Service Learning:

Fostering a Cycle of Caring in Our Gifted Youth

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Service learning, a method of instruction that combines learning with service to the community, can foster mutual respect and caring between gifted students and their communities. Using examples from various service learning experiences conducted by young gifted adolescents, the authors relate how service learning can be instrumental in infusing the qualities of caring in gifted youth. A K–12 best-practice model for service learning that incorporates the Creative Problem Solving process, the cognitive apprenticeship model, cooperative learning, reflection, and celebration is described.

G ifted students from Spring, TX, personified caring when they set out to help adolescent patients in a nearby hospital (Bohnenberger & Terry, 2002). In describing the sad circumstances facing these patients, the compassionate young adolescents stated,

> These . . . [children] look at the same thing every day, the four bare walls of their hospital room. Many are experiencing hours of separation from their friends and family. Some are in great pain and experiencing mental anguish. . . . We knew we must persevere and find ways to brighten their days. (Bohnenberger, Bomis, & Reinhardt, 1999, p. 12)

The students created and delivered Boredom Busting Kits containing educational and recreational activities for the young patients. They ultimately created these kits for seven other health care facilities, one as far away as Eastern Europe. According to the compassionate young altruists, "Our idea started like the flicker of a small candle but grew into a glorious fireworks display with brilliant bursts of love, enthusiasm, and appreciation illuminating our 'Journey of the Heart'" (Bohnenberger, Bomis, & Reinhardt, 1999, p. 17).

Reflective of the service learning reform movement that is becoming more widespread in the United States, this project typifies the excitement, commitment, and compassion associated with this form of experiential education. Service learning, "an innovative teaching methodology that integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities" (National Commission on Service-Learning, 2002, p. 3), has received noteworthy attention in education in recent years. Over the past decade, all three U.S. presidents representing two political parties have promoted and funded service learning. During a time when bipartisanship in the U.S. Congress was seldom achieved, this was quite an accomplishment.

According to Madeline Kunin, former deputy secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, "Service-learning resurrects idealism, compassion and altruism . . . we cannot survive as a nation unless we hold onto these qualities and teach them to our children" (National Commission on Service-Learning, 2002, p. 38). This statement exemplifies the new realization of the importance of service learning in instilling the qualities of a caring society in the leaders of tomorrow.

Moral Development and the Potential for Caring in the Gifted

Qualities of caring involve issues of moral development. Silverman (1994), having observed gifted children over a 35-year period, found that the higher the child's IQ, the earlier moral concerns developed. Others have recognized the moral component of giftedness, as well. Terman studied the emotional stability, social adjustment, and moral characteristics of the gifted and recognized that these characteristics are intermingled with advanced cognition (cited in Silverman).

Is it, however, possible to instill qualities of caring? Dabrowski thought it was. In developing his Theory of Positive Disintegration, Dabrowski examined human personality as it actually expressed itself, especially in eminent individuals, and the developmental process from *what is* to *what ought to be*. Dabrowski saw behaviors as ranking from egocentric at one end of a continuum, to altruistic at the reverse end. His Theory of Positive Disintegration (TPD) stresses the affective aspect of development. He saw developmental potential as the underlying principle that provides continuity between the five levels he postulated. Dabrowski observed that the most creative and gifted individuals exhibited higher levels of empathy, sensitivity, moral responsibility, self-reflection, and autonomy of thought than the general population (Nelson, 1989).

Dabrowski called the five dimensions of his TPD forms of psychic overexcitability, adding that overexcitabilities (OEs) contribute to the individual's psychological development (Piechowski, 1986). According to Piechowski, Dabrowski stressed intellectual, emotional, and imaginational OEs, viewing them as necessary for personal growth characterized by moral questioning, existential concerns, and self-judgment. In this type of development, the individual works on inner psychic transformation, putting forth efforts to overcome one's lower propensities and following one's ideals. The greater the strength of the OEs, the greater the developmental potential for following an ethical and compassionate life. The more intense and sustained the effort toward development, the more it produces highly moral individuals and spiritual leaders. In other words, with the appropriate effort, instilling qualities of caring can be achieved in gifted youth.

