

## Youth Led Projects

Why not encourage your students to take on youth led initiatives either within their school community or wider local community? Volunteer Now have partnered this year with Action on Hearing Loss and will be encouraging young people within schools to become local trainers on their hearing awareness training programme so that they can spread the important messages within their school and peer groups.

## Overseas Volunteering

Did you know that your students can get MV recognition for the volunteering they undertake whilst overseas? Volunteer Now have produced a publication called 'Steps Around the World' which provides guidance for young people thinking about volunteering overseas! We have also teamed up with Habitat for Humanity and promoted their programmes to schools. St Joseph's Boys School in L'Derry took on the challenge and a team went to Romania in July for a very successful trip.

## Volunteer Now Campaigns

Throughout the year Volunteer Now initiates and supports campaigns which encourage and promote volunteering. Many schools have taken part in initiatives such as Christmas Connections, Student Volunteering Week and Volunteers' Week itself. Why not encourage your young people to become volunteers at the World Police and Fire Games next summer?

## Skills Development

Volunteer Now believes that volunteering for young people is an excellent way to enhance the services provided by their volunteer involving organisation (school, voluntary or community organisations) but it also provides them with valuable life skills that they can take wherever they go. Earlier in 2012 Volunteer Now undertook a skills analysis of 200 Hour Awardees and here is a snapshot of the findings:

- 93% of the young people stated that volunteering increased their self confidence
- 71% stated that volunteering had increased their ability to achieve paid employment
- 70% stated that it had increased their ability to get into their chosen university course



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You won't believe what you can do!



If you would like to find out more please contact the youth team on **028 9023 2020** or [youth@volunteernow.co.uk](mailto:youth@volunteernow.co.uk)  
Further information is also available on the youth pages of our website:  
[www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk)

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## Supporting Volunteering within Schools



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## What is the Millennium Volunteers (MV) Programme?

MV is a programme funded by the Youth Council for NI and supported by the Department of Education that provides young people between the ages of 14 and 25 years with recognition for their sustained commitment to volunteering. Young people receive certificates for 50, 100 and 200 hours of volunteering and this can occur within school (e.g. peer mentoring, prefect duties, supporting school events, sports coaching etc.) or within a community/voluntary setting. The programme is great for providing young people with experience for CVs, UCAS personal statements and interviews. They also develop their 'soft' skills, give something back to their school, community or voluntary organisations and it's great fun!

Within schools young people receive a Schools Award which is equivalent to the 50 hour certificate as we recognise that school work is a priority and it is difficult for young people to achieve exactly 50 hours of volunteering within the academic year. Many however do go on and achieve their 100 and 200 Hour Awards!

### Volunteer Now's Role

Volunteer Now's aim is to encourage your students to volunteer, either within school or within the wider community/voluntary sector. We are happy to talk to your students, provide information on possible opportunities and to support the teachers who implement the programme.

Volunteer Now provides all the resources free of charge to the school. All the young people receive a record book so that they can record their volunteering and have it verified by their support teacher. Volunteer Now do not monitor or assess these books – they belong to the young person for their own volunteering record. We prepare the certificates and send them to the school when requested. The Schools Award is signed by the School Principal, the 100 Hour certificate is signed by the Chief Executive of Volunteer Now and the 200 Hour Award by the Minister of Education.

## Complementing the Curriculum

Volunteer Now believes that volunteering through the MV programme complements all courses undertaken within the school curriculum. Employers and universities are constantly seeking young people with experience, those with an ability to work in teams, those with the confidence to speak in public etc. We hear time and time again of how volunteering has helped young people achieve their academic and career goals irrespective of the discipline. Volunteer Now can also support schools who undertake the volunteering aspect within the COPE (Certificate of Personal Effectiveness) qualification and complements other initiatives such as the Duke of Edinburgh and Pope John Paul II Awards. Hours gained for these can be transferred across to the MV awards.

## Endorsements from Employers

### Belfast Media Group:

'The Belfast Media Group advocates through its publications, events and moreover as employers the need to serve our local communities with respect. As part of our supporting communities we therefore acknowledge the need for the role of the volunteer in all aspects of employment. Volunteering can open up many doors for not only our youth but for all age groups whilst growing experience, nurturing skills, encouraging working relationships with our peers and moreover, experiencing the skills involved in the sharing of work-based knowledge and involvement in communities of practice. Millennium Volunteers are experts in manipulating the potential that volunteering can bring to a company thus improving the quality of the employees in the workplace while fulfilling the needs of the individual who gives his or her time as a volunteer'.



### Lear Training & Perform-Analysis

'When recruiting new staff we place significant value on volunteering. As an employer it shows initiative, self-motivation and commitment, all the personal qualities we can't give you. One of the easiest things for employers is to provide you with training to gain qualifications and specific skills to do the job but we can't give you those very important personal skills that show you don't have to be asked to do something to get motivated'.

### University of Ulster

'The University of Ulster recognises that success in higher education depends upon many factors – not just the knowledge achieved through traditional academic qualifications, but also the personal skills and independent learning styles which are often derived from elsewhere. Skills and aptitudes gained from involvement and experience in the broader learning environment often prove vital in enabling students to successfully complete the transition into higher education. Millennium Volunteers incorporates many of these important elements and has the potential to empower students to put their learning, through volunteering, to best use in the real world of higher education. The University of Ulster welcomes the contribution volunteering makes in complementing and enhancing the learning experience of its undergraduate students'.



## Quotes from Our Young People

*I thought volunteering was more work on top of a packed timetable. I was so wrong. It was the best part of my week.*

*I enjoy working with others so volunteering seemed a natural thing to do.*

*We even got a certificate for volunteering which will let employers see that I am keen.*

*I would encourage others to volunteer as it is a fabulous experience getting to know other people with the same passions as you. It's really rewarding and the benefits from volunteering are immense! The time, energy and effort you put into the people you are working with is so important to them and it is a pleasure to do.*

## Quotes from Our Schools

Nearly 60 schools have registered as a Millennium Volunteers Delivery Partner and many more have availed of our talks, opportunity sheets and information. Here is what some of them say:

*'AEP is a fresh start for young people for whom mainstream education is no longer appropriate, this is a Holistic and Individual approach to beneficial learning for each young person. Partnerships are emphasized as essential to successful induction and progress through AEP. We feel that working in partnership with MV provides our young people with the chance to learn new skills in different working environments in preparation for the world of work as well as develop existing skills such as building relationships and self confidence. Through this experience our young people appreciate the acknowledgement of their individual involvement through the presentation of certificates. We have appreciated the ongoing support from MV and look forward to an excellent working partnership in the future.'* **SEELB AEP**

*'We found the Millennium Volunteer Award very worthwhile. Our volunteers found the volunteering experience very fulfilling and enjoyable. They made many new friends as well as gaining excellent life experiences.'* **St Catherine's College, Armagh**

*'Pupils at Hunter House are encouraged to be active citizens and take part in community-based work as part of both the taught and extended curriculum. The MV programme enables the School to provide the pupils with recognition of their volunteering commitment thereby complimenting their studies and enhancing career choices.'* **Hunter House College, Lisburn**

A full list of our School Partners can be found on the youth pages of our website:

[www.volunteernow.co.uk](http://www.volunteernow.co.uk)