DISTINCTION IN SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY
PROGRAM APPLICATION

Purpose and Overview:

Service learning is a well-established educational approach that can very profoundly influence the educational and professional development of students. It combines service activities with academic activities and often consists of planning activities, service, and reflection on what was learned through service and how service contributed to that learning.

Service to the community is a core value of Mercer University and Mercer University School of Medicine (MUSM). Many MUSM students participate in service activities. The Distinction in Service to the Community (DISC) program will enrich the benefits of these service activities by adding an academic component. It will also allow MUSM students to be recognized for their commitment to community service. Finally, it will strengthen connections between MUSM, its students, and the community.

The DISC program is a partnership between MUSM students, faculty, and administration. Students who are committed to improving health care and health outcomes, eliminating health disparities, and serving their communities are ideal candidates for the DISC program. Students who fulfill the requirements of the DISC program will be acknowledged at graduation with “Distinction in Service to the Community.”

Projects will be based on student-identified community and population health needs. MUSM faculty and students will team with community partners and share responsibility and ownership of these projects. Students will assume a significant level of responsibility in the collaborative planning, implementation, evaluation and dissemination of a focused community service project.

This application is intended to serve as an initial sign up for students who are interested in the DISC program.

Steps for applying:

1. Complete the application form and submit the application to Jennifer Boryk (boryk_jm@mercer.edu)
2. You will be responsible for:
   a. Logging volunteer hours and having them signed off on by organization contact and faculty advisor
   b. Planning service project
   c. Completing short assignments for project design seminars
   d. Submitting service project proposal
   e. Document service project
   f. Complete volunteer and service project commitment (60 hours each)
   g. Turn in final project report
   h. Present at the annual Mercer University Service Learning Conference
To be completed by applicant(s):

Application Date: 2/22/2014

1. Student name/names that are submitting the proposal
   Primary Contact: Kristen Kettelhut
   Campus: Macon
   Email: kettelhut_kl@med.mercer.edu
   Phone: (770) 712-8353

2. What is the name of your proposed project? Organizing Macon Volunteer Clinic's Grants

3. What is the start date of your project? Summer 2014
   Single Event
   X (weekly) Recurring event (How often will your take take place?)

4. What Organization are you partnering with for your service project? Who is your primary contact at the organization?

   Macon Volunteer Clinic
   376 Rogers Avenue
   Macon, GA 31204

   Director of Development: Jasmine Head
   Phone: (478) 755-1110 ext. 123
   Fax: (478) 742-9645
   Email: jasmine.head@maconvolunteerclinic.com

5. Please briefly describe the organization and the community the organization serves.

   In Bibb County, Georgia, 19% of its residents are uninsured. That means around 5,000 working residents have nowhere to go but the ER when they have a cold, the flu, or need additional maintenance medications for chronic illness like high blood pressure. Even if they could find the money for a doctor’s visit, they still have to worry about the exorbitant price attached to most medications. The Macon Volunteer Clinic (MVC) bridges the gap for those without health insurance by providing free care to the working, uninsured residents of Bibb County, Georgia. They first opened February 18, 2003, and since then, they have completed over 40,000 patient visits. They offer primary medical care, dental care, medication assistance plans, laboratory analysis, x-rays, eye exams, and cancer screenings.

6. Please give a brief description of the potential service project.

   Recently, the Macon Volunteer Clinic has expanded its services to include restorative dental care and is even offering surgery for people in need (SPIN Program). For all the good Macon Volunteer Clinic accomplishes, they rely solely on grants, individual donations, fundraisers, and corporate giving for their operating and capital expenses. Last year, MVC applied for 63 grants and received 23; this totals to around $350,000. In order to expand and better serve the uninsured residents of Bibb County,
applying to grants is one of the more convenient and lucrative means of obtaining large sums of money. Unfortunately, it is also an extremely time consuming process.

With this in mind, I will be working closely with Jasmine Head, Director of Development, to track currently awarded grants and search for new grants to diversify the revenue stream for MVC. Since grant application deadlines occur year round, I will start by creating a “Grant Calendar” that will be a quick reference for the previously awarded grants. It will include the application due date, amount awarded, institution funding the grant, contact information, and any other important facts or reminders for each application. With this calendar, MVC will be able to determine which months yield the lowest financial awards and begin researching additional grants to apply for during those months.

In addition, each grant has unique rules and requirements. One grant may be for a prescription assistance program that requires facts and figures related to the clinic’s current prescription spending. Another grant could be for basic operational costs (electricity and employee salary) so the clinic can stay open for an extra hour or two each day. This grant would need to see past electric bills, number of patient visits per month, and a projected number of additional patients MVC could see with this funding. All this information needs to be organized and sorted according to each grant for easy reference when the time comes to reapply the next year. I will be organizing folders with the required reports and creating reference sheets for each grant application.

Some funding institutions have limits to how many consecutive years clinics like MVC can apply to and receive their grant. Of course, this information will need to be documented on the Grant Calendar, but it also means MVC will need to research new grants to apply for and obtain operational funds. Foundation Directory Online (FDO) is one of the most comprehensive grant research databases to begin this search. My goals for this task of the project will be to use this database to seek additional funds that Macon Volunteer Clinic meets the requirements for. Finding just 1 additional grant can take hours of research, but it has the potential to drastically improve the quality of care for each patient at MVC.

Lastly, I will be coming full circle with the entire grant searching process and co-authoring a new grant that I researched and found for the Macon Volunteer Clinic.

Since Jasmine approached me with this project, I do believe it will be a success for the Macon Volunteer Clinic. One of the most needed resources at this clinic is time. This project is intended fill that need by providing a more efficient process to organize, research, and apply for grants. The calendar and organizational reference sheets will only need to be created once and simply added to with each new application. This can be completed by future volunteers. Researching grants is an ongoing task that can completed by future volunteers as well.

In brief summary, my project tasks include:
1. Create a Grant Calendar
2. Organize/Sort Current Grant Applications
3. Create Reference Sheets for Current Grants
4. Research New Grants for Fund Diversification
5. Co-Author Grant for MVC