

SEEKING SUPPORT

How do I get others involved in my experience as a Young Adult Volunteer? Here are a few simple suggestions that will help you prepare to talk to others about this very important mission opportunity and how they can be involved.

How Do I Get Started?

1. Learn as much as possible about the Young Adult Volunteer Program. Be able to talk about the goals of the program and how it can impact not only your life but also the life of the church.
2. Learn as much as possible about your site and the work that you will be a part of in your placement.
3. Know the amount that is needed for your participation in the Young Adult Volunteer Program at your site and what those funds will be used for during your year. This information should be available from your site coordinator.
4. Be clear about why you wish to serve as a volunteer and what you have to share in this position. Persons and groups you approach may be much more supportive if they are clear about why this is important to you as well as to the mission of the church. Someone may ask what this has to do with mission. Be prepared to address such a question.
5. Take on a positive attitude toward raising financial support as a volunteer. In most cases people and groups are eager to hear about your interest in serving and learning through participation in the Young Adult Volunteer Program. Their support of you helps maintain a very personal connection to this mission. Your role is to invite people to share in your ministry as a volunteer. Your attitude can make all the difference. Remember, if you approach people reluctantly you may find them reluctant in return.
6. Be prepared for refusals. Do not be discouraged when someone says they are not able to help in your financial support. People and groups who might very much like to help may not be in a position to make a commitment at the moment you approach them - sometimes they may come through at a later date. Express appreciation for their consideration of your request and ask for their prayer and spiritual support during your term of service.

Using the above information, write a brief description about your position, what you will be doing, how it facilitates the mission of the church and why you are excited about serving in this context. Be specific about the amount of support you need. As much as possible indicate what it will go toward, eg. a small living stipend for monthly expenses, food costs, etc. Be sure to indicate what you will provide, what the site will provide and what support will be provided by the Young Adult Volunteers Office.

Who Should I Approach?

1. The first person to approach is a pastor, educator, or clerk of session (or the lay leader of your church council) of your home church. Share with him/her the above information. Ask for his/her advice about other groups in the church to contact, especially the missions committee. She/he may know of special or general funds in the church that may be available for your support in mission. Work with your pastor/educator in developing a strategy for seeking support for your volunteer position.
2. Groups in your church you may want to consider approaching: The Mission Committee; Presbyterian Women; Presbyterian Men; Sunday School Classes; Youth Groups, etc.

3. Check with your pastor/educator about individuals in your church who may wish to contribute toward your volunteer experience. You might also consider asking your pastor/educator to approach them with you, or on your behalf.
4. With your pastor/educator identify sources of support from your presbytery and synod offices. She/he can help you determine appropriate persons/committees to approach as well as scholarship funds that are directed toward people in mission.
5. Next, consider approaching family members, friends, and groups outside of the church who know you personally. They have a personal investment in you and may very much like to support you in this endeavor. Even if they are not able to provide you with financial support they may be able to advise you of potential resources as well as advocate on your behalf.
6. If you are a college or seminary student, check with your campus Chaplain and/or Dean of Students Office (or other appropriate offices). Your volunteer experience may qualify you for special funds or grants they may have.
7. Finally, determine what funds of your own you might be able to use for your support. The amount you will contribute for your own support is important information to share with others as you approach them for financial support.

Remember, in identifying financial support for your service as a volunteer, the more personal the link between you and the potential funding source, the greater the possibility. Your role is one of interpretation and education about the mission of the church and that your particular position fits into this mission. You are not just a "fund-raiser".

What Approach Should I Use?

There are several ways to contact potential sources for financial support. These include: personal visits, telephone calls, letters, and the use of advocates. Some leads may require only one of these approaches; others may require a combination. Think outside the box and be creative in the ways that you approach potential sources for financial support.

1. When contacting persons or groups you know personally, contact them in person. These include your pastor, other church leaders, friends, family members. Set up appointments in which you can have face-to-face contact if at all possible. Share with them your opportunity for service (including the information you've put together about your position) with confidence and enthusiasm. Ask for their assistance with your financial support and in identifying other potential sources of funds.
2. If someone offers to approach another person or group on your behalf, offer to provide whatever back-up material they might need and to be available to meet personally should the need arise.
3. In the case of a prospect who does not live near enough for a personal visit, it is best, if possible, to make an exploratory phone call to ascertain if financial support might be available and what procedures are necessary. Then follow up with a letter including any documentation that has been requested during the phone call. If your pastor is willing to make this exploratory phone call on your behalf, so much the better.

