



Service Year Alliance

#LetUsServe Light Brigade Action Kit & Instructions



Materials Required

- Super Z Outlet 30 LED Battery Operated Fairy String Lights, 158 inch, White
- Elmer's Tri-Fold Premium Foam Display Board, Black, 36x48 inch
- JVCC EL7566-AW Synthetic Rubber Electrical Tape, 1 inch x 66 foot (24mm x 20m), Black
- Xacto X3001 Razor Knife, No. 1 Knife

Instructions

1. On blank sheets of 11x12 inch printer paper, draw out the letters/symbols you will need to spell out, #LET US SERVE. Note: you will only need 8 letters/symbols traced as you can use the outline of "E" and "S" more than once.
2. Make sure the letter/symbols are big enough to cover most of the paper and that the edges are at least 1½ inches in from the border of the paper. The average letter should be about 9-10 inches long vertically.
3. After drawing the letters, draw a dot to pinpoint the locations where you will put the lights on each letter. Space the dots so there are no gaps larger than 1½ inches in between each light. Some letters may require more lights than other letters.
4. After pinpointing the locations for the lights of each letter, you will cut up your black poster boards with an xacto knife into 11x12 inch cutouts to match the size of the papers that the letters are drawn on.
5. Place the papers with your letters on top of the black poster board cutouts and use your xacto knife to poke a hole in each circle that pinpoints where the lights are supposed to go. If you do not own an xacto knife, a sharp knife, scissors, or a sharp pencil will work, as well.
6. After the holes are visible on your black poster board, use the same instrument to poke through the holes on both sides of the board. This will make it easier for you to insert the lights into the holes.
7. Take your battery operated LED lights and insert them into each hole on the black poster boards.
8. Use your electric tape to tape the strings of the lights/battery pack onto the backside of the poster boards. Do NOT weave the wiring through the holes.
9. If you notice that some of your letters need more lights, you can add more holes to your board where there may be extra gaps within the letter to fill out the letter and give it more shape.
10. Show your #LetUsServe light brigade action to the world!

Best Practices

Mobilize

The first week of August, the service year movement is mobilizing with #LetUsServe signs in communities across the country to ensure that members of Congress receive the message. Bring a group of service year alums and supporters together in your community July 29th- August 6th to make your voices heard. **Note:** make sure you mobilize in the evening as the lights will not be visible during the day.

Other tips:

1. Consider recognizable, well-trafficked locations that represent where you live, potentially reach members of Congress, and would come out well in a photo.
2. Identify a few locations and map them out ahead of time; create a plan of how you will travel to each one with the group.
3. Organize a social event in conjunction with the mobilization like a movement meetup, happy hour, or coffee at your favorite cafe to ensure good turnout. It's a best practice to have at least one person per sign, but more are welcome! You can create an event on the Service Year Alliance website or Facebook to publicize the event as well. The more the merrier!

Amplify Your Efforts

Once you're satisfied with your photos, amplify your efforts with these three steps:

1. Email your photos to your Regional Field Director or Campus Organizing Manager;
2. Email and tweet your photos to your target members of Congress (see sample language below);
3. Email and tweet your photos to local reporters and tell them about your mobilization.

Work with your Regional Field Director or Campus Organizing Manager to acquire any contact information you need.

Sample Tweet to Members of Congress

.@senatorJohnDoe We are shining a light on #nationalservice. EXPAND- don't eliminate- #serviceyear programs! #LetUsServe @ServiceYear

Note: Make sure you include a dot/ period directly before the @ so it's promoted across all your followers and not solely the member of Congress.

Sample Email to Congressional Offices

Dear [SENATOR/REPRESENTATIVE],

My name is [NAME] and I'm writing as a constituent of [TOWN], [STATE].

The White House's budget proposes the elimination of AmeriCorps – America's largest national service program. Funding for YouthBuild and the Peace Corps, two other major national service programs, is in jeopardy.

On [August X], service year supporters gathered in [TOWN/CITY] to call for the expansion-- not elimination-- of national service, displaying handmade, illuminated signs that read #LET US SERVE.

Service years yield a nearly four-to-one return on investment and are backed by 80 percent of voters who support increasing or maintaining the federal investment in national service.

Please support AmeriCorps, the Peace Corps, and YouthBuild in the upcoming FY18 budget negotiations.

Please let me know if we provide your office with any additional information on the impact of service years in [STATE].

I look forward to your response.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

{NAME}

[ADDRESS]

[PHONE]

Sample Tweet to Local Reporters

.@reporterJaneDoe #TONIGHT we're calling on Congress to EXPAND- not eliminate- #nationalservice programs. #LetUsServe @ServiceYear

Note: Make sure you include a dot/ period directly before the @ so it's promoted across all your followers and not solely the reporter.

Sample Email to Reporters

Dear [NAME OF PRESS CONTACT],

My name is [NAME] and I'm writing as a constituent of [TOWN], [STATE].

The White House's budget proposes the elimination of AmeriCorps – America's largest national service program. Funding for YouthBuild and the Peace Corps, two other major national service programs, is in jeopardy.

On [August X], service year supporters gathered in [TOWN/CITY] and called on Congress to expand-- not eliminate-- national service, displaying handmade, illuminated signs that read #LET US SERVE.

Service years yield a nearly four-to-one return on investment and are backed by 80 percent of voters who support increasing or maintaining the federal investment in national service.

For more information please contact Aly Ferguson at aferguson@serviceyear.org.

Sincerely,

{NAME}

[ADDRESS]

[PHONE]