



What is J-Serve?

J-Serve is a single day on which Jewish teens across the country perform acts of community service in conjunction with Youth Service America's Global Youth Service Day. The goal of J-Serve is to create an annual event around which the entire Jewish community can mobilize across denominational/movement lines. In only its fourth year, J-Serve 2008 engaged more than 10,000 teens in over 65 projects across North America.

J-Serve 2009 will take place on April 26, 2009.

J-Serve is co-sponsored by PANIM and the Jewish Coalition for Service. J-Serve has been generously underwritten by the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, the Joseph and Rebecca Meyerhoff Awards Committee, and the Lippman Kanfer Family Foundation.

What are J-Serve Mini-Grants?

A number of mini-grants are awarded each year to communities that propose the most compelling service projects for J-Serve. The goals of this project are to initiate collaboration in Jewish communities, to encourage and enhance Jewish student leadership and to involve a large number of teens in a meaningful service project. Successful proposals will envision an innovative service project, offer a Judaic educational framework, bring about collaboration among at least three different local agencies or movements, and involve a specified number of teens (125+ for a large community, 75+ for a small community). We also have a Small Community Initiative which will make it easier for Jewish communities of fewer than 40,000 to participate. Preference is given to projects initiated and led by teens (with staff supervision). Recipients of mini-grants are required to register their project and participants with the J-Serve organizers.

What is the J-Serve Training Conference?

Each year J-Serve leaders (teens and professionals) are invited to join in a national training program designed to strengthen their skills as project leaders. Seventy people attended the J-Serve 2008 Conference in New Orleans, LA on January 13-15, 2008. Sessions focus on engaging teen and adult advisory councils, the branding issues faced by both first-time and recurrent project leaders, mini-grant requirements, marketing and recruitment strategies, and more. As in past years, participants had the opportunity to engage in direct service—in this case connected to the Katrina tragedy—and a guided reflection program. They heard from representatives of the New Orleans Jewish community. Mini-grant communities are required to attend, preferably with both a teen leader and an adult professional. Jewish professionals and teen leaders from non-Mini-grant communities are encouraged to attend the training as well. Limited travel subsidies are available for non-grant recipients, so early registration is encouraged.

Why get involved?

J-Serve provides an amazing opportunity to reach out to Jewish teens in your community and engage them in a meaningful service project. By registering your project with J-Serve you will be adding an integral piece to a national movement dedicated to service. Studies have demonstrated that service work is an effective means of attracting Jewish teens that are more marginally involved in Jewish life.

Additionally, we are happy to explore the opportunity to create a link from J-Serve's site to a community site that explains your local project. By doing this any Jewish educator who visits the J-Serve website will have the opportunity to learn about your organization. You will also have access to the educational resources available for educators on our site.

Who do I contact?

By registering your project with J-Serve, you will be taking advantage of the opportunity to engage more students, reach out to the local community, and participate in a national initiative. For more information about J-Serve, please visit our site at www.jsserve.org or contact Lia Katz at (301) 770-5070 ext. 202 or liak@panim.org.