



GPCVC February Program Notes Family Volunteerism: Best Practice and Project Pitch Session

Thank you to everyone who participated in our February GPCVC Program. A special thanks to Courtney McDade, Yasseline Jos Diaz, and Marie Gillespie for hosting, facilitating and leading our session.

On February 23th, 2017, members of the Greater Philadelphia Corporate Volunteer Council (GPCVC) came together to participate in United Way's monthly GPCVC meeting on *Family Volunteerism: Best Practice and Project Pitch Session* hosted by Independence Blue Cross. The session invited participants to learn from each other's experience with Family Volunteerism through discussion of challenges and best practices in incorporating a family volunteer component into employee volunteer programs. A group working session, following the discussion, provided opportunities for members to incorporate shared best practices into brainstorming, planning a best practice family volunteer project and making a project pitch.

Following are some of the challenges and best practices were shared during the session:

Challenges

- Age limitation
 - Finding projects that incorporate all ages of children
 - Scoping projects suitable for groups with small children
- Legal department concerns, company policy restrictions
 - Complexity in getting volunteer projects approved
 - Liabilities or risks associated with volunteer clearances
 - Volunteer registration process
- Determining group size
- Level setting expectations
 - Balancing between the interest of associates and need of the family volunteers
- Limitation in activity types
 - Activities are often limited to outdoor projects when children are involved
- Accommodating dates
 - Low participation during the weekdays
- Establishing partnerships with agencies

Best Practices

- Creating projects that address specific needs of the community or agencies that align with the skills and interests of your employee volunteers as well as the abilities of their children
- Breaking the group down into separate groups, especially for families with small children
 - Offering different types of activities for children and adults. For example, having children engage in writing notes or creating art that can be placed in emergency food boxes while adults are packing / sorting food at the food bank
- Offering large sized, off-site projects. For example, kit packing projects, organizing donations from a collection drive, MLK Day of Service in partnership with organizations like the United Way
- Utilizing partnerships with communities, local agencies, and individuals to offer on-site projects



Following are project pitches demonstrating best practices in family volunteerism from the workshop:

Service Project: Volunteer Day at Taggart Elementary School

- Best Practices
 - Offering different types of activities for adults and children
 - Creating projects that address specific needs of the community or agencies that align with the skills and interests of the employee volunteers and abilities of their children
- Benefits:
 - Service learning credit for Taggart students (7th & 8th grade), and for any employees' children who volunteer with their parents
 - A structured activity that facilitates parent-children bonding
 - An opportunity to foster understanding and solidarity among children and adults from diverse backgrounds, both cultural and socio-economic
 - A networking opportunity for cross-departmental employee interaction
- Location: Taggart Elementary School 400 W. Porter Street
- Timing: Saturday in April/May
- Activities:
 - For young children: Art project to decorate the hallways
 1. Color maps of the world to show all the nationalities represented in the Taggart community
 2. Create multi-lingual bulletin boards with uplifting and welcoming words/phrases in all the languages spoken by Taggart students and their families – Parents and employees could create a volunteer-run daycare for the duration of the volunteer events
 - Outdoor Activities: Cleaning up the school yard and creating plots for a community garden
 - Indoor Activities
 - Clean classroom desks, help teachers with individual classroom projects (if teachers request help)
 - Library book leveling: Help the Dean organize the new school library by sorting and marking books by grade level
- # of Participants: 40
- Cost: up to \$400
 - Refreshment (Lunch, snacks, water) = \$250
 - Art supplies = \$30
 - Gardening supplies (gloves, trash bags, seed, tools) = \$100 (encourage people to bring tools from home)
 - Laptops for leveling books = \$0 (Bring RevZilla's loaner laptops and encourage people to bring their own computers)

This pitch earned the most votes from attendees. If you would like to inquire about or join this project, please contact our newest GPCVC Steering Committee Member - Martina Mansell, Corporate Giving Coordinator, RevZilla, 877-792-9455x165 martina@revzilla.com



United Way
of Greater Philadelphia
and Southern New Jersey

Service Project: Day of Action – Southern New Jersey

- Best Practices
 - Offering large sized, off-site projects
 - Utilizing partnerships with local agencies
 - Creating projects that address specific needs of the community that align with the skills and interests of employee volunteers as well as the abilities of their children
- Benefits: Children in grades K – 5
- Location: YMCA / South Jersey (2 sites; one in Camden County; one in Atlantic County)
- Timing: Wednesday, June 21, 2017
- Activities:
 - Volunteers will create Summer Learning Loss kits to assist/fight against the loss of academic skills and knowledge over the course of summer holidays
 - Many of the kits will consist of STEM projects that can be done at home
 - Younger children that may not be able to assist with creating the kits can make book markers at an activity/crafts area
 - Side activities for younger children, potentially having teachers or individuals with STEM careers demonstrate kits with younger children
- # of Participants: 200 Volunteers
- Cost: Sponsorship to cover supplies

Independence Blue Cross also demonstrated how projects can evolve to include family based on the strong connections employees have with the work of the organization. Take a closer look at the video shared at the session of BlueCrew employee volunteers with their families at the Medal of Honor Grove: [click here for video](#)

Information on Upcoming United Way Signature Volunteering Events:

- Read Across America / Project Next – www.unitedforimpact.org/projectnext
- United2Feed – June 1st 2017 – www.unitedforimpact.org/united2feed
- [Day of Action](#) – June 21st 2017

If you would like to talk more about the February GPCVC program and how member companies can collaborate on Family Volunteerism projects in partnership with the United Way, please join our follow-up discussion led by Chris Major and Ashley Freeth on:

Thursday, March 17th 2017, Noon- 1pm
Dial-in: +1 (872) 240-3412
Access Code: 657-156-861

For more information, contact GPCVC Manager – Chris Major, 215-665-2464, cmajor@uwgpsnj.org or visit our website www.unitedforimpact.org/gpcvc