"What is Service?" Facilitation

Set-up:
Lay out two axes in the space you intend to use. One axis is “Importance to Society” ranging from “Not Important to Society” to “Very Important to Society.” The other axis is “Willingness to Participate” ranging from “I Would Always Do it” to “I Would Never Do it.” It often helps to do a quick example by standing somewhere in the space and asking the participants to tell you what your placement means.

Directions to Participants:
Stand in a place that represents your personal philosophy of service.

Prompts:
Providing dinner once a week at a homeless shelter
**Joining the armed forces**
Leaving your car at home and biking to work
Giving $10 to your favorite non-profit organization Giving $100
Writing a letter to a congressional leader about campaign finance reform
Choosing professional work that makes a difference
**Chaining yourself to an old growth tree to prevent loggers from chopping it down**
Giving blood
**Adopting an 8 year old**
Voting
Creating a peer support group to talk about drug/alcohol abuse
Gathering supplies for hurricane victims
Adopting a segment of the road and cleaning it regularly
Collecting signatures to free political prisoners oversees
Spending time with residents in a nursing home
Helping to make your school, home, or workplace accessible to people with physical disabilities
Tutoring a child
Volunteering to coach a youth sports team
Participate in a march for immigrant rights
Running for city council
Phone-banking for a presidential campaign
Signing up to be a research assistant with your professor studying ways to cure cancer

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Suggestions:
- Try modifying the prompts to suit your audience.
- The bolded prompts above are our favorites (in our experience they generate good discussion).
- We usually don’t just run through the prompts. We try and push people to explain why, especially if they’re far away from most of the group. Get at family/background Where they’re from may lead them to have particular opinion Ex: International/speak another language

Possible Reflection Questions:
Why did we do this?
What are your observations?
What criteria did you use to complete your ranking or determine your spot on the grid?
What were commonalities? Differences?
Which examples were most important to you and why?
Would you argue that any of the examples are not service?
Is there a universal definition of service?
What is your service philosophy or definition?
How might different service philosophies contribute to a group? Contribute to addressing a social issue?

Note: Use this opportunity to introduce or discuss the various types of service (service pathways). See “Public Service Pathways” activity/information on ASB Service Curriculum website.