



Chess the Community-Service Learning Project 2017-2018 Transylvania-College. Cluj-Napoca. Romania

Online portfolio: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1socDJ7LqK7gP6gxISAeRV1P0EVQdMdrw?usp=sharing>

Digital report: https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Q7FVehvKohRICvPXxQix_SdhmdAllaee

Facebook: https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=1848536131831977&id=100000268256318

1- How did the Project start, what were the motivations? Who started it?

The idea of the project came from a teacher who initiated us in Service Learning. Then we presented it to the secondary students and they decided that it is a good idea having as a possible topic chess; then, our students in middle school wanted to have an outdoor chess board in our X-plore park, which is in process of being built. Teachers team started helping students initiate a project based learning plan, with cross curricular activities, so that we find out more about playing chess and chess history. Some of the students involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award program were also passionate about playing chess, so they offered their help in putting this idea into practice. When we realized that grandparents would be patient and valuable "chess teachers" for us and would also help us relax and have fun, we decided to enlarge the project and involve the elderly people from the daycare center and Gheorgheni neighborhood. We need at least one more chess board, so we need to find creative solutions, but we know that when there is a will, there's a way.

Our end in mind was to: raise awareness of the importance of playing chess (our community & Gheorgheni neighborhood) and provide 1 outdoor chess boards available for the Gheorgheni neighborhood.

Project objectives:

- extend the community awareness related to the importance of playing chess
- organize chess games in Gheorgheni park, in the daycare center; involve the elderly in guiding the children to play chess
- organize a "Chessathlon" - people play chess during a fundraising event meant to raise money for the outdoor chess boards and pieces (or chess costumes for children)

We, as students:

- learn to play chess
- create something for the community, get creative and motivated (wellbeing)
- apply Service Learning theory into practice
- "Have a voice!" (our school mission) - visible results
- practice teamwork and leadership, encourage volunteering and set an example
- have a lot of fun !!! (wellbeing)

2- What curricular areas were involved? Subjects involved were: Maths, Business, Art, It, Civics, PE, Financial & Entrepreneurial education program "Global Money Week" - chess competition; movie day; shops; fundraising events; posters; chess T-shirts etc.

The project was initially promoted by grade 5, grade 7, year 8 and year 10 students, but it ended up as a whole school project, to our great satisfaction. All primary students started learning chess 1 class/week, high school students volunteered to help the little ones - as part of the "Big Brother" initiative. All classes studying business learned in Unit 3 (Marketing) to allow time for content implementation and creation of advertising materials; Chapter 10 - marketing, competition and the consumer, Chapter 11 - Market research, Chapter 16 - Marketing strategy (these 3 chapters being enriched with materials and case studies to show similarities between chess and business strategy), Chapter 14 - Promotion (this deals with the practical implementation of the project, by designing and creating advertising materials to be displayed in & outside the school). But also similarities between chess and various business strategies studied in class. Students were asked to identify and explain ways in which chess strategies can be employed in a business, e.g. correlations between anticipating opponent's moves and staying ahead of the competition. They also designed and sold the chess T-shirts, which were sold out for fundraising and also promoting the project.

3- How did the students participate? The project leading team were meeting, making plans and decisions, were promoting the project to their colleagues. They also accompanied and guided all the groups of students involved in any stage of the project: research in the neighbourhood, questionnaires, communication with city hall and local police, visits to the elderly center, fundraising events.

4- How did the community participate? (local NGOs, neighbors, Municipality, etc)

The City Hall understood from the begging the added value of this project and officially accepted our request to use the public space for constructing the chess board. They identified the following needs of this neighbourhood: an outside learning environment for the entire community (children, their parents and elderly citizens from Gheorgheni neighbourhood), a specially designed park in a very innovating way that permits generations to interact and have fun and an acknowledgement environment in which students' efforts put during the project are recognised and displayed visually (e.g. works of art, exercised solved, the History of Money project, information about the History of Chess). Moreover, the City Hall representatives were actively involved in preparing the location for construction.

The Local Police were also extremely positive about this project sending a representative to supervise the construction.

During **Global Money Week Project (GMW)**, our financial and entrepreneurial programme, all our students were involved in various activities (from kindergarten to high school). The end in mind of GMW was to raise enough money to support the Chess the Community Project. Therefore, all the participants, our sponsors and partners spread financial education in our community connecting it with the chess project. For instance:

- Primary school students organised a Movie Day, the Queen of Kabwe (Queen of Chess), selling popcorn, candies and sodas (learning about spending patterns)
- Middle school students attended a business training about how to make a budget; their knowledge was tested during the Enterprise Day during which they had to manage their budget, buy raw materials and sale their finished products; the winning team making the highest profit donated the money to the Chess the Community Project (to their profit a **considerable donation was added by a dear parent in our school: total value 1000 euros**)
- High school students thought primary students more about the History of money; during the Chess Competition in the break between the rounds the students and their grandparents had the chance to gain more thinking time (for their chess moves) by answering various questions from the History of money;
- The team of students representing Chess the Community advertised and sold T-shirts to students, parents and teaches before and during the Competition

5- How many students, teachers, institutions participated?

Our project is meant to be done in partnership with:

Transylvania College - about 450-500 students & 32 grandparents/adult members in chess teams
Parent Teachers Friends Organization (PTF) - primary school parents who supported the activities & preparations

Local Police Department Gheorgheni

Centrul de zi pentru varstnici FIV (Elderly Day Center)

Nova International School Skopje from Republic of Macedonia - 24 students & 2 teachers - in the SL workshops and chess build day

Testimonials:

- "It was nice to talk about our project; I was so proud and so nervous in the same time. I mean talking if front of all the group... and they were all highschool students... It took a lot of courage and I tried to talk looking at them, not the paper in front of me" (G.C. student grade 4)
- "In the workshops related to building the outdoor chess board, I was in the art workshop. I painted the logo of the project on a wooden board. Other students painted the logo of Nova school, of our school or chess related images. We learned about water / weather resistant painting, about perspective and shadows. This pieces of wood will be used to decorate the park around the chess board and raise awareness related to the importance of playing chess." (DV, student TC)
- "It was great to be here, find out about your service learning projects. It is inspiring for us; we also have SL projects in our school, but none related to chess. It was great to be able to help, I am proud of my work today, I helped out with the setting of the sand, chess board and pieces..."
" (Nova International School student)

Student team: Ilinca Avram - coordinator, Maria Vadan - key data officer, Octavian Ghisa- researcher, Luca Trifan - IT&media guide, George Ciocoi - fundraising leader, Stefan Martin - editor, Patricia Girbovan - marketing.