



Cavaliers Care Manual



About Cavaliers Care

Cavaliers Care is a volunteer service initiative, through which alumni, parents, and friends expand on the University's tradition of service by serving their communities in the month of April to celebrate the anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's birth.

Over the past eight years, this international volunteerism initiative has successfully engaged UVaClub members in a shared sense of purpose. Thanks to you, 69 service projects helped individuals and organizations during the 2009 Cavaliers Care Worldwide initiative up from 52 in 2007.

President Casteen has called the Cavaliers Care initiative "one of the best ideas I have ever encountered." The University of Virginia Office of Engagement has developed resources to support you as a club leader in this tremendous endeavor.

History

Today an official program supported by the University's Office of Engagement, Cavaliers Care began as a grassroots project of the Young Alumni Council in 1999. Programming Committee chairwoman Yvonne Merkel, a 1991 alumna, and her cohort of recent graduates were in search of an effective strategy to boost and sustain the University's alumni engagement ratings. The notion of an annual day of service organized independently by local UVaClubs, with some central coordination, resonated strongly with Merkel, who had served as leader of the [Atlanta club](#).

Cavaliers Care has steadily grown since UVaClubs adopted it in 2001. That first April, 16 clubs conducted 28 service events, engaging 450 alumni. By 2009, those numbers had jumped to 49 clubs and 69 projects, with the number of participants more than doubling as a growing number of UVaClubs designated a "service" or "Cavaliers Care" chair to organize a group volunteer activity for their region. Local clubs receive wide-ranging support from the UVaClubs program and a team of regional engagement officers, including real-time registration tracking through the Cavaliers Care Web site, a ready-made participant list and T-shirts in family sizes.

Some Quick Definitions

- A **volunteer** is:

(Adapted from multiple online sources, including people's opinions on Wikipedia)

- Someone who works for a community or for the benefit of environment primarily because they choose to do so. The word comes from Latin, and can be translated as "will" (as in doing something out of ones own free will). Many serve through a non-profit organization – sometimes referred to as formal volunteering, but a significant number also serve less formally, either individually or as part of a group.
- Volunteering comes in many forms: serving food at the local homeless shelter, providing computer technical support to a non-profit organization, acting in a leadership capacity, coordinating a fundraiser or educational event in your local community or constructing housing for those who cannot afford to do so on their own. Around the world volunteer centers exist to support the voluntary sector and make a difference in the communities that they serve.

- **Community service** is:

- a service that is performed for the benefit of the public or its institutions
- Examples of community service projects include (but are not limited to):
 - cleaning a park;
 - collecting much needed items including clothes, shoes, food, blankets, etc.;
 - getting involved with [Habitat for Humanity](#);
 - cleaning up the side of the highways or roads;
 - reading to the elderly in nursing homes;
 - helping out a local fire or police department;
 - helping out at a local library;
 - tutoring developmentally disabled children for free; and
 - participating in school activities that benefit the community.

Tips and Benefits of Volunteering According to United Way

Tips:

- **Be selective**
 - Think about what matters to your group, and be selective about where you spend your time. Choosing opportunities that you think will make your group feel good and you think they will enjoy while helping others builds stronger communities, while enriching the lives of the volunteers.
- **Choose carefully**
 - Work with volunteers and local nonprofits to develop the best opportunities for busy working adults to serve. Feel confident about the quality of the opportunity you choose and about the organization you donate your time to support.
- **Research causes that are important to you**
 - Whether it's helping children achieve their potential, helping families become financially stable, improving people's health or working to revive our nations landscape find out what cause is closest to your heart and the hearts of your group members and make a difference.
- **Consider the skills you have to offer**
 - Would your group like to work outdoors? would you rather build a house? Or work at a soup kitchen or with a mass distribution effort? Find something you and your group enjoy doing and enhance your skills through volunteering.
- **Learn something new**
 - Volunteering can also teach you valuable new skills that you can use in other parts of your life. It also give you the opportunity to learn more about your community and other U.Va. support in your area.
- **Don't over-commit your schedule**
 - Stick to a volunteering schedule that makes sense for your group and leaves you time to enjoy the activity.

