

National Volunteer Week

2012 Resource Guide



Celebrating
People in Action

National Volunteer Week
April 15 – 21, 2012

National Volunteer Week 2012 Resource Guide

Points of Light Institute is excited to offer this adaptable online toolkit, full of helpful ideas and marketing strategies to actively support your involvement in National Volunteer Week. Within the toolkit, you'll find project ideas, volunteer leader resources, ideas and solutions for recognizing your volunteers throughout the week.

In this resource guide you'll find all the essential messages and resources needed to effectively encourage and acknowledge volunteer participation, inspiration and recognition during National Volunteer Week 2012. This guide will help you make it a week filled with stories of inspiration and hope that encourages all of us to discover vital and imaginative ways to increase volunteer participation and intensify community impact.

National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, 2012 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, we have the fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals. National Volunteer Week is about taking action and 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.

This is the perfect opportunity for your organization and volunteers to seize the moment and share the national spotlight that National Volunteer Week deservedly receives. Simultaneously, you can leverage this brief window of national opportunity to advance your individual cause and promote volunteer commitment in your community.



**Celebrating
People in Action**
National Volunteer Week
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Table of Contents

About National Volunteer Week.....	1
Resource Guide 1-2-3.....	2
Marketing & Communications Resources.....	4
National Volunteer Week Logo.....	5
Banner Sample.....	6
Key Messages.....	7
Template Media Advisory.....	8
Template Press Release.....	9
Template Press Pitch.....	10
Conducting Interviews	11
PR Tips.....	12
2012 Media Outreach Tips.....	13
2012 Social Media Tips	15
Appendix	16
2012 General Planning Timeline.....	17
Proclamation Request Letter.....	18
Sample Proclamation.....	19
Sample Recruitment Message/Flyer	20
Sample Photo Consent Form	21
Volunteer Registration and Sample Waiver	22
Volunteer Evaluation Survey.....	23

About National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week: April 15-21, 2012

Celebrating People in Action, captures the meaning of this signature week:

Honoring the people who dedicate themselves
to taking action and solving problems in their communities.

Established in 1974, National Volunteer Week has grown exponentially in scope each year, drawing the support and endorsement of all subsequent U.S. presidents, governors, mayors and other respected elected officials.

This year, Points of Light Institute is also honored to recognize the third anniversary of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act and the creation of the Volunteer Generation Fund through a series of celebratory and service events across the nation.

Celebrating People in Action, presents an opportunity for individuals, families, nonprofit organizations and government entities alike to celebrate the ordinary people who accomplish extraordinary things through service.

National Volunteer Week embodies the energy and power volunteers evoke on a daily basis as they lead by example—not only encouraging the people they help, but motivating others to serve as well.



**Celebrating
People in Action**
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Resource Guide 1-2-3

Step 1. Get Your Community Involved

Provide opportunities for members of your community to participate in projects as individuals or as a group. Engage volunteers, adopt neighborhoods and inspire others by example.

During this year's National Volunteer Week celebration, thousands of volunteers throughout the country will participate in a variety of innovative, grassroots community projects designed to engage volunteers and community members in building strong, vibrant neighborhoods. This nationwide undertaking will include revitalizing community centers, rehabilitating parks, improving low-income homes, creating community art projects, mentoring, serving meals, developing community gardens and much more.



Step 2. Share Your Stories

Connect with other communities and organizations from around the nation and share inspirational stories about volunteer commitment and community transformation. Foster a new generation of volunteers.

Please make note of and record the following information regarding your 2012 National Volunteer Week activities. We want to hear from you and recognize your great work. Send us the following information via email to JGeckler@PointsofLight.org.

- Number of volunteers
- Number of volunteer hours
- Number of projects
- Number of volunteer leaders
- Description of people/community impacted by projects
 - Education
 - Environment
 - Economy
 - Disaster and Emergency Preparedness

Resource Guide 1-2-3

Step 3. Recognize and Thank Volunteers

CELEBRATE PEOPLE CHANGING THE WORLD THROUGH SERVICE

Millions of people give their time, talent and energy to help strengthen communities around the world. Our volunteers range from children to older adults, to businesses and community organizations, and all share in common the act of choosing to make a difference. It is through their stories that people are inspired to serve and begin to recognize their personal power to transform themselves and the world around them.

