



Community Engagement Office, 177 CSU, 507-389-5789, Community.Engagement@mnsu.edu
<http://www.mnsu.edu/engagement/> <https://orgsync.com/62632/chapter>
<https://www.facebook.com/MnsuCommunityEngagement/>

September 22, 2017

Welcome Back! We are excited to launch a new academic year. We've had several great accomplishments already, including the Free Farmers Market and Open House, the Campus and Community Fair, and the [Sibley Park Cleanup](#). On top of that, Campus Kitchen at MSU, Mankato has [already 'harvested' 2,460 pounds of food](#) from the Mankato restaurants since July 1, 2017. While it will be difficult to beat last year's roughly 32,000 hours of MSU, Mankato student completed service logged on OrgSync and Helper Helper during 2016-17, we are off to a great start. We hope you make community engagement a part of your year.

This year, we are happy to have Chris McEachron on board as our Graduate Advisor in the Community Engagement Office. Chris is a graduate student in the Experiential Education program, and this is a huge help to his work in the CEO and CK. To learn more about Chris and his adventures, [visit the staff webpage](#). We also have some [fantastic new students](#) working in our office. Stop by and say "Hi!"

If you have content to share in this newsletter, please contact Karen Anderson, karen.anderson@mnsu.edu. We are always happy to promote and celebrate the service and engagement accomplishments of our campus!



September 25 – Prep Shift at the Campus Kitchen

Volunteers are sought to help cut and portion the food for weekly distribution. For more information or to sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync website](#).

September 25 - Packaging Shift at Campus Kitchen

Volunteers package individual meals for distribution to agencies, to share with people facing food insecurity. The shift is from 5-6:30 pm. For more information or to sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync website](#).

September 26 - Reading Buddies

Reading Buddies gives student volunteers the opportunity to read books and interact with the preschool-age children. To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 1 – Biscuits, Bagels and PBJs at the Campus Kitchen

Rebecca Carpenter's Learning Community will volunteer for this shift. [This link is only open to members](#) of that group.

October 2 – Cram a Van – Meet the Candidate Carnival

Help with CAV by sitting at the table and taking food donations and card swipe for an extra name in drawing when donating 4 or more cans. Set up and facilitate game (that big green thing leaning against the wall in the CEO!) To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 2 – Prep Shift at the Campus Kitchen

Volunteers are sought to help cut and portion the food for weekly distribution. For more information or to sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 2 - Packaging Shift at Campus Kitchen

Volunteers package individual meals for distribution to agencies, to share with people facing food insecurity. The shift is from 5-6:30 pm. For more information or to sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 2 – Cram a Van Food Collection – Dodge Ball

Help with CAV by sitting at the table and taking food donations and card swipe for an extra name in drawing when donating 4 or more cans. To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 3 - Reading Buddies

Reading Buddies gives student volunteers the opportunity to read books and interact with the preschool-age children. To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 3 – Cram a Van Food Collection – Dodge Ball

Help with CAV by sitting at the table and taking food donations and card swipe for an extra name in drawing when donating 4 or more cans. To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 5 – Cram a Van Food Collection – Team Competition Drop Off

Help with CAV by sitting at the table and taking food donations. To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 5 – Cram a Van Food Collection before Lip Sync

Help with CAV by sitting at the table and taking food donations and card swipe for an extra name in drawing when donating 4 or more cans. To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 7 – Veggie Band for Homecoming Parade

To help promote the Campus Kitchen to the community, the CEO and CK are coordinating a Veggie Band. During the homecoming parade, the veggie band will march in front of the Cram a Van to announce its arrival with all the food collected! To learn more and sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync event page](#).

October 8 – Biscuits, Bagels and PBJs at Campus Kitchen (Business 295 Only)

Professor Ludwig's Business 295 class will package bread, bagels and sandwiches for the weekly distribution. For more details, contact Dr. Ludwig. [Members of class can sign up here](#).

October 9 – Prep Shift at the Campus Kitchen

Volunteers are sought to help cut and portion the food for weekly distribution. For more information or to sign up, [visit the CEO OrgSync website](#).



LEEP Volunteers Sought

LEEP is looking for a few people who are motivated to make a big difference in our community. Volunteers need a 6-8 month commitment, and will have unlimited opportunities to change a life. LEEP is Leisure Education for Exceptional People, and, as their website states, "it enriches lives through inclusive education, recreation and healthy living opportunities." LEEP programs are "designed to enhance the quality of life for people with developmental and intellectual disabilities." To learn more about volunteer opportunities, visit the [CEO portal on OrgSync](#).

