



MLK Challenge Toolkit



North Carolina | **Campus Compact**



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY OF SERVICE

In 1994 Congress passed the King Holiday and Service Act, designating the King Holiday as a national day of volunteer service. Instead of a day off from work or school, Congress asked Americans of all backgrounds and ages to celebrate Dr. King's legacy by turning community concerns into citizen action. The King Day of Service brings together people who might not ordinarily meet, breaks down barriers that have divided, leads to better understanding and ongoing relationships, and is an opportunity for service organizations to recruit new volunteers.

Participation in the King Day of Service has grown steadily over the past decade, with hundreds of thousands of Americans each year engaging in projects such as tutoring and mentoring children, painting schools and senior centers, delivering meals, building homes, and reflecting on Dr. King's life and teachings. Many of the projects started on King Day continue to engage volunteers beyond the holiday and impact the community year-round. To learn more about national MLK Day service efforts visit: <http://www.mlkday.gov/>.

BACKGROUND OF THE MLK CHALLENGE

The "MLK Challenge" event began in 2000 at Appalachian State University when the Appalachian & the Community Together (ACT) program applied for and was awarded funding from the Corporation for National & Community Service to support service activities on the MLK holiday. Upon receiving word that the request would be funded, Jenny Koehn, Coordinator of Community Service at ASU, and a team of students, set to work to create the first MLK Challenge!



From the very first year, this program was well received and loved by students and community partners alike. Because of logistical arrangements, the event has stayed constant at approximately 200 participants completing 15-17 various service 'challenges' per year. The program was funded for three years from the CNCS, and then a local business donor pledged an annual commitment to assist with the event.

The concept of completing a challenge sprang from a seemingly unrelated conference workshop attended in the summer of 1999, where students chose a project to complete during the course of a retreat; how and when they completed it was up to them. This sparked the idea to launch the "challenge" large-scale around a service event. Because all MLK service challenges are kept secret until the day of the event, there is an air of mystery that makes the event fun and new each year.

Several other institutions have hosted a similar event over the years, with modifications made for their campus, including Central Piedmont Community College, East Carolina University, North Carolina State University, Furman University, College of Charleston and Palm Beach Atlanta College. Thanks to funding from the Points of Light Foundation and the generosity and willingness of the ACT staff at Appalachian State University to share their model, NC Campus Compact is pleased to offer this MLK Challenge Toolkit to Campus Compact member campuses. Using the MLK Challenge as a model, we hope to encourage campuses to highlight MLK Day as a "A Day On...Not a Day Off."

OVERVIEW OF THE MLK CHALLENGE

The MLK Challenge is essentially a day of service projects... but with a different process from other such events. Many "service days" entail placing people in various group service projects which they are expected to complete. These days are excellent ways to spur motivation within participants and accomplish great things. The MLK Challenge takes this concept a step further by framing the service as a "challenge" to be completed; the result has been that participants are automatically in a different mindset and are prepared for a rigorous day.

An important aspect of the event is that groups are determined on a totally random basis, thereby challenging participants to meet new people. The service challenges are also selected on a random basis, which has proven to boost interest, fun, and excitement. Teams are given basic instructions and a final goal ... the rest is up to them.

Service projects are selected based on local community agency requests – whoever has the greatest need for the completion of a group project will be selected. Campuses are encouraged to look for projects that are not necessarily the agency's normal volunteer needs (e.g., interaction with clients); the goal is to take on those projects for which community organizations do not have the time or resources to complete. The "challenges" are primarily manual/physical labor types of requests, as well as fundraising requests – and all projects should allow participating community organizations to expand or improve their abilities to help the people they serve.

Participants receive enough instruction regarding the project to get them started. The project facilitators coach all groups for success; however, they expect all of the groups to brainstorm ways in which the project could be completed. In addition to "seed money" that each group is provided, they are responsible for garnishing additional resources to achieve this goal and work together as a team through the completion of the project. Local community businesses have proved extremely generous in their spontaneous giving, aiding to the success of the day. In addition to the specific team challenges, the entire group is given a "bonus challenge" to complete throughout the day.



This particular method of group service elicits the problem-solving abilities that groups and individuals have within themselves to accomplish major projects in a short amount of time. Far from being told what to do and how to do it, the MLK Challenge requires participants to work together, organize, problem-solve, realize their capabilities, and achieve a major goal. The effect can be very powerful to the individual who wonders how he/she can truly make a difference.

Throughout the day the life and commitment that Dr. King modeled for social action is discussed and reflected upon. While the MLK Challenge is designed to take place on the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, at the end of the day, participants are challenged to pledge to complete an additional 100 hours of service throughout the coming year.

"Although social change cannot come over night, we must always work as though it were a possibility in the morning."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

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Included in this tool-kit you will find the following topics and documents to assist your campus in launching an MLK Challenge. Although this program model has a successful track record over eight years of implementation, it is expected that campuses will modify the program to fit their capacity and unique campus climate and culture.

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This toolkit was written with the assistance and support of Jenny Koehn, Coordinator of Community Service in the Appalachian and the Community Together (A.C.T.) office at Appalachian State University, and Kara Brown, ASU student and 2007-2008 impACT Team Co-Chair. Many thanks to the A.C.T. office for providing the photographs included!

"Make a career of humanity—and you will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

MLK CHALLENGE ROLES

Below is an overview of possible roles, but there may be another way of assigning/creating roles that works better for your campus. As with any student planning committee, there will be a mix of talents and skills that students bring with them to the team, as well as varying levels of experience. You will find more detailed role information on the following pages.

