



**Before Your Search....**

**Take some time to think about what you are looking for in terms of:**

- **Interest/passions-** what do you love to do?
- **Talents/Skills-** what are you great at? i.e. organization, people-skills, animal knowledge, writing, knitting, etc.
- **Location-** Do you want to volunteer within your own community? Somewhere else in MD, DC, or VA? How far are you willing to travel?
- **Time Commitment-** How long are you able/want to volunteer? One-time commitment, occasional, daily, long term?
- **Client Population-** Do you have a preference for who/what you'd like to work with? i.e. kids, elderly, victims of abuse, dogs, trees, environment, etc.

**Considering these factors first will not only help you better organize your thoughts, but help in looking through the numerous opportunities online.**

***Examples of Interests/Skills Matched With a Volunteer Opportunity***

<b>Are You...</b>	<b>Consider....</b>
A "People Person"?	Friendly visiting
A Take-charge person?	Heading up a fundraising event or serving a leadership role
A Good Teacher?	Be a mentor or literacy tutor
A Nature Lover?	Work on environmental cleanups
Always on the move?	Deliver Meals on Wheels
Interested in learning?	Be a museum docent
Bi- or multi-lingual?	Check out our Language Bank!
Artistic?	Join an arts program or design a logo
A Computer Specialist?	Help build a database, build or maintain a website or do a project through the Pro Bono Consultant Program
A good writer?	Help with a nonprofit newsletter
A Sports Nut?	Work with disadvantaged youth or youth/adults with disabilities
A Researcher?	Help research grants and funding opportunities

***Tips For Finding The Best Volunteer Fit***  
**Montgomery County Volunteer Center**  
**240-777-2600**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer>



***What Organizations Expect from a Volunteer:***

Nonprofits typically take great care in matching volunteers to needs within their organization. When you approach an organization as a prospective volunteer, there may be several steps involved. These include:

- Application Process
  - Many organizations ask individuals to complete a formal application to provide useful information about you, your skills and experience, and your interests.
- Interview
  - This should be a two-way interview. You will be asked about yourself, your interests and experience. You should also ask questions about the organization, the position and its responsibilities. This is a good time to ask for a position description, as well as questions regarding reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, time commitments, supervision, liability, training and any other concerns you might have.
- Screening
  - You may also be asked to provide personal or professional references and to can expect to have those references checked. Depending upon the work involved and the nature of the organization, a criminal background check may also be required.
- Orientation and Training
  - Many organizations provide a formal orientation and training process. This is designed to help you have a thorough understanding of the organization and the program for which you are volunteering.

***Extra Resources about Volunteers/Volunteerism***

- **Montgomery County Volunteer Center's Online Database:** Click on the "Volunteer" link to browse/search through over 2000 volunteer opportunities  
<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer>
- **Why Volunteer?** By: Susan Ellis  
<http://www.serviceleader.org/new/volunteers/articles/2003/04/000048print.php>
- **Volunteer Match**, another comprehensive/searchable online database for volunteer opportunities: <http://www.volunteermatch.com>
- **What is a Non-Profit?**  
<http://www.not-for-profit.org/page2.htm>
- **The Balance Of Rights And Responsibilities Between Volunteers And Paid Staff:**  
<http://www.volunteertoday.com/recruitman.html>
- This publication from Volunteer Canada is designed for Canadians 50+, but is a very useful publication to help clarify your thinking and expectations regarding volunteering:  
[http://www.volunteerburnaby.ca/pdf/booming\\_trend.pdf](http://www.volunteerburnaby.ca/pdf/booming_trend.pdf)

***Still need help finding opportunities?***

**Call our office to make an appointment to meet with an Advisor  
who can help you search for a perfect match!**

**240-777-2600**

**Sign up for our monthly, online newsletter *Montgomery Volunteer*  
to learn more about ongoing opportunities, Volunteer Center news, and more tips for volunteering.**

<http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer>