



SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL

Community Service 2017-2018

Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, there will be an adjustment to community service requirements. In brief, only 9th grade students will have a set, 20-hour requirement.

9th Grade Students: Each 9th grade student is required to complete **20 community service hours** during the **academic school year**.

- Starting in September, there will be community service opportunities provided each weekend for 9th grade students. This will allow 9th grade students to build or continue to build their servant leadership skills and get to know the city in which they study and live.
- Summer service hours will no longer be accepted to allow for community building among the 9th grade, unless there is an extenuating circumstance, for example, anticipated heavy involvement in a club or outside sport or activity that would create a hardship for the student during the year.
 - Please [contact me via email](#) **by June 15** if a 9th grade student needs to complete her service during the summer.
- While we prefer students to serve with the school for the reasons stated above, a student may complete service hours outside of school-sponsored opportunities, particularly if she is already involved in a service activity meaningful to her. However, the activity/event should be pre-approved to make sure it fits with the guidelines of Saint Mary's community service program.

10th Grade Students: The 10th grade program includes a focus on service learning and social justice through activities such as Walk of Awareness and those during COMPASS Leadership Week. Service learning is already and will continue to be incorporated in the program to reinforce the importance of serving the greater community.

11th and 12th Grade Students: In 11th and 12th grade, students will have the opportunity to continue serving the greater Raleigh community or other communities. Students in 10th, 11th, and 12th grade may still participate in community service activities and will be encouraged, though not required, to do so.

As was announced to students during Honors Convocation, Saint Mary's is in the process of becoming a certifying organization for the [Presidential Volunteer Service Award](#). This nationally recognized program recognizes those who volunteer significantly. The award is open to all American citizens. Saint Mary's will also offer an equivalent, in-house award for any non-citizens who otherwise meet all program requirements. As soon as more information is available, we will send it to both students and parents. There also will be a new community service club, open to all students interested in community service. Both new initiatives will reward and support those interested in pursuing service in a significant way.

During the school year, I refer you to both *The Buzz* and the handbook for more information about community service at Saint Mary's.

- *The Buzz*, Saint Mary's weekly e-newsletter, has timely information regarding weekly service opportunities that we sponsor or publicize. The school organizes and offers chaperoned opportunities throughout the school year, normally on the weekends, so as not to conflict with athletics, dance, Chorale, and any other afterschool commitments.
- *The Student-Parent Handbook*, which you will receive over the summer, has important guidelines and consequences related to community service.

Your daughter will have access to this information throughout the school year, through the weekly student e-newsletter, emails, and assemblies.

I am grateful for our students' service and look forward to the 2017-2018 school year. To our new families, welcome, and to our returning families, welcome back!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Ann Bonner-Stewart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping loop at the end of the last name.

The Reverend Ann Bonner-Stewart
Chaplain
Director of Community Service
Instructor of Humanities and Social Sciences

Rev. May 2017