Questions to Ask Yourself

Find the “perfect fit” for you. Below are some questions to ask yourself as you begin to consider working in community service projects and placements.

Time Considerations

- How much free time do you have available to do community service or social justice work?
- How many hours a week would you like to be involved?
- How much of a commitment are you willing to make? How many months are you able to commit to a volunteer job?
- Can you follow through with your commitment? This is a quality that agencies look for in volunteers.

Skills, Interests & Experience

- What are you passionate about? How do you feel you can make a contribution to the community and address issues in which you have a personal interest?
- Have you done community service work before? What did you like/dislike about it? Do you want to do something similar again?
- Do you have any hobbies, interests, or paid work experience that you could use in your job?
- Are there career skills or experience you would like to develop through your community work?

Job Setting

- Do you have a geographic preference? How far are you willing to travel to do volunteer work? How would you get there? Do you have access to transportation?
- Can you become a certified Smith driver to use a CSO van to get a placement or do you need to look for a placement within walking distance or on a bus route? Are there other Smithies interested in the same placement and are any of them a certified driver so that you can carpool in a CSO van?
  - For more information on becoming a certified Smith driver to go: http://www.smith.edu/cso/transportation.php
- What kind of atmosphere would you like to work in? Quiet? Fast-paced? Direct service? One on one? Administrative?
- Do you want to work inside or outside?
- Do you want to work independently or with others in a team effort?

Focus

- What age group do you want to work with: Children? Teenagers? Adults? The elderly?
- Do you want to work with a community action or social justice program, a school or educational program? Would you like to work with recent immigrants? Would you want to work in a program that addresses physical, mental or emotional disabilities?
Personal Considerations

- Do you know someone who could provide a reference for me if you need one? Have you asked that individual in advance so they will know that they may be contacted?
- If you are under the age of 21, do you understand that there may be certain volunteer opportunities that have minimum age limits for which I do not qualify?