Here are some ideas on how you can celebrate and recognize the efforts of your volunteers:

- For a group or individual that has done an exceptional service effort you can submit a nomination on their behalf for a Daily Point of Light Award. This award honors individuals and groups that create meaningful change in communities across America. Each weekday, one volunteer or volunteer effort is selected to receive The Daily Point of Light Award. Only 260 awards are issued each year. Learn more at www.PointsOfLight.Org/Recognition/dpol
- Honor your volunteers with a custom certificate, letter and pin from the President of the United States. The Presidents Volunteer Service Award recognizes individuals, families and groups that have achieved a certain standard of service – measured by the number of hours of service completed over a 12 month period. Sign up now to become a participating organization so you can honor your volunteers with a very special gift. Learn more at www.presidentialserviceawards.gov
- Send thank you letters to donors, sponsors, volunteers, speakers, and others who have contributed to your project and include a picture of the project at work
- Have a recognition lunch to present certificates
- Publicize volunteers' activities through your newsletter with pictures, if possible, and list the volunteers' names
- Publicize the project through local newspapers
- Submit press releases, articles, photos, and other information about your successful project to local media

Marketing Resources

The following marketing resources and National Volunteer Week brand attributes have been created to help you generate awareness regarding events and activities, as well as to assist you in strategically aligning your efforts and organization with the National Volunteer Week brand.

- National Volunteer Week Logo
- Banner Sample
- Key Messages
- Template Media Advisory
- Template Press Release
- Template Press Release Pitch
- Conducting Interviews
- Public Relations Pointers
- 2012 Media Outreach Tips
- Social Media Outreach Tips



National Volunteer Week Logo

To obtain logos for 2012 National Volunteer Week, visit: <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw>

It is the strategy of Points of Light Institute to maintain consistent branding and messaging regarding National Volunteer Week. Your cooperation will translate into more effective, consistent branding and messaging for your own organization, as well as allowing national exposure, increased opportunities for local and national partnerships, and boosting general public involvement and awareness of volunteerism.

Utilizing a consistent logo and theme also frees your time and creative energy for planning National Volunteer Week promotions and events, saves money on recognition items and enables your organization to provide timelier, innovative and more cost-effective promotional products.



Banner Sample

You can download this banner and customize it for your use at
<http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw>



**Celebrating
People in Action**
National Volunteer Week
April 15 - 21, 2012

ADD YOUR ORGANIZATION
LOGO HERE

A PROGRAM OF POINTS OF LIGHT INSTITUTE

www.EnterWebsite.org

Key Messages

Key Messages

- National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, 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, we have the fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals.
- National Volunteer Week is about taking action and 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.
- Sponsored by Points of Light Institute, National Volunteer Week was established in 1974 and has grown exponentially each subsequent year, with thousands of volunteer projects and special events scheduled throughout the week. For more information visit <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw>.

Template Media Advisory

Please customize the below media advisory as needed and distribute to local media to build awareness and participation in your event.

[add your organization logo]

MEDIA ALERT FOR NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

SAMPLE HEADLINE: Celebrate Volunteers During National Volunteer Week

SAMPLE SUBHEAD: More than 200 Volunteers Expected to Gather in Piedmont Park to Celebrate Volunteer Efforts

Contact: [insert contact name, your organization's phone and e-mail]

WHO: [list names of dignitaries attending your event]

WHAT: [briefly describe event - sample... Approximately 200 volunteers from surrounding neighborhoods, including local dignitaries, teen service leaders and elementary school children, will gather in Piedmont Park to kick-off this year's celebration of National Volunteer Week and recognize the power of service.

WHERE: [event address]

WHEN: [event time and date]

WHY: 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, we have the fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals.

