



SERVICE LEARNING AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION

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### STEM PATHWAYS: HOW UNDERGRADUATES INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION THROUGH SERVICE-LEARNING

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#### ABSTRACT:

We sustained an interdisciplinary peer-driven model that redefined the undergraduate role, moving them to collaboratively educational, engaging, and accessible activities. This transformation moved the focus beyond design service delivery to cultivating leadership skills and STEM advocacy among undergraduates. This presentation will analyze the successful implementation of this peer-driven model in Dr. Mary Jo Parker's seminar course through the service-learning peer leader's perspective. Therefore, establishing a replicable framework for more impactful and integrated community engagement.

#### THEMATIC FOCUS:

**Shifting Foundations: Modern fundamental changes in how communities form, change, and represent themselves.**

#### BIO:

Stephanie Chavarria is an undergraduate student. A Service-Learning Peer Leader who started out in 2023, initially as a course student, and returned to mentor peers after seeing the impact of service firsthand. This was made possible through the Scholars Academy, under the sponsorship of Dr. Mary Jo Parker. Stephanie now leads undergraduate students in designing experiments at the middle school level, advocating the importance of fostering interest in STEM. This shift from mentee to mentor strengthened her leadership skills, allowed her to support peers, deepened her passion for advocacy, collaboration, and connecting classrooms with communities.

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