

Dear YOUers and Sponsors:

After last year's Appreciative Inquiry Summit, wonderful energy charged through IYOU and a clear vision statement emerged:

**As a spirit led youth movement, we empower individuals
around the world on their spiritual journey.**

IYOU calls upon all YOU chapters and regions to make a positive difference in the world through personal example and active service. By continually striving to participate in the betterment of humanity through our positive thoughts, words and deeds, a cause and effect reaction occurs that results in a consciousness shift that positively affects everyone.

During the weekend of April 24-26, 2009, we invite you to join the IYOU Worldwide Service team and participate in the largest youth service event in the world—Global Youth Service Day (GYSD). Over the past 20 years, GYSD has brought together more than 40 million people in thousands of communities worldwide to serve together. Imagine the energy IYOU can contribute by participating with millions of youth in over 100 countries in a weekend of service!

**Are you ready to participate in this historic
service event?**

Go to the Global Youth Service Day website (www.gysd.org) to discover ways to participate in events that have already been organized, or organize your own. You can also post your event on the website. To participate, you can work together in a group project or individually, spreading random acts of kindness. YOU can make a huge difference as we join together to help co-create a world that works for all.



The 20th Annual Global Youth Service Day

Held throughout the world the weekend of April 24-26, 2009.

89 Ways to Make a Difference in Your Community

Young people are serving their communities in record numbers. Each year, approximately 13 million teens give 2.4 billion hours of service back to their communities. Here are some ideas for how you can make a difference:

1. Help teach a younger child to read.
2. Help cook and/or serve a meal at a homeless shelter.
3. Gather clothing from your neighbors and donate it to a local shelter.
4. Make “I Care” kits with combs, toothbrushes, shampoo, etc. for the homeless.
5. Pack and hand out food at a local food bank.
6. Adopt a “grand friend” and write them letters and visit them.
7. Visit senior citizens at a nursing home.
8. Rake leaves, shovel snow, clean gutters, or wash windows for a senior citizen.
9. Pick up groceries or medicine for an elderly person.
10. Go for a walk with a senior citizen in your community.
11. Deliver meals to homebound individuals.
12. Hold an afternoon dance for your local nursing home.
13. Teach a senior friend how to use a computer and the Internet.
14. Paint a mural over graffiti.
15. Invite local police officers to present a drug awareness or safety program.
16. Tutor a student that needs help learning English or another subject.
17. Organize a canned goods drive.
18. Clean up a vacant lot or park.
19. Organize a campaign to raise money to purchase and install playground equipment.
20. Plant flowers in public areas that could use some color.
21. Volunteer to help at a Special Olympics event.
22. Set up a buddy system for kids with special needs in your community.
23. Raise money for Braille books for visually impaired people.
24. Read books or the newspaper on tape for visually impaired people.
25. Bring toys to children in the cancer ward of a hospital.
26. Plant a garden or tree where the whole neighborhood can enjoy it.
27. Set up a recycling system for your home, school, and/or church.
28. Organize a carpooling campaign in your neighborhood.
29. Adopt an acre of a rainforest.
30. Clean up trash along a river, beach, or in a park.
31. Create a habitat for wildlife.
32. Create a campaign to encourage biking and walking.
33. Test the health of the water in your local lakes, rivers, and streams.
34. Contact your local volunteer center for opportunities to serve.
35. Volunteer at your local animal shelter.
36. Help build a home with Habitat for Humanity.
37. Walk a neighbor's dog or pet sit while they are on vacation.



38. Teach Sunday school.
39. Learn to be a peer counselor.
40. Send a letter to one of America's veterans or overseas soldiers.
41. Volunteer at your local youth center.
42. Participate in a marathon or sporting event for your favorite charity.
43. Become a candy striper at your local hospital.
44. Mentor a young person.
45. Donate books to your local library.
46. Donate clothes to the Salvation Army.
47. Start a book club in your area.
48. Adopt a pet from the Humane Society.
49. Hold a door open for someone.
50. Give up your seat on the bus or train to someone.
51. Donate your old computer to a school.
52. Give blood.
53. Become an organ donor.
54. Teach a dance class.
55. Volunteer on a hotline.
56. Meet with local representatives from your area.
57. Don't drink and drive.
58. Listen to others.
59. Write a letter to the editor about an issue you care about.
60. Bring others with you when you volunteer.
61. Shop at local, family owned businesses.
62. Become a Big Brother or Big Sister.
63. Take a historical tour of your community.
64. Write a note to a teacher that had a positive effect on you.
65. Get together with some friends to buy holiday presents for a family at a shelter.
66. Recycle.
67. Drive responsibly.
68. Get CPR and First Aid certification.
69. Don't litter.
70. Shop responsibly.
71. Don't spread or start gossip.
72. Tell someone that you appreciate him/her.
73. Hold a teddy bear drive for foster children, fire victims, etc.
74. Make a care package for an elderly or shut-in person.
75. Teach at an adult literacy center.
76. Sing for residents at a nursing home.
77. Befriend a new student or neighbor.
78. Baby sit.
79. Look for the good in all people.
80. Coordinate a book drive.
81. Donate money to your favorite charity.
82. Make quilts or baby clothes for low-income families.
83. Bake cookies and bring them to your local fire or police station.
84. Donate toys or suitcases to foster children.

85. When visiting someone in a hospital, talk to someone that doesn't have many visitors.
86. Around the holidays, visit the Post Office and answer some letters to Santa.
87. Start a neighborhood welcome committee.
88. Visit www.SERVE.net to find volunteer opportunities in your area.
89. Plan your next year of service.

Reflect and Share

After completing your service activities, please take some time to reflect on the experience and share your thoughts with us.

You may want a journal or notebook in which to keep your reflections about GYSD. These questions are designed for you to freely write-in response to your experiences.

1. What did you do? What feelings did you have during the whole experience (accomplishment, satisfaction, frustration, sadness, etc.)? What are the things you enjoyed? What are the things that bothered you?
2. Many times with community service we are serving people with much less than ourselves. How does experiencing this inequality affect your service, if at all? Was it uncomfortable for you? Do you think it was uncomfortable for those you were serving?
3. Think about what you gave and what you received during your service experience. Are they equal? Should they be?
4. What did you learn from your interactions? What do you want to take with you from this experience? Will you see anything differently after this experience?

Ideas for a final project

Have everyone from the group pick something they wrote in their journal or a story from their service project. Compile them together with photos from the project in a creative presentation to post online (ex: A slideshow, a video, a blog, or online scrapbook). At the Global Youth Services Day website (gysd.org/share) you can learn more about how to plan, share, promote and record your event. Photos can be posted online at Flickr and videos on YouTube! There is also a Facebook event for GYSD you can join, and you can even text or "twitter" about your experience.

Make a positive difference in our world by joining Youth of Unity across America by participating in the 20th Annual Global Youth Service Day on April 24-26, 2009.

In joyful service,

The IYOU Worldwide Service Team (with special thanks to Sabrina Garvin)