



# How to Better Understand, Recruit and Retain Volunteers

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### Fun facts:

- 2004 -began journey in the nonprofit sector
- Worked for several fundraising platforms
- Degree in Computer and Information Science
- Married for 39 years with 2 adult kids





## Why This Topic?

Volunteers are the backbone of most NPOs

They provide vital support and expertise

Without them, NPOs would not be able to achieve their missions





# Volunteerism in decline

Population is growing while volunteerism stays flat and formal volunteering has been declining.

- Despite two decades of population growth, there are only 1M more volunteers than 20 years ago.
- Formal volunteering rate dropped seven percentage points—from 30 percent in 2019 to 23 percent in 2021.

# Understanding Your Volunteers

Reasons people  
volunteer...

- It's good for you
- It brings people together
- Encourages civic responsibility
- To gain professional experience
- You can make a difference

# Understanding Your Volunteers

Let's look at some  
more statistics

- In 2021, 23.2% of the US population volunteered
- In Kentucky, 22.6% of residents volunteered
- Estimated value of a volunteer's time in KY is \$28.53/hour.

# Understanding Their Motivations

Volunteers are essential to most all nonprofit organizations.

- ★ Volunteers contribute their time, energy, and skills to causes they support.
- ★ Understanding what motivates a volunteer to give of their time allows you to build strong, lasting volunteer programs.

# Understanding Their Motivations

What motivates a  
volunteer to give of their  
time?

Motivations can vary widely

- Personal and social needs
- Altruism
- Personal beliefs
- Networking opportunities



# Understanding Volunteer Interests

Why is it important to understand volunteer interests?

1. You depend on your volunteers
2. You may have trouble retaining them

# Understanding Volunteer Interests

Trivia Time!

What is the average  
annual volunteer  
retention rate in the  
USA?

To help boost this rate and  
the volunteer experience as  
a whole:

- ❖ Understand volunteer interests
- ❖ Incorporate their interests into your volunteer matching process

# Volunteer Matching

What is volunteer  
matching?

Volunteer matching is the process of reviewing a volunteer's interests, passions, personal and professional skills in order to pair that individual with a role that best suits that organization.

# Volunteer Matching

Why volunteer  
matching is important?

- Improves retention and engagement
- Creates more meaningful work experiences
- Helps fill your gaps more easily

# Volunteer Matching

How to match  
volunteer interests to  
job roles

1. Make sure you screen your volunteers
2. Design a questionnaire for volunteer interests
3. Put all of that data into a great database that you can use across your programs
4. Use your data to write effective role descriptions
5. Use the data to streamline communications



# What We've Covered

- Reasons people volunteer
- Understanding their motivations
- Understanding their interests
- Volunteer Matching





# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

1. Define your volunteer needs
2. Develop clear volunteer roles
3. Establish a strong online presence
4. Create a simple and accessible application form



# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

5. Use Volunteer Management Software
6. Conduct Interviews and Background Checks
7. Hire and Communicate

# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

1. Define Your Volunteer Needs
  - Evaluate current volunteer roles
  - Determine requirements for new positions
  - Engage staff, board members, and current volunteers
  - Analyze data from previous events and programs

# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

## 2. Develop Clear Volunteer Roles

- Use job descriptions -  
clear and specific
- Outline qualifications  
needed
- Use language that is  
inclusive and  
welcoming

# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

## 3. Establish a Strong Online Presence

- Make volunteer opportunities easy to find on your website
- Utilize social media
- Share through email newsletters

# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

## 4. Create a Simple and Accessible Application Form

- Easy to find and fill out
- Clear instructions and a user-friendly design
- Limit the information you ask
- Avoid asking for sensitive information

# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

## 5. Use Volunteer Management Software (VMS)

- Centralized volunteer database
- Automated scheduling and reminders
- Online registration and application forms
- Tracking of volunteer hours and impact
- Communication and engagement tools

# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

## 6. Conduct Interviews and Background Checks

- ❑ Ensures they are a good fit and have the necessary skills and experience to succeed
- ❑ Ask questions that assess a volunteer's motivation, skills, and experience
- ❑ Give them an opportunity to ask questions and express any concerns
- ❑ Conduct background checks to ensure the safety and well-being of those you serve

# Recruiting Volunteers

Key steps to  
developing an effective  
volunteer recruitment  
strategy:

## 7. Hire and Communicate

- ❑ Ensures they are a good fit and have the necessary skills and experience to succeed
- ❑ Ask questions that assess a volunteer's motivation, skills, and experience
- ❑ Give them an opportunity to ask questions and express any concerns
- ❑ Conduct background checks to ensure the safety and well-being of those you serve



# Recruiting Volunteers

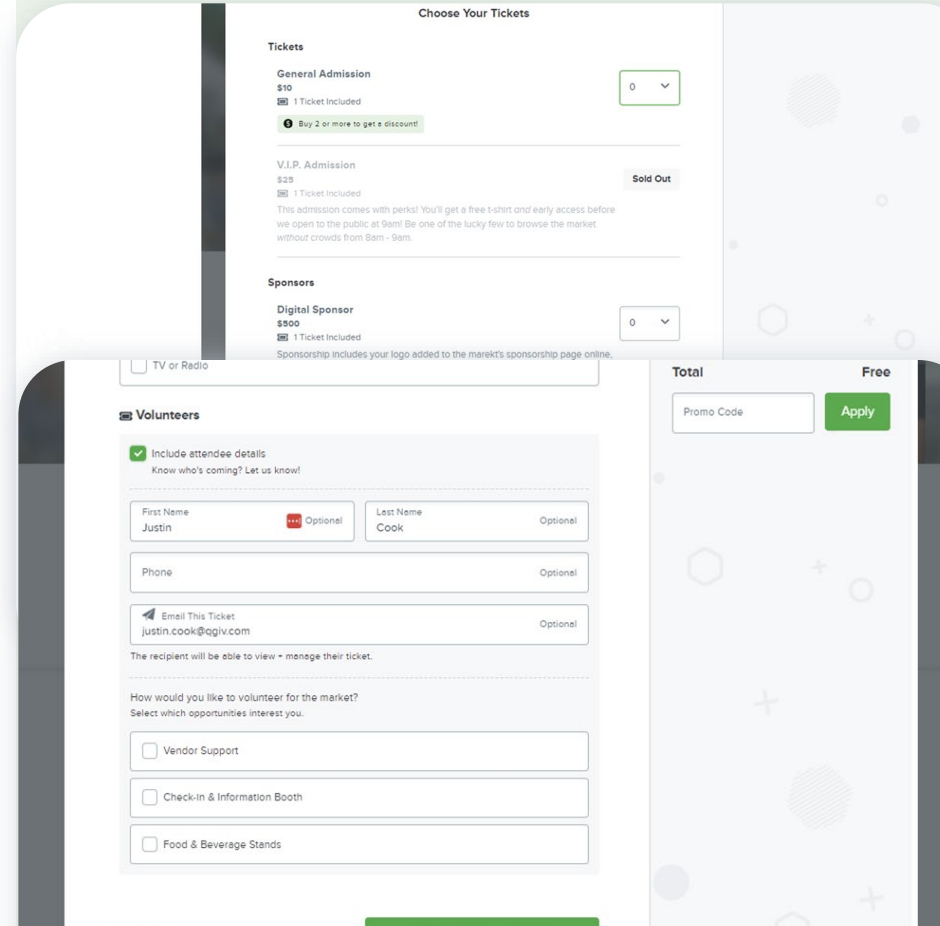
Where to find  
volunteers

- Social Media
- Existing Network
- Open Houses
- Corporate Partners

# Simplify the Sign Up

Avoid a confusing or extended sign-up process.


