

A Guide to Volunteering

Why get involved in service?

- To help others who are in need
- To learn about yourself - your values, beliefs, and views of the world
- To assist in career decision-making
- To gain practical experience in the field of study you have chosen
- To learn about the Scranton area and contribute to the local community
- To meet, work, and develop relationships with people - other college student volunteers, community agency personnel, and the population you are serving
- To broaden your knowledge of social justice issues
- To fulfill service learning requirements

Choosing a Service Experience

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What type of service project would best suit your interests and skills (tutoring, recreation/sports, healthcare, awareness raising)?
- With which population do you wish to work (children, elderly, disabled individuals, homeless men or women)?
- How much time do you have to volunteer? Would you prefer a regular commitment (weekly/monthly) or to participate in one-time events?
- Would you like to volunteer in an individual experience or be part of a group?
- How will you get to the service opportunity? Will you need an experience within walking distance? Can you take public transportation? Will it be on campus?

How can this service experience compliment what I'm learning in the classroom and contribute to my career goals?

- Complete the online interest form.
- Stop in the office and speak with a member of the staff of Campus Ministries' Center for Service and Social Justice or one of our student assistants. We will assist you in narrowing down your choices and finding the most appropriate experience for you.

Some suggestions when getting started...

- If the experience you chose is with an off campus agency, contact the volunteer director or designated contact person at that agency. Make an appointment to meet with him/her.
- If the experience is on campus, gather all the information about the program.
- At your initial interview with the agency representative:
 - Dress appropriately.
 - Be on time for your interview.
 - Be as clear as possible as to your expectation of the experience.

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- Understand the expectations of volunteers for this program. Ask for a volunteer job description if there is one.
- Do not commit yourself to more hours than you can complete. Most students volunteer from 1 to 3 hours per week.

Things to remember when volunteering

- Make sure you know the name and title of your agency supervisor. Get to know her/him; share your contact information.
- Always call if you are scheduled to volunteer and you cannot make it.
- Make your supervisor aware of your schedule early on. Include things such as Fall and Spring Breaks, exam weeks, holidays.
- Find out if there is a dress code.
- Keep a log of your hours.
- Keep a journal of your service activities. Try and take time to reflect how your service work is affecting you as a person. Where do you see growth? What areas need improvement?
- Stop into Campus Ministries' Center for Service and Social Justice periodically to keep us updated on your progress. If you have any questions or concerns about your experiences, please make every effort to discuss them with Campus Ministries' Center for Service and Social Justice Director, [Pat Vaccaro](#).