Sponsored by Points of Light—National Volunteer Week was established in 1974 and has grown exponentially each subsequent year, with thousands of volunteer projects and special events scheduled throughout the week. With the third year anniversary of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the creation of the Volunteer Generation Fund and the resonant call to serve from the President, this year will be even more energizing and inspiring.

For more information regarding National Volunteer Week activities, please visit:

[insert your website] or www.PointsofLight.org.

[INSERT ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION HERE (NAME, PHONE, EMAIL)]

Template Press Release

[Please customize the below press release as needed and distribute to local media to highlight your recognition event and the impact of service on community challenges.]

SAMPLE HEALDLINE:

[ORGANIZATION NAME] Announces Recognition Plans for 2012 National Volunteer Week

SAMPLE SUBHEAD:

Local Volunteers Encouraged to Celebrate Power of Volunteerism During National Volunteer Week

[CITY/STATE, MONTH DAY, 2012 - ORGANIZATION NAME, ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION], today announced plans to celebrate National Volunteer Week, a time dedicated to demonstrating to the nation that by working together, we have the fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals.

National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, is about taking action and 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.

[INSERT RECOGNITION PROGRAM OVERVIEW HERE: WHAT IS TAKING PLACE? WHERE IS IT HAPPENING? WHO IS PARTICIPATING? WHAT IS THE IMPACT?]

[“INSERT ORGANIZATIONAL QUOTE HERE RE: SERVICE RECOGNITION EVENT AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY ON NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK.” INSERT PROGRAM DETAILS HERE: HOW CAN LOCAL VOLUNTEERS LEARN MORE OR GET INVOLVED.]

Sponsored by Points of Light Institute—National Volunteer Week was established in 1974 and has grown exponentially each subsequent year, with thousands of volunteer projects and special events scheduled throughout the week. With the third year anniversary of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the creation of the Volunteer Generation Fund and the resonant call to serve from the President, this year will be even more energizing and inspiring.

[About INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME
INSERT ORGANIZATION BOILERPLATE INFORMATION

Contact: ADD ORGANIZATION CONTACT HERE (NAME, PHONE, EMAIL)

Template Press Release Pitch

Template Press Release Pitch

Hi,

Wanted to send you a quick note to let you know that **ORGANIZATION** will be hosting an event on April XX to celebrate National Volunteer Week by **ACTIVITY DETAILS INCLUDING WHO IS PARTICIPATING, WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND WHAT YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH THROUGH YOUR RECOGNITION EVENT. ALSO INCLUDE ANY DIGNITARIES OR LOCAL CELEBRITIES WHO ARE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE.**

We have images and interview opportunities available. If you're personally interested in participating to support **ORGANIZATION** and National Volunteer Week, please let me know. If you'd like additional information on National Volunteer Week please visit <http://handsonnetwork.org/nvw12>.

Thanks,

YOUR NAME

YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

[INSERT BODY COPY OF PRESS RELEASE HERE]

Conducting Interviews

Recommendations for Conducting Interviews

Some journalists might be looking for an interview. Designate your representative ahead of time who will speak with the media. If you have interest from a local reporter, make sure to put them in touch with that local representative in a timely fashion (media often are working under tight deadlines). Ensure your appointed spokesperson has reviewed the key messages and press release provided and is comfortable delivering this information.

If possible, also identify a volunteer or service recipient who would be willing to share their story with the media, either the reason why they volunteer throughout the year or why they are excited about National Volunteer Week.

A call to action is crucial, and can be as simple as “people can visit <http://handsonnetwork.org/nvw12> for more information about how to get involved.” Try to get this message - or one tailored to your own organization - in any and all interviews.

