School and City volunteer programs create unique identities, separate offices

For many years, the City of St. Louis Park and St. Louis Park Public Schools partnered to facilitate volunteer recruitment, training and coordinating under one office, headed by Sarah Krzesowiak, who retired December 31 after more than 30 years of service.

Beginning January 1, 2013, Linda Asche, Community Education’s Adult Enrichment coordinator, assumed responsibilities for the school district portion of the volunteer program. Program assistant Kathleen Huyck continues to be on staff in the school district volunteer office.

Laura Ingebritson is the volunteer coordinator for the City of St. Louis Park.

*The data in this report reflects school district volunteers from the 2012-13 school year as well as volunteers for City events and activities from July 1-Dec. 31, 2012.*
Volunteers in Our City

Westwood Hills Nature Center Halloween Party

Over 150 students as well as adults from the community participated in the Westwood Hills Nature Center Halloween Party in October, 2012. Volunteers assist with set-up and post-party cleanup. On party nights, they run the games, serve refreshments and act as costume characters.

Westwood Hills Nature Center

Volunteers help the naturalists teach visiting classrooms and children’s groups, work on maintenance projects, take care of the captive animals, do library maintenance, and staff the front desk between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. five days a week. These wonderful volunteers donated a total of 612 hours between July and December of 2012.

Volunteer Hours
Front Desk coverage - 205
Animal Care - 212
Wood Round Prep - 4
Bee Keeper - 1
Maintenance - 115
Program Aide - 76
TOTAL - 613

Student Election Judges

48 St. Louis Park High School students were recruited to help at voting sites throughout the city in November. These students attended training sessions and assisted the regular election judges with setting-up voting booths, checking the voter ID lists, directing voters to the correct polling station if they are at the wrong place and all the other tasks that make our democratic election system work.

City Volunteer Office Contact Information

City of St. Louis Park Volunteer Office
Laura Ingebritson
Program Coordinator
lingebrigtson@stlouispark.org
952-928-2847

Laura Ingebritson was born and raised in Minnesota, and attended the University of Minnesota. She has 5 years experience in Human Resources at Target Corporation. She then took a short break to teach abroad in Beijing, China with her fiancé. She is excited to use her experience in recruitment and staffing to directly impact St. Louis Park’s community through volunteerism.
Volunteers in Our Schools

Classroom Volunteers
Volunteers help in the classroom by providing enrichment and/or reinforcement of the classroom curriculum. They assist with a variety of activities in the classroom, once or twice a week, as directed by the teachers.
Volunteers - 39
Classrooms - 35
Students - 875
Hours - 3,670

History Day Volunteers
In December, over 350 Sr. High School students prepared projects for History Day. 44 volunteers were recruited through the volunteer office to serve as judges, donating 132 hours of their time. Along with parents and staff, the volunteers spent time talking with the students about their projects and then evaluating and ranking students’ projects.

English Language Learners (ELL) Volunteers
Volunteers help students practice their English speaking and writing skills. They also assist students as they learn about American culture and customs.
Volunteers - 3
Students - 12
Hours - 163

Susan Lindgren Elementary International Baccalaureate (IB) Project
In April and May, community and staff volunteers met weekly with groups of students to help them with their project research, organization and presentations for their 5th grade IB project. The Volunteer Office assisted the project coordinator with volunteer recruitment.

Media Center Inventory
Fifteen volunteers donated 46 hours to help the High School and Middle School Media Center staff conduct inventories. Volunteers scanned and recorded over 30,000 items.

Media Center Volunteers
Volunteers - 11
Hours - 461

“The work of the volunteers allows us to concentrate on student and staff needs. This is greatly appreciated.”

Nikki Toal, Media Specialist
Susan Lindgren Elementary
Volunteers in Our Schools

**Picture Person/Art Appreciation**

Trained volunteers teach six art appreciation lessons a year to children in grades K-6. “Cultural Visions” was the focus of this year’s curriculum. (At PSI, the amity scholars teach the lessons.)

