

Volunteer Options FAQs

Students in our community depend on JA volunteers to connect the lessons they're learning in school with practical, real-world experiences. Thank you for taking the time to learn more about how to turn volunteers' desire to help into a true commitment of time and energy. We're so proud to partner with local educators who put their trust in us so that, together, we can unlock boundless potential in our future leaders!

What can I expect from 'Pre-Event - Volunteer Training'?

- **What does the training involve?** JA staff members offer training to ensure our volunteers feel confident that they are set up for success. This includes explaining what to expect from the volunteer experience, how to prepare to meaningfully engage with students and teachers, how to utilize JA's volunteer resources, how to prepare their kit of classroom materials (if applicable), and how their time will directly impact the students they serve.
- **How do volunteers get their program materials?** Some JA volunteer engagements require pre-event training (reference the Volunteer Options chart to see which events do).
 - If the training is in person at the office (preferred): JA will coordinate with Volunteer Champions to deliver the program kits to the office building via courier at least one day before the training. The kits need to be stored by the Volunteer Champion's office building until the training where volunteers will receive them.
 - If the training takes place virtually: JA will still coordinate with Volunteer Champions to deliver the kits to the office building via courier. Volunteer Champions need to arrange for each volunteer team to receive their kit before the training.
- **How long is training?** Training duration varies depending on the program and ranges from 15 minutes to one hour.
- **When does training take place?** The timing of training varies depending on the program and ranges from taking place the day of the event to taking place up to two weeks before the event.
- **Where does training take place?** The location of training varies depending on the program as well as on the volunteers' preference and can include remote training via video conference or in-person training at either the volunteers' office or JA's facility.
- **Which programs do NOT require training?** All JA programs require some training. However, the definition of training varies widely, from a 15-minute phone call to an hour in person or via Zoom, and from taking place the same day as the event to taking place several weeks before the event, with prep time needed between the training and the event day.

What can I expect from ‘Pre-Event - Volunteer Prep’?

- **What does volunteer prep involve?** Programs that require training up to two weeks before an event also require volunteers to spend a little time on their own at home or the office, reviewing the information learned in their training and getting ready to guide or teach students on the day of the event. The prep work needed varies depending on the program and can involve simply reviewing an outline, practicing playing games or working through student activities, watching volunteer resource videos, organizing teaching materials, etc.
- **How long is prep?** Prep time varies depending on the program, and ranges from 15 minutes to two hours.
- **When does prep take place?** Prep time takes place between volunteer training and the day of the event.
- **Where does prep take place?** Volunteers can choose to prep for their volunteer experience at the office or home on their own. If volunteering as a part of a team, it's a good idea to spend some time prepping together with your teaching partner(s) and sometimes even with the larger group when applicable. JA staff are available to answer questions at any time during prep.
- **Which programs do NOT require prep?** Neither JA BizTown nor JA Finance Park includes prep time, as training takes place at the JA facility on the morning of the event, and volunteering commences immediately after training.

How can we decide which volunteer options are best for us?

- The Volunteer Options chart is designed to help volunteer teams decide which kind of opportunity would be best for them. Generally, considering the following factors will help:
 - Total number of volunteers who will participate
 - Organization/grouping of volunteers (from individuals to teams of two/three, six/eight, all the way up to large teams of 40+ volunteering at the same time)
 - Volunteer experience desired (guiding v. teaching)
 - Ability/willingness of volunteers to train and prep before the volunteer event date v. all time spent on JA taking place in one day
 - Specific scheduling preferences (quarter, month, week, day of the week, specific date, specific start/end times) can help narrow down the options
- Teams can talk through these factors on their own or JA staff can help curate an opportunity for them based on the information/requirements shared.

Can volunteering with JA count toward Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Requirements?

- If your company must meet CRA requirements, volunteering with JA can help you meet that goal. We work with many schools whose student demographics qualify their volunteers to earn CRA credits.
- If your organization would like your volunteer hours to count toward your CRA credits please let JA Staff know.

