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## **NYC SERVICE KICKS-OFF VOLUNTEER DATA COLLECTION**

***NYC Service launched the NYC Volunteers Count survey to determine breadth and impact of volunteerism on COVID-19 relief efforts and democracy.***

**NEW YORK** – Last week NYC Service kicked off the NYC Volunteers Count survey, the city's annual inventory of residents volunteering with organizations in the five boroughs. NYC Service seeks data and stories on how volunteers supported COVID-19 relief efforts and contributed to strengthening democracy in 2020, such as with the 2020 Census and voter registration drives. Organizations that engaged volunteers in 2020 are called to submit survey responses by March 25th, 2021 at [nyc.gov/volunteerscount](https://nyc.gov/volunteerscount).

"Volunteers are the heart of the city and in 2020 every volunteer helped pave the pathway to a recovery for all of us," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "We all owe these volunteers a debt of gratitude and the NYC Volunteers Count will help recognize and honor each and every New Yorker who volunteered their time and effort to help keep this City strong."

"Volunteers powered 2020 Census initiatives that secured the resources and representation our communities deserve," said **J. Phillip Thompson, Deputy Mayor for Strategic Policy Initiatives**. "We are grateful for every New Yorker that took action and look forward to recognizing community partners in the NYC Volunteers Count survey."

"We saw equity in action with every New Yorker who volunteered in 2020," said **NYC Chief Service Officer Anusha Venkataraman**. "It is our honor to recognize and document the power of trusted community partners, volunteers that showed up to the frontlines of COVID-19 response efforts, and those volunteers that strengthened our democracy for the future."

National Volunteer Month this April will mark more than a year since New York City became an epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic. Community-based organizations, volunteers, and AmeriCorps members were on the frontlines of emergency response efforts that saved New Yorkers' lives and the 2020 survey will document the impact of volunteerism during a year marked by urgent crises. While active in COVID-19 emergency response, the City's Volunteer Coordination Task Force tracked over thirteen thousand volunteers active through NYC Emergency Management's CERT Program and the nonprofit New York Cares' volunteer programs.

"In a city that never sleeps, volunteers have worked tirelessly to support New York City in its darkest hour," **NYC Emergency Management Department Commissioner Deanne Criswell** said. "I am especially proud of our Community Emergency Response Team volunteers, who have supported their communities on a range of response and recovery efforts — from providing food to neighbors to supporting COVID-19 vaccine hubs — for more than 7,100 hours since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers have been a lifeline to us all, and show us how resilient New York City can be. I encourage all voluntary organizations to participate in this survey."

"New York Cares is proud to have served on the City's Volunteer Coordination Taskforce since the beginning of the pandemic," said **Gary Bagley, Executive Director of New York Cares**.

"Through this impactful partnership, New York Cares deployed over 13,000 volunteers on 61,000 positions for a total of 180,000 hours of service providing emergency food assistance for families, virtual education for students, and wellness checks for isolated New Yorkers."

The survey, established in 2014 during the de Blasio administration, was designed to recognize community-based organizations and their volunteers for contributing to social resiliency and civic engagement by collecting the total number of unique volunteers active in a year. Previous NYC Volunteer Count surveys recorded more than a million volunteers per year with a [record number of 549 organizations engaging volunteers in 2019](#). The 2020 survey questions have been simplified to be inclusive of smaller community groups formed in response to the COVID-19 crisis. Grassroots and volunteer-led groups, such as mutual aid groups, are highly encouraged to respond to the survey. View more information about qualifying organizations at [nyc.gov/volunteerscount](https://nyc.gov/volunteerscount).

"Brooklyn Community Services prides itself on being a service enterprise, meaning volunteerism is at the heart of our mission and our increasing impact in the Brooklyn community. 2020 was a year filled with unpredictability, ambiguity, and escalated disparity in marginalized communities," said **Janelle Anderson Director of Outreach and Volunteerism at Brooklyn Community Services**. "Volunteers ensured people had meals, access to PPE, and curated the joys of the holidays for BCS youth. Even in times of crisis, our volunteers made an impact."

City agencies are also called to submit volunteer engagement data from the 2020 calendar year. City-run initiatives, including Census and DemocracyNYC, engaged volunteers in neighborhood organizing to strengthen civic engagement and democracy.

"Our communities would not be as resilient and vibrant without the critical work of volunteers and AmeriCorps members across the five boroughs," said **Bitta Mostofi, Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs**. "With the important role they play connecting New Yorkers to the resources they need and enabling agencies to expand our reach throughout our communities, volunteers and AmeriCorps members are an integral part of the fabric of our city and our democracy. We applaud this new effort recognizing and celebrating the critical work they do to keep our communities thriving in our most challenging moments."

"2020 was a historic year for voting and elections in New York City, with more New Yorkers than ever coming out to vote in the general election. Volunteers are a huge reason why: from phone banking and text-banking voters, to conducting student voter registration drives, to volunteering to watch the polls on election day, DemocracyNYC's extraordinary volunteers moved mountains to protect and strengthen New York City's democracy," said **Laura Wood, Senior Advisor and General Counsel, DemocracyNYC**.

In addition to the citywide NYC Volunteers Count report, NYC Service recognizes diverse forms of volunteerism through the Mayoral Service Recognition Program established under the de Blasio Administration. Organizations that respond to the survey, and volunteers with 100+ hours of service, are recognized with a certificate signed by Mayor Bill de Blasio and NYC Chief Service Officer Anusha Venkataraman. NYC Service is also accepting entries for the [2020 Mayoral Service Recognition Awards](#) honoring exceptional volunteer projects. Awards in four categories will be presented to a community-based organization, a youth, an AmeriCorps alumnus and a business and community-based

organization partnership. The deadline to submit nominations and applications for the awards is March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Nominations for volunteers, organizations, and projects that addressed COVID-19 relief and recovery efforts are highly encouraged. Winners will be recognized publicly at a virtual ceremony at the end of April.

**About NYC Service**

NYC Service is a division of the Mayor's Office that builds partnerships to deepen and expand civic engagement through volunteer and service programs, creating sustainable change for our city's greatest needs. We unite New Yorkers in service to advance lifelong civic engagement for a more equitable and inclusive city. To learn more about NYC Service and connect to volunteer opportunities, visit [nyc.gov/service](https://nyc.gov/service).

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