Benefits:

Whether it is important to you to solve a community problem, advance a worthy cause or to develop as a person, volunteering offers many benefits in appreciation for the gift of your time and expertise. Volunteering can help you:

- Make important networking contacts
- Learn or develop skills
- Teach your skills to others
- Enhance your résumé

- Gain work experience
- Build self-esteem and self-confidence
- Improve your health
- Meet new people
- Feel needed and valued
- Express gratitude for help you may have received in the past from an organization
- Communicate to others that you are ambitious, enthusiastic and care about the community
- Make a difference in someone's life

Tips for Volunteering in a Group

(Adapted from an Article by Jayne Cravens for UNVolunteers)

1. One person from the group will need to be the primary group contact and deliverer of information. This person will receive all communications on behalf of the group regarding volunteering, and will be responsible for communicating with all group members. This person will also attend any orientations required before volunteering, and communicate information from this orientation to other members.

2. The group needs to take an assessment of all group members' availability for, interests in and goals for a group volunteering activity. This will help you in choosing a group assignment, and ensure that everyone has a positive experience and that their expectations will be met. For instance, if the group is interested in environmental issues and members are only available to volunteer on Saturdays, then you may want to contact local environmental groups and state agencies about possibilities to participate in a trail repair event.

3. Does your group want to be engaged in the same activities during the entire group volunteering endeavor? Or, would your group be willing to separate at the event or location to engage in a variety of tasks; for instance, at a community center, one person reads to an elderly person while others help at an activity for youth and others help re-organize the center's stock room.

4. Do members of your group want to bring family members along to volunteer? The group will need to decide if this is acceptable, and permission to bring family members will have to be secured from the volunteer hosting organization.

5. What talents and experiences are volunteers interested in sharing in this group effort? For instance, the marketing director may not want to help with marketing efforts as a volunteer but, rather, share her talents at basic home repair.

6. Someone in the group needs to have the responsibility to fill out application forms; often, volunteer hosting organizations require the completion of such forms. A representative of the group or just one member may be asked to complete a Waiver of Liability form.
7. If you are volunteering on behalf of an organization or company, you must make sure the organization or company supports the group volunteering activity and all the responsibilities such entails. Also, ask the organization or company how it wishes to be represented within the group volunteering activity. Sometimes, companies don't wish to be represented at all, other than by their employees engaging in the group volunteering effort; others want their employees to wear a company t-shirt while volunteering, and still others may want to publish a press release highlighting the volunteer activity.
8. If you are participating in an employee-based group volunteering activity on company time, or if you are taking vacation time to volunteer on behalf of the company, make sure you have permission and support from your immediate supervisor.
9. You must give organizations sufficient lead time to place your group into a volunteering activity; for disaster relief situations, this can be immediate, but most organizations will need several weeks to prepare an assignment for your group.

After all of the above steps are completed comes the hardest part: actually finding a group volunteering activity. If you engage in all of the above activities beforehand, however, you will shorten the time it takes to actually get started on a group volunteering assignment once you have found one. Good places and ways to look:

1. contact your local volunteer center
2. look for events by local nonprofit organizations, NGOs and schools (charitable performances, science fairs, and other one-time events often need volunteers to help)
3. ask group members to contact nonprofit organizations they have a relationship with or with a mission they are particularly attracted to, to ask about potential group volunteering activities

Once you have identified potential volunteering activities, be sure to ask the hosting organization:

1. the exact times and dates volunteers will need to be there

2. the location volunteers should go to when they arrive
3. if there are age restrictions
4. about the availability of parking
5. what tools and resources will be provided, and what the volunteers are expected to bring themselves
6. what food and drinks will be provided, and what the volunteers are expected to bring themselves
7. how volunteers should dress

On the day or days of the group volunteering endeavor:

1. be on time
2. confirm responsibilities and commitments with organizers
3. take pictures

A few days after completion of the group volunteering endeavor, ask all group members about their experience. Bring them together for lunch for an informal discussion, or have all group members complete a written survey. What did they like? What did they learn? What do they wish they could have done that they didn't get to do? What do they wish had been different? What do they hope for the next time? Share these results with the organization that hosted you, as well as the organization or company that sponsored you.