- Use custom fields to ask about how volunteers wish to help.
- Add conditional fields to gather more information.
- Ask for their email address and phone number.
- Identify their communication preferences.
- Integrate with your favorite CRM




The screenshot displays a multi-step sign-up process. The top section, titled "Choose Your Tickets", offers two options: "General Admission \$10" (1 ticket included, with a "Buy 2 or more to get a discount" button) and "V.I.P. Admission \$29" (1 ticket included, marked "Sold Out"). Below this is a "Sponsors" section with a "Digital Sponsor \$500" option (1 ticket included). A "TV or Radio" checkbox is visible. The bottom section, titled "Volunteers", includes a checked "Include attendee details" option with the instruction "Know who's coming? Let us know!". It contains several optional input fields: "First Name" (Justin), "Last Name" (Cook), "Phone", and "Email This Ticket" (justin.cook@qgiv.com). A note states "The recipient will be able to view - manage their ticket." Below this, a question asks "How would you like to volunteer for the market?" with three checkboxes: "Vendor Support", "Check-in & Information Booth", and "Food & Beverage Stands". On the right side, a "Total" section shows a "Free" price and an "Apply" button.


# Sample Registration Form

- List your volunteer opportunities
- Include optional donation

  
Please select from below:


**Community Resource Volunteer**  
Free    
 1 Ticket Included  
Assist 211 in tracking program changes with local health and human service organizations in order to provide accurate and up-to-date information to the community.


---

**Emergency Response Volunteer**  
Free    
 1 Ticket Included  
Assist 211 to answer text messages from people seeking help. We'll provide you training videos, a remote training session with one of our staff, and access to our information and tools to help our community.

\*\* Must be at least 18 years old, and pass a level 2 background check paid for by 211 Tampa Bay Cares.

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**Social Media Ambassador**  
Free    
 1 Ticket Included  
Assist 211 in raising awareness of available services to help individuals, families with minor children and seniors in need on various digital media platforms.

  
**Add an Optional Gift**  
Your generosity makes a difference!

\$

# Embedded Registration Form

Incorporating a signup  
form within an event.

Technology can help  
facilitate your volunteer  
needs.

The screenshot shows a web page for the "2025 ASK Walk Volunteer Sign-Up". At the top, there is a dark blue navigation bar with a search field, social media icons for Facebook, X, YouTube, and Instagram, and a "Sign In or Sign Up" dropdown menu. Below the navigation bar is a white header with a blue bar containing links for "Event Home", "Event Details", "FAQs", "Tool Kit", "Prizes & Awards", "Volunteer", "Donate", and "Register". The main content area has a white background with a blue title "Register for 2025 ASK Walk Volunteer Sign-Up" and a date/time "Saturday, 5/03/2025 6am EDT - 12pm EDT". A breadcrumb trail reads "Volunteer Shifts > Details > Finish Up". The section "Choose a Volunteer Shifts:" lists four options in rounded rectangular boxes:

- Early Bird Packet Pick-Up 1st Shift, Friday May 2nd 12:00pm - 4:00pm**  
Hand out race bibs and t-shirts, register walk-ups, organize team packet pick-up, and manage fundraising swag pick-up.
- Early Bird Packet Pick-Up 2nd Shift, Friday May 2nd, 4:00pm - 8:00pm**  
Hand out race bibs and t-shirts, register walk-ups, organize team packet pick-up, and manage fundraising swag pick-up. Note: Last shift will help load up supplies from 7-8pm, light lifting needed.
- All Day Volunteer, May 3rd, 6:00am - 12:00pm**  
Assist with all areas of event where needed.
- Race Set-Up, May 3rd, 6:00 a.m - 8:00 a.m.**  
Set up course cones, signage, registration tables, festival area, etc. Deliver water station materials to designated areas.



## Another way to find volunteers...

Your volunteers are with you because they want to impact their community and see your organization as one of the best tools to do so.

