



Youth Engaged in Service (YES)

AmeriCorps Program

Member Manual

2013-2014



Section 1

AmeriCorps Program Overview

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey is an alliance of 23 local Clubs throughout the state who work to enable all children and youth, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring and responsible citizens. To do so, we provide Club members with a safe “home away from home” where they develop relationships with caring adults, and engage in enriching programs during the critical hours after school, on weekends and throughout the summer. (www.bgcnj.org)

AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is a network of local, state and national service programs AmeriCorps that connects more than 70,000 Americans each year in intensive service to meet our country’s critical needs in educations, public safety, health and the environment. Since 1994, nearly 500,000 men and women have provided needed assistance to millions of Americans across the nation through their AmeriCorps service. AmeriCorps members serve with more than 3,000 nonprofits, public agencies, and faith based and community organizations. Often described as the domestic Peace Corps, AmeriCorps is designated to help meet pressing needs in communities across the nation (www.AmeriCorps.gov)

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey YES (Youth Engaged in Service) AmeriCorps Program

Through the BGCNJ YES AmeriCorps program, AmeriCorps members are placed at a local Club as a YES Program Leader and given the responsibility of integrating fun and meaningful service learning activities into the Club as well as implementing service events and recruiting community volunteers.

Each member completes a term of service that runs 3, 6 or 12 months. Members typically serve 10 - 30 hours a week, depending on the agreed upon schedule between the Club & member.



Service Learning

Service learning combines student *learning* with *service* to the community in a way that improves both the student and the community. It is a method where students apply newly acquired skills and knowledge to address real life needs in their communities. It focuses on both the service and the learning, and provides students with structured time to reflect on their experiences. Moreover, it enhances what is taught in school by extending learning beyond the classroom and into the community. It's often carried out in a four-step process: preparation, action, reflection and demonstration.

Performance Measures:

- Each member will engage youth in service learning programming (YES Club)
- Each member will recruit community and family volunteers to provide a minimum of 3 hours of service to the Club

**These numbers may vary depending on your position description.*

Measurements: AmeriCorps members will pre and post survey all student participants to document the impact of the service learning programming on their academic engagement through improved student attitudes toward learning.

AmeriCorps members will track volunteer service through a volunteer tracking spreadsheet.

Outcome: 65% of youth participants will demonstrate improved academic engagement via improved student attitudes in the areas of increased interest in school, attachment to school and increased educational aspirations based on pre and post student surveys.



Section 2

Position Overview

Welcome to Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey AmeriCorps program! You are now part of two national movements that exist to strengthen, educate, and assist citizens and communities. Congratulations!

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey created its **Youth Engaged in Service (YES) AmeriCorps Program** to engage students in activities that build their sense of civic responsibility, enhance their academic lessons with hands-on activities, and address vital needs in their communities. YES AmeriCorps members are placed at a local Club as the **Boys & Girls Club YES Program Leader** and plan and implement fun and meaningful service learning activities at the program. During their term, members serve directly with youth. In addition, AmeriCorps members assist the Club in recruiting and managing volunteers.

Afterschool Program Placement

The Boys & Girls Club site or satellite site you are working with during your term of service is your Host Club. Through this exciting placement, you will learn a great deal about the afterschool field and gain invaluable direct service experience and leadership skills development.

Each Boys & Girls Club service site is run by the remarkable efforts of its site supervisor. For your term of service, the site supervisor at you assigned program will be your site supervisor. They will provide you with daily, direct supervision and offer guidance, resources and feedback. Your site supervisor will also oversee your activities at the program, sign and submit your timesheets to BGCNJ, and assist you in completing monthly reports.

Service Schedule:

As an AmeriCorps member, you are required to successfully complete a specific number of hours during your term of service. BGCNJ understands that you may have commitments outside of the AmeriCorps program, and may be available at different times throughout the week. For this reason, BGCNJ asks that you create a schedule with your site supervisor (including a minimum number of hours per week) that takes in to account your service hour requirement. It is recommended that you serve at least the minimum number of hours stated in your Member Contract.



Member responsibilities:

To ensure that your experience as an AmeriCorps member is productive and meaningful, it's essential that you adhere to the responsibilities that are required with the AmeriCorps program and your position as a member.

