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“Service to the community helps clarify “why” what I do is important.”

What do you do as your community engagement activity?
Faculty mentor for the Geriatric Interest Group and SON faculty leader for the Daniels’ Scholars Interprofessional Program.

How much time do you spend on service per week/month?
10 hours/month

How did you begin to work with your community-based organization (CBO)?
Ten years ago I began the Geriatric Interest Group, an interprofessional group for students (nursing, public health, medicine) interested in learning about and providing service for older adults in the community. I began the Daniels’ Scholars program, an interprofessional group of students (medicine, nursing, pharmacy), five years ago as a method for providing students across disciplines to learn with, from and about each other while providing services to older adults in the community.

What do you enjoy about or gain through community service?
The pleasure of watching students from different disciplines working together, helping older adults in the community and learning so much from them. For example, students provided and shared a Thanksgiving dinner with older adults at senior housing facility and this month they will
host a “senior prom”. Students and older adults alike find meaning and enjoyment in these experiences.

**How do you find time for service in your busy schedule?**
I make time because it is important and students enjoy it.

**Besides finding the time, what barriers related to your service have you had to overcome?**
Finding time when students from different programs are available is a big challenge. Fundraising is another challenge, but the students are very good at that, and the institution is supportive.

**How does your service shape your development as a health care professional?**
Service to the community helps clarify “why” what I do is important.

**What advice do you have for prospective students who are interested in community service?**
“The more you give, the more you get.”

**What would you say to someone who is unsure of the impact his/her service would have on a community?**
Speak to students who engage in community service and ask about the benefit to cost. They will explain.

**What is the community service accomplishment that has affected you and/or your community the most?**
Students in the Daniels’ Scholars Program (nursing, medicine, pharmacy) visit an older adult longitudinally over the course of a year. The older adult serves as a “health mentor” to the students and the students share their knowledge with the older adult. A strong bond is formed between all and the benefit is profound.

**Final Comments**
Join the Geriatric/Gerontology Interest Group geriatricofficers@alive.johnshopkins.edu and learn about opportunities to work with other students and older adults in the Baltimore community.

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