What we do

• Volunteer Houston brings volunteer power together by connecting people with their passions

• Provide and manage volunteers at 1,200 nonprofit agencies annually

• Create programs that meet critical nonprofit needs

• Recognize outstanding community volunteers

• Manage Volunteer Reception Center in time of disaster
Impact

Individuals
- 50,000 Houstonians placed in service opportunities

Agencies
- 1,200 local nonprofit agencies partner with us for:
  - Integrated volunteer opportunities and background checks
  - Service Enterprise Certification
  - Cost savings of nearly $5M

Community
- Manage city-wide spontaneous Volunteers in time of disaster
- Recognize outstanding volunteers at the Greater Houston Service Awards
- Place 13 VISTAS on annual full time assignments at local nonprofit agencies resulting in a cost savings of $700K
Local & National Partnerships

• Volunteer Houston is a leader in key city and national service initiatives including:
VH Programs

**Youth Engagement**
Opportunities for youth to be engaged in community service and leadership to create positive social change.

**Business Volunteer Challenge**
Transform the business culture and help companies unleash the talent and expertise of their employees.

**Corporate Program Services**
Allows companies to foster a more personal link to the community by sharing its human resources with nonprofit organizations in need.

**Veteran Outreach**
A military and veteran reintegration program that inspires military veteran families to address the most pressing challenges in their communities.

**Greater Houston Service Awards**
The GHSA annual awards luncheon to honor the outstanding volunteer work in the Houston community.

**A Visit from Saint Nicholas**
Our annual holiday program that teaches students in underserved areas the value of service and giving back to the community.

**Disaster Preparedness & Response**
When an emergency affects a local area, efforts are conducted in conjunction with civic and governmental agencies to restore livelihoods and to reconstruct communities.

**Service Enterprise**
A way for nonprofit partners to learn how to leverage and manage volunteers to more effectively address community needs.
Some of our partners
VH Mobile App

in partnership with Headspring
VH Mobile App Features

Volunteer user profiles allow app personalization, volunteer identification, and most importantly, hours tracking.

Search through local volunteer opportunities based on the type of project or agency, skills needed, and geographic location.
Integrated Background Checks
Volunteers

- Volunteer can use Volunteer Houston’s website to find and reply to a need.
- If a background check is requested by the partner agency...
How to Develop A Volunteer Leader
Fostering Volunteer Engagement and Leadership
• Agenda
  • Quick review of Managed Projects
  • Why use Volunteer Leaders
  • What does a Volunteer Leader actually do?
  • Outline the lifecycle of a Volunteer Leader
  • How to keep Volunteer Leaders Engaged
Managed Project or Referral Opportunity

• Managed:
  • Planned in partnership with an agency
  • Is managed by a volunteer leader, not a staff member.
Pro Tip: Capacity Building

“We have multiple people staffing our first desk (with our primary phone number). We keep a daily written log of all phone inquiries that tracks the type and nature of the call and prioritizes needs. We put an open box by each call. As handled, we check the boxes and initial our name. Easy way to see what’s outstanding.”

Diana O’Neill, Executive Director
Long Island Volunteer Center

Volunteer Houston Pro Tip Series
Why Use Volunteer Leaders

What are the benefits of volunteer leaders:
Volunteer leaders allow staff to increase their capacity.
In the long term, volunteer leaders save time.
Volunteer leaders increase retention rates that can be tracked.
What does a volunteer leader do?

Before the project:

• Confirm project logistics with staff at agency.
• Communicate directly with volunteers who have signed up.
• Confirm volunteer attendance and check in with Project Partner one week prior to the project date.
Pro Tip: National Service

“One of my best AmeriCorps VISTA retention strategies is to take them out to lunch on the spur of the moment! Usually, it's to a new place in the community they've never experienced, it helps ease their ever-tight food budget, and it gives us some great one-on-one time in a more informal setting.”

Amy Lytle
Executive Director, HandsOn Northwest North Carolina

HandsOn Network
A Points of Light Enterprise

Volunteer Houston
What does a volunteer leader do?