The YES Club:

Your primary responsibility as a YES (youth engaged in Service) Program Leader is establishing and overseeing the YES Club, a service club that invites students to help plan and complete service learning activities. Two important components that come with overseeing the Club are taking accurate attendance records of the Club's participants, and recording the Club's meeting dates and activities. (See section 3 for more information).

***If you are serving as a **YES Volunteer Coordinator**, your primary responsibility is developing and launching a volunteer system at your host site.

National Days of Service Events:

You will also be responsible for planning and executing community events on National Days of service throughout the year. These National Days of Service events will tie into the curriculum you create for the YES Club. (See section 5 for more information).

Mark your calendar for the following National Days of Service:

October 26, 2013 - Make a Difference Day

November 16, 2013 National Family Volunteer Day

***January 20, 2014 Martin Luther King, JR. Day**

April 6-13, 2014 National Volunteer Week

***April 11-13, 2014 Global Youth Service Day**

May 3, 2014 Join Hands Day

***2014 AmeriCorps Week**

*National Days of Service that you are required to host a service project or event

Volunteer Recruitment:

To further assist your host Club, additional responsibilities include recruiting volunteers and properly managing those volunteers. (See section 6 for more information).

**Additional responsibilities:**

In addition, you will assist with regular programming in a variety of ways, such as tutoring, supervising sports and recreational activities, providing classroom assistance, and fulfilling additional duties as required. Your site supervisor and BGCNJ will assign you these other exciting responsibilities.

AmeriCorps Trainings:

Throughout your term of service, BGCNJ will organize trainings that you are required to attend. These events will expand and strengthen your knowledge in areas such as service learning, citizenship, event planning, volunteer recruitment and training, and program management.

AmeriCorps Events:

During the year, you are required to participate in various AmeriCorps events. In most cases, these events will be organized by the NJ Commission on National & Community Service, the organization that administers the AmeriCorps program.

Training Events:

Once or more per month, you will attend trainings sponsored by BGCNJ, your host site or the NJ Commission on National & Community Service. Attendance is required as part of your AmeriCorps term of service.

Travel Reimbursement:

BGCNJ will provide reimbursement, at the federal rate of \$0.55 cents per mile, for all travel cost to all required AmeriCorps trainings and events. This includes, but is not limited to the following events:

- New Jersey Commission sponsored Launch Event
- One (1) or more training events per month hosted by BGCNJ
- The Professional Association winter conference
- The Professional Association spring conference
- BGCNJ AmeriCorps Completion Event: life after AmeriCorps



AmeriCorps members seeking travel reimbursement are required to keep receipt for any public transportation or track their odometer when using a personal vehicle. To receive reimbursement, an AmeriCorps member is required to submit a travel reimbursement form with an attached receipt where required within one (1) month of the expense. All travel reimbursement forms and/or receipts should be submitted by mail, fax or scan.

Mail to:

BGCNJ State Office
Att: Susan Cardoso
822 Clifton Ave
Clifton, NJ 07013

Fax to:

(973) 773-3103
Att: Susan Cardoso

Scan to:

scardoso@bgcnj.org

Timesheets:

To keep track of how many hours you have completed toward your term of service, you must fill out a timesheet to track your hours each day. At the end of every week, you must log onto *My Service Log* and enter those hours for your site supervisor to approve.

On your time sheet, you must track hours as “Service,” “Training” or “Fundraising.”

Service Hours constitute the time you are acting ‘in service of others’ and will be the bulk of your hours. They include the time you spend preparing and completing service activities, working directly with youth, event planning and any volunteer recruiting or managing activity.

Training hours constitute the time you are receiving service training. These hours include time spent with BGCNJ in member trainings, trainings at your host site, or trainings sponsored by the NJ Commission.

Fundraising hours are rare and extremely limited. Please contact your BGCNJ Program Manager, Susan Cardoso, if you are going to spend any time fundraising to make sure the activity is permitted.



Monthly reports:

Monthly reports are due on the fifth of each month and summarize the activities you completed during the previous month. You will submit these reports by fax or email to your Program Manager, Susan Cardoso, at scardoso@bgcnj.org or 973-773-3103. To streamline the process of completing these reports, fill out the reports as you go along each week.

YES Club pre and post surveys:

To capture the impact of your service learning activities, you must have the students in the YES Club complete the YES survey once at the beginning of their time in the club and a second time when they are ready to exit the Club.