Project Director – staff person in the community service/service-learning/civic engagement office who oversees the entire project.

Site Leader –staff/faculty member or graduate assistant who participates in a site leader orientation, maintains the challenge packet, manages the team's seed money, drives the van (if applicable), facilitates team ice-breaker and reflection activities, and most importantly oversees team efforts to acquire project materials and complete the project activities and tasks.

Student Planning Committee – group of students who take the lead with planning and implementing the project.

From within this student committee a suggested division of responsibilities is listed below:

- Site Development Coordinator – Communicates with community partners to assist with service challenge site research and development. Assists with site leader recruitment, communication, and training. Develops site leader informational packets for the event, as well as facilitates and coordinates the Challenge Packet selection process.
- Publicity Coordinator – Coordinates the design of event posters and poster distribution, promotional emails, radio spots, and other ideas as brainstormed by the committee. Also responsible for signage at the event (quote-posters, thank you's, etc.). Shares responsibility with Registration for club mass mailing.
- Registration Coordinator – Creates and manage large database of participant registrations and communicates confirmations with each participant. Shares responsibility with Publicity for club mass mailing. Fully coordinates registration the morning of the event.
- Day-of-Event Coordinator – Coordinates opening/closing ceremonies, including contacting and confirming speakers, incorporating MLK educational components, designing the Pledge Card campaign, and end-of-day evaluations.
- Hospitality Coordinator – Responsible for any food arrangements (i.e. continental breakfast, sack lunches, and pizza dinner). If applicable, organizes, designs, orders, and distributes MLK Challenge "keepsake" for participants (i.e. t-shirts, posters, pins, magnets etc...)

The **SITE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR** communicates with community partners to assist with service challenge site research and development. Assists with site leader recruitment, communication, and training. Develops site leader informational packets for the event, as well as facilitates and coordinates the Challenge Packet selection process.

Developing “the Challenges”

During the first year, this will be one of YOUR biggest challenges in coordinating the event. The type of project you are looking for is a substantial, group-oriented service project, one that can be formed into a challenge (with just a little creativity, nearly everything can be worded as a challenge). A typical team consists of 10-12 members.

- The first year, you will need to explain the concept of the day to community agencies and ask if they have any types of projects that a group could assist with that day. This might take a lot of phone work, but in the years to come, they might start calling YOU with project ideas!
 - *Note: there are many important needs that agencies will have. If they suggest a project that is a need, but it may not fit well during this particular day, just be sure to find another student club or individual who can assist with that need at another time. Remember, we are here to partner with them to serve our community!*
- Look primarily for projects with a start and a finish. If there is a big project that was started by one group and will continue after your group, find a way to phrase it as a motivational challenge to the team to get as far as they can during the day.
- Projects will typically be manual labor, cleaning, organizing, small construction, painting offices or murals, etc. But... be creative! Meal preparation and delivery for Hospice patients has been a favorite, as well as a birthday party for senior citizens. **See Sample Challenges on page 15**
- Set teams off with a challenge, their seed money (\$75 for each group, for example), and directions to the site. Leave the rest up to them. **See Seed Money explanation on page 19**
- Resist the urge to plan too much! If you know a team will be painting, for example, it is very tempting to line up brushes and paint trays for their use. Resist the urge and you will marvel at what the students come up with to complete their challenges.
- Good communication with the agencies is a must. Some projects may take a few phone calls to develop, and confirming a few days before the event is essential.
- Encourage the agency not to plan too much, either. A few helpful mechanisms are one thing ... arranging everything is another. Most will be thrilled that they do not need to provide supplies; just an orientation, some guidance and motivation, and a willingness to see what the team creates.

SITE DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR continued...

Selecting Site Leaders

The term “site leader” is really a misnomer, as site leaders are routinely told that they are to stand back and let the students make the decisions. However, a talented site leader can inspire and help keep a group motivated to achieve their goals and have fun in the process. For ASU the site leader is a staff/faculty member or graduate assistant.

Some things to keep in mind:

- Recruit one site leader per group. (e.g., 12 site leaders for 12 sites)
- For the first year, you may need to persuade these staff or faculty members that this will be a good way to spend their time/weekend day/vacation day ... In the following years, this becomes much easier as the event builds a name for itself.
- Gather the site leaders together for an orientation before the day of the event to give tips, important information, and basic instruction about the sites.

**Sample Agenda
for Site Leader Orientation**
(recommended to occur at least one week
before MLK Day Challenge)

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. MLK Challenge Overview
3. Review MLK Challenge Day-Of Agenda
4. Review of challenges, including Bonus Challenge. Please note that, just like all the participants, the site leaders will not find out their site until the day of the Challenge.
5. Role of the Site Leader

SITE LEADER INFO PACKET

Create a comprehensive informational packet for site leaders to take with them the day of the event. Site leader packet may include:

- ✚ Site leader roster and cell phone numbers for each site leader (be sure to include emergency contact information and Project Director information, too)
- ✚ A list of the challenges with space to write which site leader ends up with which challenge (in order to communicate via cell phone if need be)
- ✚ Small group reflection possibilities for conversation during lunch, van time, or if the project ends a few minutes early
- ✚ Two activity options for a morning group icebreaker
- ✚ The seed money for the group
- ✚ Whatever else you might think they'll need!

TIP: ASU has chosen to keep the sites randomly selected for the site leaders, too; this way, the site leader is part of the challenge, and resists the temptation to arrange things ahead of time for their group. This also helps them feel more connected to that group than the site.

