

Volunteer Connection Questions and Answers



What is the United Way Volunteer Connection?

In addition to conducting an annual fundraising campaign, the United Way works year round to promote volunteerism so that area agencies can effectively meet the health and human service needs of the community. Under the United Way, the Volunteer Connection serves as the primary resource for matching volunteers with the needs of nonprofit agencies in both counties. The Volunteer Connection links volunteers and agencies, maintains an agency wish list, coordinates the Corporate Volunteer Council and Youth Volunteer Connection, and provides training and education resources.

If I am interested in volunteering, how can the Volunteer Connection help me?

The main component of the Volunteer Connection is the volunteer referral service. United Way works with 90+ organizations in Monongalia and Preston Counties. When someone calls the United Way or checks out the web site (www.teamunitedway.org), they will find a long list of various volunteer opportunities. Based on their interests, skills, and time available, potential volunteers are then linked with an agency that might best use their time and talents.

What is the Wish List?

Many nonprofit organizations rely on "in-kind" donations of equipment and supplies – everything from computers to paper clips. When someone has items that they are interested in donating, they are directed to the "wish list" to see what agencies are in need of the particular items they have. Also, if someone has a substantial in-kind donation available (office furniture, computers, etc.), United Way can advertise the information to area nonprofit organizations.

What is the Corporate Volunteer Council?

A joint program between United Way and the Family Resource Network, the Corporate Volunteer Council (CVC) is a group of area businesses that meet monthly to coordinate and sponsor monthly service projects. To help meet community needs, CVC supports a variety of projects that vary from year to year depending on the needs of agencies and the interests and skills of members. Some of the most successful projects have included hosting a tea for nursing home residents, collecting personal care items for local pantries and shelters, making goody bags for homebound seniors, and taking children from Big Brothers Big Sisters to the zoo. Businesses of all types and sizes are welcome to participate. *For more information please contact Brandi Potock, Community Impact Director, at 296-7525.*

What is the Youth Volunteer Connection?

The Youth Volunteer Connection coordinates volunteer opportunities and service-learning projects for youth K-12. The United Way Service Learning Specialist works with all area schools, after school programs, and religious organizations to help them plan and implement projects to meet community needs. *For more information please contact the United Way at 296-7525.*

If I can't volunteer all the time, are there one-time projects I can help with?

Definitely. Special one-time events coordinated by the Volunteer Connection include Martin Luther King Day (January), Random Acts of Kindness Week (February), Day of Caring (May), Join Hands Day (June), Make A Difference Day (October), and Family Volunteer Day (November.) The Volunteer Connection can also work with groups to develop special projects, based on their own interests and availability, any time throughout the year.

Is the Volunteer Connection involved with volunteer recognition programs?

Yes, the Volunteer Connection has honored hundreds of volunteers through the Volunteer of the Month Program and the Random Acts of Kindness Kick-Off. The Volunteer Connection also sponsors a Volunteer Recognition Picnic each fall, the Presidential Volunteer Service Awards for college students with the WVU Center for Civic Engagement and many other projects.

How can the Volunteer Connection help agencies or businesses with their volunteer management needs?

United Way offers quarterly workshops on non-profit management issues, including volunteer management. A lending library and consultation with the Volunteer Connection Manager also are available free of charge.

For more information about the United Way Volunteer Connection, call 296-7525 or check out the Volunteer Reporter on our web site: www.teamunitedway.org