Resources Available

The following resources will support you as you plan and execute your club's event as part of Cavaliers Care:

- **Broadcast e-mail**
This message will be from your club through our office to all alumni and parents and will announce your club's specific 2009 Cavaliers Care Worldwide project(s). It will direct volunteers to the Cavaliers Care website to register to participate in your club's event. We will also offer a footer advertising Cavaliers Care to all alumni and friends in January.
- **Registration links**
Friendly links to your club's specific club project(s) will be provided two weeks after receipt of time/place/date details. These links can appear on your club's website and in broadcast e-mail messages.
- **Automatic Notification**
When a participant registers online, you may receive an automatic notification containing the participant's contact information and other relevant details. This enables you to keep up with responses in real time. However, you can also ask your REO or REA to supply lists of registrants.
- **Regional Engagement Officer/Associate**
This person will be a resource for you as you plan and execute the volunteer project in your city. From brainstorming project ideas to helping with communications tools to draw out participants, your REO is an additional resource. Your REO, however, is not the lead on your program, since she or he will be assisting more than one club.
- **Cavaliers Care Website**
The Cavaliers Care website (<http://alumni.virginia.edu/cavscare>) will keep you updated on the latest developments regarding the worldwide program. This site also allows you to submit key information on your project to the University of Virginia's Office of Engagement specifically for members in your area. Visit <http://uvaclubs.virginia.edu/cavscareprojects>.
- **Strategies, Tips & Tricks**
Various helpful hints on planning and executing your volunteer event will also be available. These hints will be posted on the Cavaliers Care website and you will be able to add your suggestions, too.
- **Madison House Alumni List**

If requested, your REO can help you to contact Madison House alumni in your area. Because of their involvement in Madison House while at U.Va., these potential volunteers may be more inclined to get involved in this program. You may potentially reach new alumni, families, and friends for club involvement through this list and this program.

Key Dates

- **March 2 Club Service Project Detail Deadline**
Last day for you to indicate your club's service project(s) for 2010 Cavaliers Care Worldwide so that participants may begin registering. Club Service Project Detail forms are available online now at <http://uvaclubs.virginia.edu/cavscareprojects>.
- **March 2 Online Registration**
Volunteers may begin to sign up online for specific service projects through <http://uvaclubs.virginia.edu/cavscare>, although registration links will be provided two weeks after time/place/date/cost (if any) details have been provided to your REO.
- **Open Registration Deadline**
Due to the volume of volunteers who signed up after deadline in 2009, we recommend a rolling deadline, to be determined by the Cavaliers Care Chairperson and noted in your broadcast messages. Cavaliers Care Chairpeople may receive frequent lists of volunteers for their club service project(s) by checking with their REOs and/or through the automatic notification system.
- **April/May 2010 Cavaliers Care Event Execution Window**
Your club's volunteer event(s) should fall within this month, or May at the latest. From a strategic perspective, this is important because of the month's relevance to the University and to Thomas Jefferson.

Easy Steps

Step 1.

Receive Kick-Off letter

(Please contact us at cnc5r@eservices.virginia.edu if you for some reason have not received a Kick-Off letter or have misplaced yours)

Step 2.

Poll membership and review constituent demographics to determine best type of service project.

Template for potential e-mail:

- “My name is_____,
I am writing because I am the Cavaliers Care Chair Person for _____ . Cavaliers Care is a volunteer service initiative, through which alumni, parents, and friends expand on the University’s tradition of service by serving their communities in the month of April to celebrate the anniversary of Thomas Jefferson’s birth.

Over the past eight years, this international volunteerism initiative has successfully engaged UVaClub members in a shared sense of purpose. Sixty-nine service projects helped individuals and organizations during the 2009 Cavaliers Care Worldwide initiative up from 52 in 2007. President Casteen has called the Cavaliers Care initiative “one of the best ideas I have ever encountered.”

I am starting to put together the 2010 Cavaliers Care _____ initiative and I would love your help. Please e-mail me back with any ideas you might have about an organization we might be able to partner with or general types of service projects in which you would be more interested in participating. A few organizations I have thought of thus far are _____. Please let me know your thoughts and if your interest in participating in a Cavaliers Care service project in any capacity. Any help would be greatly appreciated. Look forward to hearing from you.”

Step 3.

Choose Organization(s)

- Using the information provided from the e-mail you wrote in step 2 begin to research appropriate organization with which to partner
 - Websites that are helpful:
 - <http://www.volunteermatch.org/>
 - <http://www.1-800-volunteer.org>
 - www.liveunited.org
 - <http://www.voa.org/>
 - info@wildernessvolunteers.org
 - National Organizations:
 - United Way
 - Boys and Girls Club
 - Habitat for Humanity
 - Green Earth
 - Volunteers of America

Step 4.

