



Educational
Alliance

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



MC

MANNY CANTOR CENTER
Educational Alliance



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Volunteers from Weinberg Center
for Balanced Living read stories
to children from the Educational
Alliance Preschool.



WELCOME



Dear Educational Alliance Volunteer,

Welcome! We are thankful for your desire to make a difference at Educational Alliance. Our volunteer program, More Hands, More Hearts, re-imagines volunteerism as a means of empowering and strengthening our local community. We create meaningful opportunities that empower committed and skilled volunteers like you to serve in strategic, mission aligned ways. Your help and support allows us to provide critical services more effectively. Put simply, we could not do our work without you.

Educational Alliance volunteers are community members who create positive change through acts of service. Our volunteers represent the socioeconomic, ethnic, lingual and religious diversity of our neighborhood and work together with us in support of our shared vision for the community. They are young families sorting in our materials center, retirees and college students serving lunch side by side to our older adults, and local artists and professionals who mentor our teens throughout the college application process.

The enclosed handbook is meant to provide you with the information and guidelines you will need to be successful as a volunteer with us. Should you have any questions, suggestions or feedback, please do not hesitate to let us know. Thank you for all you do for our community. We look forward to seeing you at our Center soon.

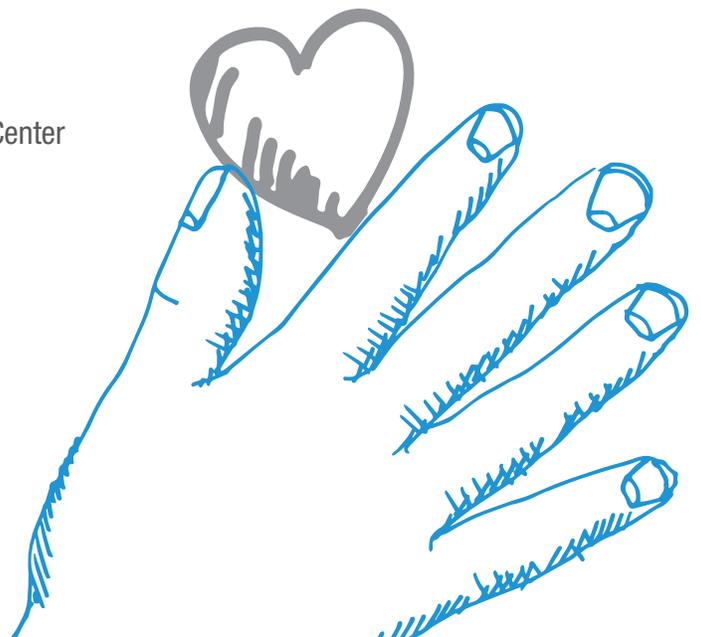
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan".

Alan van Capelle
President and Chief Executive Officer

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joanna Samuels".

Rabbi Joanna Samuels
Director, Manny Cantor Center



WHO WE ARE + WHAT WE DO

ABOUT EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE

Educational Alliance is a community-based organization offering a wide range of programs that integrate education, social services, arts and recreation throughout the Lower East Side and East Village. Created to assist Eastern European Jews immigrating to NYC, it has been serving the area since 1889. Educational Alliance has grown and changed as the Lower East Side has; now serving the diverse population that currently resides here.

ABOUT MANNY CANTOR CENTER

Opened in 2014 in the newly renovated Educational Alliance building as its flagship community center, Manny Cantor Center is the Lower East Side's new hub committed to bringing together our vibrant and diverse neighborhood. Our newly-renovated space offers award-winning programs, critical services and exciting events for toddlers, teens, young adults, and older adults of all backgrounds.

