

Do you actually like volunteering?

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People who volunteer for community service are supposed to be offering themselves to undertake some purpose to impact members in a community in a positive way, to teach themselves how to be responsible citizens by contributing to the community.

According to the Douglas County School District, such volunteers should have intentions to learn the value of selflessness and foster their personal growth, to understand the importance of helping one another to create a strong community. Based on what I see, that means nothing to probably around 80 percent of the high school population. Whereas high schools see participation in community service as a valuable life lesson for their students, most adolescents only see this requisition as stupid and a roadblock to their one way ticket out of high school graduation year. That's fine, but wouldn't students want to get something out of that? I would. That would certainly improve society.

I've been committing myself to community service for a long time and have been able to do more through my school's Key Club which I joined freshman year. If I recall correctly, there were perhaps 20 or so members in Key Club my freshman and sophomore year of high school. When I walked into the Key Club's interest meeting this year, the room was crammed with probably 60 plus people. Half of them were seniors, seniors I had never seen my past two years in Key Club. That's just insane.

Why would 30 seniors suddenly decide to be a part of a community service club when they could spend that time going out on dinner dates with friends or sleep in? Well, definitely to be good citizens and learn selfless generosity

—not. It's silly if these newbie seniors think they are fooling anyone. And I'm not the only one who sees past this cover up. " I'm not stupid, you guys," Mrs. Strait, the sponsor for Key Club, addressed the seniors with a teasing smile, " I know you all just want hours to get your pretty little cords." Hours and awards...that's pretty much what most high school students have in mind when it comes to doing community service.

It angers me so much that all these seniors couldn't care less about being truly charitable. Tell me, do they like volunteering or do they like hours? Hours and awards from community service are really just details of a bigger picture. High school is basically preparation for college, correct? Is it not true that students try to look benevolent to impress colleges? Are community service hours and awards not part of that impression they're trying to make? Well, that's what the newbie seniors in Key Club are aiming for. I'm not going to lie: I and probably every other high school student wants to make an impression on colleges. The only difference is, I care about doing some actual good too, whereas most students don't. Sometimes, I wish my school had the same community service hours requirement as schools with IB programs.

I remember my friend, Tia, who goes to Smoky Hill High School, telling me that each year, students in the IB program must submit more than 20 hours each year; that's more than four times the amount of hours students at this school are asked to turn in. Just compare: 20 measly hours versus 80 or more. Maybe if high schools requested something similar, students could invest more time in community work and develop into genuine volunteers rather than lay around like a bunch of couch potatoes. Maybe that would

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stop seniors from submitting last-minute hours for community service to fulfill the requirement. Know how much I despise the mob of newbie seniors in Key Club this year? A lot. Actually, even more than a lot.

I seethe with anger, thinking of such atrocious intentions that led these seniors to suddenly show up. Their claims to be “ true” volunteers are nothing but empty. “ Look, mom! Look, dad! I got a cord for being in Key Club! I am so getting into that school with this thing.” “ Great job, sweetie! We’re so proud of you!” That’s some false pride right there. Kids always love showing off their fancy awards, bragging about being “ involved,” and getting into good schools. Good, they’re helping the community, but where’s that valuable life lesson they’re supposed to learn? When it comes to getting community service hours for school, students just want to make an impression, not a contribution.

They don’t think about looking out for the benefit for others, but for the benefit for themselves. Tell me, do they like volunteering or do they like hours?