Considerations in the Education of Gifted Students

What should be the role of the school in helping the gifted reach their full potential?

According to Annemarie Roeper (1992), we should create an environment in which young children are kept from developing feelings of being on the outside, separated from the world. She proposed that we create an environment that preserves the uniqueness of young children while "accepting their integration into the larger global ambience just as the heart is a distinct organ within the body" (p. 52). She contended that both societal attitudes and the educational process create a separation for children and their world, and she viewed the traditional goal of education as a process that leads to personal success by learning to win through competition. This, in her opinion, leads to children believing that they must strive to win, rather than cooperating or sharing, which is needed in order to be fully integrated into the community. "Only if we can bring about the change in attitude will we save our globe and create the safe world our children are entitled to inherit" (Roeper, p. 93).

According to Passow (1995), the school as a catalyst for both talent identification and talent development needs not only to design and implement learning opportunities within the classroom, but also to identify learning resources and opportunities in the community that should be integrated with those of the classroom. Unfortunately, school seldom provides gifted students with opportunities beyond the classroom. Our schools have not effectively provided appropriate challenges for our gifted youth. Far too often, curricula for the gifted have been organized by subjects even though we recognize that most real problems involve interdisciplinary study (Passow, 1989). Passow (1989) promoted curricula with strong affective and process components that also complement cognitive components as a means to help make gifted adolescents more sensitive to community problems and needs.

No one can deny that, in school, students' cognitive developmental needs are addressed, but how do we help sensitize gifted students to problems within their communities in particular and society in general? How do we guide our gifted students toward higher levels of moral development, toward self-actualization?

Passow (1989) charged that gifted children must be sensitized through their education to the major problems in our world, such as poverty, famine, war and nuclear annihilation, racial health, genetic changes, population growth, employment, and quality of life. Advanced levels of service learning have been shown to do just that (Terry, 2000, 2003). In addition, many affective concepts can also be introduced, discussed, and even taught through projects and service activities (Johnson, 2000). According to one gifted student involved in a service learning project that researched local historical outdoor monuments,

I thought a community would be fine by itself and then after getting into this, it's like, I didn't realize how much it really needs. . . . Our history is there. If our

K–12 Developmental Service Learning Typology

Learning Arrows: directional arrows signifying the degree of learning–increasing as it moves toward the pinnacle
Service Circles: illustrate the extent of direct service to the community by the student
Side Arrows: symbolize the flow of interaction between the community and the school
Thermometer: a continuum depicting the degree of the combined service and learning experience

Community Action: Interaction between school and community flows in both directions producing greater impact in the community and greater empowerment in the students. Community Action involves the highest degree of service, which can have far-reaching outcomes in the community and the highest degree of learning.

Community Exploration: Interaction between the school and community can go in either direction–students go out into the community or elements of the community come into the school. Community Exploration does not necessarily involve direct service to the community although it may involve a high degree of learning.

Community Service: Interaction between school and community goes one way—from the school to community. Community Service involves a high degree of service to the community with a lesser degree of learning.

Figure 1. K–12 Developmental Service Learning Typology

monuments aren't being preserved, they're just going to eventually rot away, and this is a part of our history. (Terry, 2001, p. 153)

Torrance (1984), stressing the importance of developing creativity in our youth stated, "Threats to our survival challenge us to consider what we may become, at our best, and to search for new ways of helping children realize this creative potential." Not only does service learning have the capability to help the gifted reach their creative potential as they seek creative solutions to society's ever-increasing challenges (Terry, 2001), but it has also been shown to be an effective, differentiated curriculum for instruction with the gifted (Terry, 2000, 2003).

Classifications of Service Learning

Typologies or classifications are associated with the basic conceptual framework for service learning. One service learning typology addresses the differences between service learning activities based on the degree or level of student involvement and service to the community (see Figure 1). Like a thermometer, the degrees, or levels of involvement, work on a continuum, rather than on sharply delineated points in this typology.

