Reflections on Leading an Alternative Spring Break Trip

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Alternative Spring Break (ASB) is a service immersion program offered through the Office of Student Engagement during the spring semester of each academic year. Students participate in a variety of direct service projects related to specific themes, including food justice, poverty alleviation, low-income housing, coastal studies, youth arts programming, and environmental conservation. OSE selects one student for each trip to serve in a leadership role. This session will explore how student leaders form stronger group cohesion and channels of communication with the other students on service immersion trips, which can then lead to a greater appreciation for the total ASB experience. In addition, presenters will discuss how trip leaders create a unique peer-to-peer connection in ASB that would not otherwise be possible. For instance, we have found that the reflection component of the program improves immensely with student leaders facilitating the discussions instead of faculty or staff. Our presenters will share personal takeaways from their experience, and they will emphasize the ways in which serving as an ASB trip leader can offer valuable leadership development opportunities.