

## What have other students said about service-learning?

*"I enjoyed my [service-learning] experience so much; it made me decide to become a special education teacher. I had a great time working with the kids and got a great deal of enjoyment out of my experience."*

—Debbie

*"I thrived on providing those services because helping others made my working atmosphere purposeful, and, in turn, my life became more meaningful."*

—Lesleigh

*"My early experiences working with others who needed help played a major part in my decision to become a special educator. ... I enjoyed being creative, understanding, and, above all, helping students reach their goals. ... I learn from those I help."*

—Jason

## To learn more about service-learning, check out these resources:

**CalServe** - [www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/sl](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/sl)

**Youth Service America** - [www.ysa.org](http://www.ysa.org)

## Want to know more about special education? Log on to these Web sites.

**Council for Exceptional Children** - [www.cec.sped.org](http://www.cec.sped.org)

**National Center for Special Education Personnel and Related Service Providers** - [www.personnelcenter.org](http://www.personnelcenter.org)

**TEACH California** - [www.teachcalifornia.org](http://www.teachcalifornia.org)

Track your progress by registering in the **My Career Plan** section of the **TEACH California** Web site.

Make the **difference**  
of a lifetime.

**Teach.**



[www.teachcalifornia.org](http://www.teachcalifornia.org)

This brochure and other free teacher recruitment materials may be downloaded or ordered online. Log on to [www.teachcalifornia.org](http://www.teachcalifornia.org), click on "Resources," then "Outreach Materials." Online orders will be shipped within two weeks.



Funds for this project come from a federal competitively awarded State Personnel Development Grant to California (CFDA 84.323A) allowed in Part D of Public Law 108-447, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), as amended in 2004

# SERVICE-LEARNING *Special Education*

A guide to exploring  
**service-learning**  
in California



# Explore a career in special education through service-learning

## What do special educators do?

Special educators provide specially designed instruction to individuals with disabilities and support their families. Special educators adapt and develop materials to match the special needs of each student, and work to ensure that students with disabilities reach their learning potential.

## What kinds of disabilities might I find with special education students?

You may encounter many types of disabilities. Examples include learning disabilities, physical disabilities, hearing loss, vision impairments, emotional disorders, and speech or language impairments.

## What is service-learning?

Service-learning differs from community service in that service-learning makes explicit connections between classroom lessons and community-service projects. By participating in these activities, you can apply what you are learning in school to real-life situations. You likely will find doing so helps you understand why the classes you are taking are important and useful. You will also learn about issues affecting your community and how you can make a difference.

Service-learning occurs in all disciplines and is very effective. Whether you want to teach Special Education, math or science, try service learning.

## I am interested. What should I do now?

Talk with the service-learning coordinator at your school or contact a local support agency, such as the Association for Retarded Citizens. You might already have opportunities for experience in settings with individuals who have special learning needs. If not, you might find it interesting to:

- Act as a volunteer or aide in a special education classroom and assist the students in small groups.
- Team up with friends to help adapt a playground for children with physical disabilities.
- Learn a song in sign language and teach it to students with hearing impairments.
- Make costumes for preschoolers who use wheelchairs.
- Tutor a child with a disability in mathematics or reading.
- Help students with disabilities participate in the Special Olympics.
- Organize a rally to ensure accessibility at a sports facility.
- Sponsor an adopt-a-pet program for a special education classroom.
- Read books aloud to children in an after-school program.

- Participate in a special education classroom where all present are involved in a schoolwide garden project.

## Is this the right career for me?

- Are you creative and energetic?
- Do you want to have a positive impact on others?
- Do you believe that learning from a book is not always the best way to learn?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, you may have the talent and aptitude for a career in special education. The best way to find out if this is the career for you is to get some experience. Try service-learning.

