



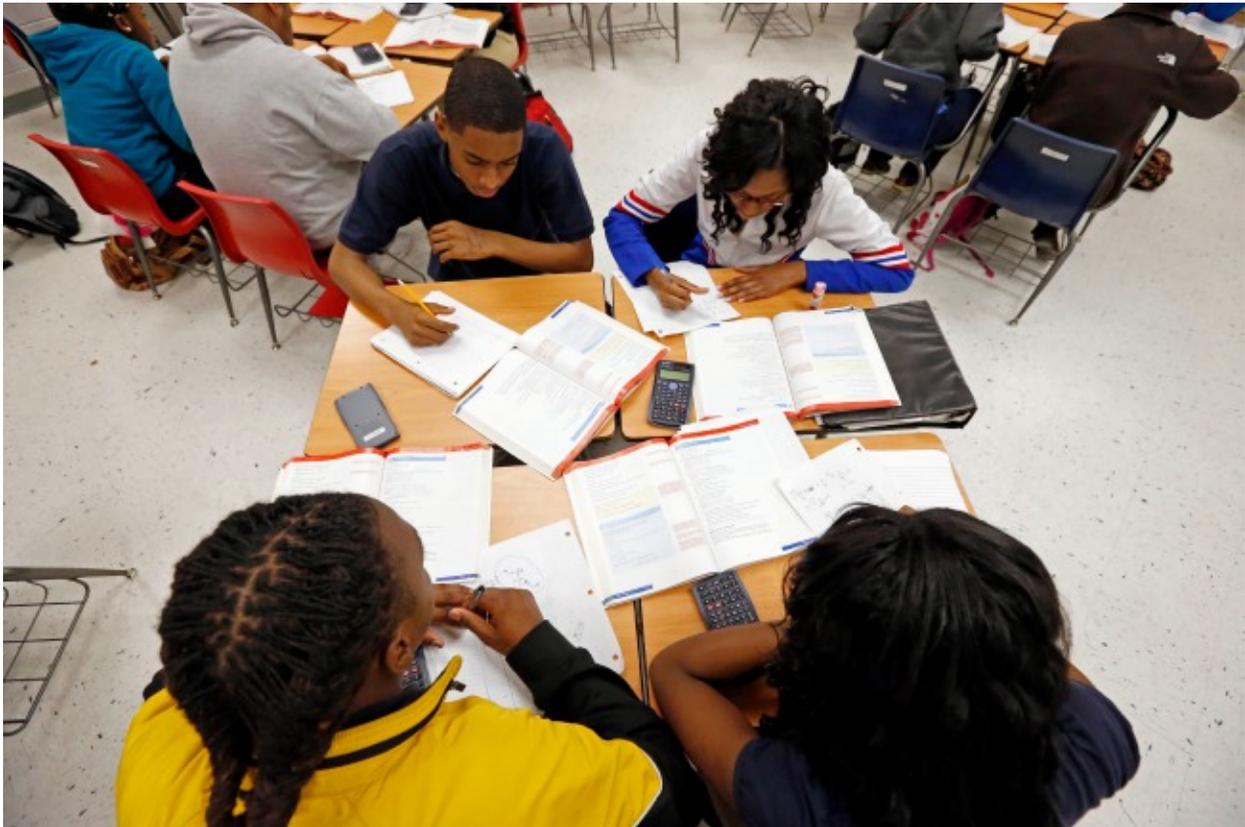
Site Coordinator Volunteer Resource Guide

To assist with volunteer recruitment, training and support



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Reaching out to community groups and members for your DC College Application Week efforts is an effective way to create a sustainable college-going culture at your school. Additionally, recruiting volunteers to help out or donate food and supplies will help ensure a successful event. We encourage you to have at least **3-4 volunteers for every 20-25 students** when completing applications. Volunteers can greet and sign-in students, assist students with the completion of online college applications, or distribute information about financial aid opportunities. The following guide provides templates and recommended tips for recruiting, training and thanking your volunteers.

Recruiting Volunteers

1. Identify contacts in your community that may be interested in helping make your College Application Week event a success by donating time and/or resources. Some examples may include:
 - School Alumni
 - Students who have already completed their application/s (i.e., college application ambassadors)
 - Student families, PTA (Parent Teacher Association)
 - Volunteer, senior, or church groups
 - Community College and University representatives, faculty, admissions office and financial aid
 - Business, community, and political leaders
 - Youth programs (i.e., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, United Way)
2. Send potential volunteer groups a DC College Application Week Volunteer Recruitment Letter (see page 5).
3. When promoting your DC College Application Week event, always mention the need for volunteers in your communication.
4. Reach out to student leaders in your school. For example, students who have already completed their application/s could help other students during the event and be called the “college application ambassadors.”
5. Create a system for collecting volunteer information. Depending on your school district’s policy, you may need to conduct a background check.
6. **We recommend having at least one site coordinator and three volunteers at all times when working with a group of 20-25.**

Information for Volunteers

1. Identify specific responsibilities and duties for your volunteers. For example, you may create shifts for greeting, sign-in, computer lab, other activities, etc. Create a short explanation of each responsibility for volunteers to follow throughout the day.
2. Finalize a volunteer list and, as a reminder, send information using the following template notifying volunteers of event details.
3. Provide name tags for volunteers on the day of the event.
4. Conduct a quick orientation, perhaps the morning of the event, to familiarize volunteers on the details of your event. Provide volunteers with the Volunteer Information and Potential Tasks documents on pages 6 and 7.
5. Provide water and snacks for volunteers, especially if they will be volunteering for more than two hours.

