Our founders envisioned it, our students aspire to it, and our world demands it.
Cardinal Service
Making Service a Distinctive Feature of a Stanford Education

When people think of Stanford University, they think of Nobel prize-winning faculty, pioneering research, high-tech innovation, exemplary academics, and championship athletic teams. Our faculty inspire and train students to tackle the world's largest and most intractable challenges. Today, more than ever, our complex social, political, and environmental issues call for Stanford University to contribute to the public good and to weave public service more deeply into our rich tapestry of tradition, identity, and culture.

Cardinal Service—a bold, university-wide initiative to elevate and expand public service as a distinctive feature of a Stanford education—reflects a broad and visible commitment to this goal.

Cardinal Service is igniting far-reaching collaboration to make public service a Cardinal value—a core part of Stanford’s DNA. It builds on the 30-year tradition of the Haas Center for Public Service and many programs across campus that provide opportunities for students to work on real-world problems in real-world contexts. With the Haas Center in a catalytic role, Cardinal Service has broad support from the President, the Provost, and the Vice Provosts for Student Affairs, Undergraduate Education, Graduate Education, and Teaching and Learning, as well as a growing array of deans, faculty, and students.

Cardinal Service focuses on four dimensions that have proven transformative in the lives of our students: a full-time, quarter-long service experience (Cardinal Quarter); community engaged learning classes (Cardinal Courses); sustained service engagement (Cardinal Commitment); and support to integrate service into any career and pursue work in the public interest (Cardinal Careers).

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“Great research universities are resilient and purposeful, educating future leaders and advancing knowledge. They are a source of light and hope in the world, even in the most troubled times. That resilience has propelled Stanford to its current preeminence as a purposeful university—one that promotes and celebrates excellence not as an end in itself, but as a means to magnify its benefit to society; a university that, relentlessly, educates students to be global citizens and leaders, fosters unlimited creativity, and discovers and applies knowledge for the benefit of humanity.”

– Marc Tessier-Lavigne, President, Stanford University
Cardinal Quarter
Students engage in a full-time summer or quarter-long public service experience with Stanford support.

More than 450 full-time summer or quarter-long public service experiences are offered by more than 30 campus programs to help students build knowledge, skills, and networks while making meaningful contributions to communities. By 2020, Stanford will support 500 students to pursue a Cardinal Quarter each year.

Cardinal Courses
Students enroll in courses that integrate a community experience, examine a public issue, and explore civic identities.

More than 1,700 students enroll in more than 140 community engaged learning courses to apply classroom knowledge to social and environmental issues. Faculty offer Cardinal Courses across 45 departments or programs, integrating academics with service. By 2020, this will grow to 200 courses each year.

“At Stanford you join a diverse, joyful, and collaborative campus community with a shared determination to change the world. You are part of something larger than yourself at Stanford, and your unique perspective will contribute to our extraordinary community. Most importantly, Stanford is a place to grow and begin to define your place in the world.”

– Richard H. Shaw, Stanford Dean of Admission and Financial Aid, letter to admitted students
**Cardinal Commitment**

*Students make and sustain a significant service commitment.*

Students make and sustain a significant service commitment to an issue, program, or organization. We encourage students to declare a major and a mission. By 2020, we will engage 600 students in making a Cardinal Commitment each year.

**Cardinal Careers**

*Students are encouraged to integrate service into any career and are supported to pursue work in the public interest.*

Stanford offers high-impact recruiting and networking events, online tools to explore internship and career opportunities, and coaching tailored to students’ professional interests. By 2020, we will support 30 percent of graduating seniors to pursue work in the public interest through Cardinal Careers.

“My summer Cardinal Quarter experience through the TomKat Center for Sustainable Energy pushed my boundaries on a daily basis. My team’s project on using solar PV as a path to financial benefits for economically disadvantaged public schools in California wasn’t a straightforward one, and no simple solution was provided to us. Through my service I became much more intentional in tying methodology to desired impact, and gained a clearer picture of what I bring to the table in collaborative settings.”

– Chiamaka Kenneth Ogwuegbu, ’18, Cardinal Quarter participant
Building a Legacy of Greater Service

Cardinal Service represents the most significant expansion and elevation of public service at Stanford since the establishment of the Haas Center for Public Service in 1985.

As in 1985, Stanford is leading its peers toward a civic resurgence in higher education. Bolstered by three decades of experience and innovation, the fundamental pieces are in place to foster a strong culture of service among undergraduate students as well as graduate students, faculty, staff, and alumni.

In defining the character of Stanford University in its earliest days, Jane Stanford called upon students to “be of greater service to the public.”

Today more than ever, Stanford students yearn for opportunities not just to serve, but to apply the knowledge they are gaining and the skills they are developing toward the creation of a more just and sustainable world.

Expanding Transformative Service Experiences

- 95% of student respondents rated their 2016 Cardinal Quarter experience as “excellent” or “good”
- 98% of host organization respondents rated their 2016 experience hosting students as “valuable” or “extremely valuable”
- 70% of freshmen and sophomores surveyed in 2015 are interested in participating in Cardinal Quarter
- 96% of Cardinal Course student respondents in 2016 would recommend community engaged learning courses to their peers

“I am a first-generation, low-income student from Turlock, California. Low-income students at Stanford face two key educational obstacles. First, we lack the financial resources other students have to pursue career-related interests. Second, because we can’t accrue professional experiences, our education tends to be less exploratory than other students’—we don’t develop the confidence from learning how we can apply our education in a professional setting and perhaps more importantly, we don’t know in what direction we should shape our education to find our place in the world. After completing a Cardinal Quarter with the California Department of Education’s Data Analysis Division, I’m able to say that my place in the world is at the intersection of government, data, and technology to create better institutions of American democracy, and for me, this means two words that in my time at Stanford I thought I would never hear myself say: computer science.”

– Corey Garcia, ’16
Gift Opportunities for Cardinal Service

In addition to unrestricted support for Cardinal Service, donors can target their support for current and future generations of Stanford students to serve on issues they care about at the local, national, and international levels.

Cardinal Quarter (CQ) Gift Opportunities
Goal: Endow 100 more opportunities

Campus Partners include: Bill Lane Center for the American West, HANDA Center for Human Rights and International Justice (H&S), Seed, Stanford Arts, Stanford Global Studies, Stanford in Government, and others.

- $1,000,000 endows a cohort of 5-6 CQ fellowships
- $175,000 endows one CQ fellowship annually

Cardinal Commitment, Cardinal Course, and Cardinal Career Opportunity Funds

Naming opportunities start at $1,000,000.

Highest priorities:
- Local Education Partnerships
- Leadership development
- Graduate Public Service Fellowship
- Course development in education, engineering, environment, health, human rights, and identity

Matching Funds for Cardinal Service

Matching funds at a ratio of 3 to 5 are available for endowment gifts of $175,000 or more; i.e., a gift of $500,000 will generate an additional $300,000 to support the unrestricted needs of the Cardinal Service Program.

For more information about Cardinal Service, please contact:

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