

# STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

LIVE UNITED

## About The Volunteer Center at United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County

A service of United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County, The Volunteer Center supports individuals and agencies with programs to make volunteering easier and more satisfying.

### Programs offered by The Volunteer Center

**Born Learning Trails** - An interactive, playful and visible community engagement tool designed to help parents, caregivers and communities support early learning.

**Shoebox Project** - Children, veterans, elderly, and homeless in our area need your help. United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County mobilizes our community to provide personal care and basic-need items to our most vulnerable residents.

**Write Start Project** - A back-to-school initiative targeting those who make a difference in the lives of our children, the individuals who spend their days ensuring that our students succeed in the school ... teachers.

**Raul Jimenez Thanksgiving Dinner** and the **H-E-B Feast of Sharing** - The Center recruits and manages over 2,000 volunteers to serve at the annual holiday dinners.

**Night of a Thousand Stars** - An annual gala that hosts over 500 participants and recognizes outstanding volunteers with awards in many categories.

The Volunteer Center spreads the word about community service opportunities through **Get Connected**, an online volunteer recruitment system, and through **Bexar Necessities**, an in-house online bulletin board.

**SAVA** (San Antonio Volunteer Administrators) is for nonprofit agency administrators who want to improve volunteer management skills by providing workshops, training and other assistance.

The **Corporate Engagement Network** is a new initiative which provides opportunities for leaders of employee volunteer programs to network and share best practices.

### How does The Volunteer Center link volunteers and agencies?

The Volunteer Center makes connections between people who want to help and nonprofit organizations that need their help. With more than 200 local agencies listed on Get Connected, the Center acts as a clearinghouse for area volunteer opportunities.

### How does The Volunteer Center assist volunteers?

The Volunteer Center assists local and out-of-town groups and individuals who want to volunteer. Projects are coordinated and made available to volunteer groups while individuals are provided links to appropriate volunteer opportunities or provided with specific details according to their needs.

### Which agencies need volunteers?

The Volunteer Center works with a wide variety of nonprofit or public sector organizations. These agencies may teach literacy, reach out to at risk youth, distribute food to the needy or promote the arts.

There are volunteer opportunities at community gardens, food pantries, parks, and neighborhood community centers, among many varied possibilities. Referrals include, but are not limited to, agencies that receive United Way funding.

### What kind of skills do volunteers need?

Different agencies have different needs. Volunteers may staff festival food booths, build bookshelves, create thrift shop displays, answer hotline phones or lead recreation activities for children and seniors. Some agencies are looking for specialists such as computer technicians, sign language interpreters, grant writers, attorneys, artists, etc.

A link to specific opportunities is available at:

[www.VolunteerSanAntonio.org](http://www.VolunteerSanAntonio.org)

### How much of a commitment would I be making?

That's up to the volunteer and the matching organization. Some agencies need only a few hours of help for a one-time event, while others require long-term assistance. Depending on their own availability, volunteers may choose to work with a single agency or to aid several with a variety of short-term projects.

### Who should call The Volunteer Center?

The Volunteer Center helps individuals as well as groups find satisfying service opportunities. This includes youth, families, retirees, corporate employees and members of other organizations. Volunteer work helps people to sharpen skills, make new friends and get to know another part of their community.

**For questions or information on any of these programs, please contact one of these staff members:**

Brandyn Moore-Rodriguez, Vice President, Community Relations and Volunteer Initiatives - 210.352.7077

Diane Talamantez, Coordinator, Community Involvement - 210.352.7000