

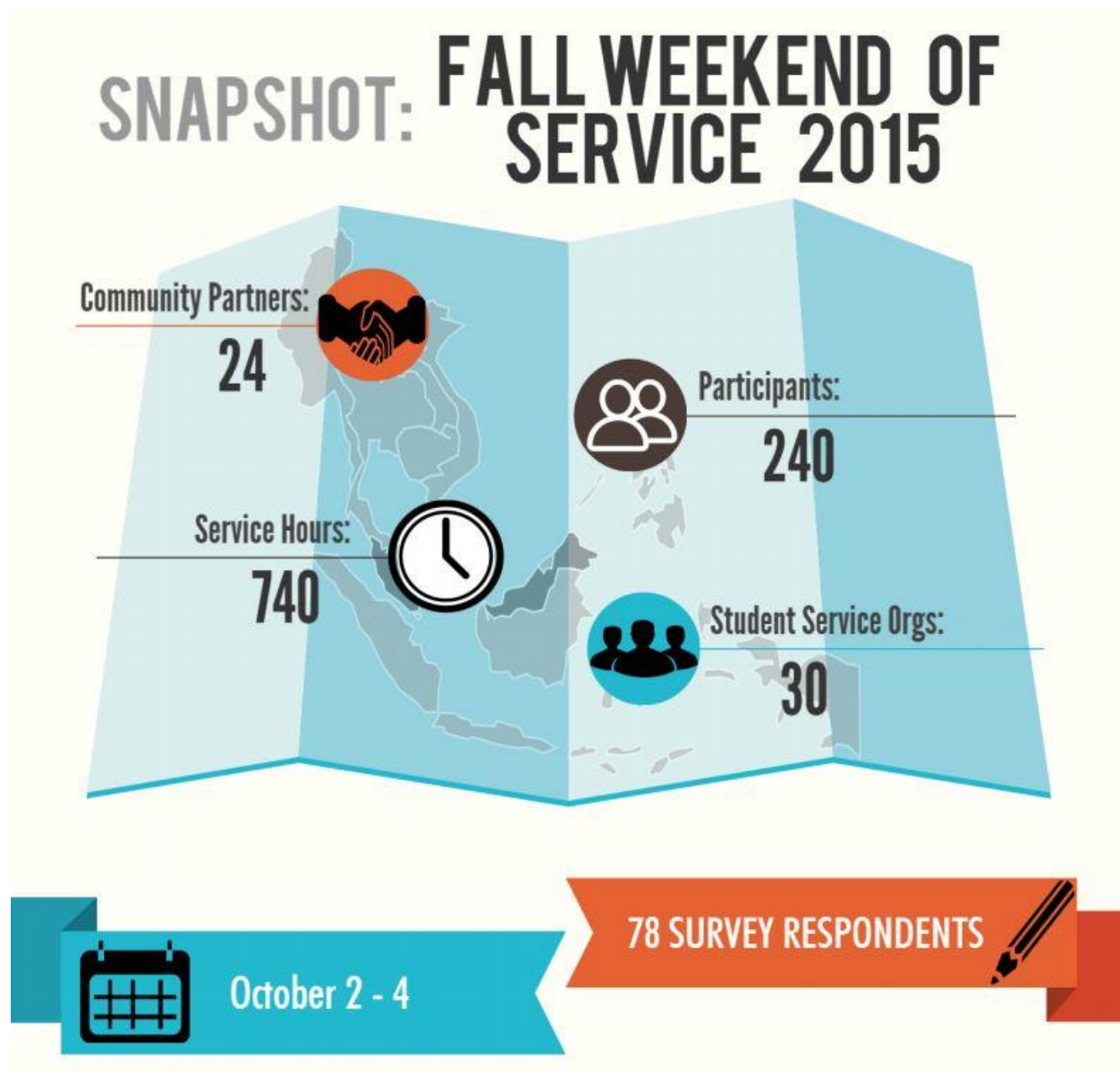
# 2015 Fall Weekend of Service Assessment Report

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## Executive Summary

Over the weekend of October 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015, more than 200 Vanderbilt students working with 30 student service organizations and 24 community partners came together in remembrance of the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> by paying tribute to the victims of that day through more than 700 hours of compassionate and dedicated community service. The importance of The Fall Weekend of Service cannot be overstated, as it exemplifies the empathy and social consciousness of our student body as well as the fundamental link between Vanderbilt and the communities of Nashville. As our Academic Strategic Plan directs, “our graduates must be active citizens who solve important problems that confront the world and seek opportunities for discovery.” This report details how the fellowship between university and city is at the core of our Weekend of Service, giving students the opportunity to recognize the important role they play as leaders on campus and in the greater community.





## Methodology

To properly assess the Fall Weekend of Service and to analyze the impact on the Vanderbilt students who participated, OACS staff created a paper assessment instrument composed of open-ended and Likert-scaled questions. These questions were designed to capture the opinions of students as well as gain a clearer understanding of who composed our student cohorts and respective community partnerships. OACS staff hosted a breakfast for site leaders on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, which was attended by approximately 20 site leaders. Surveys were distributed to site leaders that morning and those who could not attend the breakfast were emailed the survey.

Site leaders were responsible for disseminating surveys to their groups at the conclusion of service events, and were instructed to emphasize the importance of completing them. The surveys took approximately 5 minutes to finish, and site leaders were responsible for collecting and returning the surveys to OACS staff the following week. Site leaders were also reminded via email to hand in the surveys. 78 surveys were returned, representing a 33% completion mark.

From a methodological perspective, paper surveys were utilized to maximize the response rate. It was felt that students would be most likely to respond to a survey distributed immediately following their service event, when the experience was fresh in their minds and they were together as a group. The survey was kept intentionally brief at eight questions to encourage participation.

## Results and Analysis

Approximately 240 students were reported to have participated in the Fall Weekend of Service. 30 student service organizations partnered with 24 community organizations (primarily non-profits) and logged approximately 740 hours of work. 78 participants completed evaluations, yielding a 33% response rate, which is a response rate increase of 12% from 2014. Weather strongly impacted volunteer involvement in 2015, as virtually all outdoors events had to be cancelled or rescheduled due to rain and wind. Additionally, the Fall Weekend of Service was held three weeks later than it is typically scheduled, due to other events happening around campus on September 11<sup>th</sup>. The resultant challenges surrounding publicizing and communicating the different date created some

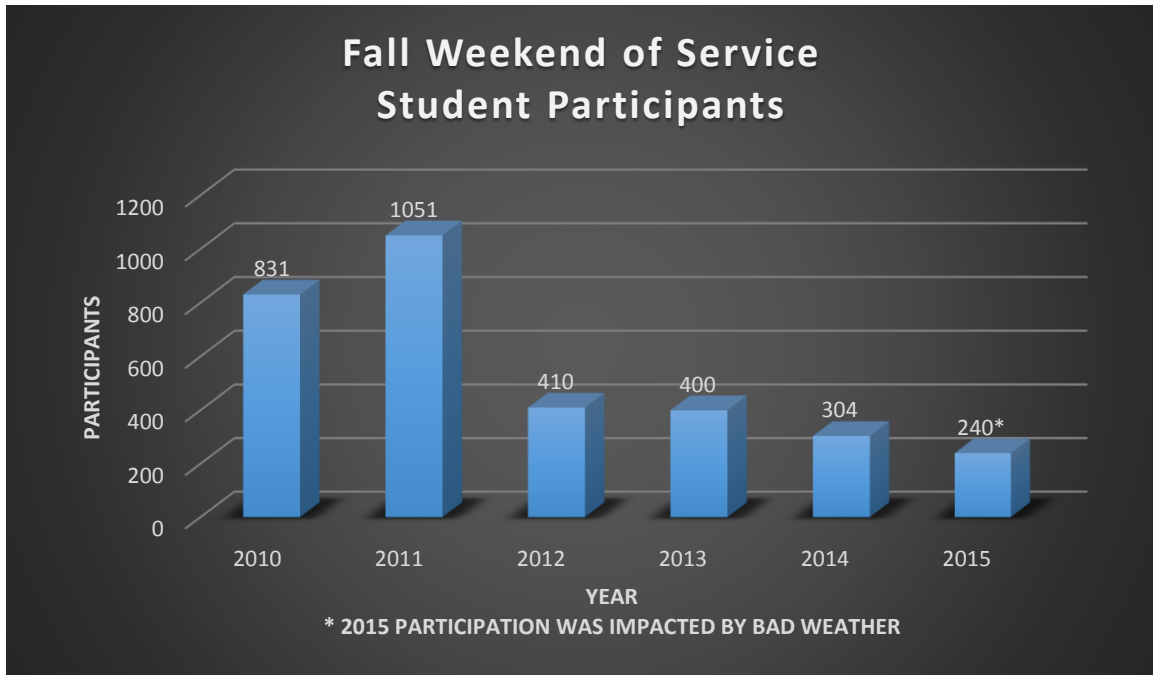
degree of confusion and decreased participation. There were several student organizations who had planned service events for 9/11 months before the date of the Fall Weekend of Service was announced. These students are not included in the numerical analysis of this report. If at all possible, keeping the Fall Weekend of Service as close to September 11<sup>th</sup> in future years is advocated as a good way to keep the event in peoples' minds.

### Student Comments

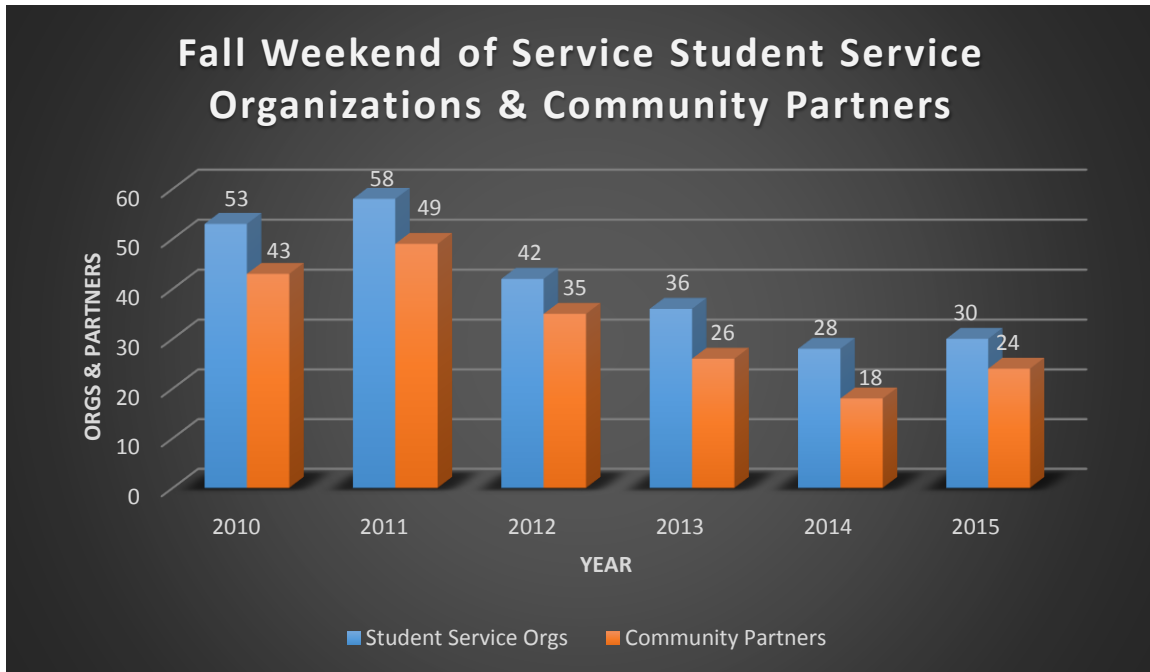
The following student comments were taken from the free response survey question “how could your Weekend of Service experience have been improved?”

