



## What is Youth Volunteer Corps?

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- *Youth build a playhouse for a low-income housing neighborhood. They start with a pile of pre-cut wood, a set of directions and tools and in under three days finish construction and paint the playhouse to match the housing development.*
- *Youth redesign a food pantry and host a career fair at a shelter for homeless women.*
- *Youth join with a local social services agency to create a community garden. They help design the plot, build raised beds, prep the soil, plant seeds, pull weeds and harvest the results.*
- *Youth work with a Big Brothers Big Sisters program to provide training for other youth who have had an interaction with the juvenile justice system. They discuss leadership and civic engagement in small groups and then go out and serve together in the community, getting to know each other through icebreakers, team builders and reflection activities.*
- *Youth host and participate in a River Clean Up event that brings together several different groups and teaches them the importance of preserving natural areas as well as all of the free Parks Department activities available to community members.*
- *Youth serve at a camp for children with disabilities. They accompany them on nature hikes, swim lessons, and other activities while learning about how best to support those with special needs.*
- *Youth prepare and serve meals for 500 low-income individuals at a local soup kitchen. They are able to put a face with the issue of hunger in their community while learning about the causes of and solutions to food insecurity.*
- *Youth complete literacy activities while they collect, repair and redistribute donated books to an organization that provides educational enrichment for children and families.*

### ***It's all Youth Volunteer Corps!***

#### **A Very Brief History**

While researching his senior thesis Williams College in 1985, a man named David Battey visited existing service organizations and interviewed leaders in the newly forming youth service field. He found that while volunteer opportunities were randomly available through schools and religious groups, there were no consistent, challenging, community-based opportunities for youth of diverse backgrounds.

Developing a framework for such a program, Battey returned to his hometown of Kansas City and established the Youth Volunteer Corps. Forty-two YVC youth served in the summer of 1987, and over 30 years later, the YVC network has grown to include around 40 programs across the U.S. and Canada that have engaged more than 310,000 youth in more than five million hours of service!

#### **Our Mission**

We create volunteer opportunities to address community needs and to inspire youth for a lifetime commitment to service.

## The YVC Network

Youth Volunteer Corps is a network of programs hosted by nonprofit organizations, schools or individuals that offer youth ages 11-18 the opportunity to serve their community. What sets YVC apart is an emphasis on quality. Any youth can call an organization and volunteer, but YVC's team-based, supervised model based on service-learning offers a truly transformational experience.

## Our Four Fundamental Goals

1. To engage youth in service projects that are challenging, rewarding and educational.
2. To serve the unmet needs of the community and its residents.
3. To promote among youth a greater understanding and appreciation for the diversity of their community.
4. To promote a lifetime ethic of service among youth.

## The Eight Program Standards

1. Conduct frequent, supervised, team-based service projects that address a variety of important community needs.
2. Recruit youth ages 11-18 who represent the diversity of the program's community.
3. Assign a Program Director responsible for managing the program.
4. Establish an integrated education and reflection process for participants.
5. Provide leadership opportunities for youth volunteers.
6. Use the trademark Youth Volunteer Corps name and logo prominently in close coordination with the name and logo of the YVC host.
7. Provide no financial inducement for youth volunteer participation.
8. Participate in the program evaluation process.

*To join your local YVC, start a new YVC, make a donation, or simply learn more, visit [www.yvc.org](http://www.yvc.org).*

