

Chicago Festival Association Volunteer Management


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CFA History

- Formed in 2000
- Non-profit event production company
- Not affiliated with city of Chicago
- All funding done through partnerships
- Other events
 - Amman, Jordan parade consultation
 - Golf Outings
 - NASCAR (Chicagoland Speedway)

CFA Mission Statement

"To produce high-quality entertainment events that benefit all spectators, participants and volunteers involved."



Thanksgiving Parade


- 1934 – parade begun by Walter Gregory
 - State Street Christmas Caravan
 - Created to stimulate economic development and cheer Chicagoans up during the depression
 - Held on Dec. 7
- 1968 – Mayor's Office of Special Events begins producing parade
- 1969 – Chicago Tribune reports more than 1.5 million people lined parade route

Thanksgiving Parade

- 1984 – Ronald McDonald Children's Charities® Parade formed
 - Parade route moved from State St to Michigan Ave
 - McDonald's Sponsors parade from 84-89
- 1990 – The Brach's Kids Holiday Parade is created
 - Brach's Confections assumed position of title sponsor
- 1998 – Field's Jingle Elf Parade is created
 - Marshall Field's assumed position of title sponsor
 - Giant character balloons become part of the parade
 - Since this time, Chicago has introduced more recognizable character balloons than any other parade in the country

Thanksgiving Parade

- 1999 – Target and Marshall Fields become title sponsors together
 - Parade moved back to original route
 - Produced on Thanksgiving Day
- 2002 – Target assumes title sponsorship
 - Broadcasted on ABC 7 Chicago
- 2003 – renamed State Street Thanksgiving Parade
 - Parade presents first-ever unit from Hawaii




Thanksgiving Parade

- 2006 – McDonald's begins two-year title sponsorship
 - Close to half a million spectators line State Street
- 2007 – Parade will be covered live on WGN-TV (Superstation WGN)
 - Available in approximately 72 million homes
 - One of the three parades in the country to be covered live
- 2008 – 75th Anniversary of the parade broadcasted live for THREE hours
 - Reaches over 5.1 million viewers nationally on TV and an additional 425,000 spectators on State Street
- 2009 – Teddy Turkey Appearances build excitement
 - Teddy Turkey goes Digital (Facebook, Myspace, Twitter)
 - CLTV re-broadcast of parade


Starting a Volunteer Program

- Importance
 - Backbone of the event
 - Encourages community involvement
- Benefits
 - Lowers expenses
 - Creates sense of community ownership




Volunteer Program: Elements of Success

- Assess
- Develop
- Plan & Design
- Implement
- Evaluate
- Recognition



Vision without action is a daydream.
Action without vision is a nightmare.
- Japanese Proverb

Assessment of a Volunteer Program



- Where are volunteers needed?
- What are volunteers' responsibilities?
- What are short-term goals of having a volunteer program?
- What are long-term goals of having a volunteer program?
- What are the benefits of having volunteers?
- How much money should be budgeted for a volunteer program?
- What are some strategies of promoting positive staff/volunteer relationships?

Assess Committee Structure

- Recruit year-round
- Launch Leadership Board
- Establish committee chairs

Leadership Board Committee

- CFA leadership board
 - 40 members, leaders of the respective positions
 - Serve as liaisons between CFA and volunteers (approx 1,200)
 - Board members are crucial in developing
 - Training materials
 - Instructing volunteers
 - Helping CFA keep abreast of issues
 - Helping CFA improve operations
 - Monthly Meetings
 - Start meeting every two weeks during parade season

Leadership Board Committee

Forming a leadership committee based on established needs

- People who possess qualities such as
 - Enthusiasm
 - Confidence
 - Trust
 - Efficiency
 - Composure
 - Commitment

Development

- Goals & Objectives help
 - Develop a sufficient volunteer team
 - Prepare volunteers for event
 - Ensure ongoing volunteer needs are met

Plan and Design

- Develop a sufficient volunteer team
 - Volunteer administration
 - Recruitment

Recruiting Efforts

- Timeline
- Website
- E-Recruiting
- Applications
- Mailer
- Public Service Announcement (PSA) Campaign

Training Volunteers: Policies/Rules

- Like paid staff, volunteers need rules to follow
- Fair and consistent
- Developed by staff and leadership board
- Easily known by all volunteers

