



Volunteerism: The Philanthropy of You

Philanthropy is “the desire to promote the welfare of others.” We often equate philanthropy with monetary gifts, but the gift of a volunteer’s time and expertise is just as critical to our nonprofit and community benefit organizations.

In fact, without volunteers, our local philanthropic organizations would be diminished or, in many cases, unable to continue at all. Most nonprofits employ only a limited number of people to do the work of the organization. Indeed, many nonprofits in Nevada County [and beyond] are almost entirely volunteer-driven.

For example, [Fire Safe Council](#) reports that volunteers serve as the many certified, trained citizens that perform the important service of Defensible Space Advisory Visits.

[Hospice of the Foothills](#) volunteers are an integral part of the hospice team, supporting terminally ill patients and their families. They also provide support as those working in the thrift stores.

A CASA volunteer from [Child Advocates of Nevada County](#) even played violin over the phone for an infant during the pandemic!

Other [CNL Member organizations](#) took the time to share what their volunteers mean to them:

“Volunteers are the organization!... They give themselves in service, companionship, expertise, and in time....” -[One Source Empowering Caregivers](#)

“We would be lost without our volunteers!” -[Auburn Symphony](#)

“Volunteers help keep our campus beautiful, mentor residents, teach life skills, or become Angel Grandparents to our kiddos. We love our volunteers; they are heroes of hope.” -[Acres of Hope](#)

“Volunteers are vital to the health and well-being of the Yuba.” -[South Yuba River Citizens League](#)

“...[We]rely on the expertise and compassionate hearts of our local community volunteers for every aspect of our education and services.” -[Full Circle of Living and Dying](#)

“... volunteers remain central to our success and reason for being.” -[Sierra Streams Institute](#)

“Serving in numerous capacities at concerts and events, ...volunteers enhance the vibrant and welcoming culture of our organization.” – [InConcert Sierra](#)

“Volunteers are ultimately the backbone of our organization...”-[GV Downtown Association](#)

One of the best things about volunteerism is that you show up as you are, do the things that you are good at, and enrich the lives of those around you. Some roles require specialized training, but many simply require reliability and the desire to accomplish the organization’s goals. Volunteers reap significant social and health benefits themselves too, with opportunities to learn new skills, make new connections and feel good about giving back the community they love through service at a local nonprofit.

According to [Thrive Global](#), the behavioral change technology company, the impact of volunteering is powerful and far reaching. *“When you volunteer your time and efforts, you start a string of positive events that happen from the time you decide to help out, until long after you’ve done your part. Volunteerism not only helps so many people, organizations, and your community as a whole, but it also brings a significant amount of joy and happiness to ourselves and the people we are helping.”*

Be sure to read the next two articles in the series to learn about Board of Director service and how prospective volunteers can connect with organizations and volunteer opportunities through the online Volunteer Hub by Connecting Point.

To share how you have been impacted by philanthropy, as a donor, volunteer, or recipient of services, email info@cnsierra.com, and you could be featured in a future article.

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