



SUMMER OF SERVICE 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS SUMMER OF SERVICE?

Summer of Service is your opportunity to get involved in your local community, meet new people, and do something awesome with your time away from school. Spark the Wave will offer multiple options to meet your needs including our Change-Maker Challenges, and two sessions of our brand new Ignite Academy. Participants can **earn more than 75 hours of community service** by participating in various Summer of Service options. For those who want to take on that challenge, take advantage of the **Premium Package** which offers access and participation in *all* programs, sessions, and dates below.

\$299 registration fee

WHAT IS IGNITE ACADEMY?

Join STW staff as they guide you and your fellow change-makers through the planning and execution of your own service project. Over the course of five-days, you will meet with your group in the morning online to put the pieces together to plan your project. When the online session is done, you'll head off to work through your project independently or with your family and neighbors. Head back online in the afternoon to regroup on your progress, prepare for the next day, and take part in some fun social activities. By the end of the week, you'll have completed a service project that meets the needs of your local community.

STW will offer two sessions of Ignite Academy: July 12 - 16; and July 26 - 30. Join either or both if you like. Participants are eligible to **earn 25+ hours of community service** for completing Ignite Academy. Change-Maker Challenge guide included with registration.

\$199 registration fee per session

WHAT IS THE CHANGE-MAKER CHALLENGE?

Looking for fun, simple ways to give back that you can do on your own time and still make a huge impact? Check out the Change-Maker Challenge for a downloadable guide full of dozens of service projects that can be completed with minimal household supplies. Do as many or as few as you like. While most challenges take an **average of 30 minutes**, STW will certify **up to 20 service hours** for all challenges completed with proper documentation. The guide will come complete with lists of materials, instructions, and organizations where you can send your final product (if applicable).

\$49 registration fee

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Summer of Service welcomes high-energy middle and high school students who are entering grades 7 through 12 in the 2020 - 2021 school year. Participants will be grouped by age and cause-area of interest for Ignite Academy. Additional age restrictions are in place for certain Days of Service (*more info below*). The Change-Maker Challenge is designed for individuals entering grades 7 through 12; however, with appropriate supervision most projects can be completed by a younger age group as well. Please reach out directly if you would like to register for the Change-Maker Challenge younger than grade 7.

WHO ARE WE HELPING?

Summer of Service programs will help your local community and beyond. Depending which options you choose, you will have the chance to support the needs of individuals facing hunger or homelessness; work to combat environmental issues; bring joy to children in hospitals facing life-threatening illnesses; give back to friends and neighbors who need a pick-me-up; and so much more. Summer of Service presents the opportunity to find the cause area you are most passionate about and work to make it better in your local community. We encourage you to learn more about the organizations we serve before signing up for Days of Service or Ignite Academy so you can choose the cause you support with more background knowledge.

WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS OF ATTENDING?

- Become a more active citizen in your community
- Learn how to be an effective communicator
- Understand personal strengths and weaknesses
- Learn how to motivate team and community members
- Grow as an individual and a leader
- Increase and develop your community impact
- Become a more creative thinker
- Gain the confidence and support system to know that you can make a difference
- Earn hours toward the **Presidential Volunteer Service Award** - STW is a certifying organization
- Great for college applications, essays, and resumes

WHAT IS THE AVERAGE PARTICIPANT LIKE?

There is no average participant for Summer of Service! Spark the Wave prides itself on recruiting a diverse mix of participants and staff. Our participants come to us from a broad geographic, demographic, and economic pool. We have found that exposing teens to young leaders from varied backgrounds creates a more comprehensive and dynamic learning environment. This diversity prepares teens for real-world experiences and helps to develop their communication and team-building skills. Prior community service experience is not required. Interest in activism is a plus, but we will get you there no matter what :)

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF PROJECTS IN THE CHANGE-MAKER CHALLENGE?

The Change-Maker Challenge guide will consist of projects that can take you anywhere from 10 minutes to a few hours depending on how much time you choose to spend. Think: writing cards for children in the hospital; creating homemade wrapping paper for organizations who give gifts during the holidays; taking on an outdoor chore for a neighbor in need; or posting on your social media about a cause or organization important to you. Be sure to keep proper documentation as service hours will vary per person.

WHAT PLATFORM WILL YOU BE USING FOR THE IGNITE ACADEMY TRAINING SESSIONS?

Ignite Academy will run on Zoom. Participants will have access to a MySTW account through our website where they will find daily schedules, meeting links, training guides, and more. Zoom sessions will last an average of 60-90 minutes in the morning and 60 minutes in the afternoon, and will be no longer than 90 minutes at a time. We understand that Zoom fatigue is real, and we plan on keeping the lecturing to a minimum and encouraging most of the work to be independent and off-screen. Additionally, STW takes the safety and privacy of our participants and volunteers extremely seriously and has a comprehensive online safety guide available for those who would like to learn more.

WHO IS IN CHARGE OF SUMMER OF SERVICE?

We are led by our Summer of Service Director. We are proud that more than 95% of our staff are volunteers who give their time each year to make sure the experience is a great one. They are almost all program alumni. We offer a unique peer-learning environment where staff is composed of experienced high school and college student leaders as well as professionals in fields such as event planning, business coaching, education, and nonprofit management. Adult volunteers are present during all sessions of Ignite Academy and at all Days of Service. All volunteers go through a rigorous background check process to ensure the safety of all involved.

CAN I BRING A FRIEND?

Absolutely! We encourage participants to share the Spark the Wave experience with a friend or family member. Register for the same session of Ignite Academy and choose the same cause-area to work together, or sign up for the same Day of Service to have a socially distant hang out with friends. Not to worry if you are participating solo – most people do, and you will meet plenty of awesome people once you get started. *Please note:* if you sign up for the Change-Maker Challenge, we don't mind if you share project ideas with others who want to get involved. However, STW will only certify service hours of those who have registered for the program and submit proper documentation.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Head over to sparkthewave.org/register and reserve your space for any or all of our Summer of Service 2020 options. Additional information regarding payment plans, specific dates and age restrictions, and more can be found on the registration page.

WHAT IF I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

You can find more information by visiting our website at sparkthewave.org and clicking on the Summer of Service tab. If that doesn't help, please feel free to reach out to our Summer of Service Director via phone or email. We would love to hear from you and answer any questions.

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