For more information, visit mannycantor.org

Follow us on social media
   @MannyCantorNYC



OUR MISSION + VISION

Our commitment to the diversity of the Lower East Side is reflected in our programming: Head Start classrooms sit alongside our private preschool; the Weinberg Center for Balanced Living creates community for older adults of all backgrounds

and abilities; our fitness center is utilized by neighborhood residents of all ethnicities, income levels, and ages through an innovative tiered membership model. The Educational Alliance Art School uses the study and mastery of fine arts to forge connections between students and master teachers. Afterschool programs serve community needs

for recreation, fitness, education, and college preparation. Community and cultural programming invites deep conversation and calls to action.

OUR IMPACT

- Across Educational Alliance, we've created collaborative learning environments for 630+ infants and children up to age five through our Head Start, Early Head Start, pre-school and UPK programs, and give nearly 2,000 youth with a safe place to go during after school hours, including school holidays and summer through Afterschool Programs on the Lower East Side and East Village.

At Manny Cantor Center alone, we serve 1,500 people per day, including:

- 400+ under resourced youth attend our Teen Center each year, helping to make us the Boys & Girls Club with the highest daily attendance in the country.
- 100% of students that applied to college in our college prep program are accepted to at least one school.
- 3200+ older adults are members of our Weinberg Center for Balanced living, receiving daily nutritious kosher meals and a wide-array of activities, events and services they would not otherwise have easy access to.
- 300+ infants and children up to five are served through our Headstart, Early Headstart, pre-school and UPK programs, creating a collaborative learning environment.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM MISSION + VISION

Educational Alliance creates meaningful opportunities that empower committed and skilled volunteers to serve their community. Through More Hands, More Hearts, launched at Manny Cantor Center, acts of service create positive change and foster agency and purpose within the community. Everyone possesses the capacity to give back. At Educational Alliance, we encourage each individual to invest and participate in building a stronger, more connected community. We need your hands. We need your hearts. GET INVOLVED by VOLUNTEERING!

PURPOSE OF THIS VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

The goal of this handbook is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers. These policies do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual or personnel agreement. Our agency reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Changes to or exceptions from these policies may only be granted by the Volunteer Program, and must be obtained in advance and in writing. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by the Volunteer Program Team or your program supervisor.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Every organization has a culture of practices that “unwritten rules” that are not conveyed in a handbook, things like where you keep your personal items, how you get coffee, communication methods within the department or how we celebrate birthdays and holidays. At Educational Alliance and its affiliates, we are no different. Some of our practices vary greatly by program or location. We want you to know that we value the work volunteers do and our volunteer supervisors will always strive to ensure they communicate with you our practices so that you are comfortable in your role and environment. If ever, you are unsure of a policy, procedure or practice or uncomfortable with a situation, we encourage you to talk to your supervisor or the volunteer manager.

“Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

- Martin Luther King. Jr.

IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERISM

IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS

In order to meet the needs of the community, Educational Alliance relies on volunteers to achieve our mission, strengthen our programs and meet our goals. Volunteers are a vital part of our center and we are so appreciative that people are willing to get involved in a purposeful and meaningful way. We hope that volunteers find fulfillment in the work they are doing at Educational Alliance and are able to see the impact and needs they are filling within our communities, neighborhood and world. We certainly could not do it without the efforts of all of our dedicated volunteers.

In 2016, Educational Alliance became a Certified Service Enterprise and we continue to be a part of a nationwide movement that ensures organizations are leveraging volunteers and their skills effectively and purposefully to fulfill their social mission.

The UJA-Federation of NY generously grants us funds through their Time for Good Initiative for capacity building, so we could align our organization with other Service Enterprise to be in the top 15% nationwide for effective volunteer engagement. We believe that the missions of Service Enterprise and Time for Good fit well into the culture of Educational Alliance and Manny Cantor Center, so we can best meet the needs of our growing and changing communities.



VOLUNTEER MEET-UPS

Volunteers will be invited to exclusive meet-ups as a way to reflect on their roles, socialize and network with other like-minded people and have some fun! These meet-ups will vary, but will include text studies on service and giving, cultural and community activities and some purely social events too. We welcome our volunteers to submit ideas for the types of things they would like to do. If volunteers are interested in helping to plan these meet-ups, we welcome that too.

