUES	
Tell me what service learning has taught you about helping other people. What has service learning taught you about issues such as equality, hunger and poverty? Do you think service learning helps people take responsibility?	
Commitment to Learning	
How has service learning motivated you to do well in school? Does service learning make you feel more connected or happy with school?	
Social Competencies	
Tell me how service learning has affected your ability to plan ahead and make decisions? Tell me how service learning has made you better at interacting with other people.	
Other	
What could be done to make service learning (or activities) more enjoyable? Do you have anything else you could add about service learning?	
Notes	

Appendix E

Parent Consent Form

Date

Dear Parent,

My name is Kraig J. Lofquist. I am a doctoral degree student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. I wish to conduct a research project regarding Developmental Asset building in youth. The purpose of this mixed methods study is to explore how "service learning" affects student's overall level of developmental assets. The study will be of a mixed methods nature which will require me to ask each student questions about developmental assets and their experience with "service learning projects."

In order to effectively address the purpose of this study, I wish to interview seventh and eighth school students who attend Central Middle School and who have participated in the "Time Travelers" program". I will need your permission on behalf of Millard Public Schools and the permission of the parents of each of the students. Participation is strictly optional and the following safeguards are being brought to your attention.

Please sign and return the consent form in the self-addressed stamped envelope to:

Kraig J. Lofquist
16910 Holmes Circle
Omaha, NE 68135

As always, if you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 715-8300.

Most Respectfully,

Kraig J. Lofquist, Ed.S.

Developmental Asset Building in Youth: A Mixed Methods Study

Procedures

If the appropriate permission is granted, and the student decides to participate in this study, they will partake in a one-on-one interview with a University of Nebraska doctoral student, Kraig J. Lofquist. To ensure confidentiality, the interview will be conducted in a conference room at the school. Instructional time will not be adversely affected. The interview will take approximately thirty to sixty minutes. Students can take breaks during the interview as needed. During the interview, the student will be asked questions about their thoughts relating to their participation in service learning projects. The interview will be audio recorded for later transcription and analysis.

Risks and/or Discomforts

There are no known risks or discomforts to participants.

Benefits

Participants will not receive any direct benefit from this research. However, analysis of the results from this study may provide valuable insights regarding "service to others" through "service learning" projects. Specifically, it may determine if "service to others" helps create more developmental assets simultaneously. If students report having more developmental assets after participating in service learning projects, the implications will be truly significant to the institutions within our society. Schools, businesses and policymakers will then be able to embrace the concept of service to others which would not only build developmental assets within youth, but help create a more positive culture and society.

Confidentiality

Any information about the students shall be kept strictly confidential. However, due to the small sample size, I cannot guarantee that their identity will not become known. The following steps are being taken to minimize this risk.

To ensure confidentiality, the interview will be conducted in a school conference meeting room. Names will appear only on this consent form as well as on the Developmental Asset Profile (DAP) answer sheet. The answer sheet will be used only to match the results to the student's interview. Results will be viewed only at school. Confidentiality will not be breached as the interviewer has access to the Developmental Assets Profile (DAP) score sheet as part of his regular job responsibilities. Additionally, participant names will not be associated with the audio recording made of the interview. Audio recordings will be transcribed by the researcher, Kraig J. Lofquist, and then the recordings will be destroyed within a three year period after the transcription. In the event participants choose to share any negative information, it will not have an adverse effect on any school relationships. Names will not be used in any manuscripts or presentations

resulting from this research. Instead, participant will be assigned a participant number or a pseudonym. It is the intent of the primary investigator to publish the results in dissertation format. Also, the investigator(s) may write articles about the research or talk about it at professional meetings or during college classes, but will not provide any identifying information about the participants. The data will only be reported in aggregate form. All research materials will be kept in a locked file cabinet, and will be destroyed within three years of completing the analysis procedures.

Compensation

The students will not be paid for participating in this project.

Contacting the Investigators: Opportunity to Ask Questions

The student's participation in this study is voluntary. You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to your child's participation in or during the study. Or you may call the investigator at any time. The principal investigator, Kraig Lofquist can be reached at 715-8300, and Dr. Larry Dlugosh can be reached at 472-0975. Please contact the investigator if you want to voice concerns or complaints about the research.

Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 if you wish to talk to someone other than the research staff to obtain answers to questions about your rights, or your child's rights as a research participant; to voice concerns or a complaint about the research; to provide input concerning the research process; or in the event the researchers listed above could not be reached.

Freedom to Withdraw From the Study

Any student, or student's parent on behalf of the student, can decide not to participate in this study and withdraw at any time. The decision of the student or the student's parent to not participate or to withdraw will not result in any negative consequences or adverse effects on any relationships they have with the researcher, their student status or the University of Nebraska – Lincoln.

By signing and returning this form, you are giving your child permission to participate in this research. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Name of Child: _____

I agree for my child to be audio taped during this study.   _____

I **DO** give permission to Kraig J. Lofquist to interview my child. I understand that my child's participation is voluntary and they must agree to the interview along with having my permission. They can also refuse to answer any questions or withdraw at any time.

_____

Parent Signature

I **DO NOT** give permission to Kraig J. Lofquist to interview my child.

_____

Parent Signature

Appendix F

Student Assent Form

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN SCIENCES
Department of Educational Administration

Student Assent Form

You are being asked to participate in a research study pertaining to Developmental Assets and "service learning" because you have worked on service learning projects this year. The title of the study is Developmental Asset Building.

Your parent(s) or guardian(s) will need to give permission for you to participate.

If you decide to participate, you will participate in an interview with, me, Kraig Lofquist, a college student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The interview will last approximately 30-60 minutes in length.

The interviews will take place in the conference room at Millard Central Middle School. You can take breaks during the interview as needed. During the interview, I will ask you questions about issues that relate to your "service learning" experiences. The interview will be audio recorded for later transcription and analysis. The information you share will be strictly confidential and your name or other identifying information will never be shared. There are no known risks to you. You can decline to answer any questions that you don't want to answer, and if you wish to change your mind about participating you can withdraw at any time.

I, Kraig Lofquist, the principal investigator can be reached at 715-8300, and Dr. Larry Dlugosh, the secondary investigator can be reached at 472-0975.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

_____
Participants Signature

_____
Investigators Signature