

*Mayor's Volunteer Corps*

zine

*April to June, 2021*



# *The Mayor's Volunteer Corps Zine*

Organized by the Mayor's Office of Civic Engagement and Volunteer Service, the Mayor's Volunteer Corps is a community of volunteers who commit to ongoing, high-impact service in the city of Philadelphia. This zine captures inspiring stories of service from members of the volunteer corps. We hope this encourages you to reflect on the importance of volunteering and begin your journey!

## *Join the Mayor's Volunteer Corps!*

Getting featured in the Mayor's Volunteer Corps Zine is as easy as 1-2-3!

- First, join the Mayor's Volunteer Corps. Register an account at the Mayor's Volunteer Corps Portal ([serve.volunteermatch.org](https://serve.volunteermatch.org)).
- Second, sign up for volunteer opportunities that are listed on the portal.
- Finally, after completing your service, track your service hours (You can also track hours for service opportunities that you did not find on the portal!).

## *How can you get featured?*

Share your volunteer service story while tracking your service hours online:  
[bit.ly/MVCtrackinghours](https://bit.ly/MVCtrackinghours)





I have volunteered with a variety of organizations over the years and I am currently a Donor Ambassador with the Red Cross.

I started volunteering a long time ago when I realized my daughter hit an age where she was doing her own thing. I recognized "someone must need me, let me start volunteering!" While I can't always give monetarily, I can give my time! I enjoy the people I encounter and it's very meaningful to me that I can give back and actually help people.

In order for this world to work, we all need each other and we all need to give back. You never know how your smile, a brief "hello," or any action could change someone's life. To people interested in volunteering, just take some time, whether it's an hour or two to just try and give back.

**Angel Matthews**

**Volunteer with Red Cross of Southeastern Pennsylvania**

As a volunteer with Prevention Point Philadelphia, I support food distributions every other Monday and clean the area where we serve.

My service is inspired by how the opioid epidemic has affected not only our city and neighborhoods, but also my family. My wife and I lost our son in 2019 to an overdose. Every day I see the evidence of the epidemic scattered across streets. I know we all have a part to play in taking care of our city and each other so I created a FB page in my Son's memory titled "S.O.N." which stands for 'Save Our Neighborhoods.' This community has over 300 members.

You don't have to have money or do big things to make a difference, just time and an awareness of the impact you can make by helping out. If everyone did just a little we could help better our city and save lives.

**Michael J. Lang**

**Volunteer with Prevention Point Philadelphia**







As someone who loves children, I was drawn to Autism Rec's service opportunity. As a volunteer, I get to work with children and support fun activities and games.

I found the experience meaningful because I got to have fun while helping kids have fun and learn even while out of school. I found a volunteer opportunity that matched my passion and interests.

I encourage others looking to volunteer to do the same thing. Make sure you find an organization whose mission interests you. That will motivate you to keep going!

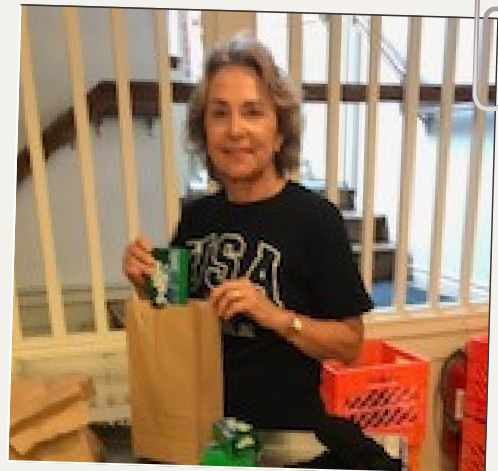
**Geraldine Gibson**  
Volunteer with Autism Rec

Through my volunteer service with Old St. Joseph's Faith, Food & Friends, I assist in assembling and distributing toiletry kits for our guests who visit for a hot "grab and go" meal.

Our Mother taught us, by example, that volunteering should be part of our lives. Every moment is an opportunity to serve. My service keeps me grounded and connected to reality. I am honored to hear our guests' stories and learn of their reality.

Volunteering gives back in many ways including friendships. I have met people, both volunteers and program guests, who have become part of my life outside of volunteering. Look for something you are passionate about and plan to meet others with the same passion.

**Nancy Wood**  
Volunteer with Old St Joseph's Faith, Food & Friends





At the Lutheran Settlement House (LSH), I help with organizing the food pantry and packing food bags for distribution to our visitors.

Having lived in Philadelphia most of my life, the idea of giving back to my home community is really motivating. I also wanted to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on my neighbors as much as possible; this drew me to LSH. It's really fulfilling to see the direct impact my volunteerism has on the staff and community.

For people interested in volunteering, signing up for the first time is always the hardest part. My advice: don't be shy! The people you will meet along the way - and the realization that your work has a great impact on the daily lives of others - will be deeply gratifying.

Joseph Chong  
Volunteer with Lutheran Settlement House



I volunteer because I enjoy meeting with people from different walks of life to identify barriers and access social services for our community. My volunteerism empowers others and brings change. I feel proud when I feel I've contributed something to my community.

If we are not willing to contribute and help one another, there is no way to demand changes in society and bring about equity for our most vulnerable neighbors.

I encourage people to think about local causes of interest and to do something about it. Volunteering is an exceptional act open to all of us.

Diriba S. Gonfa  
Volunteer with The Oromo Community  
Organization in Pennsylvania







I serve Philadelphia because my father was once homeless. His passing inspired me to help others in need. Everyone needs to be loved regardless of their situation; serve with dignity for all people.

To those looking for inspiration to volunteer, I encourage you to give without expecting anything in return - it's a rewarding experience.

Abby Anderson  
President and Founder of Salvation  
Of Sorrows Inc.

I am motivated to serve because I want to address the challenge of chronic hunger. Too many people among us do not get enough calories, essential nutrients, or both. So, we create healthy meals on site and deliver to people in need.

If you are interested in volunteering, I would recommend to take a few hours out of your busy weekly schedule and support a cause that's close to your heart. You will feel good about yourself knowing that you are in a position to make a difference for someone in need.

Harry Simons  
Food Prep Volunteer with MANNA





I volunteer because I grew up here, and the city means a lot to me. As much as I love Philly, I know that there is work to do to make the city better for all Philadelphians.

Providing kids with a safe space to play, learn, and engage with peers is more important than ever after a socially-distanced year. At Safe-Hub, I truly get to know young people and help them build skills from passing and dribbling to working together and dealing with frustration. Seeing kids grow each week is incredible.


Coming out of quarantine, I am continuously reminded of how important it is to build community -- Safe-Hub helps you do that, whether you're a coach, kid, caregiver, or supporter!

Elizabeth Clinton

Volunteer Soccer Coach with Safe-Hub Philadelphia







Learn more: [www.phila.gov/programs/mayors-volunteer-corps](http://www.phila.gov/programs/mayors-volunteer-corps)