**JUST LIKE YOUR  
DONORS.**

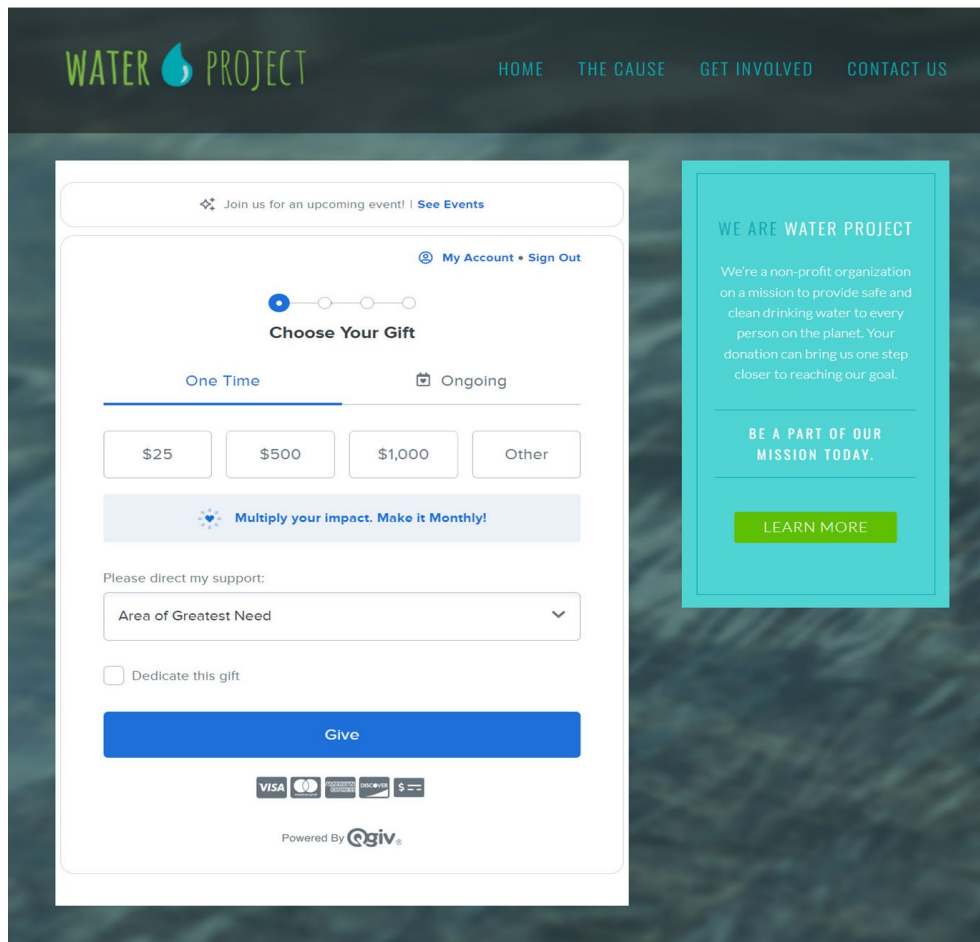
# New Volunteer Recruitment Ideas

- Identify highly-engaged donors who have not volunteered
- Re-engage lapsed donors by asking them to volunteer
- Engage first-time event donors by asking them to volunteer

Whether we're acquiring donors  
or recruiting volunteers, we  
need to use empathy and  
emotions to connect them to  
your mission.

# Recruiting volunteers using your donation forms

- Donors can also become volunteers
- You have their attention so why not ask?



The screenshot shows a donation form for the Water Project. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, THE CAUSE, GET INVOLVED, and CONTACT US. Below the navigation bar, there is a header for the Water Project with the logo. The main content area is titled "Choose Your Gift" and features a progress indicator with four steps, the first of which is active. Below the title, there are two tabs: "One Time" (selected) and "Ongoing". Under the "One Time" tab, there are four buttons for donation amounts: "\$25", "\$500", "\$1,000", and "Other". Below these buttons, there is a blue banner with the text "Multiply your impact. Make it Monthly!". Underneath the banner, there is a dropdown menu labeled "Please direct my support:" with the option "Area of Greatest Need" selected. Below the dropdown menu, there is a checkbox labeled "Dedicate this gift" which is currently unchecked. At the bottom of the form, there is a large blue "Give" button. Below the button, there are logos for VISA, AMERICAN EXPRESS, DISCOVER, and MASTERCARD. At the very bottom, it says "Powered By Qgiv®".

