

# Spotlight on Service-Learning

## Thanks for Giving!

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A friend of mine calls this time of year, “Merry Hallothankmas!” The big box stores simultaneously display their Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas decorations and merchandise. I have been seeing posts on social media throughout the summer about the number of Fridays left before Christmas. I begin to feel a holiday overload before the season even gets started!

One way to put it all into perspective for ourselves and our students is to get involved in service-learning and philanthropy education. Always a perfect fit, it seems even more appropriate at this time of year. November is a time for thanks – thanks for our community helpers and veterans, thanks for our blessings, and thanks for opportunities to give back to those in need. Engaging students in service-learning at this time just makes sense. Now is the time to begin planning November service.

Principal Christine Collier and music teacher, Laura Bartolomeo, at *Center for Inquiry School 70 in Indianapolis Public Schools* hosted a Veteran’s Day Food Drive and program. The students invited veterans to the school for a Veteran’s Day program where they performed songs that they had learned for the event. They also collected food donations for a local food pantry that assists veterans. One of the veterans in attendance stated that he had never felt so appreciated before. The students were proud of the impact that they made on the lives of those who served. Schools wishing to participate in a veteran’s appreciation service-learning experience can find project ideation and links to K-12 philanthropy lessons in this Veteran’s Appreciation Toolkit [www.learningtogive.org/resources/veterans-and-community-helpers-service-learning-toolkit](http://www.learningtogive.org/resources/veterans-and-community-helpers-service-learning-toolkit)



Under the leadership of John Bertram, principal at *Castle North Middle School* in Warrick County, students participated in *National Wreaths Across America Day* that honored fallen heroes in their community. Rose Hill Cemetery is the resting place for 530 veterans. These veterans represent all wars with American involvement since the War of 1812. Each of the veterans’ graves was decorated with a beautiful, live balsam Christmas wreath during the remembrance ceremony which was scheduled to coincide with the national ceremony at Arlington. Darlene Short, 6<sup>th</sup> grade LA Teacher and CNMS genOn Club Co-Sponsor incorporated Learning to Give’s “Courage and Hero” lessons with this service-learning project. Darlene is also our genOn Southern IN Field Rep that assists other schools with their service-learning experiences.

When asked, “What is Philanthropy?”, most students reply that it is giving money. It is important for them to know that TIME and TALENT are assets that can be given to help others and are just as important as treasure. Learning to Give lessons on philanthropy help to illustrate this concept to all students regardless of age and prior knowledge.

*TeachOne* is an initiative on the Learning to Give website. Each one-session lesson is followed with a simple and powerful service project and reflection. These lessons spark meaningful discussions and service that centers on giving, sharing, and caring. TeachOne in the classroom or building on **GivingTuesday, November 28**. Each of these lessons were written by Indiana educators and can be adapted for any grade level, K-12. The lessons can be found at [www.learningtogive.org/teachone](http://www.learningtogive.org/teachone)



Here are some of the lessons that are featured:

- **Giving Tuesday** - Lesson: Students define philanthropy and discuss the joy of giving, as well as various ways to give through nonprofits in the community. They learn how GivingTuesday uses the power of social media and combining efforts with others to make a big difference. Project: Students explore their giving passion and use communication as an instrument of change during GivingTuesday.
- **Impact of Giving** - Lesson: Students investigate local and global hunger issues, and learn about nonprofits in the community. Students examine root causes and effects, and learn about the Sustainable Development Goals and giving. Project: Students organize an event, such as a volunteer fair or game-a-thon, and raise awareness of the issue or of giving opportunities.

To develop leaders of tomorrow with a heart for giving, be sure that you are registered at [www.generationOn.org](http://www.generationOn.org). Registering is free and simple. It will connect you with generationOn Indiana and generate information for our mini grant application for teachers and schools. Philanthropy lessons are FREE to schools at [www.learningtogive.org](http://www.learningtogive.org). For more information, contact Joan Belschwender, Director generationOn Indiana at [generationOn@iasp.org](mailto:generationOn@iasp.org). For free professional development for your region, corporation, or school, contact me at [bethsmithgenonin@iasp.org](mailto:bethsmithgenonin@iasp.org).

See our generationOn Indiana page on the IASP website: [www.iasp.org/affiliates/genon/](http://www.iasp.org/affiliates/genon/) or the IMLEA website: [www.imlea.org](http://www.imlea.org). **Thanks for Giving** Indiana students opportunities to serve and grow as leaders!