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ABSTRACT

Volunteer trips are a way in which young people can change the world through physical service and relationship building. Undergraduate students' experiences during volunteer trips change how they see themselves in relation to the world around them. However, few resources are available to help support the professionals who are leaders in this growing field. The purpose of this study is to determine the defining factors of "successful" volunteer trips and the staff/faculty leader dispositions that contribute to this success. In order to access a wide range of perspectives, information will be gathered from staff/faculty leaders, student leaders, and student participants from the University of Vermont, Saint Michael's College, and Champlain College. Staff/faculty leaders (4 from each campus), student leaders (6 from each campus), and student participants (10 from each campus) will complete online surveys, with a proportional number of personal interviews held for each research category on each campus. From the collected information, I will create a handbook for staff/faculty volunteer trip leaders that will be applicable to professionals working with any university volunteer trip program. This publication will use personal anecdotes collected to support the outline of four primary roles of staff/faculty leaders: communicator, caretaker, tone-setter, and role model.