Join us for an upcoming event! | [See Events](#)

[My Account](#) • [Sign Out](#)

**Choose Your Gift**

One Time  Ongoing

\$25 \$500 \$1,000 Other

[Multiply your impact. Make it Monthly!](#)

Please direct my support:

Area of Greatest Need

Dedicate this gift

[Give](#)

VISA AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER MASTERCARD

Powered By [Qgiv](#)®

## WE ARE WATER PROJECT

We're a non-profit organization on a mission to provide safe and clean drinking water to every person on the planet. Your donation can bring us one step closer to reaching our goal.

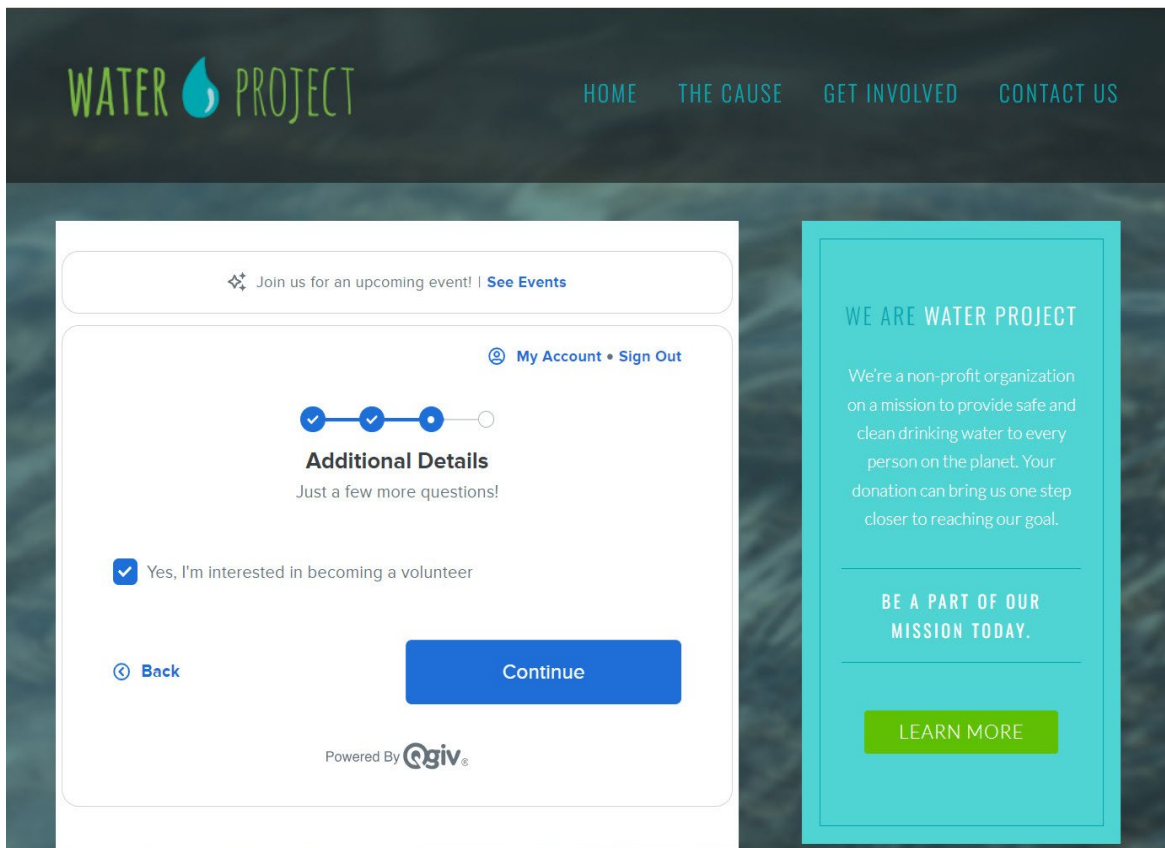
BE A PART OF OUR  
MISSION TODAY.