Please mail completed pre and post surveys to your Program Manager, Susan Cardoso, at

BGCNJ ATT: Susan
822 Clifton Ave, Clifton, NJ 07013



Section 3

YES Club Overview

As mentioned in Section Two, your primary responsibility during your term of service is overseeing the YES Club at your service site. The YES Club invites students to plan and complete service learning activities. As the 'Leader' of this Club, you are responsible for leading the students through the service learning process and guiding their efforts to engage in meaningful service.

*If you are serving as a **YES Volunteer Coordinator**, this does not apply to you.

Your YES Club is required to meet at least once per week for about an hour. Depending on your program, the students may remain the same over the school year, or change periodically. Contact your Site Supervisor or Program Manager for support.

Special initiatives:

The following special initiatives should be incorporated into the planning and completion of the YES Club's service learning activities.

- **National Days of Service:** incorporate the meaning of each National Day of Service into your curriculum for the YES Club
- **Volunteer Engagement:** you should involve at least 5 volunteers per National Day of Service event or project
- **Community Partnerships:** you are encouraged to partner with community organizations. These can include senior citizen homes, soup kitchens, etc.



Section 4

Service Learning Guide

The BGCNJ Service Learning Guide is a comprehensive guide that leads you through the process of overseeing the preparation and completion of meaningful service learning activities. The guide includes ten “unit guides”. Each unit guide corresponds to a month and a theme. These are samples.

Each guide outlines essential stages and steps for service learning activities. You should use the guide as a road map for your month’s activities.

Service Learning Introduction:

Creating and distributing emergency kits to afterschool students and their families is service.

Sitting in math class, calculating the cost of purchasing 100 flash lights and batteries needed to work them is learning.

Identifying items needed in emergency kits, creating a budget, putting the kits together and distributing them to after school students and their families is service learning.

Service learning combines student **learning** with **service** to the community in a way that improves both the student and the community. It is a method where students apply newly-acquired skills and knowledge to address real-life needs in their communities. It focuses on both the service and the learning, and provides students with structured time to reflect on their experiences. Service learning enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community, and helps lay the foundation for a lifetime of commitment and service to others.

It is often agreed that successful service learning includes these elements:

- Community need
- Youth voice and choice
- Preparation/planning
- Connection to learning
- Meaningful action
- Partnerships
- Celebration and reflection
- Evaluation



The stages of service learning:

Similar to the essential elements of service learning, most definitions of service learning includes these four steps as the important “stages” of service learning:

- Preparation
- Action
- Reflection
- Celebration/Demonstration

Preparation:

Preparation includes everything done with the students to help them develop the skills and knowledge necessary to complete the service learning activity. To prepare the student can:

- Discuss the month’s theme, purpose and quote
- Read newspapers, magazines, short stories
- Do research (online, in the community, in books)
- Survey the community
- Interview community members and fellow students
- Listen to a guest speaker or attend an assembly
- Choose a service project by voting, discussing or debating with classmates
- Develop the process for completing the service project (make a timeline, assign responsibilities, gather materials, etc.)
- Recruit others to join you-including parents, classmates and community members
- Complete a preparation plan with the students. This tool allows you to brainstorm how the month’s theme or project could be addressed through various subjects.

Action:

The action (i.e. service project) that you plan and perform with the students during the month can take on many different forms (direct service, indirect service, research, and/or advocacy.) It may include:

- Providing a service to others
- Teaching other students
- Putting on a performance (play, musical production, etc.)
- Creating a product (mural, video, poem, information brochure, etc.)

The project could occur in one hour, one day, one week, or over the course on the month. It should build on what the students learned during the “preparation” stage, and address the a theme and purpose. Remember to assign responsibilities to each student, so that everyone can lend their voice and talent to the Club’s service activity.



Reflection:

Reflection consists of using creative and thinking skills to prepare for, think about, and learn from a service learning experience. It should be done before, during and after each service learning activity. There are many ways you can facilitate reflection. Common practices include:

- Role play, skits
- Discussion
- Debate
- Journal writing
- Drawing
- Complete reflection squares with the students. This tool encourages students to consider four reflective questions. You have them complete one by writing or drawing their answers.

Through reflection, the students describe what happened, examine the difference their actions made, discuss their thoughts and feelings and consider project improvements.

