

Parter and Alumni Engagement

Lesson Plan





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Table of Contents

04

Activity 1: Build Strong Partner Engagement

05

Activity: Community Asset Mapping

Activity: Who Needs Who

06

Activity: Community Asset Mapping Continued

Activity: Leadership Action Wall

07

Tips for Success

Conclusion

Expand your Skills

Supporting Resources

SkillsUSA Partner and Alumni Engagement

Activity 1: Build Strong Partner Engagement

Goal of the Activity: Students will understand the role of community partners and learn how to identify, communicate with, and collaborate with local organizations in ways that benefit both the community and students.

Activity Overview: Students will begin by identifying potential local partners, including businesses and organizations. Key terms will then be introduced to describe effective and mutually beneficial partnerships. Students will explore the skills and services they can offer community partners, as well as how partners can support students, the chapter, and the school. Finally, students will practice communication and professionalism by delivering a partnership pitch.

Middle School Momentum: Partner Engagement

Time Required: 50 minutes

Suggested participants: All middle school students

Materials Needed: Lesson PowerPoint Slide deck (optional), large tear sheets/paper (4 total), markers (at least 4), “Who Needs Who” cards (1 per student), and foam ball.

Learning Objectives

Students will:

1. Explain what a community partner is and why partnerships matter.
2. Identify local organizations and their potential needs.
3. Describe how collaboration can be mutually beneficial.

Facilitation Instructions

Part 1: Community Helpers (10 minutes)

Say: “Today we’re exploring the SkillsUSA Program of Work focus area: partner and alumni engagement. We are going to focus on community partners. We’ll start by identifying people and organizations in our community who support students, families, and the broader community.”



Activity: Community Asset Mapping

1. Place four large tear sheets around the room labeled: Business/Industry, Nonprofit/Service, Government/Public Support, and Education.
2. Divide students into four groups, one group per paper.
3. Students will list local examples in their assigned category.
4. After two minutes, rotate to the next paper.
5. Repeat rotations, allowing about 90 seconds at each.

Say: *“These are examples of potential community partners in our area.”*

Part 2: Schools and Partners Work Together (10 minutes)

Say: *“Strong partnerships benefit both parties, not just one side.”*

Do: Introduce key terms related to partner and alumni engagement including:

- Partnership: a collaboration between two or more organizations that work toward shared goals by combining resources and strengths for mutual benefit
- Collaboration: working with others in a respectful and cooperative way to create better results
- Community Asset: a person, place, or resource that helps support the community
- Mutual Benefit: everyone involved benefits, not just one side

Say: *“Think silently: What could community partners offer students and our SkillsUSA Chapter?”* (30 seconds think time)

Say: *“Share your ideas with a partner.”* (60 seconds for discussion)

Do: Invite several pairs to share. Potential responses include mentorship, speakers, tours, internships, job shadows, advice, real-world experience, scholarships, and sponsorships.

Say: *“What might partners want in return from our chapter or school?”*

Do: Gather several responses such as: future workforce pipeline, advertising, visibility, reputation, recognition, student volunteers, and project collaboration.

Say: *“Partnerships should support students and help the organization/business reach its goals.”*

Activity: Who Needs Who

1. Give each student one “Who Needs Who” card.
2. Explain that half the cards are community organizations/businesses, and the other half are student skills or services.
3. Students will walk the room and find a mutually beneficial match.
4. After finding a partner, students discuss why the pairing benefits both sides.
5. Give students three minutes to find a partner. (Assist as needed)

Say: *“What were some of your pairings?”* (allow for several responses)

Say: *“Did any organization match with more than one student skill card? Why?”* (allow for one or two responses)

Part 3: Identifying Partner Needs (16 minutes)

Activity: Community Asset Mapping Continued

1. Put students into four groups, one per category from above: Business/Industry, Nonprofit/Service, Government/Public Support, and Education.
2. Groups brainstorm needs these organizations might have that students or the chapter could support.
3. Students record ideas on the large tear sheets or a separate sheet of paper.
4. Allow three minutes, then have all groups share with the class.
5. Groups brainstorm ways these organizations support students and the chapter
6. Students record ideas on paper (either the original tear sheet or a separate piece).
7. After three minutes, have all groups share with the class.



Part 4: Preparing to Engage Partners (12 minutes)

Say: “We’ve identified community partners, explored their needs, and discussed how partnership can benefit everyone. Now we’ll practice how we might approach a partner.”

Activity: Leadership Action Wall

1. Pair students.
2. Each pair selects one community partner.
3. Pairs discuss and prepare a brief introduction using these prompts:
 - What values matter to us in a partnership?
 - What values might matter to this partner?
 - How could we support this partner?
 - What could we gain from the partnership?
4. Allow six minutes to prepare.
5. Pairs share their introduction with another pair.
6. Repeat with a second pair if time allows.



Part 5: Closing (2 minutes)

Say: *“To wrap up today, we will complete this prompt: Because of strong community partners, students can...”*

Do: Use a foam or squishy ball and toss it to one student to begin. Have several or all students share their responses, tossing the ball to a new person each time.

