

create and examine real problems in their community and build their own projects to help create a better society.

Sagawa, previously cited:

“Not only would students and their families benefit, communities would as well. Existing programs have mobilized middle-school students to manage recycling programs, educate the community about environmental hazards, and tutor young children. In the wake of Hurricane Charlie, the students interviewed, registered, and deployed more than 5,000 volunteers. The kind of awareness, empowerment, and responsibility built through the program could be exhibited by teens everywhere. We could provide a Summer of Service, helping them to put their lives on a positive trajectory and become a vital resource for their communities.”

And finally, deteriorating social bonds exacerbate forms of welfare. Only service learning can build an ethic of community that builds connections and resolves the roots of human conflict.

From Jo Ann Mort, the director of communications for UNITE, the national clothing and textile union, titled, “A Place for Us: How to Make Society Civil and Democracy Strong,” from 1998:

“Much is at stake today. The economic reality of jobs vanishing at the very moment when we are reaffirming the ideology of work, calling the work ethic our core value in the politics of welfare reform presents a problem. In our civilization, work has endowed human life with meaning, dignity, and status. As work disappears we must look to new ways to define ourselves. Making ourselves good citizens is the perfect route. Democracy depends on them to be educated into civil society, to participate in deliberation, time to service, volunteer for civic activities. Unless we “find new ways to distribute the fruits of non-labor-based productivity, more citizens will become poor in economic and social terms and the system itself will be undermined and destroyed by political instability, and new forms of class wars.”

Observation Two is solvency. First, the plan would make community service a rite of passage for students entering high school, transforming young lives and entire communities. Our author is an expert on this subject. From Sagawa, previously cited:

“Legislation would support community efforts to engage young teens in intensive service as a ‘rite of passage’ during the summer of high school. Research shows that service-learning promotes positive youth development like few other programs can, motivating students to achieve and teaching personal, social, and civic responsibility. By making the summer service experience a ‘rite of passage’ for young people transitioning to high school, whole communities could be transformed. Using AmeriCorps members and college students to lead the younger students in service offers the dual benefit of keeping costs reasonable and offering positive role models. The Dodd-Cochran-DeLauro bill encourages this staffing model.”