What Should I Say?

1. In face-to-face encounters with persons you know, begin by sharing with them that you have an exciting opportunity to participate through service as a Young Adult Volunteer. If they are unfamiliar with this program, describe the ministry and how you would participate in its work and goals. Tell them the time frame of your volunteer position/program and how much (in total) you need for financial support for this experience.

Emphasize that you consider serving as a volunteer an opportunity to share in ministry with other Christians and that it will be a learning experience for you as well. Invite them to support you in this ministry. Offer to share what you are doing from time to time by including them on your newsletter mailing list, as well as being available to speak about your experience at the end of your term of service. Particularly with church groups, describe their potential support in terms of an investment in leadership development.

2. Telephone contact needs to be briefer and more to the point than face-to-face encounters. Remember, in most cases you are using a phone call to explore possibilities - details can be spelled out in a follow-up letter. Tell them who you are and why you are calling: "My name is _____ and I will be serving as a volunteer with the Young Adult Volunteer Program of the Presbyterian Church (USA) at (name of site). I am working to identify financial support for my term of service. I will need a total of \$_____ for _____ (months/years). I am able to commit \$_____ of my own funds. My parents and friends, etc. are adding another \$_____ toward my support. The (name of site) will be providing a total of \$_____ which covers _____ (housing, insurance, etc.). The Young Adult Volunteer Office of the PCUSA will be providing \$_____ which covers _____ (student loan reimbursement, insurance, etc.). Pastor _____ suggested that you might be able to help either with actual financial support or with leads of potential sources. Serving as a Mission Volunteer is very important to me. It offers an excellent way to experience and share in ministry. Whatever assistance you can contribute toward this program and my participation as a volunteer will be greatly appreciated. Can you help?"
3. Letters confined to a single page are usually the letters that get read. Try to get all the basic information in clear, concise language on one page. Attachments may always be added. These might include a biographical data sheet, resume listing educational/work experience, a copy of the Young Adult Program brochure and a copy of your volunteer position expectations.

What To Do After You Have Received A Commitment of Support

1. Once you have received a commitment of support from your church, another organization, or an individual you will need to keep track of the amount committed and the contact information for the one making the commitment.
2. You will need to provide the information on the appropriate way to send these funds. If your site has an ECO (Extra Commitment Opportunity) account you should use that account number. If your site chooses not to have an ECO account your funds can be sent through the general Young Adult Volunteer ECO account which is ECO# 048329. (Please contact Nancy Cavalcante for the appropriate ECO account number) You will need to provide the donor with the following information:
 - a. If it is a Presbyterian congregation or governing body they should use normal remittance procedures being sure to include the ECO# and your name on attached documentation

- b. All other donors should make checks payable to the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and write your name and the ECO # on the check.
- c. Checks should be mailed to the address listed below which is a secure lockbox

**Presbyterian Church (USA)
Individual Remittance Processing
PO Box 643700
Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700**

ECO ACCOUNTS

Cincinnati	ECO-051427	Alaska	ECO-051432
Nashville	ECO-051430	Miami	ECO-051470
Seattle	ECO-051431	Gulf Coast	ECO-051474
Tucson	ECO-051440	San Antonio	ECO-051475
Atlanta	ECO-051472	Hollywood	ECO-051428

As with other religious and non-profit agencies, The General Assembly Council has been faced with the dilemma of how to handle administrative costs associated with giving. During an era when most gifts given to the church were undesignated these costs were covered from those funds. However, over the past forty years a significant shift in giving has occurred with more and more gifts coming in the form of restricted gifts. On January 1, 2005, a process of associating a five percent (5%) administrative cost with restricted gifts was put in place with full approval of the General Assembly Council elected body and the 216th General Assembly. All of the above referenced ECO accounts are subject to this five (5%) administrative cost.

- 3. For accountability and your protection we encourage you to have funds for your support sent through an ECO account. If you choose not to use this system be sure that your donors know where the funds are to be sent, with the appropriate contact person and who the check should be made payable to.
- 4. THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! You can never say thank you enough to people who have committed their support. Thank them in a personal note as soon as they have committed and again throughout your service either by note or in your newsletter. The Young Adult Volunteers Office will send a thank you letter to each donor for each contribution that is received in an ECO account.

NOTE:

Attached is a “Covenant of Support” that you may want to photocopy and use as a tool to keep track of support. This form is for your own records and for your supporters, and does not need to be returned to our office.

Also attached is a letter documenting your participation in this program should you need to request a deferment or reduced payment from any loan provider.