Say: *“Partnerships expand opportunity for our chapter, our school, and your future careers.”*

Tips For Success:

- ✓ Share about current community partners that support the SkillsUSA Chapter and school and how the partnership is structured.
- ✓ Gauge how familiar your students are with the local community: if needed, for Community Asset Mapping, provide a list of those names and then have students sort them into the four categories.
- ✓ For the “Who Needs Who” activity, extra cards are provided. Select and use examples of businesses/organizations that are applicable to your community.

One way to engage partners and alumni is to invite them to speak to the class. Use the Guest Speaker resources that are highlighted in the Middle School Momentum Curriculum and in the Middle

Conclusion:

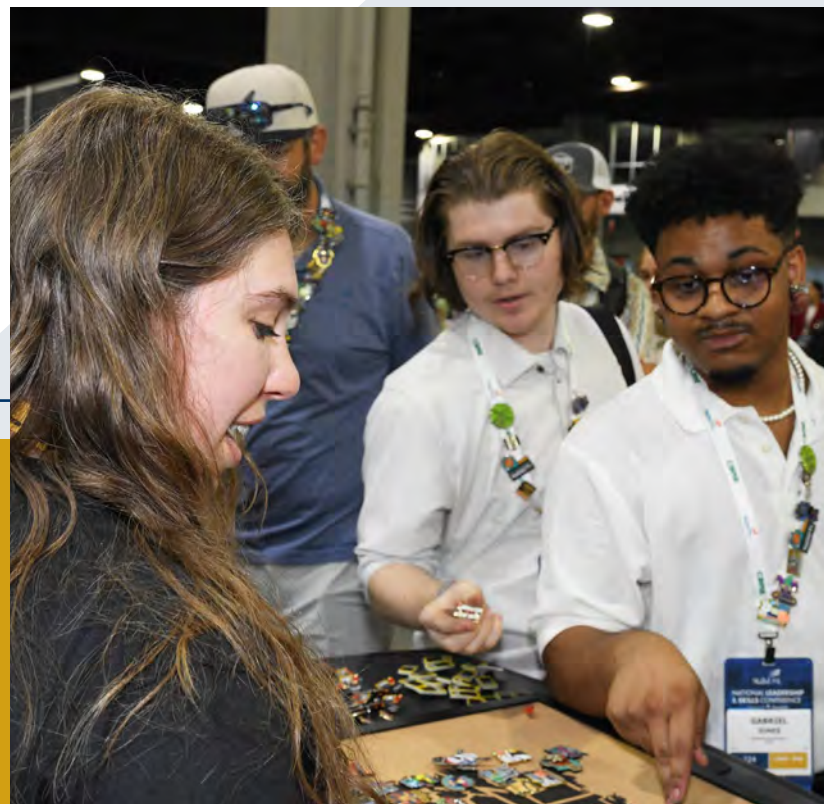
Strong community partnerships are built on collaboration, communication, and mutual benefit. When students understand partner needs and bring their skills, ideas, and responsibility to the table, everyone gains. The habits they practice now help them grow into leaders that partners trust and want to work with.

Expand your Skills

For partnership ideas, explore the [Partnerships](#) portion of the SkillsUSA Website. These videos and documents can be shared with potential partners. The Middle School Work Base Learning Toolkit, in Pathful, includes several tools for hosting guest speakers in the classroom.

Supporting Resources

[SkillsUSA Official Partners](#)



Who Needs Who: Community Partner Cards

BANK	YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM
RESTAURANT	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT CENTER
TECH & IT SERVICES	COMMUNITY SWIMMING POOL
ANIMAL SHELTER	AUTO REPAIR SHOP
PUBLIC LIBRARY	HAIR SALON/ BARBER SHOP
POLICE DEPARTMENT	THRIFT STORE CONSIGNMENT SHOP
COMMUNITY COLLEGE	GAS STATION
MANUFACTURING COMPANY	CONSTRUCTION CO.

LOCAL FARM	HOMELESS SERVICES ORGANIZATION
FOOD BANK OR PANTRY	LAWN CARE & LANDSCAPING BUSINESS
SENIOR CENTER	VETERINARY CLINIC
FIRE DEPARTMENT	HAIR SALON/ BARBER SHOP
HOSPITAL	PLUMBING SERVICES BUSINESS
RETAIL STORE	LOCAL NEWSPAPER
COMMUNITY ART GALLERY	CITY COUNCIL
PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT	

Who Needs Who: Student Skills & Services Cards

EVENT PLANNING & SUPPORT	WELCOMING GUESTS
PUBLIC SPEAKING	LEADING SERVICE PROJECTS
VOLUNTEERING AT EVENTS	SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT
SERVING ON YOUTH ADVISORY COMMITTEES	SHARING STUDENT FEEDBACK
CREATING POSTERS & FLYERS	PROMOTING PROGRAMS AT SCHOOL
HELPING ORGANIZATIONS REACH TEENS	BASIC TECHNOLOGY TROUBLESHOOTING
SHARING SUCCESS STORIES	DIGITAL CONTENT CREATION
TEAM LEADERSHIP	

VOLUNTEER SHIFTS	STUDENT TALENT PIPELINE
STUDENT LABOR HELP	CLEANUP PROJECTS
DONATIONS	MENTORSHIPS



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