



eVOLve

technical assistance for
leveraging volunteers

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Ask Us

Do you have a question about working with volunteers? Send it to Points of Light & Hands On Network at:

training@pointsoflight.org

Welcome to **eVOLve: technical assistance for leveraging volunteers**. In this electronic technical assistance (eTA) brief, you will find tips and tools to help you leverage volunteers in your community. It is sponsored by Points of Light & Hands On Network, a training and technical assistance provider for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

This Month's Question

How can our program engage college students as volunteer leaders?

The Answer Corner

A 2006 report by the Corporation for National and Community Service found that 3.3 million college students volunteered in 2005. CNCS is working with other federal agencies, colleges and universities, higher education and student associations, and nonprofit organizations to increase the number of college students volunteering each year to 5 million by 2010. As national service programs seek to expand their efforts by leveraging additional volunteers within the communities they serve, one avenue of increasing their capacity is to tap college and university students as volunteer leaders to plan projects and engage other students in meaningful service.



A student volunteer leader (SVL) is someone who:

- Takes charge of a project by coordinating it and taking accountability for its successful completion
- Organizes, leads, and inspires a group of volunteers before,

- during, and after the project
- Communicates the details of the project and serves as a resource for other campus and community volunteers
- May initiate new projects
- Represents the national service program to other volunteers on campus and in the community

There are millions of students participating in volunteer service activities and several more looking for opportunities to take on leadership roles. Networking between campuses and non-profit organizations is a perfect combination for high impact within the community and an excellent reason to invest in college students.

- A university offers one central location to access thousands of potential volunteers.
- College students have more time to volunteer than other age demographics.
- Universities offer incentives for volunteering, such as credit and tuition reimbursement.
- Service offers experience highly desired for students' resumes.
- Universities have excellent resources to share with communities.

So, how can your program and college students' interests come together to build a mutually beneficial relationship and outcome?

1. **Make an organizational commitment to developing a program that leverages the leadership skills of student volunteers.** Make sure staff at all levels of the program are prepared to support students, from recruitment and training to placement and recognition. Prepare staff to respond knowledgeably to students interested in serving as volunteer leaders. Ensure that policies and procedures are in place to effectively manage an SVL program. Make an organizational commitment to expanding students' capacity.
2. **Assess your program needs.** As you define your volunteer engagement goals and objectives, consider your current program, how you want to expand your work, and how you can utilize volunteers in leadership positions. Define clear goals and objectives for your SVL initiative, and make sure you have the capacity (i.e., supervision, space) to support students.
3. **Structure meaningful opportunities.** College is a busy time when students are learning and developing skills for the future, and their volunteer experiences should match that goal. Show students that their work is valuable, useful, and appreciated.
 - Offer students an opportunity that will actually mean something and make an impact in the community.
 - Provide opportunities that students can quickly relate to, such as local community issues, international issues or movements, or academic areas of interest.
 - Present opportunities for students to hold real responsibility, grow their leadership abilities, and develop personal and professional skills.
 - Create opportunities that are ambitious but not intimidating.
4. **Consider students' needs.** College students are searching for leadership roles that can lead to other opportunities, such as

employment, college credit, other leadership roles, personal growth, and/or recommendations for future endeavors. Be ready to emphasize to students the importance of the leadership role, how the role is necessary, and how it impacts your program and the community your program serves.

5. **Connect with a campus.** Identify the best avenues for establishing a relationship with a local campus. Connect with a liaison who will help you contact your target group. It may be faculty, staff, academic/student advisors, counselors, student organizations, or other individuals or groups. Be prepared to ask your campus liaison questions related to campus contacts, student contacts, marketing on campus, large campus-wide events, and other factors that could affect your work with students.

To learn more about recruiting and working with student volunteer leaders, check out the Resource Center resources and webinars listed below or contact us at training@pointsoflight.org.

Resources

Visit [The Resource Center](#) to learn more about establishing a student volunteer leader program. Find resources such as:

Effective Practice Briefs:

- [Establishing campus connections for engaging college students as volunteer leaders](#)
- [Recruiting college students as volunteer leaders](#)
- [Using "viral marketing" to recruit student volunteer leaders](#)
- [Understanding and facilitating group process when engaging student volunteer leaders](#)
- [Supporting student volunteer in developing leadership skills](#)

Online Learning Courses:

- [Engaging College Students as Volunteer Leaders](#)

Tools

- [Questions for Prospective Campuses](#)

Points of Light & Hands On Network Training

Points of Light & Hands On Network provides training and technical assistance to help national service programs leverage volunteers. From live training and webinars to on-line courses and effective practices, we provide a wide variety of resources for your program.

Want to learn more about this topic? Join us for a free 2-part webinar on **February 13** and **February 20** at **2:00 p.m. Eastern**:

Engaging College Students as Volunteer Leaders

A 2006 report by the Corporation for National and Community Service found that 3.3 million college students volunteered in 2005. One avenue of increasing your program's capacity is to tap college students as volunteer leaders to plan projects and engage other students in meaningful service. In this 2-part session, you will learn to leverage the

tremendous energy and skills of students through a volunteer leader program that recruits and supports students, builds teams, connects service with learning, and provides opportunities for meaningful service and skill development.

Session 1 - Establishing Your Student Volunteer Leader Program (Feb. 13)

Session 2 - Deepening Students' Service (Feb. 20)

Contact us at LMantooth@handsonnetwork.org for registration information.

Contact us or visit [The Resource Center](#) for more information about our training and technical assistance services.

Share Your Story

Points of Light & Hands On Network would like to hear your story about engaging volunteers in meaningful service. Your experience with volunteers and the community or any other civic action and service are welcomed. Submit your stories to LMantooth@handsonnetwork.org.

Submissions are subject to revisions and are not guaranteed to appear in eVOLve.



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