The initial degree of involvement is *Community Service*. This level involves students volunteering in their community while also increasing their awareness of the community. Usually involving a high degree of service with a lesser degree of

learning, activities at this level include working in nursing homes and daycare centers, tutoring, and volunteering for community organization like the March of Dimes and the Cancer Society (see Figure 1).

The next type of involvement includes not only awareness, but exploration and engagement, as well. Under the classification of *Community Exploration*, the students go out into the community or members of the community come into the school, where information from the real world is shared and explored on a more authentic level than the distancing abstraction of a textbook. It includes activities associated with experiential education such as internships, outdoor/environmental education, and other types of experiential education programs such as Co-nect Schools, Expeditionary Learning, Outward Bound, and The Foxfire Fund. Community Exploration does not necessarily involve direct service to the community, although it may involve a high degree of learning. The greater the service and learning, the higher the degree on the continuum (see Figure 1).

The highest level on the service learning continuum, *Community Action*, involves students becoming aware of, exploring, and becoming engaged in their community, as well as making a positive difference. Activities include civic reform, such as legislative initiatives and health and human services; professional services, such as historic nominations and grant writing; and community enhancement, such as cultural and aesthetic ventures and environmental improvements. Community Action involves a high degree of service, producing a broader community impact and the highest degree of learning, which fosters reciprocity between the students and the community (see Figure 1). The gifted students mentioned in this article all participated at the Community Action level of service learning.

Service to the Community

We have isolated youth in the institution called school, thereby creating a rift between youth and society. Service learning, shown to close that rift, has reinforced the worth of youth in and by the community through recognition of their work (Alliance for Service Learning in Education Reform, 1993). Service learning fosters respect by youth toward the community and from the community toward youth (Terry, 2001). This work, this service, can have profound effects on both the community and the students, leading to a cycle of caring.

Service learning provides both direct and indirect value to the community. It can help to instill in students the attribute of caring about the community by encouraging them to recognize community concerns and to take action to implement positive change. Though limited, research findings on the impact of service learning on those served indicate that youth involved in service learning positively affect the community (Kraft, 1996; Terry, 2001).

As an example of direct value, one group of gifted students involved in a Community Action project positively impacted the community by leading efforts to restore two of the oldest buildings in the downtown, conducting a professional market study, and carrying out a massive clean-up of the downtown area. The impassioned students illustrated that youth can bring about dynamic change that can benefit the community for years to come.

Though not as evident in the short term, indirect effects can have invaluable long-term benefits to the community. From students furthering their education; becoming resources, rather than responsibilities or problems in a society; and evolving into responsible, caring citizens, the indirect value of service learning to the community cannot be underestimated.

It is not unusual, however, for service learning activities to provide both direct and indirect value to the community. A Community Action project undertaken by the SWaMP Kids (SWaMP stands for Solid Waste Management Plan), a group of gifted youth from a rural area in Georgia, was one such activity. Lasting for 3 years, this environmental improvement project created very dramatic results. The students wrote a 750-page, state-approved solid waste management plan for their county and prevented their county landfill, scheduled to close in 1996, from closing. Several of the students were guests on the *Phil Donahue Show*. Impressed with what these students had accomplished, Phil Donahue remarked,

Think about this! These are teenagers. . . . Imagine the consciousness now, the awareness at age 14. They'll have it all their lives. These folks are not going to pollute; they're not going to waste. They're going to recycle, and they're going to make a better world, not only for us, but for themselves and their children as well. (Wheeler, 1993)

Several years later, one of the SWaMP Kids, Kat, went head to head with Fieldale Farms Corporation, a large poultry company. She was instrumental in preventing a poultry byproduct sludge-dumping site from being located in her community. Why? Because she still cared enough to be involved. Long after the cessation of the SWaMP project, Kat continues to advocate for the environment and is pursuing a career in environmental law (Bohnenberger & Terry, 2002).