Follow-Up

1. Send a thank you letter to all volunteers for their dedication to DC College Application Week!
2. Send volunteer survey (survey will be provided by your CAW, District Coordinator)).

Steps for Volunteers

The following are potential steps a volunteer should take prior to College Application Week and potential tasks a volunteer may be asked to complete during College Application Week. Site Coordinators should share these recommended steps with their volunteers. Some volunteers may not think to confirm certain details like if the school has a volunteer/visitor policy. See page 7 for a more detailed listing of potential tasks that should be shared with all volunteers.

Steps to Take Before College Application Week

- Watch the Volunteer Training Webinar available at <http://osse.dc.gov/service/dc-college-application-week>
- Check in with Site Coordinator
 - ✓ Confirm any volunteer/visitor policies (may require background checks)
 - ✓ Confirm day/time to arrive
 - ✓ Receive anticipated volunteer assignment(s)

Steps and Potential Tasks During College Application Week

- Guide students through the application process
- Help students complete and submit college paper applications and fee waiver forms
- Sign-in/Sign-out process: Ask where they intend to apply, applications completed, etc.
 - ✓ Track data
- Provide directions to the appropriate room
- Pass out “Now What?” and/or financial aid information and tracking where students applied
- Answer general questions about the application process
- Monitor printers to ensure they remain in order and replenish as needed
- Share personal experience
- Congratulate students on applying

Volunteer Recruitment Letter/Email

SCHOOL LOGO

SCHOOL ADDRESS

September 2014

Dear [NAME OF ORGANIZATION],

[NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL or PROGRAM] is pleased to announce its participation in DC's College Application Week. DC College Application Week will take place November 3 through November 7, 2014. The goal of DC College Application Week is to provide every graduating high school senior the opportunity to apply to college with a particular focus on helping first-generation college going students, low-income students, and students who may not otherwise apply to college.

DC College Application Week can open the door for students by encouraging them to take a significant step toward college in their senior year. What began in 2005 as a single day at one high school in North Carolina has evolved into 50 state campaigns to help students. This year, DC is expanding last year's initiative in 13 high schools to include nearly 33 schools. A critical component of DC College Application Week is the one-on-one support provided by volunteers who help students fill out applications at school. Volunteers may include high school staff, registrars and admissions officers from nearby postsecondary institutions, and representatives from the community.

We will be hosting our event on [DATE(S) AND TIME] and would welcome representatives from [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] to visit our school during this exciting and important time. Volunteers can greet and sign-in students, assist students with the completion of online college applications, or distribute information about financial aid opportunities. Our students would really appreciate your help and support as they take a big step toward going to college.

Stay up-to-date with a pre-recorded webinar that serves as a training to prepare volunteers for their duties. You may also wish to watch the Site Coordinator Training Webinar to familiarize yourself with the larger College Application Week initiative in DC.

If you or any of your colleagues at [NAME OF ORGANIZATION] are interested in working with [NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL] in any capacity **please contact me at** [SITE COORDINATOR INFO].

Thank you!

Volunteer resources and webinar information are available at <http://osse.dc.gov/service/dc-college-application-week>

[SITE COORDINATOR NAME]
[YOUR TITLE]
[CONTACT INFO]

Volunteer Information for DC College Application Week

Welcome to DC College Application Week at [NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL or Program]! We appreciate your hard work and dedication to making college a reality for our students. Use this reference guide to familiarize yourself with more information about DC College Application Week.

DC College Application Week is an event supported by the Office of the State Superintendent and a districtwide steering committee and [NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL or PROGRAM]

The goal of DC College Application Week is to provide **every graduating high school senior** the **opportunity to apply** to college, with a particular focus on helping first-generation college going students, low-income students, and students who may not otherwise apply to college.

Students are encouraged to **research different college and universities** in order to find the best fit for them **prior** to College Application Week.

Host sites are to provide a designated space and time **during the school day** for completing applications.

Students may have questions about **application fees and waivers**. Note that some colleges and universities in DC do not have an application fee.

Some students may be **eligible for an application fee waiver** from their DCCAP Counselor based on their family income status. If students have questions about eligibility, please refer them to their school counselor.

For colleges that require an application fee, **students can use credit or debit cards online** or print their online application(s) and mail with a check to the college(s).

In order to be **eligible for financial student aid**, college applicants must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible after January 1 of their senior year. The earlier students and parents/guardians complete and submit this form, the better!

