



Why and How to Volunteer

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With the large pool of candidates applying to colleges today, admission officers are looking further than grade point averages (GPA). Volunteering demonstrates to schools that you enjoy giving back to your community. Most schools require a certain number of volunteer hours per year. You should commit more hours than they require since volunteering can open opportunities for internships, jobs and scholarships.



When considering a volunteer opportunity, you should work with a cause that you are passionate about. Perhaps you already know someone who works in a place that supports your cause. You may already know someone who volunteers at a homeless shelter or a family friend who works in a hospital. If you are unable to find a prior connection, an internet search will help you find an organization to volunteer at.

When you find an organization, be sure to contact them immediately and ask what services they are in need of. Be open to make your own suggestions. For instance, if you are volunteering in a nursing home, you can host an arts and crafts day with the residents. Some places are casual with their application for volunteers while others might ask for a recommendation letter.

When you start your volunteering, try to interact with other people who are also volunteering as well as those who already work there. This is a great way to make connections for future recommendation letters and possible internships!

Here are some of Success Pathways recommendations for volunteering:

1. Fire departments, local shelters, hospitals and animal shelters
2. Food drives, clothing drives, toy drive or book drives
3. Running/walking events such as Relay for Life
4. Garbage cleanup groups
5. Mentoring at after-school programs
6. Tutoring programs
7. Nursing homes
8. Restocking food and serving food in a homeless shelter
9. Habitat for Humanity



Volunteering should be a rewarding experience. Volunteering should connect you with others and bring fun and fulfillment to your life!