A Blueprint for Helping Teachers Facilitate Service Learning

Service learning is an effective curriculum for all students, not just the gifted. So, how can service learning be

effectively implemented to meet the needs of the gifted? A K–12 best-practice model for Community Action service learning, which incorporates the cognitive apprenticeship model, the Creative Problem Solving process, well-organized cooperative learning groups, reflection, and celebration (see Figure 2), has brought about successful service learning experiences for gifted youth. This model can provide teachers of the gifted and their students with a blueprint for advanced levels of service learning, encouraging the development of a reciprocal relationship between the students and the community that encompasses mutual respect. This mutual respect is essential in cultivating a continuous cycle of caring in our society and encouraging our gifted students to reach their developmental potential.

The Cognitive Apprenticeship Model

The cognitive apprenticeship model (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989) describes four elements that lead to learning: scaffolding, modeling, coaching, and fading. This model leads students from dependence to independence in learning. Why is it effective in service learning? Because it helps students become self-learners as they construct their own learning experiences (Terry, 2003). Using this model, the teacher acts as a facilitator who provides scaffolding until the students are ready to take on more responsibility for their learning. One student described it this way:

> There's something I noticed. At first, you [the teacher] would help us out a lot, showing us all the things we had to do. And we would learn 'em [sic] . . . and then we caught on and I saw you kinda [sic] back away and just let us do it . . . let us do it on our own. I noticed you sitting back one day and smiling at us, so I guess we were doing it right. (Terry, 2000, p.16)

The Creative Problem Solving Process

The Creative Problem Solving process provides service learning participants with logical steps to follow from their initial investigation of community needs to the implementation of their action plan. An adaptation of the Osborn-Parnes Creative Problem Solving Model (Osborn, 1963; Parnes, 1967) was introduced into schools in 1974 by E. Paul Torrance, world-renowned expert on creativity. This model includes the following steps (Torrance, 1995):

1. Identify problems and challenges.
2. Recognize and state the important problem.
3. Produce alternative solutions.
4. Evaluate alternative solutions.
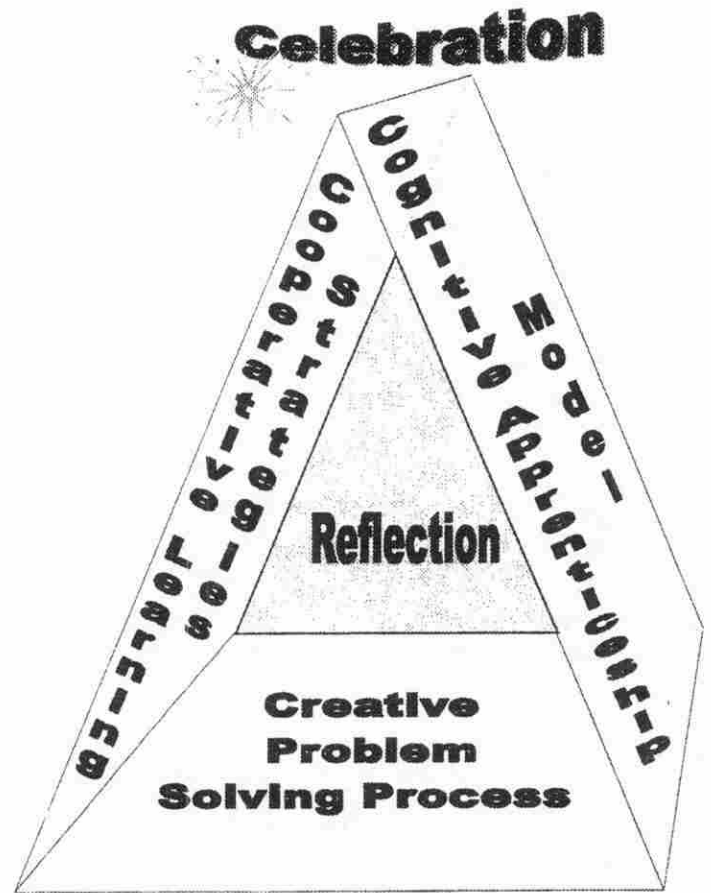5. Plan to put solutions into use.