DCTAG provides up to \$10,000 per year for college tuition for DC Residents. Funds are limited. Students must apply early beginning February 1, 2015.

Remember you are there to assist students; don't recruit to a specific campus.

Prior to arriving – confirm day/time you are expected with the site coordinator, confirm any visitor guidelines for the high school.

Potential Volunteer Tasks

When assigning tasks, consider the expertise and comfort level of the volunteer with various roles. The power of the volunteer comes from students seeing that members of the broader community see education as an important goal.

- Post (possibly create) directional signs in the school for the event. Good signage is key to reminding students of the event and getting them to the right place.
- Greet students as they arrive. Make sure they use the sign-in sheet.
- Help students log on to/access the specific college/university website and begin an application. If the school does not have enough computers or stable online service, the site coordinator should be prepared with paper applications. As a volunteer, you can hand out the correct application.
- Guide students through the college application process and help answer any questions students may have, regardless of where the student wishes to apply.
- Monitor printers to ensure that any applications that need to be printed remain in order and replenish the paper supply as needed.
- Share personal college experiences with students.
- Instruct each student to complete an evaluation of their DC College Application Week experience (if applicable, not all sites may choose to use the student evaluation form). The evaluation may be an online evaluation or a paper evaluation.
- Give an “I Applied!” sticker and a “Now What?” handout to each student after they complete an application.
 - Some sites may have students request their FAFSA PIN immediately after completing their applications.
- Remind students to use the sign-out sheet before leaving. Site coordinators need to track where students applied, fee waivers used, if it was their first application and if they will be a first-generation college student.
- Congratulate each student on applying to college and encourage them to complete their admission file by sending in their high school transcript, test scores, or any other documentation that the college may require.
- Remind students to share their experience with others and to remember to attend the Financial Aid Day (FAFSA Day, College Goal Saturday/Sunday, etc.) that will be held in your community. Handouts may be available regarding the upcoming Financial Aid events.
- Wear a college t-shirt or sweatshirt.

Volunteer Training – Example Agenda

Training volunteers for DC College Application Week is not a complex task. You want to provide volunteers with enough information to be useful to you and the students but not so much as to overwhelm them. In addition to the very real assistance they can provide to ensure that College Application Week is successful, they also are likely to become college access advocates in the community.

OSSE and the CAW Steering Committee will provide pre-recorded webinar training for volunteers. It will cover the basic needs and expectations for volunteers across the state. It will NOT cover the individual site needs for each host high school. Host sites are not required to provide a volunteer training. It is up to you based on who you have selected as volunteers and if they feel comfortable with the tasks you are expecting them to complete. You can provide it as a short face-to-face gathering either a week before the event or the day of the event. If your school requires a background check for non-school personnel to work with students on your campus, then be sure to handle this requirement prior to the training.

- I. Welcome and Thank You!
 - Have all volunteers sign in and provide you with name, phone number(s), and address (you will need the address later when you send a follow-up thank you note)

- II. Purpose of DC College Application Week
 - To encourage and assist all students to apply to college, especially those who are from low-income and first generation college families, because applying to college in the fall of their senior year will increase their options as they decide what to do after high school.
 - To provide additional information to students about the college going process such as a) what to do when they hear back from an institution and b) how to apply for financial aid.
 - To reinforce a college-going culture in the community.
 - This is not a recruitment activity for a specific school. If a volunteer has a strong relationship (or love) for a particular school, it is important to leave it at the door.

- III. DC College Application Week Logistics
 - Provide a short tour of the school highlighting where the event will be held, principal's office, facilities they may use or go into and those that they should not
 - Dates and Times College Application Week/Day will be held in each school
 - Times that Volunteers are expected to be available (it is strongly recommended that they are asked to arrive 15-30 minutes prior to the start of the event)
 - Assign tasks to be done by Volunteers (see task list)
 - Review FAQs

- IV. Questions?

- V. Again – thank you!

Volunteer Thank You Letter

SCHOOL LOGO
SCHOOL ADDRESS

November 2014

Dear [VOLUNTEER'S NAME],

On behalf of [NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL or PROGRAM] I would like to personally thank you for volunteering your time at our DC College Application Week event. This event could not have been a success without your help and the help of many others who volunteered their time.

During DC College Application Week, [NUMBER OF SENIORS SUBMITTING COLLEGE APPLICATIONS] of our seniors submitted over [NUMBER OF COLLEGE APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED] college applications to colleges and universities across DC and the country. Thanks to our seniors' hard work and the assistance of volunteers like you, they are one step closer to actualizing their dreams of attending college!

Please help us continue to grow and improve DC College Application Week by completing a short survey. The survey can be found under the Volunteer Resources tab at <http://osse.dc.gov/service/dc-college-application-week> .

Once again, [NAME OF YOUR HIGH SCHOOL] thanks you for your efforts and contribution of time at College Application Week! We look forward to seeing you throughout the school year and especially at our event next year.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]
[YOUR TITLE]