Celebration/Demonstration:

Celebration and Demonstration is an opportunity for students to share with an outside group the skills, insights and outcomes they gained from their service learning activity. These could include:

- distributing recognition certificates to the students to applaud their efforts
- reporting to classmates, parents or community members on the service learning activity
- Distributing a product they made (brochure, fact sheet, etc.)
- Creating a mural or bulletin board that reflects the month's theme and service activity

A few final suggestions:

YES Club start up. Once you have several children in your YES Club, you should focus on team building activities for the first few meetings. Each YES club you manage is unique and different. Help students feel engaged and proud to be part of the YES club. You can do this by strengthening the group dynamics before introducing the curriculum.



Prepare before you prepare! Before you prepare with students, identify a few possible service learning projects for the Club. Considering projects in advance, you can plan your time appropriately and focus on activities that are most applicable to the possible projects.

Connect with your community! When preparing for your service learning activities, keep in mind there are probably local nonprofits that address the theme you are covering. Consider contacting them-perhaps they have resources you can use, or someone from their office can come and speak with your students. You could also partner with them for a service project. *Remember to ask your site supervisor before contacting any community partners.*

Remember your teammates! BGCNJ is thrilled to have AmeriCorps members in many of its Clubs around the state. Each of you has the exciting responsibility of engaging students in service learning. There will be opportunities throughout your term when you can meet with other AmeriCorps members serving at different Boys & Girls Clubs and share your 'best practices' or experiences.

BGCNJ will circulate each member's contact information. You could contact the AmeriCorps members at a nearby Boys & Girls Club and plan a joint service project.



Section 5

National Days of Service Event Planning

As an AmeriCorps member, you are responsible for planning and managing events on National Days of Service. Building the days of service into your program calendar can promote volunteerism in the community and provide opportunities for project-oriented problem solving, planning, teaching, researching, networking and increasing community awareness. The goal is to turn people on to service so they will become life-long volunteers.

The events you plan on national days of service can vary depending on your experience, your host site's needs and resources available. You may plan something as simple as graffiti cleanup or something as complex as a community fair. The key is to plan months ahead of time no matter how big or small!

National Days of Service:

October 26, 2013 Make a Difference Day

Make A Difference Day is an annual event that takes place on the fourth Saturday of October. Established in 1992, it soon grew into the largest community service effort in the nation, rallying corporations, government leaders, charitable organizations and everyday Americans into action on one day. Each year, three million people participate worldwide, helping millions more. To learn more, visit makeadifferenceday.com.

November 16, 2013 National Family Volunteer Day

Designed to showcase the benefits of families working together, introduce community service, and encourage those who haven't yet made the commitment to volunteer as a family

January 20, 2014 Martin Luther King, JR. Day

MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service – a "day on, not a day off." The MLK Day of Service is a part of United We Serve, the President's national call to service initiative. It calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems. The MLK Day of Service empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, creates solutions to social problems, and moves us closer to Dr. King's vision of a "Beloved Community." Visit MLKDay.gov to learn more.



2014 AmeriCorps Week

AmeriCorps Week is a recruitment and recognition event designed to bring more Americans into service, salute AmeriCorps members and alums for their powerful impact, and thank the community partners who make AmeriCorps possible. AmeriCorps Week provides an opportunity for AmeriCorps members, alums, grantees, program partners, and friends to shine a spotlight on the work done by members in communities across the country -- and to motivate more AmeriCorps to join AmeriCorps or volunteer in their communities. For more information visit <http://americorpsweek.gov/pages/about/about.asp>

April 6-13, 2014 National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week is about inspiring, recognizing, and encouraging people to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. It's about demonstrating to the nation that by working together, in unison, we have the fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals. It's about taking action, encouraging individuals and their respective communities to be at the center of social change – discovering and actively demonstrating their collective power to foster positive transformation.

April 11-14, 2014 Global Youth Service Day

Global Youth Service Day is an annual campaign that celebrates and mobilizes the millions of children and youth who improve their communities each day of the year through service and service-learning. Established in 1988, Global Youth Service Day is the largest and longest-running service event in the world, and the only day of service dedicated to children and youth. GYSD is celebrated each year in over 100 countries. Visit GYSD.org to learn more.

May 3, 2014 Join Hands Day

Join Hands Day is a day that brings youths and adults together to improve their own communities. Sponsors are America's Fraternal Benefit Societies. For more information visit www.JoinHandsDay.org.



Here are some other service days to consider during your term of service!