The **PUBLICITY COORDINATOR** coordinates the design of event posters and poster distribution, promotional emails, radio spots, and other ideas as brainstormed by the committee. Also responsible for signage at the event (quote-posters, thank you's, etc.). Shares responsibility with Registration for club mass mailing.

As with any event, it is very, very important to create eye-catching, fun, and informational publicity!

The student may design the poster him/herself, recruit someone else to design it, or work with an off-campus graphic design office, as long as it is appropriate and meets the standards of the planning committee. The poster is one of the first pieces of the event to come together, as so much depends on "the look" of it for further advertising efforts.

Poster Tips:

Hint of mystery: An effective strategy at ASU since the first year has been adding the tag line: *MLK Challenge ... Are YOU up for it?* This piques student interest from the beginning, and continues to be a tag line to incorporate throughout the day.

Big & Colorful: If possible, spend the extra money to make these posters larger in size (11x17 or 8.15x14, for example) and in color print, which can be reproduced in smaller sized/black & white copies if needed.

Agenda-at-a-Glance: For an event that runs a full day, it is courteous to let the participants know the general timeline of the event (though they are expected to stay all day!), even if it is tucked down in the corner.

Be thankful: If you are receiving grant support or a substantial donation for overall event funding, be sure to include the name/logo on the poster as well.

Clear information: Be clear about any important deadlines, dates, locations, contact information, etc. And, don't be afraid to advertise a full day of free food, too!

Each campus has its own media outlets and effective advertising sources, including mass emails, sheet signs, campus radio spots, contact tables, etc. Discover what needs to happen on your campus, and leave no stone unturned!

What is a club mailing?

A mass mailing to all student clubs which includes:

1. 8.5x11 black/white version of the posters
2. Memo to the club describing the MLK Challenge
3. Club/organization sign-up sheet (clearly note at the bottom that the group will be split up randomly)

See page 23 for sample club memo

TIP: Have your Publicity Coordinator host a dialogue in one of your planning committee meetings to solicit ideas from all committee members on ways to advertise the event. This often generates a much broader array of ideas than you might guess.

The **REGISTRATION COORDINATOR** creates and manages large database of participant registrations, and communicates confirmations with each participant. Shares responsibility with Publicity for club mass mailing. Fully coordinates registration the morning of the event.

“To pre-register or not to pre-register, that is the question.” ~ Jenny Koehn (ASU)

ASU recommends pre-registration for the reasons listed below:

- It gives a good idea of how many folks to expect to show up on the morning of the event (remember, though, a good rule of thumb is that one-quarter to one-third of all pre-registrations will be no-shows).
- Despite the no-shows, many students are more likely to get up early that morning and make the effort to come to the event knowing that they have signed up, and have received a confirmation email.
- You can send expected participants informational reminder emails. Beyond a reminder of date, times, locations, it is helpful to remind participants to dress for a variety of possible service projects, bring a water bottle, expect to stay the whole time, etc.
- In the event of overflow attendance, you have some folks to use if pre-registered volunteers don't show up. Overflows need to understand that there may not be a spot for them.
- A database can be easily “cleaned up” after the event to indicate who showed up, which group composition, and to add any volunteers who registered that morning.

Choosing not to require pre-registration would save the time of creating a database before the event. You could create a participant log following the event.

Registration at the Event

The typical registration ideas hold up ... a student comes in, friendly greeters are checking in volunteers, A-L and M-Z, nametags, liability forms, etc.

Remember! Part of the challenge is to meet new people: The main addition to your general registration is that once registered, the student picks a number out of a box (or hat or jar or ...) and signs up for the corresponding group number at the next table. Having them physically add their name to the group sign-up sheet provides a convenient, accurate roster for each group, as well as limiting the amount of switching among groups to be with friends.

TIP: Be sure to put an accurate number of spots per group in the box (if your goal is 12 people per group, put twelve #1s, twelve #2s, and so on).

Waiting List

Expect to get volunteers who did not pre-register. What do you do with them?

Happily greet them and explain that there is a waiting list, and you'll place them after all of the pre-registered folks sign in. You can't *guarantee* them a spot, but it is worth it for them to stick around and wait and see. After you officially close registration, simply take a look at which groups have open spots based on the sign-in sheets, and add the wait list students to the respective groups.

TIP: Have a separate section of chairs for these volunteers to hang out, as all of the other participants trickle over to join their group members at their designated table/area. Arrange three smaller circles of chairs on the periphery of the main area and encourage these participants to sit in one of the circles and they will be placed according to who signed in first.

The **DAY-OF-EVENT COORDINATOR** coordinates opening/closing ceremonies, including contacting and confirming speakers, incorporating MLK educational components, designing the Pledge Card campaign, and end-of-day evaluations.

Developing the Opening Ceremony & Closing Reflection

Brainstorm with the planning committee what is an appropriate length of time for an opening ceremony, and what are important components to include in tribute to Dr. King. Once decided, begin the process of recruiting and confirming people/performances for the opening ceremony.

Suggestions for the tribute part of the Opening Ceremony:

- Creative artistic expressions (music, dance, poetry) that honor Dr. King
- A keynote speaker who can give a lively, motivational address on the purpose of the day
- A video of one – or part – of Dr. King's speeches

It can be particularly meaningful if the artists and presenters are chosen from within your campus community.

