

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 11, 2011

CONTACT: Jennifer Stein
Public Relations Office
623-930-2958

VOLUNTEERS DONATE THEIR TIME, MAKE GLENDALE A BETTER COMMUNITY

GLENDALE, Ariz. – Volunteer. You'll feel better. Just ask the more than 3,500 people who volunteer their time and talents to make Glendale a better community.

While they donate their time for free, they also get something in return – the satisfaction of knowing they make a difference. It's that difference that gets celebrated each April during National Volunteer Month. And, in Glendale, there's a lot to celebrate.

Last year, volunteers provided 120,744 hours of service, which, if paid, would be valued at \$2.5 million. And that tradition continues in more than 20 departments across the city this year.

“Our libraries have always been dependent on the help we receive from volunteers. We would not be able to function without them,” said Michelle Schrade, volunteer coordinator for Glendale Public Libraries.

Volunteers with the city fall into one of two categories: the Glendale STAR Program for ongoing volunteer assignments, and the Glendale Community Volunteer Program that's geared toward groups doing specific short-term projects. The second category was created as a one-year pilot in 1998. It became a Best of the West award winner and continues today.

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City of Glendale
5850 W. Glendale Ave.
Glendale, AZ 85301
(623) 930-2960
www.glendaleaz.com

VOLUNTEERS

ADD 1-1-1-1-1-1

Across the city, there are volunteer opportunities that tap into a variety of skills such as tutoring, causes such as feeding the hungry, and interest areas such as gardening.

Those with a green thumb volunteer with the city's Environmental Resources department helping with the city's four-acre Xeriscape Demonstration Garden located at Glendale Main Library. Joanne Toms, who oversees these volunteers, said, "It makes me feel good that these folks are enjoying their experience and want to repeat it by volunteering multiple times."

Those with business skills are helping out in computer and job-related programs at the city's three libraries. In fact, Schrade says the Business Forum program is completely volunteer-run. Facilitated by volunteer Joan Howard with help from volunteer Donna Tucker, the Business Forum is a monthly networking opportunity that also features speakers on a variety of business topics. Volunteers also run computer labs and workshops for job-seekers and provide one-on-one computer assistance for library patrons. "This frees our reference librarians to answer patron questions," said Schrade.

Another city department utilizing volunteers is Neighborhood Services. It's newest program, Adopt-a-Neighborhood, assigns volunteers from faith-based organizations to work on meeting the needs in specific neighborhoods that they "adopt." This leads to projects like yard clean-ups and hosting barbeques so neighbors meet one another. So far four neighborhoods have been adopted.

Other volunteers like to look beyond city boundaries and reach out as tourism hosts for the city. These volunteers work with the Glendale Visitors Center. In the 10 years the center has been open, volunteers have assisted more than 125,000 visitors from all 50 states and 46 countries. The number one question these volunteers field is "Where is a great place to eat?"

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VOLUNTEERS

ADD 1-1-1-1-1

Keeping people fed is also the mission of volunteers at the Glendale Adult Center who deliver Meals-on-Wheels. All volunteers across the city are the focus at a breakfast in Sahuaro Ranch Park on Friday, April 15. It is the 16th annual recognition event held for volunteers in Glendale.

To learn more about Glendale volunteer opportunities, call 623-930-2282 or visit www.glendaleaz.com/volunteer.

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Photo opportunity: Glendale's 16th Annual Volunteer Recognition Event will be held from 8 to 9:30 a.m. on Friday, April 15, at Sahuaro Ranch Park Ramadas, 9802 N. 59th Ave.

Submitted photos: The photos can be viewed in the following flickr slideshow.
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/glendalewebmaster/sets/72157626456808790/show/>

To download a photo:

1. Click on the photo's name in the upper right corner of the photo (for example: click the title "Volunteer 1")
2. Once the photo is open in the flickr window, select "actions" from the upper left corner, just under the flickr logo.
3. Select "view all sizes"
4. From this window, select the size you need then click "download the XXXX size of this photo" on the download link.

Flickr photo captions:

Photo 1: Glendale's volunteers even include the four-legged kind. Canines Huey and Wizardo work in the library's "Paws to Read" program.

Photo 2: Volunteers stuff gift bags for the city's Christmas in July event. Pictured left to right are Bobbie Garland; Vickie Loya; employee Jessica Alexander; and Keshia Corpuz

Photo 3: Volunteers pitch in to get homes painted for individuals who can't do it themselves.

Photo 4: Glendale relies on volunteers to help with their book sales that raise funds for its libraries.

Photo 5: "Serve Day" brings out volunteers in force on one-day projects like helping organize library shelves.

Photo 6: Sam McAllen volunteered his time to help paint the home of a Glendale resident in need.

Photo 7: Volunteers gleaned fruit at Sahuaro Ranch Park on Martin Luther King Day, donating 42,000 pounds to the St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance.