



# SUCCESS STORIES





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## SUCCESS STORY - SPAIN



My name is **Ersilia Morilla Lepe** and I am from Malaga. I am lucky enough to work in a charity shop run by the **NGO "Piel de Mariposa"** (Butterfly Skin). I am in charge of the shop and my duties include managing donations, organising volunteers and of course managing the shop itself. The staff I work with are exceptional, of an enormous human quality, which allows us to develop solidarity projects.

**What has the Service Learning experience given you personally, professionally and to your organisation?**

This question is the key to my work, why I do what I do.

On a personal level, it is very clear to me. Since I was very young I have always felt the need to be able to help, but day to day life and my work and family obligations prevented me from doing so.

At a key moment in my life, I literally stumbled upon the charity shop and started volunteering. It was one of the most beautiful experiences of my life and the fact that now I can collaborate in a Service Learning project with a school is the culmination, also on a professional level.

With regard to the organisation I work for, it is a great contribution, as it gives us visibility, making the disease known in more circles. There is no doubt that children, who are our future, are the most appropriate people to bring to the world the needs of a group that is little or not at all known, such as those suffering from butterfly skin. Undoubtedly, participation in this project has been of great importance and we do not hesitate to continue collaborating in events of this type whenever the opportunity arises.



## SUCCESS STORY - SPAIN

**What values do you think the Service Learning project in which you have participated has promoted ?**

This question is easy to answer, because if there is one thing that children teach us every day, it is the enormous capacity they have to make other people's problems their own. This is evidence of their great empathy, to which we must undoubtedly add their desire to collaborate and their interest in knowing what they can do to improve the lives of people who are not as fortunate as they are. Faced with problems of this nature, they show their humility and leave us impressed with the way they deal with the difficulties of others, making them, if possible, a little bit their own.

**What would you recommend to someone who wants to start a Service Learning project?**

I would say to anyone who wants to start a Service Learning project that the only thing they need is **EAGERNESS**, in capital letters, because the world in which we live is full of people with needs, people with problems, people who are less fortunate than us and who we can make happier with very little we do. A Service Learning project allows those who develop it to feel like better people and those who receive it to have faith and hope in humanity. Finally, we can all have an influence on this type of project, and children are the best candidates to make the world we live in a better place.

## SUCCESS STORY - CROATIA



**Dubravka Šumiga, parent,** Primary school Fran Krsto Frankopan, Osijek, Croatia

Together with my children, students of this school every year I participate in various sports activities, fairs and presentations, landscaping of the school and the school garden. These are not volunteer actions that only happen once, but continuous activities in which the school staff, us parents, students, but also some associations, if necessary, participate, so we all contribute together with our work.

I am personally involved in the arrangement of the school garden, participate in the school fair together with other parents where we have various roles - from collecting and selling tombolas, to joint support actions for the users of some other organizations in our area.

**What the service learning experience has left you personally, professionally and in your community?**

All these activities are deliberately implemented throughout the school year and have, so to speak, their own head and tail. I'm glad that our school carries out exactly such activities, because it achieves a better connection between the generations, children respect their parents more when they see that they are also involved and that they care, that they didn't just come to work. Also, children communicate better with each other because they are involved, they are asked, they have their own real tasks that are valued by someone.

# SUCCESS STORY - CROATIA

**What would you recommend to someone who would like to start a service learning experience?**

We should talk to children as much as possible, not only us parents, but also teachers and students. It is a joy and pleasure to see how we help each other, do something good for someone, and it is not difficult for anyone.



**How can you contribute to implement further project?**

When our children come home from school with some ideas, we parents should be engaged in their implementation, support them, because it is important to be part of a community that will give us much more good in return.

## SUCCESS STORY - ITALY



We are **Pinuccia Di Martino** and **Giorgio Lonardi** and we live in Verona. We are environmental activists, volunteers of the **Verona Sud Committee**.

The purpose of the committee, founded in 2015, is to mobilise to carry out some 'battles' related to the environment, with the aim of protecting the territory, making proposals to preserve or build green areas, creating spaces to allow social aggregation and fighting the climate crisis with an eye to the future.

We entered the school curriculum and classes, invited by the association Legambiente, after their introduction to the topic. We held thematic meetings with the young people and then focused on our Contrada Polese redevelopment project. In addition, we took the school students to visit the park that we re-bonified and are taking care of.

On the last day of school, we held a closing ceremony with the students and their parents, which gave us the opportunity to explain our rehabilitation goals to them as well.

**What the service learning experience has left you personally, professionally and in your community?**

Thanks to this experience, we were able to see that there is a lack of public green spaces to create relational and aggregative networks. It turned out to be a felt need, a tangible problem that characterises our neighbourhoods and inhabitants.

We were struck by how limited the young people we met were in their dreams and ideas of natural spaces. For them, a small park in the countryside is the maximum that one can aspire to, when in reality one could have much more beautiful and greener places.

We also take home the comment of a mother who said that imagining a common project as a community would give her a feeling of "peace of mind". We are now even more convinced that our work is fundamental to the community and the bonds between people. We feel stronger than before, seeing the teachers so passionate and stimulated has made us realise that our work is useful and should be extended to all ages.



## SUCCESS STORY - ITALY

**What would you recommend to someone who would like to start a service learning experience?**

To those who wish to follow our path, we would say first of all to think that the effort is for the new generations. Paths such as the one we have been involved in are fundamental in instilling in young people a sense of belonging to the planet, teaching them respect for all creation through involvement in their community.

We would also like to advise them not to be afraid to expose themselves, to dialogue and to be together. It is crucial for our work to confront each other and share ideas. If you want to create spaces that are common and free for all, where you can build community, you need to have a spirit that is not polluted by fears of diversity or of new generations. Beautiful things are born when we overcome our sense of fear of others.



**How can you contribute to implement further project?**

By communicating better with the school, by making the resources of the neighborhood available, by involving young people in new activities and by inviting parents to participate; indeed, it is crucial to educate families on these issues as well.

An educational community could be created with common goals. It would be nice to show parents that school goes far beyond grades and/or marks.