September 21, 2013 Boys & Girls Clubs (BGC) Day For Kids

Created as a day to foster relationships between adults and children, the mission of BGC Day for Kids is to establish a day to celebrate and honor American children through the gift of meaningful time. Research shows that when adults spend meaningful time with kids it helps them develop a positive self-image and a sense of belonging, usefulness and purpose. Now, more than ever, BGC Day for Kids provides adults and kids an opportunity to take a break from their busy lives and celebrate the wonder of life and the fulfillment of spending time together.

March 23-29, 2014 National Boys & Girls Club Week

Every year, Boys & Girls Clubs dedicates a week in the year to celebrate our rich history of youth development in communities around the nation - National Boys & Girls Clubs Week.

Planning guides for each of these service and celebration events are available on www.bqca.org and www.bqca.net.

Event Planning Guide for National Days of Service

Organizing a successful one-day or multi-day service event takes careful planning. Finding a project that fits into your service learning curriculum is important. After you do, it's a matter of putting all the pieces together, from recruiting volunteers to finding supplies, getting the word out and the work done. Here are some guidelines for making your event a success. To make planning easier, we've broken it down into five critical components of outreach to help guide you from start to finish.



Community Voice. Before you identify a community service project, listen to the voices around you, and voices of the community. Community members can best define what needs to be done since they live there and share a history. Listening to their ideas is essential if we are to build bridges, make changes, and solve problems. There are many ways to learn about the needs in the community you are serving. The best way to find out specifically what you can do is to contact community gatekeepers.

You can achieve this by speaking to staff members, parents and club members at the Boys & Girls Club. In addition, you can reach out to agencies that deal directly with the community, including schools, clinics, hospitals; local houses of worship; community groups, organizations, and associations such as Rotary, Lions Clubs and PTAs. Call them up. Attend a meeting. Ask questions. Do some research. Take notes, and most important of all, listen.

NOTE: you must always receive permission from your site supervisor before reaching out to partners or agencies.

Begin planning your event

Get organized! First, establish a team who will help you plan and implement this event. Team members can include other AmeriCorps members serving at your Boys & Girls Club service site, staff members or community members. Once you have a committee, your first job is to choose a project.

Choose a project. After you've contacted several community groups to determine the needs of the community, the next step is to choose an issue or several issues on which your Day of Service event will focus. Try to encompass the Day of Service into your YES Club so that the members have an opportunity to participate. If you plan the Day of Service into your curriculum, you can include it as a component of service learning. Here are some examples of service projects in conjunction with specific issues:

- **Education** - present special educational programs to children such as science experiments or arts & crafts projects
- **Environment** - large scale clean-up projects, parks, beaches, etc.
- **Health care** - visit hospitals, work in community clinics
- **Hunger and homelessness** - sort non-perishable goods at a food pantry, cook and serve food at a soup kitchens, distribute clothing
- **Senior citizens** - serve with a Meals on Wheels Program, visit seniors in nursing homes, Adopt-a-Grandparent



Volunteer Recruitment

Once you've chosen a project, focus next on recruiting volunteers to help. The biggest reason people get involved is by simply being asked! In order to recruit volunteers successfully, you need to do more than post flyers. **See Volunteer Guide in section six.**

Fundraising and finance

Another issue that you will need to tackle is funding your event. If you are going to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to deliver to the local homeless shelter, who is going to supply the peanut butter? The jelly? The bread? The knives? Who will provide the transportation? You need to determine your program budget and find ways to either get supplies donated or raise the money you will need to carry out your project.

No more than 10% of your term may be devoted to fundraising. This includes any and all parts of fundraising, whether it is brainstorming for fundraising ideas or actually out in the field raising money. ***You must receive permission from your site supervisor and program manager before beginning any fundraising project.***

Ensure Meaningful Action

Meaningful Action means that the service being done is necessary and valuable to the community itself. Meaningful Action also makes people feel like what they did made a difference in a measurable way and that their time was well used. In determining what Meaningful Action is, there are two components involved. Both the community (Boys & Girls Club service site) and the service participants (your volunteers) need to feel that the service was worthwhile. Activities that address both the community's need for action and change, as well as the volunteers' need for a sense of well-being and accomplishment represent true Meaningful Action.



Reflection and Learning

After your work is done, volunteers should get together to share their reactions, personal stories, feelings, and facts about the experience. Discussing the day is an opportunity to dispel any stereotypes or ignorance about the group or cause served and get ideas about how to better serve the community in the future. Reflection also provides an opportunity to place the experience in a broader context. Volunteering often encourages continued community service. It is a learning experience. Discussion is an opportunity to share what volunteers learned.

