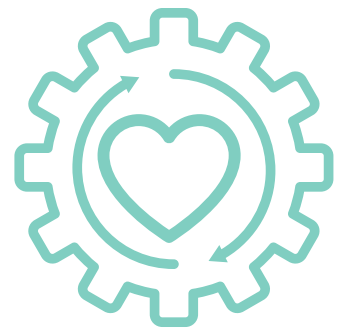
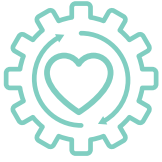


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# Building Volunteer Capacity

To have a wide reaching community impact, it is often necessary to establish an expansive volunteer base. This section provides practical ways communities can expand their volunteer base and work with established organizations to access volunteers.





# BUILDING VOLUNTEER CAPACITY

Channeling Passionate People

## WHY VOLUNTEERS MATTER

Initiating activities to raise awareness of Alzheimer’s and other dementias and to serve those living with the disease and their caregivers can feel overwhelming, but is possible through strong partnerships and appropriate community involvement. Community wide efforts often require resources from multiple organizations and staff to support efforts. Even with multiple community partners, it is difficult to fulfill the needs required to host a community event or staff a community program. Community volunteers passionate about the cause your team or community is supporting can fill gaps needed to support efforts. A diverse group of volunteers can also offer skill sets that current partners or team members do not possess, offering additional benefits to securing volunteers.

Volunteers can be utilized to support efforts in a variety of ways including offering time, securing additional funding, developing communication materials, and providing support at events. It is important to target volunteers that come from various backgrounds.

## TYPES OF VOLUNTEERS

In order to recruit and advertise for volunteers, it is necessary to first determine what types of volunteers are needed. Items to consider are as follows:

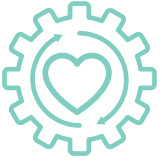
- What will the volunteers do?
- What skills do the volunteers need to fill the needs of the coalition or group?
- How frequently will volunteers be needed?
- What time during the day are volunteers needed?

Consider what resources volunteers will need in order to be successful in their role. It is important to remember that volunteer programs are not completely free. There are certain costs associated with providing volunteers with the tools they need to be successful.

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT & MANAGEMENT

Locating and securing potential volunteers can be a challenging task for many teams and communities. There are often established volunteer groups in the community that might have an interest in participating in community efforts related to Alzheimer’s disease and other dementia, or other health related initiatives. A few groups to consider contacting include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Local high schools:** Local high schools have clubs such as HOSA might have an interest in participating in initiatives related to public health and supporting those with chronic diseases. Along with high school students with an interest in health, other students with other interest such as marketing might have an interest in contributing to community efforts. Work with high school teachers or principals to engage students in participating.



# BUILDING VOLUNTEER CAPACITY

## Channeling Passionate People

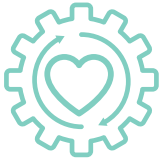
**Local colleges and universities:** Local colleges and universities have a multitude of student organizations that have required service hours or whose sole purpose of existence is to serve their local community through volunteerism. Each college and university typically has a space on their website that lists all student organizations and provides university contacts. In addition to student organizations, Colleges or Nursing, Social Work, and Public Health often require students to participate in community programs as part of one or more of their courses. Consider establishing relationships with the Dean of these colleges or program directors to discuss ways to engage students in community efforts.

**Senior Corps:** A Senior Companions program supports local programs that engages adults 55 and over to provide companionship and support to older adults in need of extra assistance to remain at home or in the community for as long as possible. Communities can apply to receive a grant through Senior Corps in their community. Explore the program to see if it would meet some of the needs in your local community. <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/senior-corps-programs/senior-companions>

**Making specific asks:** When reaching out to groups for volunteer participation in community efforts, it is important to be specific when describing the need for volunteers and the types of activities that the individuals will be asked to do and the time commitment that will be required. Be sure that the request you are making of the volunteers is reasonable. For example, if you are working with high school students they will likely be in class during the day, so it would not be appropriate to ask them to help staff and event during school hours.

**Getting the Word Out:** Utilize your established partnerships to assist in recruiting volunteers. Develop a standardize message for emails, flyers, and newsletters that partners can use for their volunteer recruitment efforts. An example volunteer recruitment letter and newsletter insert has been developed and attached to this portion of the toolkit. To reach a wide variety of potential volunteers, market volunteer opportunities through utilization of email blasts, newsletters, promotional flyers, and social media (Facebook, twitter, Instagram, etc.). Make sure to include who to contact to register as a volunteer and when to expect to be contacted!

