

Name: _____ Date: _____

Below are practical examples of civic responsibility from ordinary high school students. Make note of how they designed their Action Projects and how they carried them out. Note that in each instance the students really cared about what they were working on. This is a key component to a successful Action Project.

Vignette #1: Raising Breast Cancer Awareness, The Graham School in Columbus, Ohio

Leslie’s mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. For one of her classes at The Graham School, Leslie decided to do her part in raising awareness about the disease that was affecting her mother’s life so dramatically. Leslie held a series of bake sales at the school to raise money for Race for the Cure, an event that raises funds and awareness for breast cancer and celebrates survivors of the disease. Leslie participated in the 5K race herself. Leslie also created a window display at her internship site, a local candle making shop near the school. This window display raised breast cancer awareness in her local community. Leslie deeply cared about this cause because of its effect on her life. She worked to make a difference for her mom and other women and families suffering from this disease.

Vignette #2: Florence Roach’s Personal Computing Classes, Middle College High School in Memphis, Tennessee.

“Students in Florence Roach’s personal-computing classes set out on a journey exploring the myriad of personal and professional uses of computers. The students learned function ranging from word processing and spreadsheets to the basic navigation of hardware. Through portions of their research conducted by survey, these students found that many people in their communities and families were not computer literate. Taking on the challenge of ‘doing a greater deed’ with what they had learned, students at Middle College turned their classroom into an after-school computer learning lab. “Every Monday evening for a month, parents and

other friends of the community gathered after work from 6 to 8 pm to learn basic computing skills. The students took full responsibility in organizing, publicizing, and staffing the sessions each week. At the end of the sessions, the participants were given certificates for their hard work and participation. Both parents and students were proud of their accomplishments.”

--Taken from *Service at the Heart of Learning: Teachers’ Writings* by Emily Cousins and Amy Mednick

Vignette #3: Meeting Needs at a Local Animal Shelter, The Graham School in Columbus, Ohio.

Ebonie interned at Pets Without Parents, a local animal shelter down the street from The Graham School. Ebonie noticed that the animal shelter was often in need of basic supplies to run their organization. Animal food, grooming tools, and cleaning supplies were always in demand. To help meet this need, Ebonie created posters to hang around the school that advertised these needs. She created a box for students to deposit the donated supplies and then took the resources to the shelter. Through this project, Ebonie met animal needs at her internship site and built awareness about Pets Without Parents at her school.

Vignette #4: Performing Arts Skits for a Local Girl Scout Troop, Middle College High School in Memphis, Tennessee.

“Student in a performing arts class at Middle College used their talents to offer young girls in a local Girl Scout troop messages of hope and self-esteem. Using the dramatic arts, students co-wrote and directed three skits which primarily focused on resisting peer pressure and learning to love and accept one’s self. The students created multiple drafts of their skits and their peers critiqued them to ensure that the performances would be interesting as well as relevant. After the performances, the audience was given the opportunity to talk candidly about the issues during a structured debriefing that was also

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organized and facilitated by the performing arts students.”

---Taken from *Service at the Heart of Learning: Teachers' Writings* by Emily Cousins and Amy Mednick

Vignette #5: Creating a School Rain Garden, The Graham School in Columbus, Ohio

Brendan wanted to help improve the environment near his school, so he decided to help create and raise money for a rain garden on The Graham School's property. A rain garden collects rain run-off from the school's building and purifies it with native plants that naturally absorb toxins. This prevents hazardous water from getting into the city's water supply and creates clean air for the community. Brendan ran multiple bake sales to raise money for gardening supplies. He also worked on the construction of the rain garden in the school's front yard with a team of students and teachers. He participated in one of the first rain garden projects at a school in the city.