



RSVP of Allen County Inc.; dba: Volunteer Center  
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[www.VolunteerFortWayne.org](http://www.VolunteerFortWayne.org)

The Volunteer Center is dedicated to coordinating meaningful volunteer opportunities for local citizens to make a positive impact in the communities of Allen, Huntington, Wells & Whitley counties.

### **Our mission:**

The Volunteer Center is committed to providing individuals with opportunities for meaningful volunteer experiences that benefit the community.

**Our primary focus is twofold:** empowering local citizens who wish to get involved to make a difference in their community and providing support to the nonprofit agencies where volunteers serve.

### **Our Signature Programs:**

**Nonprofit Capacity Building** – The Volunteer Center has established partnerships with 140+ local nonprofit organizations connecting them to a team of volunteers to help expand their capacity and meet their mission. Access to the *Galaxy Digital Get Connected* online volunteer management platform is provided at no cost to all Volunteer Center partner agencies. This platform serves as a centralized hub for recruiting, scheduling, and managing 3,100+ volunteers while facilitating ongoing communication. The *Volunteer Managers' Networking Group* provides support and professional development opportunities at no cost to local volunteer managers. The group meets four times a year with membership open to any organization that utilizes volunteers.

**Coats for Kids** - This volunteer led program eliminates financial & social barriers that inhibit low/ moderate income children from receiving a winter coat. In 2023, 47 volunteers gave 3,429 hours of service collecting, sorting, and distributing 7,548 winter coats to ninety-nine schools and social services agencies across our 5-county service area.

**Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA)** - IRS certified volunteers provide free electronic Federal and State Income Tax preparation to low/moderate income families. In 2023, 38 IRS certified tax volunteers prepared 2,089 tax returns, bringing \$1.8 million dollars in tax refunds to local families.

**Second Chance Initiative** - Volunteer attorneys and volunteer attorney assistants provide free legal aid in expungement of criminal records to 79+ individuals at legal clinics throughout the year. A felony record has been identified as a major life-long barrier to financial independence, stable housing, and better employment/education opportunities.

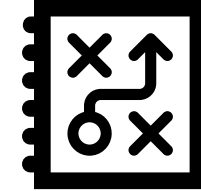
**I CAN Service Team**- The program provides regularly scheduled group-based volunteer opportunities to individuals of all ages with enduring intellectual, development and physical disabilities. The focus of the program is on removing barriers to service and increasing the volunteer participation among individuals with disabilities. In 2023, a total of 549 volunteer spots were filled providing over 821 volunteer hours assisting at 22 partner agencies in the community.



## Top Volunteer Trends 2024

- Shorter & more flexible volunteer options
- Skills based volunteering
- Multi-generational volunteering
- Increased demand for virtual volunteering
- Focus on advocacy & cause-driven volunteering
- Corporate social responsibility

### Challenge for nonprofit organizations:



- Adapting volunteer position to shorter terms with the goal of attracting individuals with busy schedules or those that prefer a shorter time commitment
- Requires a new strategy
- More time & effort
- Ongoing recruitment





### 1. Break down roles into smaller tasks

- Task based volunteering- Divide large projects into smaller, manageable tasks that can be completed in a few hours
- Micro volunteering- Develop roles where volunteers can serve in short, specific task  
Examples: data entry & social media posting; Good way to engage younger volunteers

### 2. Offer flexible scheduling

- Can you adapt opportunities to fit into a few hours rather than a few days?
- Can you develop drop in volunteer opportunities that do not require a set schedule?

### 3. One time/Event based volunteering

- Organize one-time event where volunteers can help with a set up or specific task
- Use this opportunity for them to learn about your mission, work with your staff and other volunteers; feel part of the group
- People enjoy the satisfaction of seeing what they accomplished

### 4. Simplify your onboarding process

- Develop a quick & easy onboarding process for volunteer positions that allow it
- Remove barriers to volunteering

### 5. Promote group volunteering

- Encourage groups to volunteer
- Create a welcoming group environment for volunteers to collaborate with current volunteers and be mentored by them; Create feelings of belonging; make volunteering a social activity

### 6. Clear & impactful volunteer roles

- Clearly define volunteer roles and short-term impact
- Match your recruitment message to the volunteer motives & interests
- Provide training and learning opportunities

### 7. Acknowledge the contributions made by volunteers

- Let volunteers know how their contribution helps the organization
- Provide immediate feedback & appreciation (thank you acknowledgements, volunteer corner/welcome center)
- Simple but meaningful volunteer recognition



## What we do...

### CONNECT

**We connect volunteers** with local community organizations that need help. If you want to get involved but don't know where to start, we are your source.

### SUPPORT

**We support non-profit organizations**, helping them expand their capacity to meet their mission by connecting them to a pool of talented, dependable and skilled volunteers.

### SOLVE

**We provide solutions** to community needs through the power of volunteers. Our Signature Programs address critical disparities affecting low to moderate income households and the most vulnerable in our community.



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