



VOLUNTEER PROJECT LEADERS PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

How It Started

In 2004, a small pilot group of volunteer project leaders were recruited to work directly with nonprofit agencies to plan Day of Service volunteer projects. The volunteers worked with the organizations to recruit volunteers, solicit supplies and materials, coordinate the day's events, and more. Managed in this way, the efforts of the volunteers and agencies proved to be highly successful in completing valuable projects and involving large amounts of volunteers in teambuilding community work.

The Need

With Days of Service growing larger and more frequent, and with nonprofit organizations' day to day workloads continuing to increase, it has become harder for nonprofits to organize one-day volunteer events for a large group of volunteers. Large-scale volunteer projects often take many hours of planning and coordination, and organizations can struggle to find the necessary resources to carry out the project.

In efforts to assist agencies in organizing successful projects, United Way of Larimer County hosts the Volunteer Project Leader (VPL) program to connect individual volunteers with agencies to help with larger scale projects. VPL volunteers work with nonprofits to help plan the project, recruit volunteers, solicit supplies and materials, and coordinate the day's events. With the help of a VPL, large projects can run more smoothly and the agency is more likely to fulfill their need with the volunteers, supplies and talents available.

The Goals

- To build capacity of nonprofits to organize projects, especially for large groups
- Effectively match volunteer skills and supplies to the needs of nonprofits

DAYS OF SERVICE

United Way of Larimer County coordinates VPL projects twice a year, during National Volunteer Month in April and Make a Difference Day in October.

National Volunteer Month – April

National Volunteer Month in April is a nationwide annual celebration of volunteering to inspire, recognize, and encourage people to engage in their communities. National Volunteer Week began in 1974 when President Nixon signed an executive order establishing the week as an annual celebration of volunteering. Since then, every U.S. president has signed a proclamation promoting National Volunteer Week. United Way of Larimer County has extended National Volunteer Week to take place throughout the entire month of April to include numerous local events and volunteer activities, and to continue to promote volunteerism throughout the whole year.

Make a Difference Day – October

Make A Difference Day, an annual national day of service, is a week-long event in Larimer County because of its popularity and continued success. United Way organizes the event in Larimer County, and Make A Difference Day activities make up the largest week of volunteer service in northern Colorado. Organizations throughout Larimer County in need of volunteers host projects, and more than 2,000 volunteers come together to complete projects in Larimer County.