Figure 2. K–12 Best-Practice Model for Service Learning

This process is effective because it allows the students a *choice* and a *voice* in the service learning activities, thereby helping to ensure more interest in the project. In other words, the students are the ones who decide on the focus for the project, not the teacher. The teacher's role is to guide the students through the steps of the Creative Problem Solving process. Using this process, the students identify challenges within their own community and decide for themselves which challenges they will address and what actions they will take while applying key curricular principles to overcome the community concern and extend their learning. The more *choice* and *voice* the students are given, the more interested and involved they will become both in the project and in their community. This not only makes the students feel that their input is meaningful and valued, but it also encourages the development of leadership and organizational skills, as well as personal responsibility.

Cooperative Learning Strategies

Cooperative learning strategies are key to successful student-run service learning. In cooperative learning, learning takes place between students through interaction with one another. Effective service learning classrooms are busy. They are

alive. They thrive on social interaction in order to enhance student learning, encourage self-efficacy, and promote respect for others.

Students work together in self-selected cooperative action groups to carry out the piece of the action plan for which their group is responsible. Though the actual action groups will differ depending upon the focus of the project and the related curricular objectives, typical classifications for groups might include research, media, public relations, and correspondence. The students may work on different tasks at different paces within each group, but they all share in the responsibility for implementation, record keeping, and assessment (Bohnenberger & Terry, 2003).

When asked what he learned from participating in his service learning project, Aaron, a seventh-grade student, responded, "[A] lot of cooperation skills. Having to work together in classes." Bryan, one of Aaron's classmates, added, "I think I learned a little bit more [being in this class than in a regular classroom without service learning] . . . teamwork and all" (Terry, 2001, p. 163).

Reflection

In service learning, reflection is viewed as the framework around which the students process and synthesize the information and ideas they have gleaned during their service learning activities (Alliance for Service Learning in Education Reform, 1993). Although central to effective service learning practice, reflection is an activity that is often pushed aside due to time constraints (Terry, 2001). Critical to service learning, reflective activities can help youth prepare for, be successful in, and learn from their service experience (Kinsley & McPherson, 1995). Newmann and Rutter (1989) stressed the importance of the reflective component in community service projects. They found that it makes a difference in the students' intellectual and social dimensions of development.

In Community Action service learning, the type of reflection carried out by the students is *synthesis*. Students operating at this level view things from multiple perspectives and can make appropriate judgments based on reasoning and evidence. At this level, youth:

- view things from multiple perspectives and are able to observe multiple aspects of the situation and place them in context;
- perceive conflicting goals within and among the individuals involved in a situation and recognize that these differences can be evaluated;
- recognize that actions must be situationally dependent and understand many of the factors that affect their choices;
- make appropriate judgments based on reasoning and evidence; and

- have a reasonable assessment of the importance of decisions facing clients and of their responsibility as part of their lives (Bradley, 1995).

Celebration

Celebration, the use of multiple methods to acknowledge, honor, and further validate students' service work (Toole, Conrad, & Nelson, 1998), is also an important component of service learning. According to the National Service-Learning Cooperative, celebration is a critical component of service learning that supports both learning and service. Celebration refers to opportunities that "recognize the positive contributions of youth to the community" (Toole, Conrad, & Nelson, p. 19).

What are some things teachers involved in service learning can do to celebrate their students' achievements? Teachers can give students a pizza party; they can have an ice cream party in class or at a local ice cream parlor within walking distance, if possible. They can show a movie after school with snacks or hold a skating party on a Saturday. They can have a cookout at a nearby park. In addition to these fun activities to honor the students' work, businesses, clubs, organizations, and government agencies can recognize the efforts made by students to improve their communities. This recognition can range from awarding certificates and trophies, to giving cash prizes or scholarships for individual or group efforts.