[LEARN MORE](#)



# Recruiting volunteers using your existing donation forms

- Simple but effective
- Checkboxes,  
dropdowns and even  
conditional logic



The screenshot shows a web form for the Water Project. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo "WATER PROJECT" and links for "HOME", "THE CAUSE", "GET INVOLVED", and "CONTACT US". Below the navigation bar, there is a white form area. At the top of the form, there is a link to "Join us for an upcoming event! | See Events". Below that, there is a "My Account • Sign Out" link. The form is divided into three steps, with the first two completed (indicated by checkmarks) and the third step, "Additional Details", currently active. The text "Additional Details" is followed by "Just a few more questions!". There is a checkbox labeled "Yes, I'm interested in becoming a volunteer" which is checked. At the bottom of the form, there are "Back" and "Continue" buttons. The form is powered by Qgiv.


Join us for an upcoming event! | [See Events](#)

[My Account](#) • [Sign Out](#)

**Additional Details**  
Just a few more questions!

Yes, I'm interested in becoming a volunteer

[Back](#) [Continue](#)

Powered By 

**WE ARE WATER PROJECT**

We're a non-profit organization on a mission to provide safe and clean drinking water to every person on the planet. Your donation can bring us one step closer to reaching our goal.

**BE A PART OF OUR MISSION TODAY.**

[LEARN MORE](#)

**A CHILD  
NEEDS YOU**





## What We've Covered under recruiting volunteers

- Our recruitment strategy
- Where to find volunteers
- Donor pool as volunteers



# Retainin g Volun teers

We're on a roll  
already!

From here:

- Create a positive experience
- Show volunteers you and your organization values them

# Why Is Retaining Volunteers Important?

You should prioritize  
volunteer retention

Two Primary Reasons:

1. Retaining volunteers is cost-effective
2. Returning volunteers offer greater skills and knowledge

Understanding  
why volunteers  
stop participating

Volunteers commonly  
stop because:

- Feel burnt out
- Surprised by sudden policy changes
- Feel like their voices aren't heard
- Feel unappreciated
- Busy schedules

# Volunteer Retention Strategies

Let's proactively boost  
retention!

- Empower volunteers with training
- Offer flexible scheduling
- Keep shifts organized
- Segment volunteer communications
- Show appreciation

# Engagement Tool Example

Use outbound text messages to capture the attention of volunteers.

Add the volunteer's first name to personalize your message.

Link back to your volunteer page.

1 Message Content

Message Name: required

Choose an existing template or create a new one:

Create a new template ▾

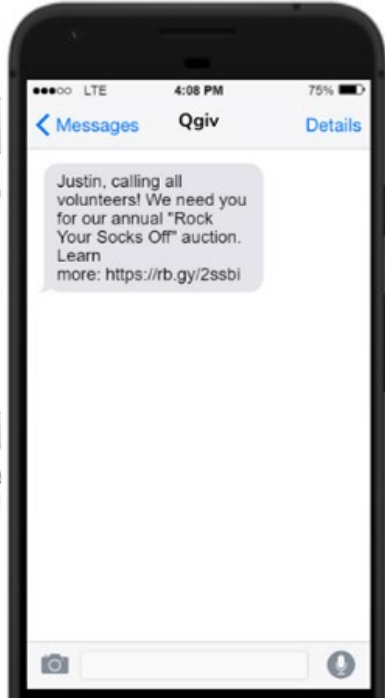
Message Content: required

Insert Tags ▾

%FirstName%, calling all volunteers! We need you for our annual "Rock Your Socks Off" auction. Learn more: <https://rb.gy/2ssbi>

body

Compliance text: Msg&Data rates may apply





# Appreciation Example

Volunteers are your  
brand ambassadors



🛒 Empty

## Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region Items

### Sweatshirts and Long Sleeve Shirts



\$16 - \$35 ea.

Items will have the HSPPR logo on both the front left chest. Those indicated as VOLUNTEER will have "VOLUNTEER" printed...