Assessment of Policies and Procedures

- Types of written policies that should be developed
 - Statements of belief/position/value of organization
 - Mechanisms for managing risk (insurance coverage, background checks)
 - Rules to specify expectations, regulations, and guides to action (confidentiality, time and training commitments, customer service)
 - Aids to program effectiveness modified for the volunteer program (personnel policies)

Creating a Timeline

- 10-12 Months Out
 - Secure Leadership Board chairs & Vice-chairs
 - Develop year-long Leadership Board program
 - Secure locations for Leadership Board meetings
- 6-9 Months Out
 - Host Leadership Board meetings (discuss overview, schedule, positions, volunteer recruitment, gift bags, etc.)
 - Recruit volunteers and process applications
 - Secure a training and orientation session location

Creating a Timeline

- 4-5 Months Out
 - Continue hosting Leadership Board meetings
 - Recruit volunteers and process applications
 - Begin soliciting Gift Bag donations
 - Work with PR firm
 - Choose press photos
 - Develop, finalize and drop long lead release
- 3 Months Out
 - Continue hosting Leadership Board meetings
 - Recruit volunteers and process applications
 - Develop Press Kits
 - Prepare and drop volunteer mailer
- 2 Months Out
 - Continue hosting Leadership Board meetings
 - Recruit volunteers and process applications
 - Finalize and print volunteer handbooks

Creating a Timeline

- 1 Month Out
 - Continue hosting Leadership Board meetings
 - Recruit volunteers and process applications
 - Complete volunteer position assignments
 - Prepare and drop volunteer position letters and orientation info
 - Send e-vite to all volunteers
- Event Month
 - Continue hosting Leadership Board meetings
 - Close volunteer program
 - Host volunteer orientation and training
- Post-Event
 - Drop volunteer Thank You mailer
 - Host Thank You party
 - Update volunteer forms
 - Meet with Leadership Board to develop next year's program
 - Revise volunteer committee structure and positions

Value of Websites

- Internationally Accepted
- Abundance of Information
- Immediate Application Process
- 24 hour Access
- Paperless
- Organized

Reasons for Applications

- Obtain contact information
- Liability
- Limit volunteers
- Variety of responsibilities

Importance of Mailers

- Update contact records
- Personal connection
- Physical application
- Specific volunteer information
- Reach out to volunteers that do not have access to the internet

PSA Campaign Benefits

- FREE!!
- Promote your need for volunteers at the local, regional and even national level
- Every television, radio and print outlet in the country is required by the FCC to run PSA's.

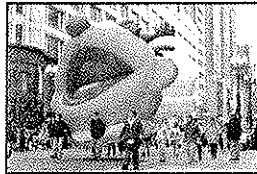
Implement

- Prepare volunteers for the event
 - Orientation
 - Placement
 - Training
- Ensure needs are met
 - Supervision
 - Co-ordination



Preparing Volunteers

- Volunteer position descriptions
- Orientation
- Training with equipment
- Leadership Board

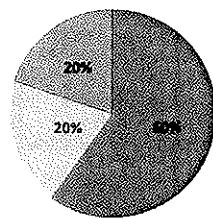


Evaluating Volunteers

- Success of event
- Volunteer performance
- Volunteer attendance



Volunteer Retention



■ Retained ■ New ■ Referred

Recognizing Volunteers

- Volunteer benefits
 - Apparel
 - Food and Beverage
 - Gift Bag
 - Thank You party
 - Raffle prizes
 - Awards



Training Volunteers: Policies/Rules

- Volunteers should be exposed to proper training just like paid staff would be to ensure success.
 - Videos, orientation packets, workshops, etc. are important to ensure that your volunteers are doing their best and you are getting the best outcomes

Volunteers should be exposed to proper training just like paid staff would be to ensure success. Videos, orientation packets, workshops, etc. are important to ensure that your volunteers are doing their best and you are getting the best outcomes.

The CFJ cannot guarantee position choice, but will try the best to accommodate requests according to the parade's needs. You may be reassigned positions before or during the parade if the needs arise to ensure that the parade operates as full efficiency.

Volunteers must check-in and check-out individually to ensure all positions are covered on parade day. Upon completion of volunteer responsibilities, all volunteers will receive a gift bag and invitation to the Parade Thank You Party. Gift bag pick-up will be at Volunteer Check-in location at 10:00 AM on parade day. (Check-in location is 10:00 AM on parade day.)