Contact Organization(s)

- Begin to connect with the organization on preliminary details
 - Set up:
 - Time
 - Date
 - Venue
 - Number of volunteers appropriate for the project
 - Get more background on:
 - the organizations initiative
 - Additional cost the volunteers might incur
 - Gear needed

Step 5.

Complete Project Detail Form online

- http://uvaclubs.virginia.edu/site/c.hnKLKUOwHoE/b.3590349/k.A9B/Project_Detail_Form/apps/fc/form.asp

2010 Cavaliers Care Project Registration Form

Please indicate your club's service project(s). The submission deadline is March 2nd, 2009.

(* = required field)

Contact Information

*Club:	<input type="text" value="Please Select..."/>
*Your Name:	<input type="text"/>
*E-mail:	<input type="text"/>
*Telephone:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>
City:	<input type="text"/>
State:	<input type="text"/>
Zip Code:	<input type="text"/>
*Cavaliers Care Chair:	<input type="text"/>
*Chair's E-mail:	<input type="text"/>
*Chair's Telephone:	<input type="text"/>
Club President (if different from above):	<input type="text"/>
President's E-mail:	<input type="text"/>

President's Telephone:

Club Service Project(s)

*Date of Project:

*Project(s) Description:

*Goal Number of Participants:

*Estimated Project Length:

-
- Make sure the project description is enticing. This is what your volunteers will be reading and it may make a difference as to how many people actually sign up.
 - May help to also include a title at the beginning of your description
 - Make sure you know the answers to the required fields before filling out this form

Step 6.

Communicate with members/constituents and make sure they register online

- Potential E-mail:

Dear members of the UVaClub of _____,
I am your Cavaliers Care Chairperson and would like to inform you of a great event in our area. Cavaliers Care is a volunteer service initiative, through which alumni, parents, and friends expand on the University's tradition of service by serving their communities in the month of April to celebrate the anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's birth.

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I have arranged for us to partner with _____ an organization that _____. We will be partnering with this organization to _____ on _____ from _____ to _____. This is a wonderful opportunity for our Club to come together for a great cause. Please go to the Cavaliers Care website (<http://uvaclubs.virginia.edu/site/c.hnKLUOwHoE/b.3567709/k.BF14/Home.htm>) to register for this event. I hope you can make it.

Best,

- Example of a Volunteer Registration Form

2010 Cavaliers Care Volunteer Registration
UVaClub of Atlanta
Trees Atlanta
Saturday, April 24, 2010

Contact Information

First Name: *

Last Name: *

Phone: *

Cell Phone:

Email: *

Address Line 1:

Address Line 2:

City:

State: -- please make a selection --

ZIP/Postal Code:

U.Va. Affiliation: * -- please make a selection --

Additional Volunteers

Please list the names of any additional volunteers accompanying you

Guest 1 Name:

Guest 1 Relationship:

Guest 2 Name:

Guest 2 Relationship:

Guest 3 Name:

Guest 3 Relationship:

Guest 4 Name:

Guest 4 Relationship:

Step 7.

Receive automatic notifications of registrants.

- Example of notification

- Make sure to keep a record of who is attending

Step 8.

Receive incentives/gifts from Office of Engagement.

- Make sure we have all of your information so we can send you something for your group

Step 9.

Communicate approximate number of attendees to organization

- It is important to keep in contact with them throughout this process so they know what to expect

Step 10.

Print list of registrants prior to event and take along a sign-in sheet

Step 11.

Arrive an hour prior to project start; supply nametags, gifts, sunscreen, water, and, food if necessary

Step 12.

Manage volunteers

Step 13.

Send thank-you notes/e-mails to everyone who attended

- Example of Potential thank-you note template:

- Dear _____,

I just wanted to take this opportunity to thank you again for all of your efforts with the UVaClub of _____ Cavs Care service project, _____. You were a huge help and I feel we got a lot accomplished in our _____of volunteering. It is so great when we can

come together as a group and do something good for our community! Great getting to know you and I hope to see you again at an up coming event!

Best,

Step 14.

Send sign-in sheet to Regional Engagement officer, who will transfer it into an Excel document and return it to you