



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Congress promotes National Center for Families Learning’s Family Service Learning initiative

Multi-generation program recognized as tool to solve community challenges

WASHINGTON, DC (November 1, 2021) – Innovative family-centric programming designed to enable families to address community challenges continues to receive Congressional recognition.

[Family Service Learning](#), a framework that facilitates family-generated community service projects, was recognized today by Representatives John Yarmuth (D-KY) and Van Taylor (R-TX) and Senators John Cornyn (R-TX) and Cory Booker (D-NJ). A Congressional resolution introduced this week designates the week of November 1-5, 2021 as “National Family Service Learning Week.” This is the sixth consecutive year Congress has supported a resolution highlighting Family Service Learning.

Developed by the [National Center for Families Learning \(NCFL\)](#) in 2013, Family Service Learning creates a pathway for low-income families—a segment of the population that is often missing from discussions around national service—to lead community service projects. Through a deliberate, six-component educational program, families identify problems within their own communities and carry out service projects to address them. The projects are researched, designed, and executed by families in their own communities, flipping the paradigm for low-income families who often feel disconnected from community service.

“It is my honor to once again introduce this resolution recognizing November 1st through 5th as National Family Service Learning Week,” said Congressman John Yarmuth. “This multigenerational approach to learning enriches lives, improves our communities, and helps families build stronger futures. As a Louisvillian, this week is also an acknowledgement of the tremendous work being done by our own National Center for Families Learning. For more than three decades the dedicated staff of NCFL have worked to improve our commonwealth and our country, and I’m so honored to represent them in Congress.”

Over the past year, during a worldwide pandemic, families and communities had to navigate remote learning, work from home, and build new skills and relationships. Family Service Learning programs helped bridge this moment in time to deepen families’ and communities’ ability to learn together and in different ways.

Family Service Learning projects can be carried out in-person or virtually, and allow parents to gain literacy, computer, and communication skills while building social capital, deepening their community connections, and developing additional skills that are critical to getting and keeping a job. Often, participants secure a job or a better job by the end of their service project. Children participate in service projects alongside adult family members, observing their parents as active community members and role models.

“We appreciate Congress’ ongoing support and recognition of the value of Family Service Learning,” NCFL President Dr. Felicia Cumings Smith said. “Unfortunately, low-income families are families farthest from opportunities and often are excluded from traditional service learning projects. Family Service Learning is an approach that empowers families to impact challenges within their own communities. The results are powerful! Families establish strong peer connections, enhance problem solving, collaboration, and other employability skills, becoming agents of change taking pride and ownership in their communities. Now more than ever, families need and deserve these tools to create waves of change and a culture of service for stronger families and communities.”

Results from an independent evaluation of Family Service Learning have found that Family Service Learning can:

- Increase formal learning, including content knowledge research, and academic skills;
- Increase technology skills;
- Increase opportunities to develop work-based skills;
- Improve employment status—46% of participating adults secured a job or improved their existing work status;
- Expand voice, social capital and networks of participating adults;
- Expand self-efficacy and self-confidence.

About the National Center for Families Learning

The National Center for Families Learning (NCFL) is a national nonprofit that works to eradicate poverty through education solutions for families. Partnering with educators, literacy advocates, and policymakers, NCFL develops and provides programming, professional development, and resources from the classroom to the community that empower and raise families to achieve their potential. For more information on NCFL, visit familieslearning.org.

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