Public Relations Pointers

Public Relations Pointers

Outlined below are tips for approaching your local media outlets to help you secure coverage for National Volunteer Week:

- Try to take advantage of current news or trends, if appropriate or helpful. If you can pitch National Volunteer Week activities to a reporter in the context of a larger news trend you are seeing in your local market, you will increase your chances of coverage by making the pitch seem less commercial. However, do not ever link National Volunteer Week to stories that might be political in nature, polarizing or overly controversial. The purpose of National Volunteer Week is to promote unity through service.
- To enhance your relationship with a reporter, you can offer to provide them with access to your organization and the people you serve before the event. This will allow them to learn about what went into planning the recognition event itself, covering it from the perspective of a participant rather than as a separate third party.
- For television, call the station and ask which producer covers stories related to local charitable organizations and recognition events. Ask how you might be included in their coverage. For example, maybe they are open to having an organizational representative on their show to discuss local service projects.

2012 Media Outreach Tips

Use Media to Recognize Your Volunteers and Volunteer Leaders

- Organizations with marketing managers and/or local PR agencies or consultancies are encouraged to contact local broadcast (TV and radio), print (newspapers, weeklies and magazines) and online outlets (blogs, websites).
- Research the relevant outlets and reporters/editors in your market who have covered your organization or similar charities and nonprofits in the past and who might be interested in your National Volunteer Week programming in order to compile an up-to-date media list. You'll find that Google News is a great tool for this.
- If you think your National Volunteer Week program would fit nicely in a certain column or correspond to a recent article you read, suggest that to the reporter, showing you have done your homework. If you call the front desk of any outlet, they will be able to provide you with the phone numbers and email addresses of the journalist you're looking for. You can also ask, "Who covers philanthropy and nonprofit organizations?" and they will direct your call.
- Local markets should feel free to target local online publications and blogs to announce the National Volunteer Week program and recruit volunteers. Conducting a Google search using key words like "service," "volunteerism" or "charities" coupled with the name of your market, or checking local portals in your market - like Boston.com - is a good place to start. If pitching blogs, identify the blog host and pitch them as you would pitch a reporter. Remember to always be transparent and identify yourself as someone representing your organization, not just an interested citizen.
- Your affiliated chapters or sponsors in your region could also be a powerful ally in this effort. Be sure to brief them and find out if you can work jointly to release the press materials and contact the media. They may also be able to provide a copy of their media contacts and help act as spokespersons. Be sure to invite them to your National Volunteer Week recognition event.

2012 Media Outreach Tips

	Materials	Date
Print	<p>The best way to initially reach the print publications is through e-mail. We recommend you send a short pitch (see press release pitch below), along with the press release copied and pasted into the body of the email. As a general rule of thumb, do not include attachments or embed the logos in your email.</p> <p>Start this process in March - many media are already planning their National Volunteer Week stories.</p>	Beginning in March
	<p>You should follow up with journalists with a phone call, waiting a day (or as many as two days) between contacting them by email and then following up by phone. A phone conversation may go something like this:</p> <p>Hi, this is NAME from ORGANIZATION. We are holding a recognition event to celebrate National Volunteer Week this year. NUMBER of VOLUNTEERS ATTENDING WHAT ACTIVITY. I sent you an email about this earlier and was wondering if you'd be interested in joining us for the event, or telling your readers about it....</p>	1st Week of April
Photo Desk	Be sure to send a media alert to media the week leading up to your activity, and then again the day prior and early on the morning of National Volunteer Week.	1st Week of April
Broadcast	The broadcast media works a bit differently from print. We recommend you send them the media alert (see appendix) via email, and start talking to them in April. This segment is also the only group who still use faxes. Call the front desk of your local radio/news stations and ask them for the fax number for their news room; don't be afraid to both fax and email the alert.	March - April
Online	Online media loves emails. Again, start talking to these media in September, send them your pitch letter and release in April, just as you did with the print media.	March - April

2012 Social Media Tips

Use Social Media and Social Networks to Recognize Your Volunteers and Volunteer Leaders

Here are a few ways you can recognize your volunteers and volunteer leaders across your social networks:

Use Facebook

- Invite your Facebook friends to join you by serving with you on your project. (Be sure to follow up individually with everyone that says they'll join you as the no show rate can be higher with Facebook RSVPs.)
- Share the link to the official National Volunteer Week Resource Guide <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw> and ask your friends in other towns to start their own projects.
- Mention HandsOn Network in your Facebook page and we'll be sure to "like", "share" and comment on your post. (To mention us so we'll see it, first "like" the HandsOn Network Facebook Page (<http://www.facebook.com/photos.php?id=647200927#!/HandsOnNetwork?ref=ts>), then, in your wall post, type "@HandsOn Network" and you should see a drop down menu with the name. Select HandsOn Network from the drop down menu. This creates a hot link in your wall post directly to our wall and we'll be sure to see your post!)

