Service Hours Guidelines for the President's Volunteer Service Award

What is Community Service? What is not?

Volunteers select the service they wish to do. The only service requirements are that the volunteer is not paid for the service and that the service efforts are not court-ordered. Additionally, the Award only recognizes volunteer service as service hours completed; monetary or other in-kind contributions are not grounds for recognizing an individual with a President's Volunteer Service Award.

Given the PVSA's guidance, the Chinese American Parent Association of Howard County has put together as set of guidelines in order to help answer questions related to service opportunities that might not be so clear.

Community service activities may be:

School-oriented, community-oriented, or faith-based oriented:
- Performed outside of school or normal paid job hours;
- Direct (one-on-one with a person or persons) or indirect (such as a food drive)

At School:
- Performing community service for school based organizations or clubs such as NHS, Key Club, etc. which require community service as a part of their mission counts
  - Regular meeting time does not count
- Student Leadership (Student Government) service projects during non-class time count
  - Regular group meeting time does not count
- Performing with the school's cheer/pep/dance/band/choir/theater for senior citizens and/or disadvantaged groups counts
  - Regular performances and rehearsals do not count
  - Any performances required as part of a class do not count
  - Any performances where admission is charged does not count
- Helping paint or build sets, sew costumes, etc. for a school play counts only for time not required for a class
  - Performing in the play does not count
- Tutoring another student during non-class time counts provided it is done as part of sanctioned group (NHS, School Counselors, Youth Group)
  - Helping your friend study for a test during class does not count
  - Tutoring a sibling or relative does not count
- Helping a teacher (even if the teacher is related to student) set up their classroom for the year during non-school time counts
  - Helping the teacher during class does not count
- All time spent volunteering with the PTSA counts, as PTSA fundraising benefits ALL students and teachers

For Sports:
- Refereeing or coaching, and training/setup, announcing, time keeping, working concessions as a sports volunteer for a non-profit or school counts
  - Practicing, playing, and fundraising for a sport does not count
  - Any activities required for players (such as Varsity players helping at JV games) does not count
- Helping a coach (even if the coach is related to student) set up for the season during non-school time counts as long as the activity is not required

For Performing:
- Performing at a charity event, or for a disadvantaged group (disabled, senior citizens home) counts

- o Practicing/rehearsals for that specific performance counts
- o Performing at school does not count
- o Performances where admission is charged do not count
- Performing/marching at a Veteran's Parade, July 4th parade, Memorial Day etc. counts
  - o School parades (such as Homecoming) do not count
  - o Practicing/rehearsing for that performance does not count

At Home:
- Helping a neighbor who is elderly or handicapped with household chores counts
  - o Helping anyone in your family or an able-bodied friend or neighbor with a chore does not count

At Places of Worship:
- Helping plant a garden, hand out programs outside of a building, or babysitting while parents attend the service counts
  - o Singing/playing an instrument or participating in the service (or anything inside of the place of worship) does not count
- Mission trips where service is the main component and Community service projects as part of a youth group count
  - o Sleeping, eating, worshipping, socializing time does not count. (Use best judgment on travel time)
- Vacation bible school, summer camps, Sunday school volunteering counts
  - o Any activity within a worship service does not count
  - o Preaching and proselytizing do not count

In the Community:
- Helping at voter registration or a polling place counts
  - o Helping a candidate campaign does not count
- Volunteering to help set up, organize, hand out pamphlets, hand out water, etc. for non-profit organizations counts
- Volunteering at any non-profit charitable organizations or event counts (Examples: PTSA, Habitat for Humanity, Salvation Army, Red Cross, Goodwill Industries, Special Olympics, JDRF Walk, Relay for Life, Breast Cancer Awareness, Stop Hunger Now, etc.)
  - o Volunteering at a profit-based business does not count (includes internships and job shadowing)
- Assisting a disadvantaged person with a chore (cleaning out their garage, gardening, repairing their home, etc.) counts
  - o Helping a family member or any able-bodied person with a chore does not count
- Volunteering at a non-profit hospital or at a non-profit animal shelter counts
  - o Working at a doctor or veterinarian's office does not count
- Volunteering at either the school library or town library counts
- Service projects as part of Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Youth Groups, etc. count
- Meetings and non-service activities do not count
  - o Fundraising for the groups does not count

Misc. that does not count:
- Team-building activities
- Helping family members
- Fundraising for any group where the student is a member (Baseball player fundraising for the baseball team, fundraising to cover student's costs for a mission trip, fundraising for scouting activities does not count)
- Any activity where the student is paid
- Any activity required for a grade in class