

## **Varsity Letter in Community Service Information for Schools**

### **What is a varsity letter in community service (VLCS)?**

A VLCS recognizes a high school student's high level of commitment to serving their community. It is a letter or patch that is consistent with those awarded by the student's high school for varsity sports and activities.

### **What is the cost to the school district or schools?**

There is no cost to schools, districts, or families. The cost of each letter and patch will be paid for by United Way of Snohomish County.

### **How will students apply for the varsity letter, and how will their service hours be verified?**

Students will apply through United Way of Snohomish County, using the same rigorous application and verification processes used by the model program in Pierce County. Their hours are verified by community volunteers who contact the students' volunteer supervisors. For more information, visit [www.uwsc.org/varsityletter](http://www.uwsc.org/varsityletter).

### **What model is being used for this program?**

United Way of Pierce County pioneered The Varsity Letter in Community Service Program over 15 years ago as a way to recognize high school students who have an exceptional record of serving their community.

### **What are the requirements for receiving this letter?**

Students must complete 145 hours of volunteer service in 12 months. This figure is a result of United Way of Pierce County's research and collaboration with school districts to determine a challenging goal that would be approximately the equivalent to the amount of time a student spends in a varsity sport. There will be additional guidelines to ensure that students don't "double-dip" with their required service hours for a class or for graduation. Participation in service clubs like National Honor Society and Key Club projects can generally count, but school activities that are not related to community service cannot be counted. Students must also meet a minimum GPA of 2.0.

### **How will students receive a varsity letter in community service?**

A VLCS can be presented to students at your school's end-of-the-year awards ceremony, or United Way will mail them directly to students at the end of the year.

### **How will students benefit from a varsity letter in community service?**

Students will have a physical award both recognizing their achievement in volunteerism, and connecting this achievement with their academics. The VLCS program will encourage students to set a challenging goal in volunteerism. Students will be able to list this achievement in college, scholarship and job applications.

**How will the community benefit from varsity letters in community service?**

Schools and non-profit agencies will directly benefit from students' volunteer hours. Schools and communities will be able to easily recognize students who are leaders in volunteering.

If you're interested in bringing the Varsity Letter in Community Service to your school or district, please contact Susan Gustafson, Program Director, United Way of Snohomish County. 425.374.5503 or [susan.gustafson@uwsc.org](mailto:susan.gustafson@uwsc.org)