Again, be specific when describing the types of volunteer positions available. You might consider developing a sheet describing the type of volunteer position you are filing. The sheet might describe the volunteer's title, purpose, key responsibilities, location, supervision, length of appointment, time commitment, qualifications, and resources provided. An example blast email is provided at the end of this section of the toolkit.



# BUILDING VOLUNTEER CAPACITY

## Channeling Passionate People

### **SURVEY ASSESSING VOLUNTEER INTEREST & STRENGTHS**

Individuals typically want to volunteer because they are passionate about the cause they are serving. Once someone has made the commitment to volunteer, it is necessary to determine how much time the individual is interested in committing to volunteer efforts and what types of volunteer opportunities they would like to participate in. Some individuals are interested in volunteering for a specific event, while others may want to commit to a reoccurring, long term volunteer opportunity. An initial volunteer survey will also help you assess the skills etc of the individual that may be important when considering volunteer placement. For example, some individuals are comfortable talking in front of a large crowd while others may have a fear of public speaking. Understanding individuals' personal preferences will allow you to make an appropriate placement for a volunteer and will lead to greater volunteer retention. There are several free survey tools available to organizations such as Google forms. An example survey is provided at the end of this toolkit section.

### **MANAGING VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteer management can be a huge responsibility and can sometimes become a heavy lift for one person. Establishing a system that is organized and updated regularly is critical when managing multiple volunteers. Keep in touch with volunteers regularly to assess what types of volunteer opportunities they would like to have and what they need to be successful in their volunteerism. The Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disabilities (TCAD) is developing trainings that provide useful information related to volunteer management. Visit the TCAD website by clicking here to learn more about volunteer management.

### **EXISTING VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS**

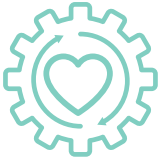
The Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's Tennessee, and TCAD offer volunteer opportunities for those interested in participating in advocacy efforts, volunteering for community events, participating in research opportunities, and educating the public about Alzheimer's disease and other dementias and community resources. Each organization provides community volunteers and advocates with the tools they need to best serve their community. To register to serve as a volunteer with the Alzheimer's Association, Alzheimer's Tennessee or TCAD visit their website to complete a volunteer application or find volunteer contact information.

Alzheimer's Association: <https://www.alz.org/get-involved-now/volunteer>

Alzheimer's Tennessee: <https://www.alztennessee.org/volunteer/become-a-volunteer>

TCAD: <https://www.tn.gov/aging/learn-about/volunteer-opportunities.html>

There may be other community groups that work with volunteers that you can connect with. Work with your community partners to determine what volunteer groups exist that can assist in community efforts related to Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.



# BUILDING VOLUNTEER CAPACITY

## Channeling Passionate People

### BENEFITS OF WORKING WITH ESTABLISHED VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATIONS

Working with groups with an existing volunteer program helps remove some of the liability associated with having a volunteer program. These organizations likely have the appropriate insurance coverage, volunteer screening process, waivers, volunteer orientation, and recruitment process. If your community team does not have the capacity to manage volunteers, work with organizations to help recruit volunteers for their agencies so that there is a strong volunteer base for Alzheimer's and other dementias efforts. Talk to your local Alzheimer's Association and Alzheimer's Tennessee chapters and visit the TCAD website to learn more about how you can support their efforts recruiting and retaining volunteers and utilize volunteers to support your initiatives!

### ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATIONS

- Will the volunteers need to be 18 years of age or older? How will you verify age?
- How will the volunteers sign up to participate? Who will be the main point of contact?
- What type of agreement will you develop with volunteers? Is a contract needed? If so, will you need legal services?
- How will you communicate with volunteers? (email, news letters, social media)
- Is there a need for a background check? Will the volunteer be responsible for paying for the check or is there another way to obtain payment?

## References & Resources

1. **Alzheimer's Association:** <https://www.alz.org/get-involved-now/volunteer>
2. **Alzheimer's Tennessee:** <https://www.alztennessee.org/volunteer/become-a-volunteer>
3. **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration-Successful Strategies for Recruiting, Training, and Utilizing Volunteers:**  
[https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/volunteer\\_handbook.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/volunteer_handbook.pdf)
4. **University of Kansas Community Tool Box:**  
<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/promotion-strategies/start-a-coalition/main>

