Serve

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Believe it or not, community service isn’t just something you do to earn a badge in Girl Scouts. Community is an overused noun in modern American English. Its meaning has been watered down, along with other richly historical terms like individual and art. Everyone is an individual, and anything we’re passionate about is an art. Right? Community is what’s around you. Your neighborhood back home, your dorm house, your Facebook network. There are more people out there than the ones you see in your chem lab, and working with those people is the kind of fulfilling experience that is harder to find than the snooze button at 6 a.m. Don’t think volunteering is only for your Greek friends either. Ames has enough options to snag the interest of even the most apathetic or overworked college student. Here’s some of what the city has to offer:

**COMMUNITY SERVICE**

*Kristene Dontje*

There are flyers around campus, the occasional mass email. If you don’t really know what it is, here’s the deal: You volunteer 10 hours (yep, only 10 per person, not 10k) and you get free stuff that’s only for participants, like concerts with big names such as Cake, Jet, and Guster. You fill out a straightforward online registration, do the volunteer work of your choice for at least 10 hours and log your hours, then reap your benefits. Good for those who like the idea of a little side of karma with their good deeds.

**AMES REPAIR & CARE**

*What is it?*

For those with a penchant for hands-on work, this organization gets straight to the nitty gritty and does what needs doing, whether that is painting old buildings, doing repairs on safety equipment or moving natural debris so the old lady doesn’t trip over that log crossing the street.

**Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa**

*What is it?*

Heard of it before? Not surprising. But it’s an excellent way to share some time if you like kids, or if you like the idea of being “that awesome college guy/girl.”

**AMEs COMMUNITY ARTS COUNCIL**

*What is it?*

Speaking of art, or rather, the arts. If you have any interest in music, dance, theater, etc., this is where to turn to pitch in some time. Plus, they’re responsible for Tune In to Main Street, a festival of the arts held locally over the summer.

**The 10,000 Hours Show**

*What is it?*

There are flyers around campus, the occasional mass email. If you don’t really know what it is, here’s the deal: You volunteer 10 hours (yep, only 10 per person, not 10k) and you get free stuff that’s only for participants, like concerts with big names such as Cake, Jet, and Guster. You fill out a straightforward online registration, do the volunteer work of your choice for at least 10 hours and log your hours, then reap your benefits. Good for those who like the idea of a little side of karma with their good deeds.

So, interested? Finding these people is not difficult. In fact, the Volunteer Center of Story County has a site that lists these and other opportunities. They update regularly with new events and organizations looking for help, and send out a newsletter if convenience is your bag. Browse the home page of vcstory.org, or follow the sidebar links to Volunteer Opportunities > Browse Organizations to see a more comprehensive list of what’s on tap.

**Check them out:**

**www.vcstory.org**

**www.bbbsiow.org**

**www.amescurl.org**

**www.10000hours.stu.org.iastate.edu**

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*Dontje: Serve*

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