Volunteers - 39  
Classrooms - 70  
Students - 1,750  
Presentations - 420  
Hours - 840

**Math Program Volunteers**

Volunteers work with students grades 2-12 in their classrooms or as tutors in the high school math lab.

Volunteers - 23  
Students - 418  
Hours - 78

“My volunteer is one of a kind – you couldn’t find anyone like him if you tried. He has a generous heart, is kind and has a lot of patience whether working with students in small groups or one-on-one.”

Cindy Blumer, 5th grade teacher  
Susan Lindgren Elementary

**Read 180**

Volunteers assist with the Read 180 Program, a specialized program for students who read below grade level. Volunteers provide needed one on one attention and feedback for students.

Volunteers - 44  
Classrooms - 17  
Students - 255  
Hours - 2,088

“Without our wonderful volunteers, we couldn’t provide the 1:1 reading support necessary to help our struggling readers. They brighten our students’ day!”

Midi Hansen  
Read 180 teacher  
Aquila Elementary

“Community volunteers provide my Read 180 students with valuable one-on-one reading time. I appreciate their time and involvement in my classroom.”

Robyn Poythress  
Read 180 teacher  
SLP Middle School
Cargill Volunteers

This spring, Cargill partnered with our district to support education and the environment. Over 80 volunteers worked on a number of projects including the Middle School Days of Service, Track & Field Day at Peter Hobart, playground clean up at Lenox and classroom projects on the environment at Peter Hobart and Aquila.

Classroom Speakers

Volunteers enriched the classroom curriculum by sharing their hobbies, careers or special interests with students. Many of the talks are given by city staff, including the Fire, Police, Forestry and Water Departments.

Speakers - 25
Presentations - 37
Hours - 24

“The Cargill volunteers were amazing. They were knowledgeable, patient, enthusiastic, involved. Those are just a few of the adjectives, plus they had a sense of humor. We got things done in one hour that would have normally have taken me at least 4 + hours.”

Kathleen Kirlin
4th grade teacher
Aquila Elementary

Breck School Student Volunteers and Pi Beta Phi Collegians from the University of Minnesota

20 students from Breck School volunteered one hour a week for 14 weeks in one of our elementary school classrooms. In addition, 19 students from the Pi Beta Phi sorority at the U of M read with the Kids Place students at Aquila elementary school twice a week for four weeks in March and April. Together, these students donated over 400 hours of their time.

“I am so grateful for the level of volunteerism in our classroom. These individuals make personal connections with students and they afford the kids the luxury of extra individual academic attention. Our students light up each week when our volunteers walk through the door.”

Suzanne Knauf
2nd grade teacher
Peter Hobart Elementary

Band/Orchestra Volunteers

Community volunteers bring their instruments and join the band class for regular practice.

Volunteers – 4
Students – 146
Hours - 173

Clerical Volunteers

Four generous volunteers spent 39 hours on clerical projects in addition to their other assignments. They copied and collated lesson plans for Gifted & Talented and helped teachers out with various jobs.
Volunteers are placed with the high school business program to serve as judges at the West Metro DECA Competition. Volunteer DECA judges role-play business scenarios with high school students who have prepared business plans and practiced for interviews. This year, 31 volunteers contributed 136 hours.

St. Louis Park High School Community Service Class

Students in the Community Service classes at the High School, under the direction of their teacher, Sophia Ross, volunteer in the elementary classrooms 2-4 times a week.

Literacy 1st

Volunteers are trained to work with beginning readers. They spend 1-1 ½ hours a week in a first or second grade classroom helping during literacy time.

Volunteers - 37
Classrooms - 28
Students - 700
Hours - 1,781

BRAVO

Music Appreciation

Classical music is the focus of the BRAVO! Program for grades 1-3. It is structured much like the art appreciation program. A music background is a requirement for BRAVO! volunteers. They are trained and scheduled into assigned classrooms where they teach six lessons a year on classical music and composers.

Volunteers - 4
Classrooms - 7
Students - 175
Presentations - 49
Hours - 53