Following the opening ceremony, the rules for the day are given and the challenge selection process takes place. **See Challenge Selection Process on page 14**

Suggestions for the Closing Ceremony/Reflective Component:

- Allot 2-minutes for each group to share the story of their day, how they completed their challenge, and continued needs of the agency (stay on track, though – if you have 2 minutes per group with 15 groups, that equals 30 minutes – so keep a close eye on time)
- Announce Pledge Cards for students to make personal commitments to continued service
- Reflect upon Dr. King's life and why the participants spent the day serving the community **See pages 26-27 for Martin Luther King biographical info**
- Show PowerPoint of photos (see Tip #1 below)

TIP #1: Throughout the day, staff members at ASU divide up the projects and drive around to check on progress, answer questions, transport money to other groups, and take pictures. Staff bring their pictures to the main site by 2pm, and one staff member places them in a PowerPoint that already has the bare-bones structure in place (i.e., all header slides are pre-made for each challenge, and staff person just puts a few pictures per project in the slide). The committee has decided ahead of time on the song(s) they wish to play during the slide show and staff just hit play at the end of the day. It is the last thing they do, and everyone sticks around because everyone likes to see their smiling face on the big screen!

TIP #2: Consider having a "Reflection Poster" waiting for each group when they return to the facility. Include on the poster-board a space for participant names, the service challenge completed, and any other information you'd like to collect. This is a good group task at the end of the day, and will help the group frame their comments to share.

DAY-OF-EVENT COORDINATOR continued....

Pledge Card Campaign

During the closing ceremony issue the “MLK Year Challenge.” This piece of the day is meant to provide a way for the participants to begin thinking about service beyond this one day. It is a self-pledge to commit 100 additional hours in the coming year. This is an important component, as it provides students with a way to “keep the dream alive.”

Presidential Volunteer Service Award

You may choose to inspire participants to pledge 100 hours over the coming year, and begin to get them thinking about pledging 2000 hours over the course of their life. Visit this link to learn more about the President’s Call for Service and how young adults who complete 100 hours of service in one year can qualify for the Bronze Level Presidential Volunteer Service award

<http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov/>



Some useful ideas:

- Create a small pledge card for each person at the event
- Have these cards waiting on the tables when the groups return to the facility
- Design a Pledge Card Box for students to drop off the cards
- Provide periodic emails to the students who pledge hours for motivation and encouragement
- Consider creating an award (to be presented at the MLK Challenge the following year) for each student who completes their service pledge of 100 hours or more.

Sample Pledge Card

MLK Challenge Pledge Card 2006



Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

Pledge for the year 2006: _____



want some help finding
a service opportunity?
call the ACT office at
262.2193

“Everybody can be great, because everybody can serve” – MLK Jr.

The **HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR** is responsible for any food arrangements. If applicable, organizes, designs, orders, and distributes MLK Challenge “keepsake” for participants.

Food Arrangements

Whatever works best for your school, go for it! Food makes people happy, so this is a job of much importance for the satisfaction of the volunteers. Here are some basics that might be helpful:

- Continental breakfast: Coffee is essential ... anything more than coffee is appreciated, but not necessarily essential.
- Lunch: Send a “sack lunch” with each group to take with them to the site.

TIP: To save money go grocery shopping a day or two ahead of time and purchase enough food to separate between the groups. With 15 groups, for example, ASU purchased 15 loaves of bread, 15 jars of peanut butter & jelly, 15 bags of pretzels, 15 packs of cookies, etc. They have also sent one jug of water per group. The groups pick up their bags on the way out to their site, and assemble the lunch on site.

If a team wants something different, they are on their own. If they have leftovers, they can donate it to the agency or take it to the local food pantry.

- Dinner: Pizza makes a great, hearty, easy meal to feed your hungry volunteers. A birthday cake is a nice touch, too. ☺ Remember to separate a certain number of pizzas per group, rather than one buffet line, in case some groups return later than others.
- Be thankful: If you do receive any donations of food, be sure to include signage at the event thanking donors and follow up the event with thank you notes. Use this follow-up opportunity to share more about the event.

Participant Keepsake

This not only demonstrates appreciation to your volunteers for their hard work throughout the day ... it is a GREAT form of advertising for next year’s event!

Some ideas:

- T-Shirts – Students seem to love t-shirts. And, they are truly the best form of advertising in terms of payoff on your end.
- Travel mugs/coffee mugs – If possible, work a deal/sponsorship with your campus coffee-shop to help purchase your travel mugs. Offer to include their logo on your mug for a flat rate and cut your bill substantially. Great advertising for them, cost break for you!
- Pens/notepaper – A chance to advertise the event and your office. These often come in large quantities, so you’ll have plenty to share with others and help spread the word.

The **SITE LEADER** is a staff/faculty member or graduate assistant who participates in a site leader orientation, maintains the challenge packet, manages the team's seed money, drives the van (if applicable), facilitates team ice-breaker and reflection activities, and most importantly oversees team efforts to acquire project materials and complete the project activities and tasks.

Each site leader must attend a Site Leader Orientation. This will help them understand their primary responsibilities as listed below:

- Facilitate the team through problem-solving, motivation, decision-making, etc.
- Engage those who seem quiet or disengaged
- Drive the van (if applicable) – monitor the beginning/end odometer **See Transportation on page 21**
- Lead an Icebreaker
- Sign for the seed money and be responsible for it
- Ask good questions related to the project activities
- Disseminate donation request letters
- Record WHO donates WHAT
- Facilitate reflection
- Help the team go “above and beyond”



Make sure site leaders are prepared to handle possible challenges including:

- Awkwardness at the beginning of the day when team doesn't know each other
- If team finishes their project activities early
- If the agency doesn't seem to have enough work
- If there is negativity (which probably won't happen)

TIP #1: Whatever project the team ends up with, the site leader needs to be positive. It might be a tough one, but the site leader gears the team up for a challenge. *Life isn't always easy.* The site leader makes members feel like they can overcome and accomplish this great project. They will look to the site leader for leadership!

