



Central Park Conservancy Institute for Urban Parks

Statement of Purpose

The Central Park Conservancy Institute for Urban Parks is the **educational arm** of CPC.

The Institute develops programs designed to *facilitate discovery* of the Park and *transfer knowledge* of our world-class urban park management and stewardship practices, both locally and globally.

Volunteering in Central Park



Central Park Conservancy

- Founded in 1980 to raise money to rescue the Park
- A not-for-profit organization now under contract with NYC to manage the Park
- Our mission:
 - Restore, manage, and enhance the Park in partnership with the public

Public-Private Partnership

- The Conservancy privately raises 75% of the \$57 million annual expense budget required to care for the Park's 843 acres
- The city provides the remaining 25%
- In 34 years, the Conservancy has overseen more than \$700 million in park improvements









Central Park Conservancy by the Numbers

- 40 million visits annually
- 35,000 individual members
- 300+ employees
- 400 volunteers contributing 50,000 hours annually

Volunteering in the Park



Volunteer Department

- Conservancy was founded in 1980
- Volunteer Department was founded in 1983
- 31 years of a pro-volunteerism environment
- Staff introductions

Organization

President & CEO, CP Administrator
Doug Blonsky

VP for Operations Management
Frank LoCastro

Associate VP for Operations Management
Alex Egan

Director of Volunteer Services
Jim McGuire

Volunteer Opportunities

- PAWS Volunteers Program
- Greeter Programs
- Field Program (Horticulture)
- Tour Guide Program
- Special Events & Administrative Support

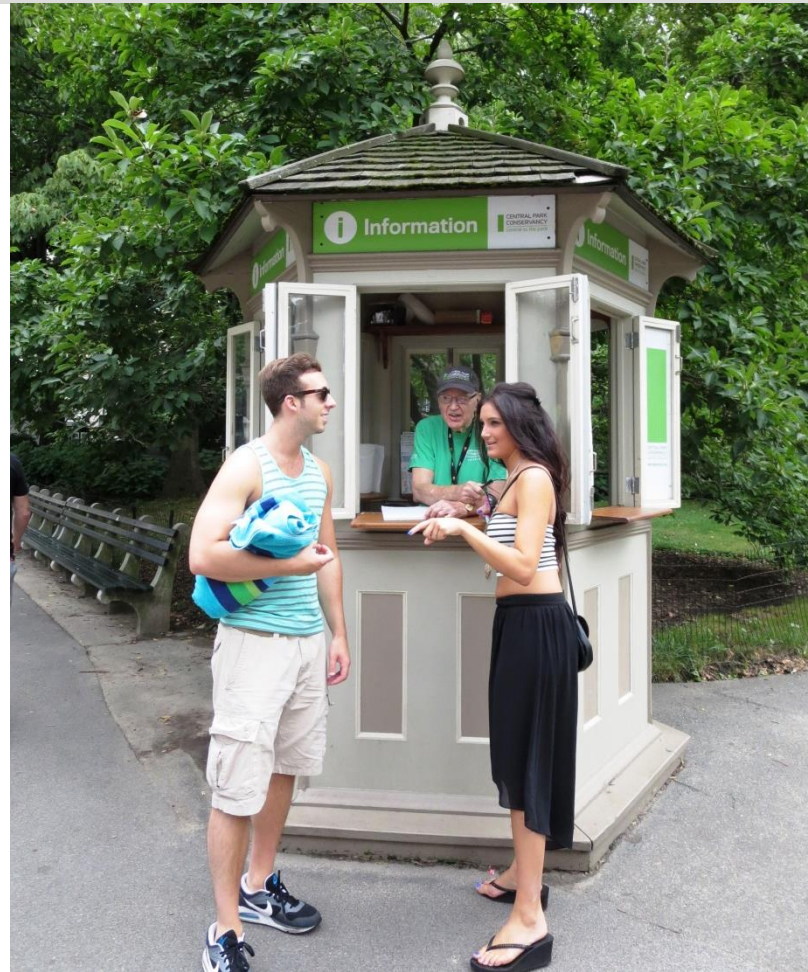
Paws Volunteer



Paws Volunteer

- Paws Area Representative
 - Engage with dog owners to increase awareness of the privileges and responsibilities of dog ownership in the Park
- Support special events for the dog-loving community
 - My Dog Loves Central Park Fair
 - Bagel Barks
 - Bark before Dark

Kiosk Greeter



Kiosk Greeter

- 3 Park information kiosks staffed by volunteers
- Assist visitors with questions about Park features and events
- Provide directions

Greensward Guide



Greensward Guide

- A walking version of a kiosk greeter
- Assist visitors with questions about Park features and events
- Provide directions
- Needed: an excellent sense of direction!

