

ALASKA



FOOD COALITION

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“It is important for teens to think of outreach as an experience, not a job!”

Heather Harris, Executive Director, Alaska Youth and Parent Foundation

Recruiting Youth Volunteers

They are motivated, energetic, and strong. They are youth volunteers and could be a great resource for your organization. But, they can be a challenge to recruit and retain. The key is to put yourself into their shoes and think young. Here are a few tips for recruiting youth, from About.com Non-profit Charitable Organizations <http://nonprofit.about.com/od/volunteers/tp/recruityouth.htm>.

1. Recruit them online.

Today's youth is wired, to the extreme. Where available, use volunteer matching services such as <http://www.allforgood.org/posting>. Post opportunities on your own website but change them frequently so your pages look fresh and appealing. Respond immediately to inquiries.

2. Speak in a youthful way.

Make your opportunities relevant to the interests and needs of young people. Young people like language that is quick, fun, and exciting. Emphasize involvement and how they can contribute.

3. Use youthful visuals.

Use lots of photos and quotes from other young people. Develop an advisory group of young people to help you with this aspect of your marketing.

4. Develop competitions and games.

Young people love competition and games so develop them to use in your recruitment efforts, your training, and when your volunteers are actually performing their tasks. Healthy competition will add zest and excitement to the work your young volunteers do.

5. Develop a speaker's service.

Put together a group of young speakers who can recruit their peers. Arrange speaking engagements at schools and churches.

6. Develop teamwork.

Develop teams among your youth volunteers and train team leaders. Encourage group participation and let your volunteers learn from each other.

7. Provide mentors

Find adults to work with your young volunteers that they can identify with. Use young adults who are natural mentors and role models.

8. Encourage participation.

Let young volunteers participate at every level. Listen and then act on their suggestions. They will not trust you if you invite engagement and then ignore their input.

We can't say it enough; online recruitment is the key to recruiting youth volunteers. If you're not already on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), or another social or professional networking site, sign your organization up for at least one of these. Young people will discover you faster and will be able to share their volunteering accomplishments with friends more easily. You can also increase volunteer interaction by updating these accounts consistently and responding to comments.

Serve.gov

Serve.gov is a comprehensive clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities. Americans who are interested in volunteering can use this tool to locate opportunities to serve across the country and around the world. Serve.gov is managed by the Corporation for Community Service, a federal agency that fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering. As the nation's largest grant maker in support of service and volunteering, the Corporation engages four million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service to their communities each year through the Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, VISTA, NCCC, and Learn and Serve America programs. Participants in Corporation programs and the community volunteers they help coordinate enable thousands of national and local nonprofit organizations, faith-based groups, schools, and municipal agencies to solve tough problems and meet local needs in education, the environment, public safety, disaster response, and other critical areas. For more information, visit [NationalService.gov](#).

YVC and AmeriCorps

The Youth Volunteer Corps (YVC), established in 1987, is a national network of programs. At each individual YVC site age-appropriate projects are selected by students or submitted by non-profit agencies. The projects are designed to be fun and educational. YVC supplies trained team leaders to supervise the youth volunteers on all projects. AmeriCorps is funded by a grant that the national YVC office receives from the federal government that allows for the placement of AmeriCorps members across the country at various YVC sites. AmeriCorps members serve as team leaders.
<http://www.yvca.org/>

All For Good

All for Good's mission is to facilitate volunteerism and community service. To meet that goal, they developed a custom volunteer opportunity oriented search engine that is powered by the largest database of volunteer opportunities on the Internet. Their database of volunteer opportunities includes those from non-profit partners as well as those provided directly to us by smaller, grass roots based organizations. <http://www.allforgood.org>

Resources

Volunteer Match Blog for Social Change

<http://blogs.volunteermatch.org/engagingvolunteers/2011/01/13/5-tips-for-recruiting-young-volunteers/>

Youth Volunteer Corps

http://www.yvca.org/main_template.php?page=start_a_yvc&article_id=726

Recruiting Youth Volunteers for your Organization

http://pubstorage.sdstate.edu/AqBio_Publications/articles/ExEx15001.pdf

The Alaska Food Coalition is here to help. Copies of Alaska Food Coalition White Papers are available online: <http://www.alaskafood.org/whitepapers.shtml> for additional information, contact Vanessa Salinas, Alaska Food Coalition Manager: afc@foodbankofalaska.org

NEXT MONTH: December is a Good Month for Fundraising