Use Twitter

- Share the link to the official National Volunteer Week Resource Guide <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw> and ask your followers to start their own projects.
- Share the details of your project with your followers.
- The hashtag for National Volunteer Week 2012 is #NVW12. (If you mention @handsonnetwork, we'll retweet it and/or @reply.)

Blog

- Write a post about why National Volunteer Week is important to you and your volunteers.
- Include a profile of the person you are recognizing for your readers. How did their service change the community?
- Send a link to your blog post to connect@handsonnetwork.org and we'll link to it from <http://HandsOnBlog.org>.

YouTube It

- Answer the blog writing prompt questions on video and upload it to YouTube, then share it with your Facebook and/or Twitter friends.
- Send a link to your blog post to connect@handsonnetwork.org and we'll link to it from <http://HandsOnBlog.org>.

Appendix

In this section, we've included some general tips and worksheets to support volunteer leaders as they activate projects in your community.

Tools, Worksheets and Checklists:

- Recommended General Planning Timeline
- Proclamation Request Letter
- Sample Proclamation
- Sample Recruitment Flyer
- Sample Photo Consent Form
- Volunteer Registration Form & Sample Waiver
- Volunteer Evaluation Survey



2012 General Planning Timeline

Critical National Volunteer Week Planning Questions:

1. Which national volunteer award will you present to your volunteers?

NOTE: There are two national award programs to choose from:

Daily Point of Light Award — a competitive daily award honoring one exceptional volunteer or volunteer effort from across the entire nation.

President's Volunteer Service Award — a non-competitive award that all Americans are eligible to receive, determined by the number of volunteer hours served.

2. Will you host a formal event to present awards?
3. Which gift item will you present to your outstanding volunteers?

Countdown to National Volunteer Week

Preparatory Steps:

1. If you have not done so already, please register as a Certifying Organization for the President's Volunteer Service Award. Visit www.PresidentialServiceAwards.gov for more information.
2. Send the enclosed proclamation Request Letter to your local mayor, county executive, governor, etc.
3. Begin planning your event: identify and confirm venue, invite speaker(s) and local dignitaries, hire event photographer, etc.

Get Materials Online

- To download the award news release, drop-in article and other materials, visit the Certifying Organization section of the President's Volunteer Service Award at: www.PresidentialServiceAwards.gov.
- The following materials in the National Volunteer Week Resource Guide 2012 are available at <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw>

Proclamation Request Letter

[Recipient Name]
[Address]
[City, State, Zip Code]

Dear [Mayor/Governor/Other Elected Official name]:

As we approach the 39th annual National Volunteer Week, April 15-21, we ask you to honor [city or state] volunteers who tirelessly share their time and talent with those in need. Your support can challenge and encourage the people you represent to commit to sustained and future volunteer service. [Insert a thank you for past participation, if relevant].

National Volunteer Week is about inspiring, recognizing and encouraging people to seek ways to engage in their community. It's about meeting our challenges not as isolated individuals, but as members of a community, with all of us working together.

Enclosed you will find a sample proclamation and more information about National Volunteer Week, which is sponsored by Points of Light Institute. This special week was designated by executive order by President Richard Nixon in 1974. Every President since has signed a proclamation of support announcing National Volunteer Week as the national week of recognizing volunteers.

[name of your organization] plans to honor the volunteers in [name of your city] by [insert SHORT description of your planned recognition events]. We invite you to join our celebration of volunteers at [insert information about your event].