### Volunteer Replacement Key Card



\$6.50 ea.

For volunteers that have lost or damaged the keycard that allows them access to and around the shelter

### Volunteer T-shirts



\$10 - \$12 ea.

\*AVAILABLE TO ALL VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING ONSITE/SHELTER, CART, AND FOSTER\* Items will have the HSPPR logo on both the front...

### LEAD VOLUNTEERS ONLY - Sweatshirts, Long Sleeve Shirts, and T-Shirts



\$10 - \$35 ea.

\*These sweatshirts are available to current, active Lead Volunteers only\* Items will have the HSPPR logo on both the front...

### PLATINUM PAW VOLUNTEERS ONLY - Sweatshirts, Long Sleeve Shirts, ...



\$10 - \$35 ea.

\*These sweatshirts, Long Sleeves, and T-Shirts are available to current Platinum Paw Volunteers only. Platinum Paw...

### CART VOLUNTEERS ONLY - Sweatshirts, Long Sleeve Shirts, and T-Shirts



\$9 - \$27 ea.


\*These sweatshirts, long sleeve shirts, and T-Shirts are available for current, active CART Volunteers only\* Items will...

# Appreciation Example

Never underestimate  
the power of showing  
appreciation!

Event Home
Donate
BGC Home

## THE BRIGHTER FUTURES VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION



Breakfast

April 28 10:00 Am

Jimmy's American Grill


Recognizing the Impact  
of 2023-2024  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County  
Volunteers

140 US Highway 130  
Bordentown, NJ 08505

Volunteers: FREE  
Guests: \$35.00  
RSVP BY: 4/18/24


[Register Today!](#)

[Donate](#)



**Volunteers We Appreciate You!**


Volunteers are essential to the make up of Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County. Join us as we honor and celebrate your impact and contributions to the Club and our youth.




## VOLUNTEER!

### YOU CAN INSPIRE GREAT FUTURES!

**Caring Days**  
 Perfect for a corporate group or team building activity, we will work with you to create a project that will benefit your group as well as our kids. We rely on volunteers to help with a number of projects, including helping out in our BGC Gardens.





**Teen STEM Conference or College, Career & Job Fair**

Every Fall we host two special events that help our youth to explore possibilities for their futures. We are looking for Sponsors, Panelists, Workshop Facilitators and more. Host a booth or facilitate a workshop and tell young people about your college.

# Wrapping Up

Ultimately, volunteer retention comes down to your ability to form genuine, long-lasting personal connections with volunteers.

Volunteers participate because they support your mission, but they also want to feel like they're a part of something bigger.

These engagement and appreciation efforts can facilitate a stronger sense of community and belonging.

Your VMS will play a major role in handling your program's logistics and planning



# Thank You

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Learn More

Scan or visit [bloomerang.com/seedemo](https://bloomerang.com/seedemo)

# Presentation Sources

Americorp Research <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/01/volunteering-and-civic-life-in-america.html>

Reasons people volunteer

<https://getinvolved.ucsd.edu/service/resources/reasons.html#:~:text=Volunteering%20provides%20physical%20and%20mental,fate%2C%20strengthen%20the%20immune%20system.>

Volunteer stats:

<https://serve.ky.gov/volunteers/Pages/default.aspx>

Understanding motivations

<https://www.nonprofitlearninglab.org/post-1/understand-volunteer-motivations-to-build-strong-volunteer-programs-for-your-nonprofit>

Volunteer interests

<https://blog.goldenvolunteer.com/why-its-important-to-understand-volunteer-interests>

The CASA Volunteer Experience video <https://youtu.be/puBggwQo7oM?feature=shared>

Recruiting volunteers <https://nonprofitquest.com/volunteers>

Volunteer Retention <https://bloomerang.co/blog/volunteer-retention/>

Andre's Story: The Impact One CASA Volunteer Can Make video [https://youtu.be/D9vfQO\\_-7B0?feature=shared](https://youtu.be/D9vfQO_-7B0?feature=shared)