

Effective Practice: Recruiting and Sustaining Dedicated Student Volunteers

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Issue(s) Being Addressed:

The process of locating, recruiting, and sustaining student volunteers to work with community partners, can be an awesome responsibility, but is essential to maintaining credibility and continuity with community program environments.

Actions to Consider:

- How should one go about locating student volunteers? The best and most efficient procedure is to recruit from within ones current college environment where students are currently involved with service or volunteerism.
- Communities need volunteers for assistance with various projects. Finding dependable volunteers is essential for these projects to run and succeed.
- Once volunteers are found one of the key elements is to make sure to maintain and sustain these volunteers in order for programs to succeed and maintain credibility and continuity in the future.

Overview:

In order to meet the needs of the community locating, recruiting and retaining student volunteers is essential for volunteer community programs to succeed. An important part in this process is to maintain dedicated student volunteers to assist new recruits and maintain continuity of the community programs in which student volunteers actively participate.

Where and How to Find Student Volunteers:

1. Have your information prepared: an overview of your project, a flyer, the dates, time and expected commitment are essential in recruiting.
2. Start by communicating with student organizations; many of these organizations require volunteer hours from their members.
3. Ask leaders of student organizations to send out a request on their list serves.
4. Send out a memo to your campus faculty and staff making them aware of your projects, whom you are looking for to volunteer and why. Some will refer students to you or even volunteer themselves.
5. Make as many classroom presentations as possible; a personal invitation to assist on a project is very successful. Show a brief PowerPoint or video.
6. Post your flyers on all bulletin boards also distribute them in different offices through-out the campus.
7. Speak with the editors of your school newspaper; ask them to print articles on your projects and the students you are looking for.
8. Attend campus events. Bring a sign-up sheet and other information on projects.

Sustaining Your Student Volunteers:

To keep students dedicated in volunteer service, they need to know they are appreciated. You can accomplish this with kind words, e-mails and telephone calls as well as creating appreciation certificates. Incentive gifts are great if you can arrange them.