RECOMMENDATIONS + TRACKING HOURS

We would be happy to provide reports on your volunteer hours to your school, company or affiliated group upon your request and with your permission. We can also sign-off on documents

needed to prove your volunteer hours or provide written letters of recommendation on your time here when applicable and appropriate.

BENEFITS FOR VOLUNTEERS

We know we wouldn't be able to achieve success without the commitment and skills of our volunteers. So here are some of the ways we show appreciation:

- Discounts on other Educational Alliance and Manny Cantor Center programs
- Networking and social events with like-minded individuals
- Opportunities for learning and professional development within your role and our volunteer program.

VOLUNTEER ONBOARDING POLICIES + PROCEDURES



“I volunteer for three reasons. To help people, to build some skills that I otherwise wouldn’t get to practice and to meet more different members of my community.”

– Jacob Employment Services

Volunteer

ORIENTATION

Volunteers will receive orientation either prior to their shift or on their first day, depending on the role, at Educational Alliance to ensure they understand our policies and procedures, which they must be compliant with. This is also an opportunity for us to share our mission and vision, provide an overview of our center and information on the various volunteer roles.

PLACEMENT PROCESS

Volunteers will have the opportunity to review the various opportunities available at Educational Alliance either via our website or via hardcopy. This is a matchmaking process; we want to do our best to find the role that is the right fit for the volunteer. Depending on the role the process may include phone or in-person interviews, reference checks, and background and fingerprinting checks. The requirements will be outlined in the role description for each opportunity.

TYPES OF VOLUNTEERING

Ongoing: This includes activities that require varying degrees of skill level and commitment, daily, weekly, monthly, etc. The requirements vary but these roles usually require some amount of “on the job” training as well as a strong commitment from the volunteer.

Skilled/Pro-Bono: This is usually project-based work, such as communications and marketing assistance, legal or financial advice. This work can often be done remotely and usually requires an interview (by phone or in-person), references and sample work.

One-time/short-term: This includes special events, special project assignments, group activities, etc. The commitment and requirements for these types of activities are the simplest and include limited training.

REQUIREMENTS

Requirements will depend on the volunteer role. All volunteers will need to fill out an application (either online or hardcopy) and sign necessary waivers and forms, attend an orientation session and screening phone call. Additional requirements may include, background or reference checks, submission of work samples, fingerprinting, medical forms or in-person interviews. All requirements are clearly listed on the volunteer role description. If you are volunteering for a one-time event, special project or special event, requirements may vary or may be waived by the program supervisor or volunteer team.

BACKGROUND/SCREENING/REFERENCE CHECKS/ FINGERPRINTING

For some roles, volunteers must submit samples of work, professional references, submit to back ground checks and/or be fingerprinted. If any of these are required, it will be outlined in the role description and you will be notified of the next steps. The systems are in place to ensure the safety of all program participants, staff and volunteers.

SCHEDULING SHIFTS AND LOGGING HOURS

We use a system called CERVIS to schedule volunteer shifts and log hours. If you fill out your volunteer application online, you will have the ability to apply directly for volunteer roles and update your profile. For those that apply via hardcopy, a user account will be created for you. Volunteers will log their hours online in their account or by a paper timesheet. The volunteer team or program supervisor will alert you to the procedure you will use during your first shift.



“The people are my favorite part of volunteering with MCC. Each person I meet is nicer than the next and so passionate about the Center and its programs.”

