

Case Study: Second Harvest Inland Northwest



Courtesy of Second Harvest Inland Northwest

Online service efficiently streamlines the way Second Harvest Inland coordinates volunteers, saving valuable time and effort.

VolunteerHub has, quite literally, changed Julie Nesbitt's life—at least at work, that is. Julie is the Volunteer Program Manager for Second Harvest Inland Northwest. Here's how she describes part of her responsibilities before she started using the online scheduling system: "I was using an Excel spreadsheet and manually entering names for each shift. For our Tom's Turkey Drive, this equated to nearly 400 volunteers for an event that occurs over a two day period."

February 2008

Julie's organization is based out of Spokane, Washington. The group's mission is fighting hunger and feeding hope. "Second Harvest brings community resources together to feed people in need through empowerment, education and partnerships," Julie elaborates. Second Harvest does this on a massive scale. Through Tom's Turkey Drive alone, the organization raised more than 8,000 Thanksgiving meals for families throughout the Spokane area.

SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

VolunteerHub

Dramatically reduces the amount of administrative work involved in scheduling volunteers.

Provides instant online access 24/7 for both administrators and volunteers.

Automatically e-mails registration verifications, reminders, and "thank you" notes.

Increases registration by enabling volunteers to sign up quickly and easily.

Improves program coordination by monitoring and restricting the number of volunteers expected.

Manages groups who supply volunteers and records which groups a given volunteer belongs to.

Provides a hosted solution with servers monitored by support staff in a secure facility 24/7. There is nothing to install or maintain.

Lets volunteers update their own contact information, keeping the database current and up-to-date.

Assists with record-keeping by tracking and reporting volunteer hours.

The yearly statistics are equally impressive. "Based on 2006 statistics," Julie reports, "197,000 people throughout the Inland Northwest are served by Second Harvest's network annually."

Organizing large amounts of volunteers

With such a large number of people receiving its services, Second Harvest Inland Northwest naturally relies on a large pool of volunteers. In fact, Nesbitt

continued ►►

Volunteer Perspective: Second Harvest Inland Northwest

Sarah McDaniel is the vice-president of Washington State University's chapter of Rho Chi, a national pharmacy honor society. This year Sarah's group chose Second Harvest Inland Northwest as the focus of its service project. "I found VolunteerHub to be very helpful in arranging for my organization to volunteer at Second Harvest," comments Sarah. "Between work and school, my schedule is busy and sporadic, and I find it difficult to make phone calls during business hours. What I liked most about VolunteerHub was that it enabled me to register the students in my club and sign us up for multiple volunteer activities at night from my home computer."

On the opposite side of the Spokane River, Katie Infantine is also taking advantage of VolunteerHub's user-friendly features. Currently president of the Service Club at Gonzaga University, Katie coordinates volunteer opportunities for her organization. "I really liked that we could sign up as a group . . . so that we did not have to have each club member sign themselves in individually," explains Katie. "VolunteerHub really helped me be able to organize my club event because it was all laid out for me. It had all the times, dates, description, and maps right there. It was very easy to use."

estimates that the organization utilizes approximately 2200 volunteers annually. With statistics like these -- both in sheer numbers of population served and the amount of individuals who help keep the program going -- Second Harvest needs to be as efficient as possible. So, in an effort to streamline volunteer coordination, Julie's supervisor started researching online volunteer management data systems.

Cost and Features

Out of those researched, VolunteerHub was chosen, mainly for its low cost and wide variety of features. "We are able to use the e-mail addresses collected through VolunteerHub to send our Second Harvest e-mail blasts, as well as other volunteer and organization



Courtesy of Second Harvest Inland Northwest

Out of those researched, VolunteerHub was chosen for its low cost and wide variety of features.

solicitations," Julie comments. "In addition, the program has saved me countless hours in volunteer recruitment and retention." She has also been impressed with VolunteerHub's reporting features, which help her keep track of volunteer registration for each of her posted events.

Great for small and large events

Although a relatively new user, Nesbitt is already using VolunteerHub to schedule volunteers for numerous food drives, community nights, and will use it for Second Harvest's annual major fund raiser, "Taking a Bite out of Hunger." Julie already has 41 events scheduled on VolunteerHub for 2008 as of the time of this publication. Now, with just a quick glance, she can see that one volunteer opportunity in January has already reached its maximum limit of volunteers and can monitor the number of sign-ups for the other events. At the same

time, prospective volunteers can, at their leisure, check out the Second Harvest activities for the year and sign up for the ones that will fit best into their schedules.

How would your organization benefit from VolunteerHub? Request a free trial to check out all of its features: online volunteer sign-up, volunteer time tracking, automatic confirmation, cancellation, and thank-you e-mails, automatic event rosters, and more. ■

Want to learn more?

Get details at www.volunteerhub.com or call (877) 482-3340. Pricing starts at \$49.95/month and scales with the number of active users registered with your VolunteerHub website. A free trial is available.



VolunteerHub is a product of Carr Engineering, Inc., developers of web-based solutions for automating and streamlining organizational workflow. Since 2003, over 200 customers worldwide have used Carr Engineering's products to manage their front-line operations.

Carr Engineering, Inc.
5433 Haverhill Dr., Dublin, Ohio 43017
E-mail: info@volunteerhub.com