

## CAVA CONTRIBUTES TO A VOLUNTEER-CENTRIC COMMUNITY

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PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CAVA

Booker T. Washington, noted African-American educator, author, orator, and advisor to U. S. Presidents, once said “If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.”

The Cincinnati Association of Volunteer Administrators (CAVA), whose vision is to be the premier volunteer administration resource in the Tri-state region, agrees and has for nearly thirty years been doing just that in Greater Cincinnati!

“Connecting people to opportunities that expand their world view and lift people up in the process’ shared Meghan Kaskoun, member of CAVA for 18 years and CVA credentialed, “is vital to an engaged and vibrant community.”

CAVA, whose current membership of over 80 professionals, emphasizes how members can best attract and effectively engage volunteers to maximize the impact of their organization’s mission. With a focus on professional development, support, networking, and promoting communication and cooperation among managers of volunteer programs and by supporting volunteerism in the community, CAVA is on a mission to “equip, enrich, and empower volunteer administrators and volunteers to create positive impacts on the communities in which we live, work and play”.

By designing and coordinating strategies to connect volunteers with



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(Photo | Maria Dehne for CAVA)

opportunities to put an organization’s mission in action, CAVA contributes towards a volunteer-centric community. Without a doubt, CAVA is among those in Greater Cincinnati with a pivotal role in creating an atmosphere of volunteerism, a strong characteristic of Cincinnati’s culture.

According to Volunteering and Civic Engagement trends and highlights in Cincinnati (OH) as reported by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), an independent federal agency, in 2013:

- 26.2% of residents volunteer, rank-

ing Cincinnati 31st among the 51 largest MSAs (Columbus, OH ranked 18<sup>th</sup> and Cleveland, OH ranked 35<sup>th</sup>);

- 424,700 volunteers in Cincinnati spent 42.3 million hours in service;
- 33.3 volunteer hours spent per resident; and
- \$953.3 million value of service contributed;

“Cincinnati has an amazing history of volunteerism,” continued Kaskoun, who is also the Cincinnati Arts Association – Aronoff Center, Volunteer

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***CAVA members attend monthly skill building training to develop, practice, and enhance knowledge of Volunteer Management.***

(Photo | Maria Dehne for CAVA)

Manager of 800 volunteers including ushers, Information Desk and Guest Services, and Gallery Ambassadors, “and CAVA is an integral, if not well known, piece of that experience by creating managers who can create meaningful and fulfilling opportunities in which the community can participate.”

Throughout their careers, CAVA, a membership-based organization of Leaders in Volunteer Management, has served hundreds of professionals across nonprofit and for-profit agencies, corporations, and other organizations with professional development and educational opportunities to create and implement volunteering experiences to engage thousands of volunteers across Greater Cincinnati. CAVA members include representation from the

Cincinnati Museum Center, Freestore Foodbank, Cincinnati Arts Association, Great Parks of Hamilton County, and Habitat for Humanity.

“Volunteers have so much unique time, talent, and treasure to share” says Maria Dehne, CAVA Social Media Chair and Adult Volunteer Coordinator for the Museum of Natural History & Science at the Cincinnati Museum Center, “and, as administrators of volunteers, we have the capacity to enhance relationships, unify volunteers, and help create a link to our communities.” Dehne has been involved with CAVA since 2012.

To enable members to effectively promote volunteerism in their organizations, CAVA offerings include an introduction to Volunteer Management for those new to the field or want a basic refresher in Volunteer Manage-

ment; monthly skill building to develop, practice, and enhance knowledge of Volunteer Management and related skills; and a local Management of Volunteer Programs (MVP) certification in association with the United Way of Greater Cincinnati.

Offering scholarships to members, CAVA also encourages attendance to national and state Conferences and professional accreditation - Certification in Volunteer Administration (CVA).

CAVA’s yearly awards program celebrates excellence and elevates the field and awareness of the need for professional management of volunteer involvement and recognizes those organizations and individuals who provide outstanding volunteer service.

“My knowledge and leadership skills have been strengthened as I work closely with others in my field.” shares Stephanie Togneri, President of the CAVA Board, member of CAVA for over 5 years, and Freestore Foodbank, Director of Volunteer Engagement directing over 8,000 volunteers annually. “... I have become a better volunteer administrator and the organizations that I have served has benefited greatly.”

Click [here](#) to learn more about CAVA including how to join, events, and much more.

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