- Dani, MCC Buzz Team
Graphic Designer



VOLUNTEER TRAINING + ONGOING SUPPORT

VOLUNTEER BILL OF RIGHTS

Volunteers have the right to:

1. Feel appreciation and know that your volunteer work is meaningful and impactful!
2. Volunteer in a safe and secure environment.
3. Not be discriminated against for any reason.
4. Always feel welcome within the program you are volunteering with and the entire center.
5. Personal and background information will remain confidential.
6. Providing all the information and training you need to succeed in your role.
7. The ability to grow and learn in your volunteer role and be supported in those efforts.
8. The opportunity for additional responsibility and leadership if desired.
9. The opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions in an understanding environment.
10. The chance to Get Involved by Giving Back to your community!



TRAINING + SUPERVISION

Volunteers will be provided “on shift” training during their first 1-3 volunteer shifts, depending on the role; volunteers will have a program supervisor that will be their point of contact for training and questions, and to ensure you understand your role and have the information you need to succeed. Additionally, the volunteer manager is available to answer questions or assist in getting volunteers additional training as needed.

FEEDBACK

If a volunteer has any concerns, questions about appropriate behavior, needs to report an incident or has complaints regarding inappropriate behavior or activities by another volunteer, clients or members and/or program staff they should talk to the Volunteer Team at **646.395.4184** or **volunteers@mannycantor.org**. Additionally, a bi-annual volunteer experience survey will be distributed as an opportunity to share thoughts and ideas.



CHANGING VOLUNTEER ROLES

We understand that sometimes a role might not be the right fit or a volunteer needs a change of scenery. We are happy to work with volunteers to switch roles and ensure a great experience. Let the volunteer manager know if there are other opportunities or roles of interest.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION

Volunteers have the right and should feel comfortable to report any treatment they feel is unfair or inappropriate. A volunteer should share their issue with the Volunteer Team in writing and can request an in-person meeting if they prefer to discuss the issue face to face. All issues that are reported will be reviewed and staff will work to ensure that appropriate actions are taken to correct the issue when necessary.

ATTENDENCE

If a volunteer needs to cancel or change a shift, they should notify their program supervisor and the volunteer manager as soon as possible (24 hours or more before). If a volunteer misses three shifts within a six month period without proper notification they will be subject to dismissal. Additionally, volunteers should plan to arrive to their shifts on time and stay for the duration they signed up for; excessive lateness or leaving early (unless permitted by the program staff) will subject the volunteer to dismissal.

SEPARATION

The volunteer may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to sever their relationship with the agency. Since volunteers are critical to the continued operation of programs, we ask that volunteers (when possible) communicate their decision to the program supervisor and the volunteer manager at least one week prior.

DISMISSAL

Educational Alliance reserves the right to reassign or dismiss volunteers when such action is in the best interest of the volunteer, the agency, and/or the clients and members. Reasons for dismissal may include, but are not limited to:

- a.** Refusal to attend volunteer orientation or other required trainings.
- b.** Refusal to give suitable references or disclose past convictions for crimes.
- c.** Missing more than three scheduled shifts within a six month time period with giving adequate notice or following proper procedures.
- d.** Excessive lateness.
- e.** Disclosure of confidential information.
- f.** The use of alcohol or other inappropriate substances while a project.
- g.** Involvement in any illegal activities.
- h.** Failure to adhere to any Manny Cantor Center and Educational Alliance policies and procedures.
- i.** Any inappropriate behavior.
- j.** In the event a volunteer is dismissed, we will provide verification of volunteer hours but Educational Alliance will be unable to provide a recommendation.

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

DEFINITION OF VOLUNTEER

A volunteer is anyone who, without compensation or expectation of compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the agency. A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled by the agency prior to performance of the task. Volunteers shall not be considered as employees of the agency.

NONDISCRIMINATION

Volunteers are providing equal opportunity regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, disability, marital, gender identity or expression, citizenship, pregnancy, military status. This nondiscrimination policy applies equally to the treatment of clients and members.

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

To ensure a safe, productive environment and the well-being of all volunteers, program participants, employees, and property, the use, sale, distribution, manufacturing or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances during volunteer shifts or on any agency property is strictly prohibited. Under no circumstances are volunteers permitted on premises under the influence of illicit or controlled substances.