- Spend more time working in the community prior to the Weekend of Service
- Engage in work that has a more meaningful impact on participants
- Recruit/involve more participants
- Generate more publicity for the service events
- Expand community stakeholder participation and buy-in
- Provide increased transportation

### Comparative Data and Analysis



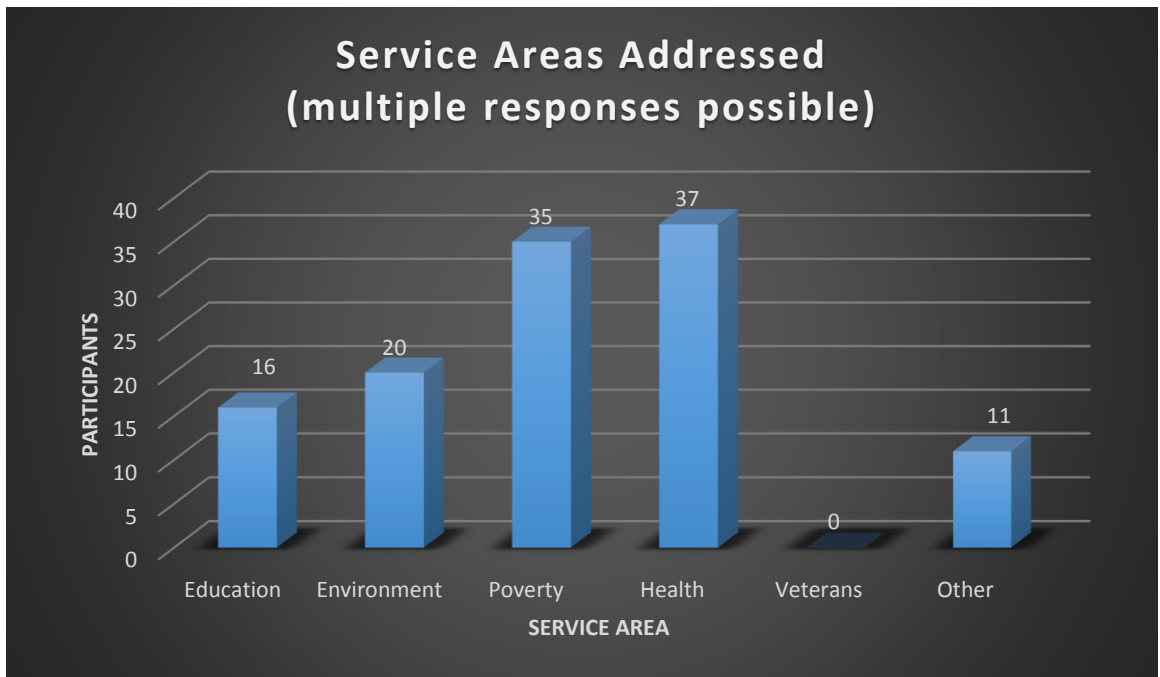
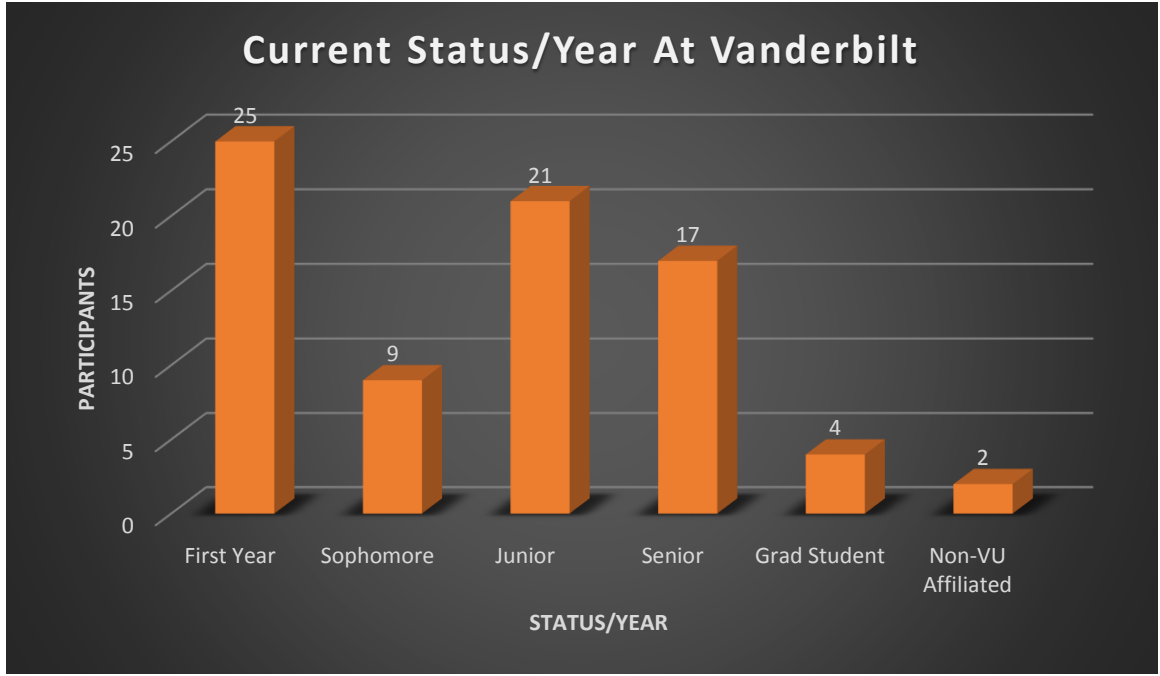
We see a decline in participation going forward from 2011, the 10 year anniversary of the attacks. As we move further in time from the events of September 11, 2001, this tragedy may feel less salient to Vanderbilt undergraduate students, most of whom would have been very young at the time. An incoming first year student in 2015 would have been approximately 4 years old in 2001 and may view 9/11 as a historical event more than a firsthand, personal loss. Additionally, heavy rain and wind dissuaded participation in 2015 and outright cancelled several planned events that were to take place outdoors.



