Millennial Volunteers

How to Maximize Your Success With College Students

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Tigers Who Care Volunteer Fair Agency Breakfast

Community Service * The Center for Student Involvement * The Division of Student Affairs * Clemson University
Topics

• Traits of this new generation
• Tips for recruiting college student volunteers
• What to do with them once you get them
• How to keep these volunteers coming back!
The Millennial Generation

- Usually defined as having been born between 1980 and 2000.

- Largest generation to date- about 80 million babies born since 1980.

- Increasing number of young people enrolled in higher education.
• Shaped by events such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks, and the school shootings at Columbine

• Parents are highly involved in their lives. Children were made to feel special as they were growing up.
• Technology has always been a part of this generation: internet, email, cable, etc.

• Super scheduled- class, jobs, clubs and organizations, social activities, community service

• Community service is becoming a more common requirement at the high school level
How are They Different from Previous Generations?

• Less politically active than Gen. Xers, and typically more civic minded

• Very trusting of authority

• Very optimistic about the future- looking for long term solutions
• Motivated by groups and what is best for the team

• Often they are compared to the G.I. Generation (born between 1901-1924) because of their civic mindedness and optimistic attitudes
Statistics on College Student Volunteering

- Increased from 2.7 million in 2002 to 3.3 million in 2005 (pre-Hurricane Katrina)

- 44.1% of students participate in “regular” volunteering (12 or more weeks a year)

- Volunteer rates are higher among students who work between 1 and 15 hours/week
When You’re Recruiting…

• Use the internet. Have online postings, signups. Allow students to communicate with you through email.

• Advertise one time events, opportunities

• Allow students to work in groups
• Be flexible with your hours. Most students are not available between 9 and 5 M-F

• At the Volunteer Fair- engage students: ask about their interests, find out what they’re passionate about
When They Come to Volunteer...

- Thoroughly explain your organization’s mission and goals
- Discuss in detail volunteer duties, and expectations (time commitment, etc.)
- Put students in activities where they can work in groups
- Clearly define who is in charge, who they can contact with concerns
Be aware that students volunteer for a variety of reasons:

– Service Organizations
– Class
– Court Sanction
– Personal desire

Adapt volunteer projects to match the needs of students whenever possible.
How to Keep Them Coming Back!

• Make it fun!
• Offer incentives (free food, a t-shirt)
• Give feedback often
• Offer a service learning experience that they can add to their resume
• Allow volunteers to take ownership of their work
Pros and Cons to Working with College Students

• Cons:
  – Very busy, so it can be hard to make long term commitments.
  – May lack professional experience
  – Short attention span- need variety of projects
• Pros:
  – Fresh ideas
  – Can recruit their friends
  – Skilled with technology
  – Used to constant change - very adaptable
  – This generation is typically focused on the big picture, and creating long term goals.
  – Generally very passionate about helping
Sources

• Millennials Go to College– By Neil Howe and William Strauss

• College Students Helping America: A Study by the Corporation for National and Community Service  www.nationalservice.gov

• The New Student Politics: Wingspread Statement on Student Civic Engagement  http://www.compact.org/wingspread/

• Understanding the Millennial Generation- By Alicia Moore