Possible questions to ask participants or volunteers:

- What was the project's most enjoyable/frustrating/surprising aspect?
- What did you learn about yourself? About the issue?
- How do the problems of the clients/community tie into bigger issues?
- How did this experience change the way you would combat the issue?

There are many different methods for reflection ranging from group discussions centering around the issue to keeping a service journal, but one of the simplest and most flexible models for reflection after a one-day service event addresses three types of questions:

- What? (What actually happened during your experience?)
- So what? (What was the significance?)
- Now what? (What do we do now?)

Prepare a checklist. Planning an event involves many steps –small and large. In order to successfully facilitate an event, create a checklist with your team in the beginning stage of planning to ensure that all tasks are accomplished on time. Be sure to delegate tasks amongst team members. Also, share the checklist with your site supervisor and/or program manager. They will be able to tell you if you are on track or if you need to add more tasks to the check list in order to facilitate a successful event.



This is a sample checklist to prepare for an event:

****Ask your site supervisor for event planning assistance or a staff person who has experience planning events. If you need more support, contact your program manager.***

As Early as Possible

- ☐ Select the date/time/location of your event
- ☐ Determine the theme of your event
- ☐ Create a outreach/marketing plan
- ☐ Create a budget or plans for fundraising (only if necessary; not all events need funds)
- ☐ Create volunteer recruitment plan (see guide in section five)
- ☐ Contact your Program Manager and share your plans!

Four to Six Weeks Before

- ☐ Begin spreading the word about your event with marketing efforts
- ☐ Continue outreach for volunteers
- ☐ Meet with your team once per week or as needed
- ☐ Figure out logistics for day of: where will the sign-in table be? Who will manage that station? Who will run the orientation? Who will show volunteers to their assigned areas? Who will supervise/support volunteers throughout? Will you provide food/beverage for volunteers? If your event is on a weekend day, who will be at the Club with you? Where you will set up an information table, etc.

Two Weeks Before

- ☐ Contact volunteers to confirm and assign tasks
- ☐ Purchase any supplies needed
- ☐ Finalize roles of all AmeriCorps members, staff and club members involved up to Three Days Before
- ☐ Make reminder calls to volunteers
- ☐ Set up as much as you can--beverage station, sign-in/information table, etc.

Day of Event

- ☐ Set up sign-in/information table with sign-in sheets, pens, name tags, BGC Club info.
- ☐ Begin your orientation once all or majority of the volunteers have arrived
- ☐ Show volunteers to the area where they will be working and make sure to provide all materials or tools needed
- ☐ Have fun!



After the event

- ☐ Bring volunteers together for reflection session and gather feedback
- ☐ Clean up all areas of the event
- ☐ Properly thank volunteers and any staff who assisted (see volunteer guide in section six)
- ☐ Mail, fax or email a copy of your volunteer sign in sheet to your program manager: Susan Cardoso

Email: scardoso@bgcnj.org

Fax: 973-773-3103

Mail:

Boys & Girls Clubs in New Jersey

ATT: Susan Cardoso

822 Clifton Ave, Clifton, NJ 07013



Section 6

Volunteer Generation

In your role as the YES Program Leader, you are responsible for recruiting volunteers, over the course of your term, to assist with events that you plan on National Days of Service. In addition, you will meet with your site supervisor to identify other areas of need for volunteers at your Club or service site. You will provide support in managing volunteers and ensuring volunteers are acknowledged for their service. It is crucial to provide meaningful service opportunities for all volunteers. Your host site may have a staff person who manages the volunteer program. If they do, meet with that staff person to discuss ways you can strengthen and assist the volunteer program.

*If you are serving as a **YES Volunteer Coordinator**, this number may vary. See your position description to learn of your specific requirements.

The volunteers you recruit must be identified and tracked, as they each must volunteer a minimum of 3 hours, over the course of your term. By using the volunteer tracking sheet template below, you will record all volunteer activity and submit the sheet to the program manager each month. In addition, you must use the volunteer sign in sheet template below to verify hours completed by volunteers. **All volunteers must sign the volunteer sign-in sheet prior to beginning their volunteer work.** Volunteer sign-in sheets must be submitted to the program manager after the volunteer project or event is complete.

The sections below are guides to recruiting, supporting and releasing volunteers.