• **During the Project:**
  • Take attendance
  • Provide volunteers with information about the agency and the impact of their service.
  • Facilitate the group in completing tasks.
  • Ensure that any agency spaces are tidy and in their original state at the end of the project.
What does a volunteer leader do?

• **Directly After the Project**
  • Host a brief on-site project debrief
  • Update volunteers on ongoing training and skills-enhancement opportunities.
  • Gather project ideas and feedback from volunteers.

• **Within 24 hours after the Project**
  • Submit volunteer attendance and impact numbers online
  • Share ideas and volunteer feedback with Program Manager
  • Thank volunteers for coming via an e-mail message
Volunteer leader lifecycle

- Recruitment
- Position Description/ Application
- Interview
- Training
- Placement
- Follow up
Pro Tip: Communications and Marketing

“Always encourage your corporate clients to cover their projects as if they are news stories. The resulting pictures, videos and quotes can be shared with all company employees, and not just those who attended projects, to foster or enhance employee goodwill. The media content companies create can be leveraged to convey positive perceptions of social and industry-related media to influence prospects, customers, vendors and potential new hires.”

Chris Allen
Executive Director, Hands On Orlando

HandsOn Orlando
Volunteer Central

HandsOn Network
A Point of Light Enterprise

Pro Tip Series
Where to recruit

• Volunteer Leaders must attend 3 projects to be eligible.
  • Recruit from current projects
    • Volunteers who are already committed
  • Recruit from within the partner agencies volunteers
    • This is not ‘stealing’ their volunteer!
  • Nominations from other staff and current volunteers
    • This can be formal or informal
Position Description

Why have a Position Description?

What does the Position Description cover?

• Logistics

• Position requirements

• Responsibilities

• Benefits to the volunteer
Application and Interview

• The application should include:
  • Preferences
  • Eligibility
  • Motivation

• What to look for in an interview:
  • Dependability
  • Discuss leadership qualities
  • Volunteer motivations
  • Answer any questions from the volunteer
“If your volunteers need to access you on nights and weekends, instead of giving out your cell phone number, use a Google voice number.”

Thomas B. Dougherty Jr.,
Director of Volunteer Programs Jersey Cares

Pro Tip Series

Volunteer Houston
Training

• Sample Training outline:
  • Discuss leadership qualities
  • Examples of poor leadership and excellent leadership
  • Review support structure for the volunteer
  • Expectations of the role
  • Team leading scenarios
  • Logistical how to’s, (Attendance, procedures, timelines, etc)
Placement

• Based on the closest match of your needs and their requests:
  • Must be exciting for both parties or it will never work.
  • Times and dates should be more flexible than project content.
  • Do not rush! In the long run, it is worth it to find the right fit.
Pro Tip: Capacity Building

“Enhance the capacity of your programs by developing an intern program. We recruit from local and statewide universities. We offer year long and semester long placements in 9 areas of expertise. While it takes planning time, job description development and periodic evaluations, this has been a huge way to help a small non-profit execute great things.”

Annie M. Anthony
Executive Director, Cape Fear Volunteer Center

Cape Fear Volunteer Center
HandsOn Network
Pro Tip Series
Support structure

• Reports to a member of your staff or directly to you
• Regular e-mail or phone communications
• Online community forum of sharing best practices
• Ability to shadow other Team Leaders
Benefits to the volunteer

• Project planning experience
• Gain valuable leadership experience
• Increase impact on issue area by creating space to involve others
• Belong to a community of dedicated volunteers
• Special invitations to special events and workshops
Pro Tip: Fundraising

“Don't ask for a gift, ask for an investment.”

Lauren Turiello
Director of Development, Volunteer Center of Bergen County
Benefits to Agency

- More time!
- One dedicated volunteer they can trust to lead and adjust project
- Less time recruiting volunteers
- Volunteer turnover becomes less a concern
- Can focus on meeting mission