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Fall 2013

**Why are you here? And what is JagCorps?**

# *“Work is love made visible.”* –Kahlil Gibran

*“We need love and creative imagination to do constructive work.”* -Paula Ollendorf

The main reason why you are here is to serve your community with your knowledge.

*“Knowledge will forever govern ignorance; and a people who means to be own governors must arm themselves with the power which knowledge gives.”* –James Madison, 1822

When Thomas Jefferson drafted the Declaration of Independence he stated that we had the right “unalienable rights, life, liberty, and the pursuit of public happiness.” *Public* was eliminated because Benjamin Franklin claimed that “everyone” knew happiness was tied to the common good. Is that true today? What is the “Common Good?” Do you know that as a citizen it is your responsibility to learn and do “good” work with the knowledge you acquire? Your choices, actions, and work affects everybody else.

*“Work that we do to improve our personal circumstances always affects others. If we do good work, that good radiates to others. Of course, poor or bad work also radiates to others, causing a general decline in the wealth of the community.”* –Michael Hartoonian

This is also true in reverse. Work that we do to help others also improves our lives personally. This is JagCorps. You will be helping others and in essence improving your life, personally.

So what does this mean to you? It means you will become an active, responsible citizen by serving the community. The work you do in this class will allow you to examine who you are, your strengths, passions, and dreams so you can make your community, this state, this country, this world a better place.

 **So what does it mean to be in JagCorps?**

First off consider yourself lucky and special to be here. You were selected by your teachers as exceptionally hard working, civic minded, and enthusiastic students. Even though what we will be doing should be done by everyone you get to focus all your energy on becoming civic leaders. Half of your school day will be spent serving your community, engaging in student work. Is that great or what? Here are some descriptions of what a JagCorps student is and characteristics that they possess:

- You have knowledge. -You reflect.

- You learn new things. -You think about issues that affect

- You evaluate others. others.

- You change. - You figure out ways to help people.

- You are a leader. - You are a role model.

- You make choices that will - You discuss.

 help the common good. - You learn new things.

- You make choices that will - You are socially responsible.

 increase public wealth. - You work well in a group.

* You are a citizen.

JagCorps means **RESPONSIBILITY.** In this class you will learn to be a responsible citizen, student, worker, young person, friend, leader, etc. In JagCorps you will be doing civic work, these are some of the things that you will be responsible for.

* You will spend at least six hours a week volunteering at various “community need organizations.”
* You will be working within a large and small group.
* You will read and learn about major issues that face current American life.
* You will read a book or two.
* You will keep a journal.
* You will reflect on your experiences and your emotions.
* You will make friends in this class and at your site.
* You will see, hear, and experience new things.
* You will make a difference.
* You will work hard.
* You will learn about who you are and what you can do.
* You will learn about other people and what motivates them.
* You will understand what it means to truly be a citizen.

Nothing short of your best is expected from you and I encourage you to extend yourself to your limits. This class will be challenging both academically and personally. This class is meant to change your view of your community and your role in it. Put forth your best effort, make a difference, and have fun!

JagCorps Class Expectations and Grading Policy

Rules and Responsibilities

If you are absent it is your responsibility to ask your base group what you missed. Your base group has a responsibility to pick up an extra copy of everything handed out if someone is missing. Any missed notes or concepts should be explained and taught by the base group.

Rules and Responsibilities:

1. Respect- if you follow this one then there should be no problems.
2. If a student is found copying or plagiarizing. The student will receive a zero and not be given a chance to make up the work.
3. No littering- in the classroom, in your school, at your site. Remember you are a JagCorps and Jefferson ambassador to the community.
4. Tardies- if you are late you will be counted as tardy.
5. You are a role model. You are to act as a representative of JagCorps, Jefferson, and young people in general. Be aware that people at your placement will often look upon you, so make sure that your behavior warrants “looking up to.” Keep this in mind not only as you serve but as you leave the building, travel, and interact in the community on your own time.
6. Confidentiality- You must keep what you learn about people and the program to yourself (except in the case of suspected abuse then you are bound by law to report it to your supervisor). Please ask me or your supervisors if you have concern.
7. When traveling to a designated area, go directly to the area. Do not disrupt other classes in session. Be where you are supposed to be.
8. Rules for your placement:
	1. Travel directly to and from site.
	2. Be responsible and safety conscious.
	3. If you can not make it to your site, be sure to let the people expecting you know well in advance that you will not be there.
	4. If a conflict at the site arises, diffuse the tension, appease the other party, report incident to your supervisor and your teachers, and develop a strategy to resolve the situation.
	5. Do not do anything that places others in danger.
	6. Fulfill your responsibilities and obligations.
	7. Do not abuse your traveling privileges.
9. Forms- all forms must be signed and on file.
	1. Parent Approval Form.
	2. Enrollment Contract.
	3. Car Contract.

*“By teaching your people the joys of service to others, we make good citizenship vital, transforming, and continuing aspect of out national character.”* – Sec. of State Colin Powell