Volunteer Recruiting

You will schedule a meeting with your site supervisor (or the staff person who manages the volunteer program) to identify areas of need for volunteers and create volunteer roles that can be utilized to recruit the appropriate volunteers and best benefit the Club. When determining volunteer roles for events and projects, make sure to prepare a volunteer job description for each event or project.

Volunteer job descriptions are very important to the success of your volunteer recruitment and retention efforts. People are more likely to sign-up to volunteer, and continue volunteering, if they understand what they'll be doing and what is expected of them. A well-written job description can give them this vital information.



A volunteer job description is most helpful when it:

- Explains the purpose and duties of the position;
- Identifies a supervisor and worksite(s);
- States the desired time commitment; and
- Lists the responsibilities and qualifications for the position

Try not to use jargon or abbreviations. As much as possible, avoid long, wordy descriptions. They tend to confuse or intimidate potential volunteers. Do your best to balance clarity and conciseness with the volunteers' need to have a complete description of the position's duties and responsibilities.

When you create a job description for a new volunteer role, it is good to consult with other staff, as appropriate, and seek input from those with whom the volunteer will be working. They may be able to help you as you craft a comprehensive, compelling volunteer job description. Also, don't forget that a well-crafted volunteer job description can be a useful tool for managing your volunteers. Use it as a guide when you offer feedback to a volunteer on his or her performance.

Make sure you have descriptions written for each volunteer project or event. **All volunteer job descriptions must be approved by your site supervisor or staff person who manages volunteers.** See a sample volunteer project flyer below:

Volunteers Wanted!



The Boys & Girls Club of Clifton is seeking community volunteers to help plant a vegetable garden.

Join us on Saturday, September 28, 2013

10:00-2:00 pm

822 Clifton Ave, Clifton, NJ

To sign up, please contact Jane Smith at 732-123-4567.



Volunteer Outreach

Tips for Recruiting Volunteers

Develop a recruitment plan. Identify businesses, organizations and individuals who are likely to be helpful in reaching or identifying prospective volunteers. Prioritize your contacts, set a schedule, and make sure to follow-up.

Invite others to help with recruitment. Ask current volunteers, staff members, or partners to promote volunteer opportunities at community events and during counseling sessions.

Use a recruitment system

- Have extra brochures and other promotional pieces ready for distribution
- Be prepared to talk in-depth about the different volunteer positions, and have copies of the job descriptions available
- Write down contact information in a recruitment log or notebook
- **Ask them to volunteer.** People are more likely to help when asked to do so

Strategies for Recruiting Volunteers

Partnerships

One of the best ways to recruit volunteers is through partnerships with community organizations. Contact the organizations that your service site currently works with and tell them about your volunteer positions. Reach out to new partners and educate them about services and volunteer opportunities. These partners can help identify and recruit potential volunteers, and refer them to your local boys & girls club. **You must receive permission from your site supervisor before contacting any partners.**

Which of these community partners could help you recruit new volunteers?

- 55+ communities
- AARP
- Alumni associations
- Businesses or unions
- Civic or social organizations (e.g. Lions club, Kiwanis)
- Coffee shops
- Colleges or universities
- Community clubs (e.g. book club, fitness club)
- Ethnic-based organizations



- Grocery stores
- Health care providers (e.g. home care agencies, hospitals)
- Libraries
- Neighborhood associations
- Professional associations
- Retiree associations (e.g. retired teachers, retired federal employees)
- Senior centers or senior clubs
- Senior housing facilities
- Social Security Administration
- Social service agencies
- Volunteer centers

Volunteer Centers

Volunteer Centers are local agencies that connect people with volunteer opportunities at non-profit organizations. Volunteer Centers also provide training and resources for community-based volunteer programs.

Additional recruiting tactics

- VolunteerMatch.org, idealist.org, craigslist.com
- Create and distribute flyers in the club or around the community
- Create and distribute a volunteer brochure at community events
- Post a volunteer job description on the BGC website

Volunteer Support

Start on the right foot. If your volunteers are helping for a large project or event, a small orientation prior is a great way to welcome new volunteers and make them feel like part of a team. The orientation should present an overview of expectations for volunteers and provide them with the information they need to succeed. Ask your site supervisor for the Club's volunteer manual, if one does not exist, draft a volunteer manual that clearly defines all procedures in writing and use it as an outline for the orientation. Provide volunteers with other helpful materials like brochures organization information. Formally introduce volunteers to members of the organization and indicate names, positions and departments.