TIP #2: Site leaders encourage teams to be as creative as possible (if the project allows) and as thorough as possible. Help the team think of all of the things they can do as a group to make the project complete with finishing touches.

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

CHALLENGE SELECTION PROCESS

1. In the front of the room, create a "challenge board" to hang the challenge packets (for example, if you have 15 service sites, you'll have 15 large envelopes hanging on a board).
2. Each group sends a representative to pick a number, 1-15, and that is the ORDER in which they will select a packet.
3. Each group, in their randomly chosen order, will choose a representative to come to the front and select a packet. This has been fun, and sometimes groups will get into helping their rep., a la "Price is Right."

TIP: This is a good time to get a team name for each group, if you want to incorporate that into your event.

4. Upon choosing an envelope, someone from the Planning Committee will read the Challenge aloud over the microphone.
5. When finished reading the Challenge, the reader might yell out something like, "(TEAM NAME), ARE YOU UP FOR IT?!?!". In our experience, the groups yell back and are already enthusiastic about the challenge placed before them.

TIP: It is fun when this person has a flair of drama to his/her tone ... a "Mission Impossible" kind of approach. 😊

6. The group member takes their respective Challenge Packet, which contains information they may need throughout the course of the day.

What might be included in the Challenge Packet?

- The actual Challenge, so that they are clear on their mission
- Directions to the agency, including any relevant phone numbers
- Instructions on what to do first (e.g., go directly to the agency, stay at the facility and a person will meet them there, etc.)
- A few official donation letters to give to businesses to legitimize the requests
- A donation-tracker sheet to efficiently track all incoming donations the group may receive
- Anything else you think is relevant & helpful to the success of the groups



"An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

SAMPLE CHALLENGE PROJECTS (Appalachian State University)

Henry Blair Farm – construction & demolition – the oldest structure in Boone, preparing the site for National Historic Registry. Help remove drywall and restore several outbuildings.

Hospice – assist in making soup, buying containers, and taking the soup to several Hospice families.

Hunger and Health Coalition – help unload food from the Feed the Children truck. Afterwards, help sort and organize some of the canned goods.

Western Youth Network - help collect graphing calculators, bookbags, pens, notebooks (any school supplies that would help the kids in their afterschool program).

Hospitality House – refurbishing project – give the living room at the House some new furniture, a fresh coat of paint, and maybe some new artwork.

Computers for School International – help sort through computers, pack, weigh, ship, etc. and get them ready to send to the first lady of Honduras.

Appalachian Brian Estates –throw a birthday party for about 50 people. The party starts at 3.

Children's Playhouse –build some benches as well as several activity tables, spruce up the downstairs room – a mosaic project is in the works, as well as some painting projects.

Sugar Grove Developmental Day School – get started building a playground, build a mini-stage, and spread some mulch. The director of the school will be there to offer lots of help, as well as maybe some parents.

Animal Shelter – painting + working at Bare Bones Boutique

Habitat for Humanity – create waterbars (which help keep the road from flooding) for a road that leads out to 5 Habitat houses. A Habitat house owner will be there to help out as well as the Director for Habitat.

Blue Ridge Wildlife Institute – one of the main projects will be constructing perches for flight cages. They also need help with several other tasks, including potentially helping to construct an aviary.

Mountain Alliance – this organization needs help re-doing their gear-shed. A little cleaning, a little organization, and some shelf rebuilding will go a long way here.

You can also visit this link at the NC Campus Compact website for additional examples:

<http://org.elon.edu/nccc/news/MLKDay2008.html>

SAMPLE CHALLENGE DISTRIBUTED TO TEAMS (#1)



Western Youth Network

This growing organization serves kids in the area by providing after-school programs, mentoring opportunities, as well as drug prevention. Currently, they have over 50 kids in their after-school program.

THE CHALLENGE

The kids in the after-school program at WYN are in need of YOUR help to get the school supplies they need. Backpacks, notebooks, graphing calculators, and pencils are in order...as many as you can get! ARE YOU UP FOR IT???

Head on to WYN and meet Jennifer and Virginia. They'll be there to tell you more!

Directions: Take King St. West and turn right onto Water Street. Pass the Sheriff's Dept. (road comes to a T), bare right, then immediately left onto Junaluska Rd. Follow for about 1 mile and turn right onto WYN Way. Building is at bottom of hill.

Contact: Jennifer Grubb (264-5174)

Good luck and have fun! See you at 5:00!



Hospice of Watauga County

This organization provides homecare and support for people who are terminally ill and their families.

THE CHALLENGE

Carry on an MLK Challenge legacy by providing an extra special treat for the families tonight by helping shop for supplies...and then cooking and delivering meals to all of the Hospice families by 5:00! These families deserve a rest ... it is your job to give them a night off from cooking, and to show you care.

Head on over to Hospice where you'll meet Kimberly, she'll tell you a little more about the meal you're going to prepare and then give you directions to the families' homes.

Head out 421-S towards Tennessee. Turn left at Skateworld onto 321. After 1 mile, the road branches right at Cove Creek Store. After 1 more mile, turn left onto Dale Adams Rd. The school is the 2 story rock building on your left. Enter via the chaingate on your right.

Contact: Kimberly Setzer (265.3926)

Good luck and have fun! See you at 5:00!

"In a real sense, all life is interrelated. The agony of the poor impoverishes the rich; the betterment of the poor enriches the rich...Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

SAMPLE BONUS CHALLENGES

A bonus challenge may be issued publicly during the opening ceremony to add an additional "challenge" component to the day. Make sure these are quick, achievable tasks that will not deter teams from their primary service activity. Choose **one** that is issued to all groups. Below are samples, but be creative!

