Volunteering

One of the best ways to get involved in the community is volunteering your time and services. By taking the time to volunteer you are not only benefiting yourself, but also the community and its members as well. With so many resources available it can be overwhelming trying to figure out which place is the best fit for you and the experience you are looking to gain. To start, it is important to figure out what you want to gain from the experience and go from there. Make sure you have a goal set and an idea of how much time and responsibility you want to invest before you get started.

Why Volunteering is Important

Beyond the obvious reasons of the importance of volunteering, there are many reasons volunteers are so crucial for the world to thrive. In 2008 in the United States alone, 61.8 million people volunteered 8 billion hours of service, with an economic value of $162 billion. Clearly, volunteers play a big role in society. From volunteer fire fighters, search and rescue teams, and crisis phone lines volunteers work with a large variety of people and benefit in many ways. Volunteering is the quickest way to help serve the community.

Benefits of Volunteering

Make New Friends: Especially if you are new to a city, volunteering can be a great way to make new friends and create new contacts for the future. For those who are shy, volunteer opportunities may present a time to develop social skills and self confidence.

Mind and Body Benefits: Volunteering can greatly improve your self confidence as you spend more time in your role. It has also been proven that volunteering can help fight depression because it creates a chance for social interaction and not so much alone time. “Helpers High” is a common phenomenon that many volunteers experience. Studies have also found the volunteering may reduce chronic pain and reduce effects of heart disease.

Gain Valuable Skills: Volunteering is the perfect opportunity to try something new or help fine tune those skills needed for that promotion. Make sure to include all of your skills on your resume as they are needed for future jobs.

Resources for Getting Involved:

http://www.volunteermatch.org/
http://bloomington.in.gov/volunteer/
**Fun and Fulfillment:** Sometimes volunteering can just be about having fun and getting the most out of your time. There does not have to be any ulterior motivation to volunteer.

http://www.volunteermatch.org/

http://bloomington.in.gov/volunteer/

http://www.helpguide.org/life/volunteer_opportunities_benefits_volunteering.htm

http://www.idealist.org/info/Volunteer/Why

http://allanluks.com/helpers_high