Orientation and Training

Information should be provided for volunteers about the community, the issue, and the agency or community group with whom they are to serve. Keep in mind that to be successful, everyone should have a pre-assigned task or the clear understanding of what will be required of them at the chosen project site.

Why do you need to have an orientation?

- To give a general overview of what kinds of service your host site provides, what clientele they serve, what volunteer needs they have
- To resolve any misunderstanding about the agency or the issue
- To let the participants know why they will be working at the host site, what is hoped to be accomplished, and what they are expected to do
- To prepare participants to learn as well as work
- To prepare volunteers for emotions they may encounter at the site, i.e. frustration, uncertainty, sympathy, hope and joy
- To train participants to act effectively at the service site

What needs to be included in your orientation?

- The goals of the community service program
- Information on the issue to be addressed (e.g. teen literacy)
- Information on the agency and service site (e.g. alternative education center)
- Information on the service client (e.g. emotionally disturbed teens)
- The participants' responsibilities in the program: be on time, provide feedback
- Program procedures and logistics: times, dates, how to get there, etc.

Create a schedule. It is important to accommodate volunteers' availability. Be sure to make volunteers aware in advance of when your project or event is, and remind them as the day approaches.

Be prepared for contingencies. At times, a volunteer may not be able to show up for a shift. The person or department who makes the schedule should also be responsible for resolving these matters. Volunteers should know whom to contact and should be encouraged to call as soon as scheduling issues arise.

Keep volunteers busy. Ongoing supervision will ensure that volunteers are contributing to the organization. If the workload is substantive, volunteers will stay busy and engaged. You should constantly assess projects and volunteer performance in order to maximize volunteers' efforts. Volunteers who are kept busy feel as though they are making an impact and are likely to volunteer their time again.



Evaluate to determine successfulness. Both facilitators and volunteers should be involved in evaluating the volunteer program. Draft questionnaires that address strengths and weaknesses of the program and have volunteers fill them out anonymously. Honest feedback can be extremely helpful for evaluating the program.

Volunteer Release

After the Project. Once the volunteer(s) have finished their assigned duties, thank them and remember to ask for feedback. Make sure to follow up with the volunteer within one week to thank them again for their services. Showing appreciation to your volunteers increases retention rates and leaves them with a positive view of the organization.

Most people appreciate a pat on the back for a job well done. You can contribute to a volunteer's motivation through both informal and formal means of recognition. Regardless of the method—an oral or written thank you or an award presentation at an annual banquet—recognition is most effective when it is timely, specific to the task or achievement, honest, generous, and personalized. It's also a good idea to keep an open ear to the volunteers as they talk about their motivations. Find ways to recognize them on their own terms. Here are some ways to show appreciation for volunteers:

- Write a thank you note
- Mention them in a publication
- Seek their opinions
- Cite their work as an example for others to follow
- Serve refreshments when they gather for a meeting or come in to visit
- Invite them to work with you on a complicated case or project
- Take them to lunch
- Ask your organization's director to write a thank you
- Find training, leadership development, and skills-building opportunities for them
- Nominate them for community service awards
- Ask a volunteer to participate with you in press interviews and photo opportunities
- Give certificates of appreciation
- Share information about how their work helps beneficiaries and caregivers
- Hold a volunteer appreciation day or appreciation picnic
- Implement their ideas



The following resources are available on <http://bgcnj.org/ameriCorps/>

YES Club Orientation

- BGCNJ 101 Powerpoint
- AmeriCorps 101 for members
- YES Program Leader Powerpoint.
- BGCNJ YES AmeriCorps E-Member Manual

Program Documents

- Monthly YES Club Report
- YES Club Attendance Chart
- Volunteer Monthly Report
- Pre-Survey
- Post Survey
- YES Goals Evaluation

Member Documents

- My Service Log (hour log entry)
- Monthly Member Meeting Schedule
- Mileage Reimbursement Form
- Stipend Distribution Schedule
- Financial Stipend Stub Set-up
- AmeriCorps College Loan Forbearance

Resources & Links

- AmeriCorps
- Boys & Girls Clubs of America
- BGCNJ Facebook Fan Page
- BGCNJ Twitter

*Don't forget to make yourself copies of: YES Club report, attendance chart, pre and post survey chart, pre survey, post survey, volunteer sign in sheet, volunteer report, and travel reimbursement request form.