If you have any questions, please call [local contact]. We would be honored to have you participate and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

[your name]
[title, organization's name]

Sample Proclamation

WHEREAS, the entire community can inspire, equip and mobilize people to take action that changes the world; and

WHEREAS, volunteers can connect with local community service opportunities through hundreds of community service organizations like HandsOn Network Action Centers; and

WHEREAS, individuals and communities are at the center of social change, discovering their power to make a difference; and

WHEREAS, during this week all over the nation, service projects will be performed and volunteers recognized for their commitment to service; and

WHEREAS, the giving of oneself in service to another empowers the giver and the recipient; and

WHEREAS, experience teaches us that government by itself cannot solve all of our nation's social problems; and

WHEREAS, our country's volunteer force of over 63 million is a great treasure; and

WHEREAS, volunteers are vital to our future as a caring and productive nation; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, [name/title] do hereby proclaim

April 15-21, 2012
National Volunteer Week

In [city/state], and urge my fellow citizens to volunteer in their respective communities. By volunteering and recognizing those who serve, we can replace disconnection with understanding and compassion.

Signed this [DATE] day of [MONTH], 2012

Sample Recruitment Message/Flyer

Make a Commitment to Serve



Celebrating People in Action

National Volunteer Week
April 15 – 21, 2012

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National Volunteer Week is not only our moment in time to celebrate our volunteers, but to enable a nation to share ideas, practices, and stories, wherever they happen thereby shaping a movement to re-imagine the notion of citizenship for the 21st century.

Organization
Logo Here

Visit HandsOn Network today
and make a commitment to serve.

Volunteer Registration Form and Sample Waiver

Yes! I'd like to volunteer at the following project:

Community Partner Site: _____

Project Location: _____

Project Date & Time: _____

Volunteer Leader (Name and Contact Information): _____

Name	E-mail/Phone	Organization

SAMPLE WAIVER:

By signing this agreement, I am applying to perform certain volunteer services related to _____. I acknowledge that my participation is completely voluntary on my part and is being undertaken without promise or expectation of compensation.

In consideration of my being allowed to participate in this volunteer community service event, I, the undersigned, for myself, my heirs, and assigns hereby release and discharge [your organization/school name], its affiliates, associates, agents, and any participating organizations, for any claims for damages or injury I may incur resulting from my participation in this volunteer community service event. I understand that my participation involves risk of injury and illness, which may result directly or indirectly from my participation. I further state that I am and/or my child(ren) is(are) in proper condition for participating in these events. I agree to abide by the rules established by organizers of this service project relative to health and safety requirements. Finally, I grant [your organization/school name] full and complete permission to use in legitimate promotions of the project photographs of me and quotations from me.

(Please feel free to replace this section if your agency has an existing liability waiver.)

Volunteer Evaluation Survey

Please tell us about your volunteer experience today. You helped create positive change in our community, and we want to hear about it. We will process this information and share the results of our team's hard work. Please complete this survey before you leave the project site and turn it in to your Volunteer Leader.

Company/Organization Name: _____

Please rate the following: Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

1. This project made a positive impact on the community. 1 2 3 4 5

2. I think the project was well organized. 1 2 3 4 5

3. I feel a personal sense of accomplishment after participating in this project. 1 2 3 4 5

4. Did you volunteer on other projects during the last 12 months?

YES NO

(If yes, check all that apply)

With my employer In my neighborhood

With a HandsOn Network Action Center

Other _____

5. Did participating in this project increase your interest in participating in future volunteer service projects? Please check:

YES NO SOMEWHAT

6. Did participating in this project increase your interest in leading a volunteer service project? Please check:

YES NO SOMEWHAT

7. How likely are you to participate in another service project? Please check:

YES NO SOMEWHAT NOT AT ALL

8. Please provide any highlights, suggestions or other feedback about this project.

We Put People at the Center of Change.

VISION

Our vision is that one day, every person will discover their power to make a difference, creating healthy communities in vibrant democracies around the world.

MISSION

We inspire, equip and mobilize people to take action that changes the world.



POINTS OF LIGHT
INSTITUTE

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