Texas A&M International University
Community Service & Volunteer Guide
Welcome

Dear Students,

Welcome to the Texas A&M International University Community Service & Volunteer Guide! Within these pages you will find information on community engagement, getting involved as a volunteer, and earning credit for your service hours at TAMIU. Take some time to explore this Guide and you will find some great ideas on how to reflect on your experiences and enhance your leadership abilities to allow you to succeed.

Community engagement has become an integral part of the University experience at TAMIU. It is our tradition to work with the community to develop solutions for the many challenges we face, while impacting many lives—including yours. Through community engagement projects, you have the opportunity to be connected with the surrounding and international community, to practice the skills you are developing through your academics, and to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be a civically engaged member of society.

There is something exceptional about the energy that our students bring to the community by serving. I hope you find this Guide to be a helpful resource.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement. If you would like assistance in regards to planning a service project, participating in a service event or reporting service hours, we will be happy to help. You are a valuable resource for our community and your service work can help make a difference!

Dust ‘Em

Mayra Hernández | Director of Student Conduct and Community Engagement
Service

Welcome
Proud Dustdevils,

Service is one of four core values at Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) as it represents a Dustdevil’s willingness to reach out to the community and lend a helping hand. With that being said, the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement (SCCE) is especially excited to share with you TAMIU’s Community Service and Volunteer Guide! Through this Volunteer Guide, SCCE can assist you in turning your interest in volunteering into a reality. Flip through the pages to explore the importance of your time and efforts, service traditions and volunteer recognitions.

As you probably know, community engagement is about giving to others; however, there is a lot an individual can gain from offering their time and commitment to assist those in need. Volunteer service has proven to be a grand factor in aiding young people develop into phenomenal leaders. By developing new skills, sharpening your problem-solving techniques and integrating your knowledge with hands-on projects, you are preparing yourself for success in the professional world.

SCCE’s goal is to open the door and introduce you into a world of possibilities through community engagement. We hope that this Guide can serve as the start of an amazing journey into service. As always, we are readily available to assist you with your questions or ideas at the Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement.

Dust ‘Em

Sylvia Hinojosa | Community Standards and Student Engagement Coordinator
THE OFFICE OF
Student Conduct and Community Engagement

PURPOSE
The Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement helps coordinate community and volunteer projects to assist the regional, national, and global public.

The purpose is to promote community engagement as a fundamental part of learning and to cultivate a University commitment to help those in need.

TAMIU students donate their time and talent while enhancing their leadership abilities that will facilitate and promote their success.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STAFF
TAMIU’s Office of Student Conduct and Community Engagement staff is ready to assist you by connecting you to an agency/organization that is committed to helping you rise above and make an impact in the Laredo community! We look forward to hearing from you in order to support your efforts to be involved.

Mayra Hernández
Director of Student Conduct & Community Engagement
mghernandez@tamiu.edu  |  956.326.2288

Sylvia Hinojosa
Community Standards and Student Engagement Coordinator
sylvia.hinojosa@tamiu.edu  |  956.326.2280
General

Community Service Info.

BENEFITS OF VOLUNTEERING

TAMIU students donate their time and talent while acquiring leadership abilities that will facilitate and promote their success. The motivation factors for volunteering may be endless, but many volunteer to:

- **give** back to the community.
- **improve** lives - make a difference by helping those in need!
- **connect** with others - network, make new friends and strengthen existing relationships.
- **learn** to build skills and gain experience that will enhance a resume.
- **explore** and boost career options - and discover passions.

TYPES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service refers to actions taken or participating in activities without pay in order to meet the needs of others and to better the community where the primary emphasis is on the service being provided.

Community engagement is a type of public participation that involves people in problem-solving or decision-making processes. It is a multi-faceted, ongoing process. Our goal is to create a movement towards positive social change and prepare participants to be effective servants, leaders, and agents in our community.

Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities.

Source: Learn and Serve America’s National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
WHERE CAN I SERVE?

A. Local Agencies Based on Areas of Interest
Volunteer opportunities are as diverse and abundant as the people in your community. To choose a volunteer position which is right for you, find something that fits your interests; work with an organization that supports your beliefs and stimulates your passions. Also, you can choose to serve a cause related to the mission of your student organization.

Click here to access a database of agencies/organizations in the Laredo community.

B. Volunteer Opportunities
Volunteer opportunities are posted on the homepage of Collegiate Link (C-Link) https://tamiu.collegiatelinl.net when volunteers are requested from an agency for a specific event or time period.

Click any of the images on the bulletin board where volunteer opportunities are posted, and you will be directed to a detailed information page about that specific volunteer opportunity. It will include date, time, location, shifts, dress code, volunteer duties, and sign-up info.
C. Annual Service Events
TAMIU currently hosts two large-scale service events every school year to assist and support our local community. Our students combine efforts and donate their time and talent to deserving organizations to identify and address issues of public concern.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY
Every Fall semester on the last Saturday of October, hundreds of volunteers gather for the largest day of service nationwide at TAMIU.

THE BIG EVENT
The BIG Event is a service day tradition started by Texas A&M in 1982 and is now celebrated by universities across the nation.
Volunteer Code of Conduct

As a Dustdevil volunteer, student leader and representative of TAMIU, volunteers are subject to a code of ethics similar to that of a professional employee. They are to accept the duties and responsibilities of their position and pledge to accomplish them by upholding the values of respect, integrity, service and excellence.