Higher levels of celebration, however, can be paramount in helping gifted students reach their developmental potential (see Table 1). For instance, most of the gifted youth mentioned herein participated in Community Problem Solving activities at the International Future Problem Solving conference, where they experienced a heightened level of celebration. In this competition, students from all over the world assemble to display their projects, share their experiences, and celebrate the power of students to make a difference in the world. This positive reinforcement and recognition for their work is so meaningful for students that it often outweighs the competitive results (Bohnenberger & Terry, 2002). When asked what he liked best about the international competition, one gifted student from Virginia wrote,

The atmosphere—which was especially evident during the CmPS [Community Problem Solving] events. Looking at the other projects, I never thought, "Wow! I hope we beat them," or, "I hope they don't do so well." It was simply, "Those guys have an awesome team. Now why don't I go over and try to do the best job I can do. It was so noncompetitive and friendly, it was awesome." (Bohnenberger & Terry, p. 10)

Table 1

Awards for Service Projects

1. American Health Care Association (Public Relations Office, 1201 L St. NW, Washington, DC 20005). "Young Adult Volunteer of the Year" honors volunteer work done in nursing homes; must be nominated by state health care association.

2. Bayer/National Science Foundation Award (http://www.nsf.gov/bayer-nsf-award.html). Youth organizations and sixth, seventh, and eighth graders are eligible; four students work together to solve a community problem. Awards include $25,000 community grant, trip to Disneyworld, and savings bonds for student team members.

3. Boys and Girls Clubs of America (http://www.bgca.org/members/youth_of_year.asp). "National Youth of the Year Award" to members for contributions to home, school, church, community, and boys and girls clubs. Local, state, regional, and national winner scholarships sponsored by *Readers Digest*.

4. Colgate Youth for America Award (P.O. Box 1058, FDR Station. New York, NY 10150-1058; http://www.colgate.com). Students must be involved in Boy Scouts/Girls Scouts, Boys Club/Girls Club, 4-H Clubs or Campfire. March 15 deadline. 315 cash awards.

5. Congressional Award (http://www.congressionalaward.org). This is an award program of the U.S. Congress for ages 14–23. Certificates and medals are given for volunteer public service.

6. Daily Point of Light Award (http://www.pointsoflight.org/dpol/ProgramInfo.html). Awards are given daily to those who have made a service commitment to meet critical community needs.

7. Future Problem Solving Program (Regency Road, First Floor, Lexington, KY 40503-2309; http://www.fpsp.org). Students must be registered in the Community Problem Solving Program through their local affiliate. Awards and trophies are given at the affiliate and international level of competition for outstanding group and individual community projects. An annual international conference highlights the best community projects.

8. The Giraffe Project (P.O. Box 759, Langley, WA 98260; http://www.giraffe.org). The Giraffe Project recognizes individuals and groups who "stick their neck out" for the betterment of society.

9. Keep America Beautiful, Inc (Awards Program Coordinator, 1010 Washington Blvd., 7th Floor, Stamford, CT 06901; http://www.kab.org). Individual and group awards are given for projects on environmental improvements. August deadline.

10. *Seventeen Magazine*/Cover Girl Volunteerism Awards (P.O. Box 9383, Des Moines, IA 50306; cyberscoop@seventeen.com). It recognizes and awards scholarships to youth who have made significant contributions to their community.

11. SeaWorld/Busch Gardens Environmental Excellence Awards (SeaWorld Adventure Park, Education Department, 7007 SeaWorld Dr., Orlando, FL 32821; http://www.seaworld.org). K–12 students can submit environmental projects and earn cash awards. There is a January deadline.

12. Target Stores All-Around Scholarship (Target All-Around Scholarship Program Manager, (800) 537-4180). Over 1,000 scholarships are awarded for community service. An essay is required.

13. National Service-Learning Leader Schools (http://www.leaderschools.org). This organization recognizes junior and senior high schools for excellence in service learning.

14. Points of Light Foundation (http://www.pointsoflight.org/forvolunteer/awards.cfm). This Web site offers a lengthy listing of individual and group awards for youth involved in community service.

