Urban Park Management Webinar Series

October 18, 2016
Volunteer Management: Running a Successful Horticulture Volunteer Program

Alex Egan, Associate Vice President of Operations Management
Webinar Objectives

- **Provide** a brief history of the Conservancy’s volunteer efforts and the Horticulture Volunteer Programs

- **Present** the Conservancy’s onboarding process for horticulture volunteers

- **Illustrate** the integration of volunteer efforts with the Operations staff

- **Share** strategies for retention and recordkeeping
Who are we?
The Central Park Conservancy’s Volunteer Department has been working with volunteers since 1983. To date, through our Volunteer Department, we work with more than 350 volunteers year-round in various capacities.
Horticulture Volunteer Programs

What are they?

Gardener’s Assistants

Saturday Green Team

Paint Teams

Seasonal Teams

Day In The Dirt Program
Gardener’s Assistant Volunteer Program

Gardener’s Assistant volunteers assist Zone Gardeners weekly in their zones.
Zone Management

What is Zone Management?

843 Acres
9 Sections
49 Zones
Want to Volunteer?

How did they hear of about us?
A three-step on-going evaluation process for applicants includes interview, orientation, and training.

Step 1: Interview
Orientation

Step 2: Universal Orientation
New Trainees

Step 3: Training
Graduation!

The volunteer has successfully completed the three-step process and will now be assigned to a Zone Gardener.
Prospective Volunteers

What if a prospective volunteer doesn’t successfully complete the three-step process?

Reasons:
• Absences
• Availability – inconsistent
• Types of opportunities

Options:
• Extend the training
• Offer other opportunities such as:
  ✓ Greeter Guide Program
  ✓ Office Support
  ✓ Administrative/Program Support
• Rejection
Operations Staff Working With Volunteers

How do we assist and support the Operations staff?
Additional Opportunities Available

Wednesday Green Team

Special Events

Snow Teams
Relationships = Retention
Database/Record Keeping

Database Statistics:
- Hours volunteered yearly
- Hours volunteered in a Zone
- Hours volunteered in a Section
Database/Record Keeping

What did Gardener’s Assistant Volunteers do in 2015?
Provided 15,145 hours of assistance
What did the Volunteer Teams do in 2015?
Provided 5,808 hours of additional assistance

Profit and Not-for-Profit Groups

Volunteer Teams
Who are they?

Wonderful people giving their time helping to maintain Central Park
For more information about Institute programs, please contact:

Maura Lout  
Director, Center for Urban Park Management  
mlout@centralparknyc.org

Chris Cousino  
Associate Director of Urban Park Management  
ccousino@centralparknyc.org

Learn more at: centralparknyc.org/institute | institute@centralparknyc.org | @cpcinstitute