Respect

Respect all volunteers, personnel and clients and the policies and procedures of the agency. Volunteers shall:

- Maintain the agency’s interest as their primary responsibility and maintain high personal and professional standards.
- Not discriminate against clients or co-workers on the basis of sex, race, age, creed, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation or source of income.
- Not use tobacco, drugs, alcohol or profanity while volunteering. The use of physical abuse, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, and/or mental abuse is strongly prohibited and will be cause for immediate dismissal from the service event or activity.
- Be discreet in personal relationships with other volunteers and avoid any behavior that may be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Integrity

Demonstrate integrity. Volunteers shall:

- Respect the privacy of the agency and maintain confidentiality at all times regarding information acquired while providing services.
- Be honest about any time constraints and communicate any changes with the appropriate volunteer leader or staff liaison.
- Notify the appropriate person if you are unable to fulfill your commitment or complete an assignment.
- Honor their commitments by attending all required meetings and/or orientations required by their volunteer position.
- Report an individual’s behavior or anything in the physical environment which you feel may pose as a threat or cause harm.
Volunteer
Code of Conduct

As a Dustdevil volunteer, student leader and representative of TAMIU, volunteers are subject to a Code of Ethics similar to that of a professional employee. They are to accept the duties and responsibilities of their position and pledge to accomplish them by upholding the values of respect, integrity, service and excellence.

Service

Commit to your service agreement. Volunteers shall:

• Carry out all aspects of their assignments as efficiently as possible and to the best of their ability.

• Look for constructive ways to overcome obstacles.

• Become an active participant by extending their involvement to other roles of leadership and training.

• Support and assist other volunteer members when in need.

Excellence

Portray excellence and leadership in decision-making and work ability. Volunteers shall:

• Be open to new ideas and new ways of completing tasks.

• Portray themselves as role models by maintaining a positive attitude and showing respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.

• Praise volunteers for their effort and dedication to serve the community and using positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition, or comparison when working with others.

• Delight in the impact that their involvement makes in the lives of others.
Reporting Volunteer Service Hours

The Office of Student Conduct & Community Engagement keeps track of volunteer service hours for students, student organizations and scholarship programs (University Honors Program & Sanchez Scholarship Program) via Collegiate Link (C-Link): https://tamiu.collegiatelink.net

ALL STUDENTS

If you have earned volunteer service hours and are currently not part of any student organization or scholarship program at TAMIU, you may follow the procedures below in order to keep track of your service hours on C-Link.

1. Request approval

You must be a member of TAMIU Trailblazers on C-Link in order to report your hours.

Don’t forget to submit your hours for approval within thirty (30) days of the event.

Your hours will be “pending” until our office receives a verification timesheet.

2. Submit a verification timesheet

There is a verification timesheet in the Documents section of the TAMIU Trailblazers organization on C-Link.

This form requires verification information, event details, and the signature of the student and the agency’s verification contact.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

1. Complete the Community Service Form

To apply to be a partner agency with TAMIU, please click here.

Get published in the Leader’s Chronicle! To submit your request, click here.

Do you need volunteers? To submit your volunteer opportunity, click here.

To submit your organization’s community service hours, click here.

This form should be submitted for approval within thirty (30) days after each service event. It is only necessary to submit one per organization because the form asks for detailed information, including all members that participated and the time spent volunteering.
Request approval

Each member must submit a request for approval for hours served.

They must submit their hours for approval within thirty (30) days of the event.

An individual may choose to split hours between multiple organizations in which they are a member.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMS

University Honors Program students must complete thirty (30) hours of service every school year. Service hours must be completed at University events or University-affiliated events.

A.R. Sanchez Scholarship Program students must complete ten (10) hours of service every school year. Service hours must be completed at University events or University-affiliated events.

Submit a verification timesheet

There is a verification timesheet for each scholarship program in the Documents section of their respective organization on C-Link.

This form requires verification information, event details, and the signature of the student and the agency’s verification contact.
THE PRESIDENT'S VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARD

BACKGROUND
The President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation was established in 2003 to recognize the valuable contributions volunteers are making in our communities and encourage more people to serve. The Council created the President’s Volunteer Service Award (PVSA) program as a way to thank and honor Americans who, by their demonstrated commitment and example, inspire others to engage in volunteer service. In Fall 2014, TAMU, through the Office of Student Conduct & Community Engagement (SCCE) became an official certifying organization for the PVSA.

AWARD CRITERIA
- Be a United States citizen or admitted permanent resident
- Services for award must be within a 12-month time period
- Volunteer service only
- Court-ordered service does not qualify
- Service is conducted with an organization that is established in the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico or one of the territories
- Service hours must be reported on Collegiate Link based on SCCE guidelines (Page 10 & 11).

THE AWARD
- An official President’s Volunteer Service Award pin
- A personalized certificate of achievement
- A congratulatory letter from the President of the United States.

AWARD ELIGIBILITY
- Young Adults: 15-25 Years of Age
- Adults: 26+ Years of Age

In April of every Spring semester, SCCE will confirm the eligibility of the PVSA for all students who have served and reported hours through SCCE via Collegiate Link. Students meeting the requirements will be contacted by SCCE via their TAMU Dusty e-mail. The default 12-month period of eligibility is from April 1 of the prior year to March 31 of the current school year. For students who graduate in a term other than Spring, the 12-month period of eligibility may be adjusted.

If you are graduating in a non-Spring term and meet the qualifications, e-mail iserve@tamiu.edu your full name via Dusty e-mail for eligibility verification.

THE LEVELS
- BRONZE
  - Young Adults: 100 to 174 hours
  - Adults: 100 to 249 hours
- SILVER
  - Young Adults: 175 to 249 hours
  - Adults: 250 to 499 hours
- GOLD
  - Young Adults: 250+ hours
  - Adults: 500+ hours
- CALL TO SERVICE
  - All: 4000+ hour (over a lifetime)