The number of participating student organizations has also decreased since the high-water mark of 2011, with a tapering effect of approximately 30 organizations for the past three years. The number of community partners worked with has similarly decreased. There has historically been overlap between organizations on campus working with the same partners. One aspect to focus on for 2016 could be the diversification of partnerships so we don't have multiple student groups working at the same place during the Fall Weekend of Service. However, this replication is not necessarily a negative outcome, as increasing community partnerships numerically does not have a directly correlative effect on the quality of said partnerships, i.e. more isn't better in and of itself unless these are legitimate, cooperative learning relationships.

## Survey Data

All of the following survey data was synthesized from the analysis of 78 paper surveys. The number of returned surveys represents approximately 33% of all Weekend of Service volunteers, and it is reasonable to conclude that the numbers below are indicative of the larger impact and outcomes experienced across Nashville over the course of this project.



Student Organization	Community Partner
AMIGOS	Bellevue Edible Learning Lab, Inc.
Manna Project International	Second Harvest Food Bank
Girls on the Run	Nashville CARES
Circle K International	Bellevue Edible Learning Lab, Inc.
Project Sunshine	Vanderbilt Children's Hospital
Vanderbilt Garden Initiative	Johnson Alternative School
SYNERGY	Corinthian Baptist Church
Vanderbilt Students for Nonviolence	Workers Dignity
Pencil Projects	Eakin Elementary School
Warren and Moore Colleges	Catholic Charities of TN (in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank)
Vanderbilt Juggling and Physical Arts Club	Nashville Tools for Schools
Best Buddies	Race the Hill - Benefits the Renewal House
VPAWS	Freedom Farms Animal Sanctuary
VPAWS	Nashville Humane Association
Alternative Winter Break	Second Harvest Food Bank
Relay For Life	American Cancer Society Hope Lodge
Habitat for Humanity	Habitat for Humanity ReStore
Alpha Phi Omega	Radnor Lake State Park
Engineering World Health	Project C.U.R.E.
Vanderbilt Blood: Water Mission	Nashville CARES
Are You Making A Difference?	Nashville VA Medical Center
Revitalizing And Empowering Vanderbilt's African American Male Population	Preston Taylor Ministries
American Red Cross at Vanderbilt	Race the Hill - Benefits the Renewal House



<b>Vandy H.O.M.E.</b>	Mercury Courts
<b>Muslim Student's Association</b>	Second Harvest Food Bank
<b>Students Promoting Environmental Awareness &amp; Responsibility</b>	Tennessee Environmental Council
<b>VSVS</b>	Head Middle Magnet School
<b>Grassroots</b>	Workers Dignity
<b>Civil &amp; Environmental Engineering Council</b>	Featheringill Hall
<b>Students Against Modern Slavery</b>	End Slavery TN