Can we volunteer at schools where we have already established existing partnerships?

- If individuals within your organization or if your organization as a whole already has a partnership established with a school or community organization, JA welcomes the introduction to their administrators/teachers to help bring JA programs to their students and to train your employees to lead JA programs there.

What if our organization doesn't have enough volunteers to fill all of the spots?

- There are also many opportunities for individuals or small groups to volunteer with JA. It might make the most sense to limit your team's volunteer experiences to those that don't require larger groups.
- Many organizations capitalize on this condition by reaching outside of their employee base to bolster their volunteer numbers in positive ways. Examples of this include asking volunteers to bring along friends or family members, or reaching out to others that your company already partners with, such as clients, vendors, professional organizations, project partners, etc.
- In some cases, JA can match smaller organizations with other small organizations to fill larger volunteer event spots.

What if we have lots of people who would like to volunteer, but we can't volunteer together/at the same time?

- JA offers individual volunteer opportunities that might make sense for your team.

How do we find out about volunteer opportunities?

- Many of our corporate and community partners have one or more Volunteer Champions who resonate with JA's mission and who are dedicated to amplifying JA's mission within their organizations. These champions attend brief monthly meetings via Zoom to stay in the loop. Please reach out to JA staff if you or someone in your organization would like to attend these meetings. [ADD VCC LINK](#)
- Volunteers who are either not associated with a JA corporate partner OR who are a corporate partner but would like to volunteer more frequently than their volunteer team

can join the Volunteer Village to receive direct communication from JA about individual volunteer opportunities. [ADD LINK](#)

- JA also posts opportunities on social media and via periodic e-newsletters for those who subscribe to receive that information.
- JA staff are also happy to directly match you and your organization with volunteer opportunities anytime.

How can we spread the word about JA volunteering/recruit more volunteers?

- Planning a group event for department heads to volunteer together is a great way to introduce JA to your organization. Once leaders have experienced volunteering with JA personally with their peers, they can more authentically recruit volunteers from their departments to get involved and to adopt their volunteer events.
- Business/Employee Resource/Interest Groups offer another great way to recruit more volunteers, as each group can adopt their own volunteer experiences - a unique and meaningful way to work together.
- JA can provide Volunteer Champions with information sheets that they can distribute to potential volunteers and/or utilize to help prepare Champions to present/persuade in group settings.
- JA staff members are happy to Zoom or walk into company/dept/interest group gatherings to talk about JA and to help recruit for specific volunteer opportunities.

How do we sign-up for volunteer opportunities?

- Once you have reviewed the various volunteer opportunities, and are ready to sign up for an event, one person from your organization will “adopt” a volunteer experience for your team by visiting SignUpGenius and signing up for an event.
- Only one person from the team needs to sign up for the event on SignUpGenius. That obligates your organization to recruit the volunteers needed for the event selected. Specific volunteer names & contact info should not be added to the SignUpGenius - you will share that information with JA at a later date.
- Once you have signed up to adopt an event through SignUpGenius, someone from JA's Volunteer Engagement team will contact you to discuss additional details such as scheduling volunteer training, how to share your volunteers' names/contact info, etc.
- To sign up for an event visit the following links:

[JA In Class SignUpGenius](#)

[JA BizTown SignUpGenius](#)

[JA Finance Park SignUpGenius](#)

[JA It's My Business Sign Up Genius](#)

[JA Career Speaker Series Sign Up Genius](#)

What happens after we sign-up for a JA volunteer opportunity?

JA staff will reach out to you shortly to:

- Ask questions and confirm that the volunteer opportunity you have chosen matches both your team's expectations and JA's requirements
- Talk through next steps, which will include a discussion of important deadlines, collecting your volunteers' names and contact information, and may include (depending on the program you've chosen) scheduling trainings, program materials, etc.
- Ensure that you feel comfortable with your commitment and confident in your team's success.

What if I have questions, or am unsure about how to get started?

No problem - we're happy to help! Please reach out to Steph spatton@jacols.org or Andrea akeller@jacols.org.