

Philosophy of Service
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My approach to service is rooted in my belief that every individual is gifted for specific life work and that one's contentment is found in using those gifts to their fullest. I believe that each person is able to make a positive difference within their sphere of influence in the world. My personal mission is "to teach, organize, and host people in transition, so they grow in faith and hope, control their own decisions and resources, and use their gifts and talents." It is this mission statement that guides me in my service to students and the community.

My understandings have been influenced by the work of Paulo Freire in terms of liberation pedagogy and by the general concepts of some liberation theologians, a term first used in 1973 by Gustavo Gutierrez, a Peruvian Roman Catholic priest. These ideas suggest that educators and theologians can work in their giftedness to empower the poor and the outcast, so that they themselves can influence social and political systems.

Early in my career, my professional service consisted of participating in training conferences and programs, in writing and editing newsletters and journals, and in deliberating on committees and boards.

I want to empower others to transform their own situation for themselves and for others. Although I will support food shelves, shelters for the homeless, and disaster relief efforts, I am not personally energized by forms of charity that provide hand-outs and band-aids.

More recently, I am interested in incorporating elements of service learning into the academic programs with which I work. I would like to act as a bridge or ally in creating learning communities with members from diverse cultures.

I am also working to foster global connections for higher education programs. The world often "comes to us" in the form of international students. I would like to take college students to experience other cultures by intentional and deep residential experiences throughout the world. In the near future, I would be energized by possibilities such as working on service learning advisory committees. Minnesota families have experienced increases in out-of-home children placements and in children arrested for serious crime. I am interested in participating in intentional programs and activities to try to influence the social and political systems that result in these regional issues.