15. Presidential Freedom Scholarships (http://www.nationalservice.org./scholarships). Each high school in the U.S. may select two students (juniors or seniors) to receive a $1,000 scholarship for outstanding leadership in service to the community.

16. President's Student Service Award (http://www.student-service-awards.org). This award honors fulltime students from kindergarten through college who contribute at least 100 hours (50 hours for younger students) of service to the community.

17. Prudential Spirit of the Community Awards (http://www.prudential.com/community). Awarded by Prudential Financial Services, this award recognizes middle and high school students who have demonstrated exemplary, self-initiated community service.

18. YouthActionNet (http://www.youthactionnet.org/minigrants.php). This group awards mini-grants of $500 for projects that bring about positive social change and youth leadership.

Note. Many local and national businesses, clubs, organizations, and government agencies recognize the efforts made by students to improve their community and the world around them. The awards range from certificates of recognition to cash prizes for individual or group efforts. To find out specifics about each competition, you need to contact the organization directly at the address listed below. In addition, you may want to check with local youth groups, fraternal or civic organizations, churches, educational resource centers or the community affairs department of local colleges or universities to find out about opportunities for recognition available locally.

Understanding the Blueprint

The K–12 Best Practice Model is a fluid, ever-evolving blueprint for community action that leads the teacher and students through the complex steps of preparation, action, reflection, and celebration (Bohnenberger & Terry, 2003). The components of the model are interwoven and flow together synchronously. In order to facilitate service learning effectively, the teacher must become comfortable with the cognitive apprenticeship model and be able to eventually *fade* from the project in order to allow the students to take charge, to lead. By applying the Creative Problem Solving process, the students identify a community concern and develop an action plan. In order to implement their action plan effectively, the students must acquire cooperative learning skills and be organized into action groups with specific tasks related to the goals of the project. Reflective activities are carried out throughout the project in order to provide opportunities for the students to process and synthesize the information and achieve the required curricular objectives. Celebration, the final element of the model, serves to enhance the service learning experience for the students (Bohnenberger & Terry).

Many teachers of the gifted become excited about service learning, yet often don't know how to implement high-quality service learning programs appropriate for gifted learners (see Table 2 for more ideas). This service learning model (see Figure 2) provides a blueprint for teachers that has been effective in implementing high levels of service learning for gifted youth (Terry, 2000, 2003).

Discussion

The tragedy of September 11, 2001, has touched all of us and raised our awareness of the importance of caring in our community. Beyond tangible academic and social outcomes, service learning can help prepare our gifted youth to overcome obstacles, develop morally, and become more responsive and empathetic citizens. Good citizens are made; they are not born. How can we expect our youth to become good citizens if we don't provide them with opportunities to care, to participate, and to practice as members of a democratic society? From primary school through high school, service learning has enabled students to practice the skills and habits of democratic citizenship by taking action to improve their communities, to demonstrate that they care (Schine, 1996). Service learning provides a necessary bridge linking school to community and community to school.

As one group of middle-level gifted students who transformed their small rural community reflected on what they had accomplished in doing their service learning project, it was clear that they understood how their project had changed their town, as well as themselves. After the completion of the project, the teacher and students debriefed in their small classroom, sitting around the same table where they sat when they began working on ideas for the project a year before. The sense of pride around the table was tangible. But, what had they actually learned from this extraordinary project that benefited their community so substantially that the students received a public service award for their efforts? The question hanging in the air in the classroom was asked: "'What have you learned from all this?' Alice Terry [the teacher] asked. 'That you have to care enough to do something,' replied Julinna [one of the gifted students]" (Henderson, 1987, p. 45). Piechowski (1986) stated that the purpose of transformation is to make one's ideals and actions one and the same, to live according to the precepts of love, compassion, helpfulness, and effective action. In other words, that you have to care enough to do something.