HARASSMENT

Educational Alliance is committed to a volunteer environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the

right to volunteer in a welcoming and professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Educational Alliance expects that all relationships among persons in the office will be professional and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.

WHISTLEBLOWER HOTLINE

A volunteer who suspects wrongdoing by fellow volunteers or staff should first reach out to their program supervisor or the volunteer manager to address the matter directly. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, the volunteer should contact Human Resources and/or a member of the Senior Executive Team. If these avenues feel unsafe or are found to be ineffective, then a call or email to the hotline is appropriate. Any EA volunteer may make an anonymous complaint about an alleged violation by calling 1-866-398-0010, by placing a web-based report at www.listenupgroup.com, or by mailing a written report to Listen Up Reports, P.O. Box 274, Highland Park, IL 60035. This policy is NOT a substitute for following the complaint procedures applicable to discrimination

SAFETY AND SECURITY

For your protection, the Alliance seeks to provide its volunteers with a safe and secure working environment and promote safe practices and procedures to reduce the risk of incidents and accidents. Volunteers must adhere to fire alarm drills

and all safety messages. Accidents sometimes occur because we are in a hurry and don't follow simple safety rules. Safety is an individual responsibility. Immediately report to the person in charge of your area and the Facilities Department should you notice anything out of the ordinary or any loss of personal belongings of a volunteer, staff member, client, or visitor. Also note, the safekeeping of your personal property is your responsibility. The Alliance is not responsible if a loss occurs.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Educational Alliance are very cognizant of HIPPA Privacy Laws as it pertains to our clients, employees and volunteers. With this in mind it is imperative that volunteers must maintain the confidentiality of all confidential, personal or proprietary information to which they are exposed to, regardless of the subject matter of the information. This includes, but is not limited to, the names, locations or images of clients they encounter through their work with Educational Alliance and any of its affiliates, as well as confidential, personal or proprietary information about the agency itself made available to the volunteer. Within your volunteer work at EA and MCC you might hear or read personal information, which could be someone's address or medical or legal issues they are facing, and so it is of the utmost importance to be discreet and keep this information confidential to protect the clients that come to us for support.

COPYRIGHT/OWNERSHIP ISSUES

Volunteers grant non-exclusive permission to Manny Cantor Center and Educational Alliance for use of any materials produced for the role they are in, including graphics materials, web page designs, narratives, research, compilations, instructional texts, etc. Upon submission it becomes property of the agency. Volunteers will receive credit for their work on the Educational Alliance website and other materials where appropriate for these and other contributions.

PRIVACY

The privacy of our volunteers is important to us. We do not sell or release a volunteer's personal information to anyone outside of our organization or to give it to other volunteers without that volunteer's written permission to do so. We do like to recognize our volunteers on our website, in our enews and other materials by listing names and sharing pictures. We are happy to remove any or all of this information for a particular volunteer per that person's request.

INSURANCE

Applicable agency insurance policies, according to the terms and provisions of the policies, will cover activities performed by volunteers in direct connection with their respective volunteer roles that are assigned by Educational Alliance and agreed upon by the volunteer.



"I wanted to deepen my own relationship to this community, so that I don't just work on the third floor without interacting with the rest of the building. The time commitment is quite minuscule compared to the lifelong impact a mentor can have on someone...I am humbled at the opportunity to be a mentor, and it is a commitment I value."

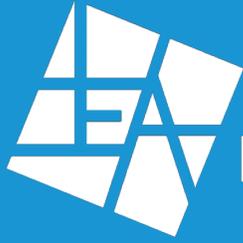
- Mickey Bronstein

Volunteer Mentor & Preschool Teacher

“The best way to find yourself is lose yourself in the service of others.”
-Gandhi







Educational
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VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

We need your hands.
We need your hearts.
Get involved by volunteering!