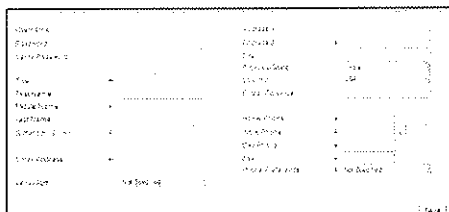
Please arrive on time to be checked by your location. Parade positions are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. If you are not assigned a position, you will not be able to work in that area on parade day.

Volunteer Program: Screening

- It is a good idea to have a way to screen volunteers just as with job applicants
- Volunteers should always fill out an application in order for you to know who is volunteering with you

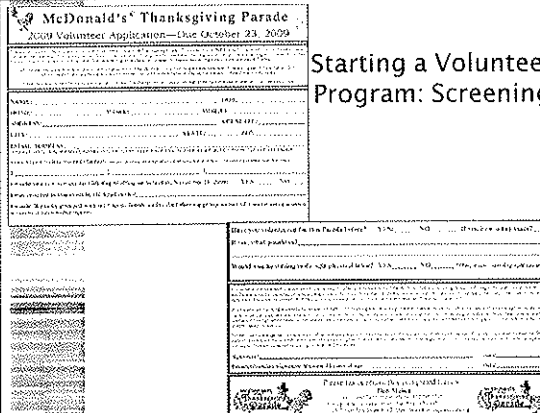
Starting a Volunteer Program: Screening

- Online Registration
 - www.chicagofestivals.org/volunteers.html



The screenshot shows a registration form with fields for Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Phone, Email, and a checkbox for 'I agree to the terms and conditions of the volunteer program.' There is a 'Submit' button at the bottom right.

Starting a Volunteer Program: Screening




The screenshot shows a 'McDonald's Thanksgiving Parade 2009 Volunteer Application' form. It includes fields for Name, Address, City, State, Zip, Phone, and Email. There is a section for 'I agree to the terms and conditions of the volunteer program' with a checkbox. The form is dated October 23, 2009.

Training Volunteers


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Training Volunteers

- Parade School
 - Each year volunteers attend parade school
 - One day session held at the Museum of Science and Industry
 - Mandatory
 - 30 minute "pep rally"
 - Volunteers meet their chairs, fellow volunteers, learn their roles
 - Time to ask questions!
 - Balloon handlers get practice with the balloons
 - Free admission to museum at conclusion of event




Training Volunteers: Materials




- Leadership Board members receive "Volunteer Leadership Board Manuals"
 - What to expect of volunteers/CFA staff
 - Important dates up to parade
 - What is expected of them as a leadership member
 - Goals
 - Important terminology to be used when referring to parade
 - Plan templates
- Volunteers receive handbooks
 - Specific to their committee
 - General parade info
 - Guidelines which are to be followed by all volunteers
 - Benefits of being a volunteer
 - Position description
 - Maps

Managing Volunteers: Tools



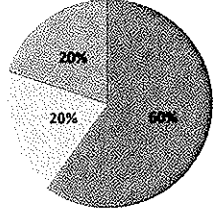
- Volunteer2.com
 - Used to check volunteer status, group listings
- Constant Contact
 - Blast e-mails to volunteers
- Group site
 - Used for all volunteers and each committee
 - E-mails, forums, blogs, important volunteer info, files, calendars, etc.

Retaining Volunteers




- Why retain volunteers?
 - Recruiting new volunteers is time-consuming and could be costly
 - The experience of your current volunteers is invaluable
 - You have invested time, skills and training in the development of volunteers
 - Retaining ensures that the continuity of the company culture is maintained
 - The loyalty of the volunteers is vital to the organization, especially during difficult or busy times

Volunteer Retention



Category	Percentage
Retained	60%
New	20%
Referred	20%

Retaining Volunteers



- Tips to retaining volunteers
 - Invest in recognizing volunteers
 - Provide training and professional development for volunteers
 - Center on enriching the volunteer experience
 - Empowerment
 - Enlist volunteers in recruiting other volunteers
 - Communicate!
 - Feedback from volunteers
 - Recognition at end of volunteer service
 - Keep experience fresh and FUN!
 - RESPECT, RESPECT, RESPECT

