

## Volunteering Coming to Your TV Set Next Week!

Are you ready for *Desperate Housewives*, *Ghost Whisperers*, *Mentalists*, and *Heroes* to call your office looking for a way to volunteer? Those shows are just some of the more than 90 primetime programs that will be highlighting volunteering next week as part of **iParticipate**, a national initiative of the Entertainment Industry Foundation to shine the spotlight on the ways that everyday Americans help their neighbors.

Television shows on ABC, NBC, CBS, Fox and several cable channels are incorporating themes of service and volunteering into their scripts and story lines that will reach hundreds of millions of viewers during the week of October 19-25. All this primetime focus is expected to generate renewed interest in volunteering in local communities. The Corporation for National and Community Service has teamed up with EIF on this unprecedented effort, and we encourage you to use this opportunity to recruit volunteers and highlight the work your organization is doing.

Are you and your organization ready? Here are a few tips and links from the Resource Center on ways to welcome, invite, incorporate, support, and celebrate the volunteers who walk through your doors.

- **The cameras are rolling...**
  - [Review or create the phone script that you use when volunteers call](#). Set a welcoming tone, and know who is responsible and what the message is.
  - [Revise and clarify existing job descriptions for volunteers](#) and have those [applications ready](#).
  - Update your online presence. [Post your opportunities on an online volunteer matching database](#).
  
- **Make the pitch...**
  - Across the country, the local affiliates of the four broadcast networks will be looking for volunteer stories to highlight on their newscasts.
  - This is a great time to reach out to your local affiliates with stories and statistics about your volunteering and service program — talk shows, morning shows, and evening news. Print media may also be more receptive.
  - [Collect stories about what volunteers have done for your organization](#).
  - For a media toolkit with tips and sample materials, visit: <http://www.serve.gov/spread.asp>



- **Coming attractions...**
  - [Brainstorm new ideas of ways that volunteers could support your organization.](#)
  - [Engage your board in planning, organizing, and leading a project with visibility.](#)
  - Not all volunteers want to do direct service. Identify internal projects where volunteers could make a big contribution to your organization.
  - It's all about *variety*—virtual jobs, one-day projects, group and family activities, and long-term assignments.
  - If your organization is not prepared to accept new volunteers, refer them to other organizations where their interests can be put to good use.



- **Behind the scenes...**
  - Contact peer organizations to consider collaborating with them. If you do not regularly engage volunteers, learn from others how best to use them.
  - [Clarify roles in training, supporting, and supervising volunteers.](#)
  - [Skilled volunteers can fill this role if appropriate staff is not available.](#)
  - Plan a project for a group to undertake; break it into small enough chunks so that several groups or individuals can contribute to its completion.
  - Use this increase in visibility to develop a long-range strategy to engage the community in new ways. They want to help you, but they need to know how.



- **Lights, camera, action! The spotlight is on you!...**
  - [Celebrate, honor, and thank all the volunteers who have labored on your behalf.](#)



For more information on iParticipate, visit [www.iParticipate.org](http://www.iParticipate.org) or [www.eifoundation.org](http://www.eifoundation.org). For additional information and resources visit the Corporation's websites [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov), [www.serve.gov](http://www.serve.gov), and [www.nationalserviceresources.org](http://www.nationalserviceresources.org) and the websites of [state service commissions](#). You received this e-alert because you are subscribed to one of the e-mail discussion lists hosted by ETR Associates, which manages the Resource Center.

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