BONUS CHALLENGE: *Random Acts of Kindness*

This is a chance to spread the spirit of unity and love promoted by MLK to everyone throughout the day.

- Each group is asked to complete 3 random acts of kindness throughout the day to anyone or any group of people...as long as it's *outside* their organization.
- Campus organizers will give a few ideas at the beginning of the day – but ask teams to use their creativity and have fun with the challenge!
- Campus organizers will give each group several "random acts of kindness" cards. Ask teams to give or leave a card for whoever they "hit" with their act of kindness.

BONUS CHALLENGE: *MLK Challenge Kicks Butt!*

Identify a local litter campaign such as the Stop the Litter! Initiative to be your partner.

- Each group is asked to pick up 500 cigarette butts.
- Encourage teams to do a rough count as they pick them up. Each groups' results will be added to a final total at the end of the service day.

BONUS CHALLENGE: *We CAN Do it!*

Identify a local organization that provides crisis assistance to individuals in need, most commonly in the form of assisting with an emergency fuel oil or electricity bill.

Challenge each group to raise additional funds in the current price of fuel oil per gallon, per member. So, if the current price is \$2.21 a group of 13 people would have to raise 13x\$2.21.

Note from ASU: *The groups far exceeded this challenge, and boosted the heating fund for this crisis network.*

"...everybody can be great, because anybody can serve....You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

SEED MONEY

A key part of the MLK Challenge is group autonomy, and seed money contributes to that greatly. Since the inception of ASU's program, what groups choose to do with the seed money has been one of the most interesting components of the Challenge.



The Appalachian State University model provides \$75 per team in "seed money." These funds have been provided through grants, a local business sponsor and their program budget.

Because many of the challenges are the types of projects where groups need to start from the ground up, it is a boost to them to have a bit of seed money to get them started. But generally \$75 is not enough for the team to complete their projects. One of the rules for the day, though, is "If you need more money, you are on your own."

Although many agencies will have a limited number of supplies, this is not guaranteed. Year after year, groups have successfully managed their seed money through spending it on needed service supplies, stretching it by negotiating discounts at local stores, and stretching it further by soliciting spontaneous donations from local merchants.

Instruct the teams at the beginning of the day to BE CREATIVE ... there are too many interesting and important things that can happen with the seed money. Instruct them to not bring any of the money back at the end of the day (and, the site leader knows to keep the group accountable and spend this money in the spirit in which it is intended).

TIP: Naturally, there will be some businesses that have already given that day to another MLK group, or that choose not to give. Prepare your groups ahead of time that some businesses will not be able to contribute additional funds but that is all part of the challenge.

What if there is leftover money?

In the event that a group does not need any of their seed money for service supplies, or has some seed money leftover, some interesting things can happen:

- Encourage the group to be on the lookout at their service site for things the agency might need for improvement or for the basics.
 - ❖ For example, one ASU group spent their extra money to negotiate a bathroom door for a local wildlife sanctuary, where previously just a sheet had been hanging on the staff bathroom door. This was above and beyond their primary challenge and the director was so touched, she cried!

SEED MONEY continued...

- ❖ Another group had to move literally tons of food from a storage unit into a local food pantry to re-stock. The group noticed that this food pantry did not have a dolly, so a couple of the participants headed to the store and procured two dollies for the agency to keep.
- Encourage the groups to support each other's work. Since all of the groups are connected by cell phones, it is easy to touch base with one another and see who needs help.
 - ❖ There may be a group whose primary challenge is to fundraise for a particular item that has been on an agency's "Wish List." If this is the case, a group that is fundraising will really appreciate a contribution from a fellow group with leftover money!
 - ❖ There may be a group that calls around because the group is looking for just \$25 extra to purchase a necessary item. A group may decide to support another group in this way.
 - ❖ One year, at ASU a group actually decided to "up it's challenge" by giving away their initial seed money to help the fundraising group, and start completely from scratch! (Now, that was cool!)

TIP: At the opening ceremony, be sure to take a moment following the Challenge Selection to repeat all of the challenges and each site leader so that leaders can track groups. This becomes very important throughout the day as groups try to collaborate with one another.

CELL PHONE NETWORK

At the site leader orientation, pass around a sheet to acquire all of the cell phone numbers of the site leaders. Type it up and place a sheet in each of the site leader packets. This sharing allows groups to try to support each other by sharing seed money. One year there were two groups that had a similar component of their challenge that included deep cleaning carpets at different agencies. Instead of each renting a carpet cleaner, the groups teamed to share one machine.



It is also important to include the Project Director's cell phone number on the list of numbers. Though this person may not be connected with a particular site, this person may be moving around from site to site, and could help carry a product or money between two groups.

"I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits."

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

TRANSPORTATION TO SERVICE SITES

Suggestions when thinking about transportation:

- Use a school's Motor Pool, if possible. This keeps everyone together, and reduces the liability of participants heading all over town. It can be a responsibility of the site leader to pick up the van in the morning, and drop it off on their way home. This will reduce a large logistical nightmare of getting all of the vans to the event site.
- If possible, look into renting a fleet of vehicles through a local rental agency.
- Many churches, daycares, and after school programs also have large vans. Try to work out a deal with these entities for this event.
- Students can carpool to the service sites, which would reduce your transportation coordination completely. If you do this, though, be sure to provide enough directions to the agency for multiple drivers so that no one gets lost, and be sure to encourage cell phone number exchange within groups before they leave.