Visitor Center Greeter



Visitor Center Greeter

- Three Park Visitor Centers
 - Chess and Checkers House
 - Belvedere Castle
 - Dana Discovery Center
- Help visitors enjoy activities unique to each Visitor Center
 - Board games
 - Fishing

Horticulture Volunteer

Weekday Gardener's Assistant



Horticulture Volunteers

Saturday Green Team



Horticulture Volunteer

- Help beautify the Park by weeding, raking, mulching, shoveling snow, and painting
- Weekday Gardener's Assistants
 - Help a Zone Gardener meet the horticulture and maintenance needs of a park zone
- Saturday Green Team
 - Groups who complete large scale horticulture and maintenance projects throughout the Park

Tour Guide



Tour Guide

- Help visitors discover Central Park's history, ecology, and design by leading regularly scheduled walking tours
- Must already have experience as a Conservancy volunteer

Special Events and Programs



Special Events and Programs

- Help out at one of the Conservancy's numerous special events
- Pumpkin Float, Ice Festival, Holiday Lighting, Great Jazz on the Great Hill
- Provide office admin support

Corporate Volunteering

- "Day in the Dirt" program
- Allows corporate groups to promote volunteerism and environmental stewardship
- Builds employee cohesiveness and camaraderie

Day in the Dirt



Pitch In, Pick Up

- Visitors can help keep the Park clean on their own schedule by volunteering to pitch in and pick up
 - Stop by a Visitor Center
 - Sign out a volunteer name-tag
 - Choose a trash-grabber or sweeper
 - Pitch in by helping to pick up litter

Volunteer Training

- All volunteers attend universal orientation
 - Park and Conservancy history and background
 - Volunteer handbook – policies and procedures
- Job specific training
 - Horticulture volunteers
 - Greeter/guides and Paws volunteers
 - Tour guides

Horticulture Training

- Horticulture Orientation Session
- Three in-Park Sessions
- Emphasis on Safety and Proper Use of Equipment
- Ongoing Schedule

Greeter/Guide and Paws Training

- Four Classroom Sessions
 - Role Play Scenarios
 - Scavenger Hunt Review
- Three in-Park Mentoring Sessions
 - Three different veteran guides
- Mentor Performance Review
- Quarterly Schedule

Tour Guide Training

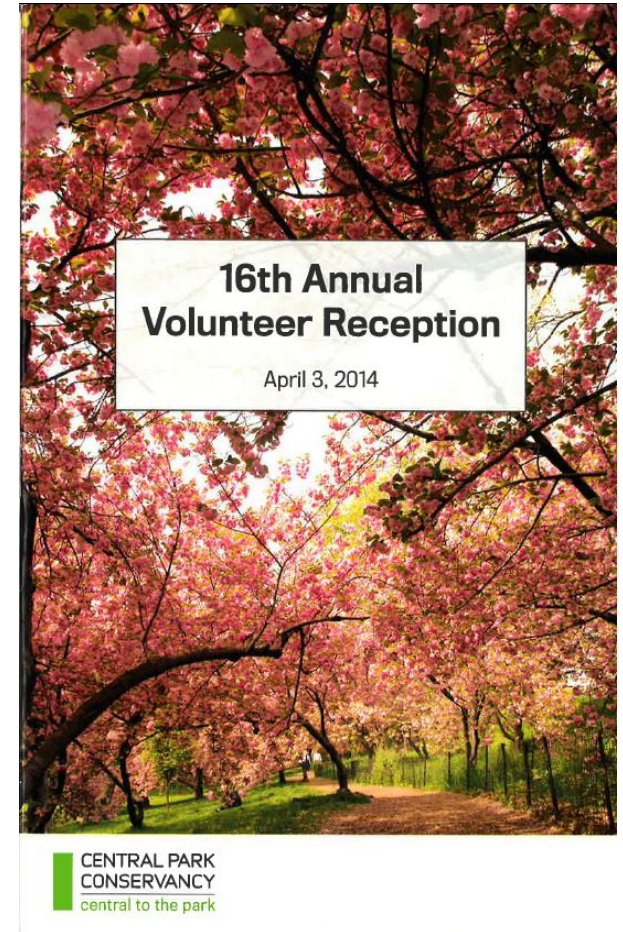
- Competitive entry with auditions
- Homework requiring significant research
- Four classroom sessions
 - The Spiel – perform in character
- Two group tour presentations
- Solo certification tour

Volunteer Communications and Liaison

- Weekend and Weekly Updates
- Steering Committees
 - Tour Guide
 - Greeter/Guide
 - Horticulture
 - Paws
- Quarterly Meetings

Volunteer Recognition

- Annual reception
- Volunteer development
 - Classes, lectures, trainings, tours
- Annual Holiday party
- Invite to select membership offerings



Database Management

- Front end: MyVolunteerPage.com
- Back end: Better Impact
- Contact info, scheduling, sign ups, logging hours, reports
- Powerful program, but steep learning curve for staff and volunteers

Branding

- Volunteer uniforms follow Conservancy branding guidelines
- Volunteers wear green, staff wears grey
- T-shirts, sweatshirts, and hats issued
- Winter jackets – a huge morale boost



A Final Thought...

You can never say thank you enough

Thank you