Judith A. Ramaley, assistant director of the National Science Foundation's Directorate for Education and Human Resources, expressed the importance of engaging students in real-world, service-learning experiences:

> If we want our students to lead creative, productive lives, we must give them opportunities to learn in ways that have consequences for others, as well as for themselves. I know of no better way to invoke the many facets of cognitive development, moral reasoning and social responsibility than to engage students in service-learning opportunities. At its best, a service-learning experience can be transformative. Clearly, learning within a context of responsibility can be powerful. (National Commission on Service-Learning, 2002, p. 58)

According to Passow (1989), gifted children have the potential for greater and more profound social, moral, and ethical concerns. "We enhance our gifted students' knowledge, but avoid helping them think about the morality of that knowledge. We speak of preparing students for life in the 21st century, but use the subject-matter of the past without teaching them the skills of future studies" (p. 6). Through service learning, gifted youth have the opportunity for moral development and an opportunity to develop a passion for their community. By having a *passion* for their *com*munity, it should follow that youth will develop *com-passion* themselves (Terry & Bohnenberger, 1995).

By sensitizing youth to be concerned about problems in their communities, it is hoped that they will devote themselves to developing their specialized talents to making contributions toward solving the serious problems facing their communities and the world (Passow, 1989).

Instead of the relationship of separateness that often exists between youth and community, we need to nurture a symbiotic

Table 2

Materials Helpful for Service Learning

1. Compact for Learning and Citizenship (http://www.ecs.org/clc). A nationwide coalition of chief state school officers, district superintendents, and educators committed to service-learning in K–12 classrooms. This site provides training and technical assistance in order to provide high-quality service learning for all students.
2. Constitutional Rights Foundation (http://www.crf-usa.org/network/net7_4.html). Explores the fundraising process in relation to service learning and how to write grants; contains many service-learning resources.
3. Learn and Serve (http://www.learnandserve.org). Information on the service learning resources, training, and grants available to schools through the Learn and Serve America program.
4. DoSomething! (http://www.dosomething.org). Provides sample service learning lesson plans and curricula to print out or download
5. EpiCenter (http://nationalservice.org/resources/epicenter). Sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service, this site supports the development of sustainable programs by sharing what works in community service and volunteering. Offers examples of effective practices in service-learning.
6. Idealist.org (http://www.idealist.org). Action Without Borders sponsors a kids' and teens' site that introduces youth to worldwide nonprofit agencies and encourages young people to get involved in their community through supporting an established agency. Great resources for teachers and students from getting organized to funding your project.
7. Learning In Deed (http://www.learningindeed.org/tools/other/currnet.html). A project of the WK Kellogg Foundation, a longtime advocate of service learning. Learning In Deed provides a listing of Web sites with service learning lesson plans.
8. SEANet (http://seanetonline.org). A national network of staff from state education agencies and organizations that provides leadership on K–12 service learning. This site offers numerous service learning resources, including the latest information from state education agencies.
9. TeachNet (http://www.teachnet.com). A great resource when designing a service learning lesson plan for your students. This site offers sample service learning lesson plans in many different content areas, ideas for reflection and celebration, and information on available service-learning grants.
10. National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (http://www.servicelearning.org). Provides many resources for K–12 service learning, including a listing of funding sources, latest research, books, references, and agencies.
11. National Youth Leadership Council (http://nylc.org). Find out about model programs, curricula, and youth training for schools across the U.S. Teachers may order fee-based products such as the Essential Elements of Service-Learning.
12. Youth Service America (http://www.ysa.org). Promotes youth volunteering by supporting organizations that are dedicated to youth service issues. Find out about YSA initiatives such as National Youth Service Day, the President's Student Service Challenge, and the Fund for Social Entrepreneurs. Be sure to check out "Project Plan-It," an interactive online tool to create service learning projects.

relationship of mutualism in which youth and the community rely upon one another and care for one another. Service learning is one educational reform that has the potential to transform, not only our gifted youth, but society, as well, by creating a more caring, compassionate citizenry. Perhaps the old African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" will coexist with a new American proverb: "It takes a child to raise *up* a village."

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