Buckeyes Give: Month of Service – Organizer Toolkit
Hosted by the Office of Volunteer Relations, April 2016

Buckeyes Give. It’s who we are. It’s what we do.

Every day Buckeyes and friends volunteer to do great things to improve the world around us. Because Ohio State is so large and our reach extends around the world it is sometimes difficult to see the impact that OSU volunteers make.

Join the Office of Volunteer Relations for Buckeyes Give: Month of Service in your community throughout the month of April. Show your Buckeye pride by serving in some way to make a difference in your community. Each participant will receive an OSU volunteer t-shirt and nametag to wear for the day of service.

Food security is an issue that affects communities everywhere. President Drake has championed this issue, making significant investments, charging Ohio State to tackle this “grand challenge.” On campus isn’t the only place President Drake has called for action, saying, “In the coming months we will again call upon the powerful support of Buckeye Nation — our passionate alumni and friends around the globe — to help in these efforts.” Organizing a service project that contributes to alleviating food insecurity in your local community is a great way to connect back to our larger mission.

Getting Started

Step 1: Identify your project
Think about what needs exist in your community and how volunteers could make an impact. Some options to give back include volunteering at a homeless or family shelter, a soup kitchen, organizing a collection drive or building a community garden. Think about how many volunteers you want to engage – some may only be able to accommodate 4-10 volunteers at a time while others could accommodate 20+ or 100+.

If you don’t have a clear idea of what needs exist in your community, reach out to some organizations that do:

- Feeding America – feedingamerica.org
- Hunger Volunteer Connection – hungervolunteerconnection.org
- The Pack Shack – thepackshack.org (This project will require funds paid for by the club/society. If you want to do this project, please let your REO/Craig know in advance, so they can work with OVR on securing the project because OVR has an existing relationship with this group.)
- United Way – worldwide.unitedway.org
- HandsOn Network – handsonnetwork.org
- Your city may have a volunteer center with connections to local non-profits and could help identify the right opportunity for the date of your event and the size of your group.
- If none of these options will work for your group please contact Nadine Holmes holmes.115@osu.edu for additional ideas.

Step 2: Submit your project on Ohio State VolunteerMatch
Use the Club and Society Volunteer Guide and the opportunity posting checklist to create your account and get your project posted on the Buckeyes Give: Month of Service page on volunteer.osu.edu.

- Projects should take place sometime in April.
• Choose **Buckeyes Give: Month of Service** when asked to “Select A Campaign”

• Be prepared to enter the following information:
  - Title of project
  - Address of project
  - Start and end date
  - Start and end times
  - Number of volunteers needed
  - Description – what will volunteers do and why should they sign up? Make your description compelling but accurate so volunteers know what to expect. Think about details volunteers may need to know – where to park, where to meet the group, etc.
    - If you don’t have every detail when you post your project, that’s ok. You can send a confirmation email a few days in advance with final details.
  - Cause Area – you must choose at least one from a list, with a maximum of three
  - Requirements – are there any musts for volunteers to participate? Will they need to fill out a waiver, or bring gloves, or be prepared to get dirty?
  - Skills – you can choose special skills from a list

• After your project is submitted, it will be reviewed within 2 business days. You will either receive a notice that your project has been approved or you will be contacted with questions if more information is needed before the project is approved.

• Once your project is approved, review the [training guide](#) (pages 25-27) for information on how to manage your volunteer sign ups.

**Step 3: Market your project to recruit volunteers**

After your project is posted, the next step is to *tell people about it*. Each project has a unique link that you can embed in an email or post on social media to take potential volunteers directly to your project to sign up (see page 28 of [training guide](#)). Simply go to volunteer.osu.edu, click on your project and copy the link from your browser.

First think about how many volunteers you are trying to recruit. If the number is fairly small 5-10, a simple email to your club or society member list will probably fill the slots in a few days. If you have a larger project with 20 – 100 volunteers you may want to layer your recruitment efforts, starting with an email to your membership list, and then using social media, followed by an email to alumni in your area who are not yet involved in your club.

If you are trying to recruit a lot of volunteers, the Office of Volunteer Relations can help coordinate additional emails – please work with your Regional Engagement Officer for help coordinating these.

**Step 4: Execute your project**

What do you need to do to make your service project the best experience possible for your volunteers?

• Check in with your host organization about 1 week before your event and make sure you have a good understanding of all the details.
  - Who will be your point person on the day of the event? Where will they meet you? Have a clear understanding of who will be providing training or explaining the project details to volunteers. Exchange cell phone numbers with your point person in advance.
  - What is the agenda – who will speak to kick off the project, how much time do you need for volunteer to check in, pass out supplies or t-shirts, will you be doing the same thing the whole time or will it vary throughout the day?
If the project is outdoors, is there a rain plan?
If you finish early, are there other projects available for volunteers to help with?

- Use the Manage Participant tool on volunteer.osu.edu to send a confirmation email to your volunteers 2 days in advance reminding them of the event and explaining any final details. See pages 25-27 of the training guide for details.

- On the day of the project, keep yourself organized:
  - Arrive at least an hour before your volunteers to ensure everything is ready to go.
  - Create a sign in sheet for volunteers by exporting the list of sign ups to Excel. Bring a clipboard and pens to facilitate the sign in process. We can provide nametags to help volunteers get to know each other.
  - Organize any supplies volunteers will be using.
  - Post directional signage to help volunteers find where to park or meet.
  - After the project is over, make sure to thank volunteers for their work.

- At the completion of your project, suggest a gathering someplace close by for lunch or a beverage.

**Step 5: Report back**

- Remove any volunteers from the attendance list who didn’t participate (see pages 25-27 in the training guide) by Sunday night.

- The Office of Volunteer Relations will send a survey to all participants listed as “attending” within 48 hours of the completion of your project. When you complete the survey, share your thoughts on the project in the comments section so we can learn what works and what should be improved for next time. We will share this feedback with you.

- Post photos and stories on social media using #BuckeyesGive to share your work and join the conversation.

- Email photos and stories to volunteer@osu.edu so we can share your great work throughout the year via the Alumni Magazine, social media and website.

**Important dates to remember**

- **Feb 26** – Clubs, notify your Regional Engagement Officer and Societies notify Craig Little, of your participation status – not participating, participating, or may participate but have questions. Please complete this pre-event status form.

- **March 14** – deadline to submit projects on Ohio State VolunteerMatch. If you know you want to organize a project but can’t get it posted by the deadline, please communicate that with the Office of Volunteer Relations.

- **Email requests** must be submitted 3-4 weeks prior to the date of your event

- **Shipping information for t-shirts and nametags** must be submitted 2 weeks prior to the date of your event. We will do our best to accommodate sizing requests. Shipping information is being collected in the above pre-event status form.

- **Within 48 hours after your project** – edit your attendee list in Ohio State VolunteerMatch and thank you email and survey sent to volunteers marked as “attending” from the Office of Volunteer Relations.

- **April 14** – Buckeye Summit, Club/Society presidents invited to participate

**Office of Volunteer Relations Contact Information** – go.osu.edu/osuvolunteer

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