

MCHS Silver Cord Service Program

Encouraging volunteerism and Community service by youth

Mason City High School, in an effort to provide students with opportunities to develop to their fullest potential and to become valuable contributors to society, initiated the Silver Cord Service Program with the 2004-05 school year. It is our belief that students who interact positively within their community not only will benefit the community, but also will develop their own leadership and citizenship skills. To encourage and reward volunteerism and community service, the Silver Cord program will recognize students each year who have made significant contributions to the community through their service.

Seniors who have completed a minimum of 160 hours of approved volunteer service during their four years at MCHS will be awarded a silver cord and will be recognized at graduation exercises. While it is suggested and highly encouraged that students complete 40 hours of approved service activities each year to reach the 160 total hours, students may accumulate their 160 hours in varying amounts during their four years of high school. Additionally, underclassmen who attain a minimum of 40 hours of approved service during a school year will be awarded a certificate and will be honored at the annual spring recognition assembly.

The Silver Cord Program will be phased into place according to the following schedule for the next four years:

Class of 2006 - 80 hours Class of 2008 - 160 hours

Class of 2007 - 120 hours Class of 2009 - 160 hours

A log of student completion of approved service activities will be maintained for all students by their teacher-advisor. A committee will review periodically those activities which constitute "approved" community service. To constitute an "approved" area of service, the following criteria must be met:

- The approved service hours must be attained during non-school time.
- The approved service hours must be completed for "non-pay."
- The approved service hours from any one project or area may not exceed 20 hours.
- The approved service hours must be approved by the faculty-advisor BEFORE being undertaken.
- The approved service hours must be submitted to the advisor with appropriate documentation (see accompanying form) and then will be recorded by the advisor on the individual student's service log sheet.

Any questions as to the approval of service hours will be referred to the oversight committee which will render a final decision about any issues.

SILVER CORD SERVICE PROGRAM

Approvable service ideas

While it is impossible to foresee all opportunities for approved service by students, and while the listing below is and will be subject to continuous updating, the following guidelines are in place to assist advisors and students in understanding what will constitute "approved" (and not approved) areas for service as part of the Silver Cord Program.

Acceptable service areas:

- Volunteering with community service organizations
- Reading to the elderly; assisting the elderly with household chores (shoveling, raking, etc.)
- Volunteering for special church projects
- Helping to improve the school buildings and grounds
- Youth Task Force activities (outside of school hours)
- Coaching younger children in a sport or other activity
- Working with a blood drive (outside of school hours)
- Tutoring other students before or after school
- Working on a community beautification or clean up project
- Assisting with Special Olympics outside of school hours
- Serving as a counselor (non-paid) at a camp or special outing
- Assisting at a hospital, shelter, day-care, or nursing home
- Volunteering for special events such as Relay For Life, Cancer Telethon, etc.
- Community service which fulfills requirements for Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts (not to exceed a maximum of 10 hours)
- Working for a political party or campaign
- Fundraising for NON-PROFIT organizations (not to exceed 10 hours total)

Non-acceptable service areas:

- Doing chores at home or helping family members
- Attending church or Sunday school
- Working on the family farm or within a family business
- Babysitting for siblings or relatives and friends
- Completing ANY task for which money is received
- Doing "extra credit" or special "chores" for a teacher at school
- Participating in extra-curricular activities (or doing a project "attached" to an activity, team, club, etc.)
- Court-ordered community service

As noted above, this list in no way encompasses ALL opportunities for service. Students who have ideas for service undertakings that are not listed above should check with a school administrator BEFORE engaging in the activity to make sure that it is "approved."

Click [here](#) to download the Silver Cord Verification Form