SAMPLE AGENDA

- 8:30-9:00 Registration
- 9:00-10:15 Opening Ceremonies & Challenge Selection
- 10:30-4:30 Service Challenges at site
- 5:00-6:00 Pizza & Closing Reflection



END OF DAY EVALUATION

Every event that is interested in quality improvement gives participants a chance to provide feedback. This can be a simple instrument that can serve the dual purpose of an additional reflection of the day, while giving a space to add any comments or feedback to the event planners. See the sample evaluative tool below.

TIP: It is important to have students complete the evaluation following the closing reflection, as there is so much energy and emotion during this process! One tip for getting high return on the evaluations is to give participants their MLK keepsake (e.g., t-shirt, mug, etc.) once they turn in their evaluation.

The MLK Challenge Participant Evaluation

- 1) My classification is the following: _____(Fresh., Soph., Staff, Faculty, Community member, etc.)
- 2) How did you hear about the MLK Challenge?
- 3) What did you think of the opening program?
- 4) What was your project site?
- 5) What did you enjoy most about the day?
- 6) What was your biggest challenge, either personally or as a group?
- 7) Do you feel as though you met your group's "challenge" for the day?
- 8) If you could do this program again, would you?

Please give us any additional comments:

This information is greatly appreciated. Thanks you for your help!

SAMPLE MEMO FOR CLUB MAILING

MLK CHALLENGE 2008 ...

ARE YOU UP FOR IT?

Greetings!

Appalachian and Community Together (ACT) invites you to participate in the 9th annual “**MLK Challenge**” on **Monday, January 21, 2008** – an event to celebrate and honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through community service. The MLK Challenge consists of one day of intense service, where a large number of volunteers of all ages and interests will divide into groups to tackle service projects of substantial proportion. But this is no ordinary day of service... this day will require problem-solving, communication, and, most importantly, **motivation** in order to complete the project on time.

The MLK Challenge will:

- *Challenge* you to work hard with a group to complete an intensive service project.
- *Challenge* you to meet people and share new ideas.
- *Challenge* you to commit to 100 hours of service throughout the year 2008.
- *Challenge* you to make a difference!

This is how the day will work: Those interested in taking on the challenge will meet in **Legends** to start off the day. Basic instruction and transportation will be provided, as well as a continental breakfast, sack lunches, and pizza for dinner (lots of free food for a day of service!). You will have a time limit to complete the project, and at the end of the day we will come together to share a meal and discuss how we accomplished our goals. You will also be given the opportunity to commit 100 hours of community service throughout the year 2008 in honor of Dr. King (there is NO obligation to do this).

Please offer this information to your group members. We challenge you to choose to spend your holiday making a difference in your community – either as a group or individually. You will receive a confirmation after you register. For more information, or to register by phone, please call ACT at 262-2193. **You must pre-register by January 15th. Note: Registration is limited to the first 150 registrations.** Encourage your friends and group members to give this day off back to the community. Through your participation, Dr. King's dream of social activism and the importance of service will be honored.

Sincerely,

MLK Challenge Planning Community

SAMPLE DONATION REQUEST LETTER FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

January 21, 2008



Greetings to the High Country Businesses!

Your participation and donation to the **9th annual MLK Challenge**, sponsored by Appalachian & the Community Together (**ACT**), is extremely appreciated. For the past eight years, the MLK Challenge has experienced outstanding success in serving the community, and we hope to do the same this year. This group is asking for a donation (either monetary or in-kind) to one of our 17 various volunteer service projects. We certainly would not be able to accomplish what we do on this important day if it were not for the generosity of area businesses. *If you donate to one of our 17 worthy projects this day, we promise to follow-up the event with a personal thank you packet (letting you know what was accomplished throughout the day), as well as a public thank you to the local newspapers.*

Last year, over 70 local businesses spontaneously donated money or in-kind goods to this event, making this truly a community event. We thank you so much for your interest and contribution in making us succeed – it is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jenny Koehn
ACT Community Service Coordinator

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES

January 25, 2007

Greetings, High Country Businesses:

Another Martin Luther King holiday has come and gone, and once again the MLK Challenge (a one day service “challenge” in honor of Dr. King) was a HUGE success. It is so important for us to take a moment to send a very special “thanks” to you for contributing to the success of the day ... **there is no question that we would not be able to achieve what we do in this one day if it were not for the extreme generosity of local businesses and organizations.**

We are truly blessed to be part of such a caring, giving community. The nature of this day calls for spontaneous giving ... and I thank you greatly for your willingness to be spontaneous (and your *patience* with this as well!). The 200 ASU students who participated all achieved the goals set before them, and were exceptionally complimentary about the local merchant community.

Please review the enclosed sheet for an overview of the amazing accomplishments of the day ... I think you’ll be impressed at the amount of volunteer service work that took place on a single day, and hopefully you’ll feel proud of the part you played in this success.

THANK YOU!

Most sincerely,

Jenny Koehn
ACT Community Service Coordinator

Businesses that donated money or goods (as of 1/25/08): MLK Challenge 2008 Donation List

Mountain Lumber Co., New River Building Supply, Klondike, Kappa Delta, Delta Zeta, Alpha Delta Pi, Wal-mart, Ingles, Food Lion, Big Lots, Boone Drug, Pi Kappa Alpha, Sage Sports, Cornerstone Christian Store, Pleasant Papers, Ruple Memorial, KoJay, J. Stewart, Sister Act, Capel Rugs, Lowe’s Home Center, Inc., Salvation Army, Heather Marr, Harris Teeter, CiCi’s, Dos Amigos, Lowe’s Food, Golden Corral, Boone Paint, Winterfire Galleries, Follow Your Dreams, Bolick Family Pottery, High Country Candles, EarthFare, Boone Drug, Ram’s Rack, Appalachian Voices, Mast General Store, Don Jones, Stick Boy, Boone Ready-Mix Construction Co., Kim Eggers

GETTING TO KNOW MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

When exactly is MLK's birth date?

