



Volunteers of America: Volunteer Services

Our definition of “volunteerism” and how we came to be named Volunteers of America.

When Volunteers of America was founded in 1896, volunteerism derived from a military context and to “volunteer” one’s time in service to others was a full-time commitment. Our founders, Maud and Ballington Booth, and other early members of our organization came to call themselves Volunteers of America because they volunteered their whole lives to help people in need. This included - not only volunteering their time - but also their hearts, their spirits and their professional prosperity.

Today, Volunteers of America helps almost 1.5 million people in over 400 communities in 46 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico through programs that are staffed by full-time, paid professionals who have adopted this same ideal of service as their full-time mission. However, that does not mean that we do not also depend on an army of modern-day “volunteers” who offer their free time to support our programs nationwide.

Number of volunteers working with Volunteers of America programs during FY2019:

55,575

Hours devoted by volunteers to Volunteers of America programs and activities in FY2019:

1,252,054

Our volunteers’ range in age from young children to seniors, and all ages in between*:

- Youth volunteers under the age of 18: **11,876** or approximately **21%**
- Adults age 18 to 54: **21,178** or approximately **38%**
- Age 55+: **5,518** or approximately **10%**

**17,003 or approximately 31 percent of volunteers did not identify themselves as being part of a specific age group*

Volunteers perform a wide range of work for Volunteers of America’s 30 local offices, including:

- Deliver Meals on Wheels or provide other direct client services
- Act as committee and advisory committee members or serve on local boards of directors
- Provide administrative support such as answering phones, performing clerical work, research, facility maintenance, food or clothing collection, etc.
- Recruit and manage other volunteers
- Provide professional services (legal, public relations, training, motivational speaking)