Volunteer for the United Way

Are you looking to have fun and volunteer at the same time? The folks at United Way are having an event and are looking for volunteers to help. They are having their United Way Reading Festival and they are hoping that you join them for a fun morning celebrating reading! This expo-style event had more than 500 people attend last year. They are looking for volunteers to greet people, hand out Capstone books, help at sign-in, and more. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, visit the [CEO portal on OrgSync](#).

Campus Schedule for 2017-18 Red Cross Blood Drives

Upward Bound had a blood drive on September 5th and **90 units** of blood were collected! That is equivalent to **11.25 gallons!** Red Cross will be hosting several blood drives on campus during the 2017-18 academic year! If you want to help and be a part of this contribution take a look at the dates and times listed below. If you plan on donating more than once, you must wait 8 weeks (56 days) until donating again! To learn more

about all of the blood donation opportunities scheduled to take place on campus, visit the [CEO portal on OrgSync](#).

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
**FEATURED
PROJECT**

Campus Kitchen Garden Harvest and Clean Up/Emily Schmitt

On Thursday, September 21, five Community Engagement Office volunteers spruced up the Campus Kitchen Garden. We harvested any fruit/veggies from dying plants then pulled the dead plants from the garden beds and put them in the compost bin. We also pulled weeds, in the garden and around the building, and picked up trash in the parking lot. We cleaned and processed the tomatoes, carrots, and beans we harvested. The Campus Kitchen will distribute them to community partners including Maple River Loaves and Fishes and Open Door Health Clinic.

“Even though more students seem to be taking summer courses, it’s difficult to manage a garden at a University because student volunteers are generally not around during the growing season” said Karen Anderson, Assistant Director of Community Engagement and manager of the Campus Kitchen at MSU, Mankato. “We have adequate volunteer support over the summer, but once classes begin, it can be difficult for anyone to find a spare 10 minutes to water and weed the garden. This is especially problematic at a time when fall harvest hits.”

On average, the Campus Kitchen Garden yields around 7 pounds of produce each week during June, July, August and September.

Besides harvesting produce, the cleanup was helpful as the Campus Kitchen Garden will be on the sustainability tour of MSU, Mankato for the Minnesota Chapter of the American Planning Association conference, scheduled to take place at the end of September. For more information about the APA conference tour, contact Dr. Russell Fricano. To learn how to get involved with the Campus Kitchen Garden, contact Karen Anderson.

To see photos of student involved in this project, visit the [Campus Kitchen at MSU, Mankato’s Facebook Page](#).

COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT
REFLECTION

Sibley Park Cleanup/Sarah Hast

The Sibley Park Cleanup was a day of service, fellowship with my peers, sun, and mosquito bites. To take part in such a diversity of students, actively choosing to serve our community, on a Saturday morning was inspiring. There was laughter, chatter, and lots of coffee as each van of students arrived. We might have been from different school clubs, organizations, majors, and cultures but had the same mission that morning. Unifying as a school community allowed us to contribute to a bigger community than ourselves.

I had the pleasure of mulching flower beds and clearing dead flowers alongside 19 other students - pictured below because of course we had to take a before shot! I was appreciative of the respect given to the site managers, but even more the respect I was given when talking to my peers. Meeting almost all of them for the first time that day, they allowed me to speak and had such a positive attitude. Our service project allowed us to work closely together, heaving mulch buckets and getting our hands dirty. We took on a team dynamic where everyone jumped into a role they saw needed without having to assign tasks. We had to practically force the team members shoveling mulch to put down the shovel and take a water break! In addition to completing projects with hard work, some projects the city had been waiting three years to accomplish, we got to learn about one other and what this service event meant individually.

After the sweat, bites, and beautifully laid mulch we spent time as a group reflecting on why we showed up that day, especially on what it was that we accomplish, and focused on what we can do moving forward in service. Many of my peers had a sparked passion for gardening, and found the work rewarding. Students often sharing that they felt they had the opportunity to help out their community. How amazing that in a few hours we were able to improve a park that is utilized by so many people? As a bonus, we walked away with new friends and a few laughs. I encourage our entire MSU, Mankato student community to branch out to our larger community. The self-reward and new friendships are an added gift to helping improve our community in way that might not have been without your abilities.



Photos of [all of the volunteers](#) can be seen at the [MNSU Community Engagement Facebook page](#).

Here's a nice reflection from a Maverick Alumna:

[Gabby Nelson](#)

Know someone who would like to receive the newsletter?

Have an important service project you would like shared?

Want to offer your reflection on a service experience?

Contact us at Community.Engagement@mnsu.edu