January 15, 1929

MLK's father was the pastor of which church in Atlanta, Georgia?

He was pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, following his father. MLK's mother was a preacher's daughter and because of these influences, he felt the call to ministry while at Morehouse College. When he was just eighteen, he became assistant pastor of his father's church.

How old was MLK when he graduated from high school?

He was 15. MLK then attended Morehouse College in Atlanta graduating when he was 19. It was here that MLK developed a lot of his ideas on nonviolence and also became attracted to working in the ministry.

While at seminary, MLK became very attracted to the nonviolent methods of what important man?

Mahatma Gandhi. MLK wrote in Stride Toward Freedom, "Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. It was in this Gandhian emphasis on love and nonviolence that I discovered the method for social reform that I had been seeking for so many months."

MLK was elected the president of the Montgomery Improvement Association, which helped to coordinate what important movement in Alabama?

The Montgomery Bus Boycott. During the boycott, which lasted for over a year, fifty thousand African Americans in Montgomery walked and carpooled to many places. After the town's white leadership noticed the effect, they began arresting the boycotters for whatever reason they could find. MLK was arrested for going 30mph in a 25mph zone.

Finally, on December 21, 1956, Montgomery's busses were integrated.

MLK was not only involved in the Civil Rights Movement. He also was an advocate against which war?

Vietnam. He once said "I'm not going to sit by and see war escalated without saying anything about it. It is worthless to talk about integration if there is no world to integrate. The War in Vietnam must be stopped." MLK became the co-chair of Clergy and Laymen Concerned about Vietnam in 1966.

GETTING TO KNOW MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. continued...

MLK became the leader of what theological organization?

The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). SCLC was based in Atlanta and was a Christian organization that promoted nonviolence and civil disobedience of unjust laws.

What famous letter did Dr. King write on April 16th, 1963?

Letter from a Birmingham Jail. MLK wrote this while confined in a Birmingham, Alabama jail and responded to the Civil Rights issues that he was working towards.

What famous speech did MLK deliver from the Lincoln Memorial on August 28, 1963?

The "I Have a Dream" speech. Over 250,000 people from all over the country attended the rally in Washington, DC. After the rally, President John F. Kennedy met with the leaders of the march. Writing about that day, MLK stated, "As television beamed the image of this extraordinary gathering across the border oceans, everyone who believed in man's capacity to better himself had a moment of inspiration and confidence in the future of the human race. And every dedicated American could be proud that a dynamic experience of democracy in his nation's capital has been made visible to the world."

In 1964, MLK was awarded what very important honor?

The Nobel Peace Prize. He was awarded the prize not only for his involvement in civil rights, but because he contributed to peace all over the world. Instead of keeping the \$54,123 in prize money, MLK divided it among the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the Congress of Racial Equality, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the NAACP, the National Council of Negro Women, and the American Foundation on Nonviolence.

In what city was MLK assassinated?

Memphis, TN. MLK, only 39 years old, was assassinated by James Earl Ray on April 4, 1968. He was in Memphis to lead 6000 sanitation workers who were on strike. Over 200,000 mourners followed his coffin in Atlanta. Robert F. Kennedy delivered a eulogy at a rally for civil rights after hearing that King had been assassinated.

QUOTES OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



“...everybody can be great, because anybody can serve....You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.”



“I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits.”



“Let us rise up [today] with a greater readiness. Let us stand with greater determination. Let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge, to make America what it ought to be.”



“Make a career of humanity—and you will make a greater person of yourself, a greater nation of your country, and a finer world to live in.”



“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?”



“In a real sense, all life is interrelated. The agony of the poor impoverishes the rich; the betterment of the poor enriches the rich...Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly.”



"Although social change cannot come over night, we must always work as though it were a possibility in the morning."



“An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.”



“Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality.”



“The time is always right to do what is right.”

IS YOUR CAMPUS READY TO TAKE THE CHALLENGE?



Ok, if you have read this far, you have all the details needed to implement a full day of service in a creative and interesting way. Ready for the next steps?

- Gather your team
- Share the vision
- Follow the steps included in this Toolkit
- Ask for help if needed
 - NC Campus Compact staff are ready to support your efforts!
 - Leslie Garvin, Associate Director – lgarvin@elon.edu

NC Campus Compact gratefully acknowledges these partnerships that have made this Toolkit possible:

The Points of Light Foundation, engaging and mobilizing millions of volunteers who are helping to solve serious social problems in thousands of communities. Through a variety of programs and services involving 333 Volunteer Centers and a thousand corporate and nonprofit partners, the Foundation encourages people from all walks of life businesses, nonprofits, faith-based organizations, low-income communities, families, youth, and older adults to volunteer.

Appalachian & the Community Together (ACT), Appalachian State University's clearinghouse for community service, service-learning, and community-based research opportunities within the North Carolina High Country area, as well as across the state, nation, and world. Thank you for creating, implementing and refining the MLK Challenge!

Jenny Koehn and Kara Brown of Appalachian State, and Leslie Garvin of NC Campus Compact who collaborated to prepare this Toolkit! Thank you for your efforts to pass on the information so others can learn the joys of the Challenge!

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who showed the way . . . “All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.”



North Carolina | Campus Compact

