An Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs program

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED

November 11th 2016

Service Project Guide & Resource Toolkit

Brought to You By:

Table Of Contents

Serve Illinois, in partnership with Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs, is happy to assist you in making Veterans Day in Illinois a day of service by Serving Those Who Served. This guide will provide tools for those committed to honoring veterans on Veterans Day, with helpful resources to accomplish a successful service project.

A successful project possesses many elements. Within this guide you will discover ways to reach out to your community, engage volunteers, and gain recognition of your event.

- About Serving Those Who Served.....3
- How You Can Get Involved.....4
    - Project Examples
    - Grant Opportunities
- Register Your Project Widget.....5
- Engaging Youth, Teachers, and Families.....6
- Informational Calls.....7
- Serving Those Who Served Gear.....8
- Media Template.....9
- Press Release Template.....10
- Project Tips 11

About Serving Those Who Served

Serving Those Who Served is a day of service created to thank service men and women, our veterans, and their families. On November 11th, people all over the state of Illinois will spend the day engaged in volunteer service projects focused on benefiting our heroes!

You, your family, your friends, your church, civic club, scout troop – you name it! – could be a big help to a group of men and women who would never ask for help! Whether it's painting, landscaping, assisting with an event, writing thank you letters to the troops, or visiting our heroes in our Veterans' Homes – WE WANT YOUR HELP!

DISCLAIMER: Volunteering to be part of this statewide program may result in a smiling face, a warm heart, an intense sense of pride knowing that you took part in serving those who served our great nation!

This day will be recognized as a statewide day of service dedicated to serving Illinois veterans. Illinois has an estimated 705,582 veterans according to a 2015 Veteran Affairs census.

Top ten counties highest veteran populations.

County	Rank	Veteran Population	Metro Area
Cook	1	192,445	Chicago & Collar Counties
DuPage	2	39,021	
Will	3	38,964	
Lake	4	34,759	
Kane	7	24,436	
McHenry	9	18,964	
Saint Clair	5	29,441	St. Louis Metro
Madison	6	24,687	
Winnebago	8	20,568	Rockford
Sangamon	10	16,138	Springfield

*Veteran statistics based on Department of Veteran Affairs 2015 Population Census.

How You Can Get Involved

Getting involved is easy! You can host, lead, or volunteer in a Serving Those Who Served Service Project. It doesn't matter if you are a large organization, small group, or just an individual. Serving veterans is the mission of the day, joining efforts to offer thanks is all we want to say!

The most important requirement for this day of service is that it benefits Veterans.

Examples of Veterans Service Project Ideas:

- Volunteer in a VA home
- Host a free meal
- Host a Care Package Drive
- Create Care Packages
- Landscaping/handy work at a local vet service organization
- Collect stuffed animals for "Battalion buddies"
- Letter writing campaign, sending a thank you to troops
- Resume writing with transitioning vets
- Serve Veterans Families
- Follow the Community Blue Print by Points of Light for other ideas!
- Other Ideas

You have the idea, now what? Follow this guide on how to share your project, recruit volunteers, reach out to the media, launch a save the date, utilize social media, and finally successfully see the project through!

Tweet details of your project before during and after using #STWSIL

Mini Grant Opportunities

Chicago Cares will serve as the fiscal agent for this event. They will be offering mini-grants to nonprofit organizations across the state that require resources to conduct a volunteer project on November 11th. Whether an organization needs to purchase paint to revitalize their local VFW Hall, or a church group needs to rent a bus to get to their service project, Chicago Cares will make it easy and accessible for all to participate in this important event. Chicago Cares has the professional resources and experience to facilitate this process, providing critical assistance to our partners across the state.

Register Your Project Widget

The Serving Those Who Served Widget will be available on all partners' websites. This widget will allow project planners to list their projects and recruit additional volunteers if needed. It is important to note that the serving those who served widget is made available through **All For Good.** To register a project you will need to set up an account with them. This will allow volunteers to see your project and get in contact with you to get involved. You are responsible for any screening, training, and tracking of those volunteers as based on your organizations standards.

If you already have a service project planned Look for the Serving Those Who Served Widget, and add your service project for others to volunteer here: Sign up your project, or any of the partner's websites.

If you do not need extra volunteers, please list your project anyway. This is the first Serving Those Who Served Day of Service, it is important to see the impact of this day by locating all the projects across Illinois.

To register a project: Click the post an opportunity button.

Register your organization or sign in if you already have an account.

Once you are signed in, click "opportunities" and then "create an opportunity"

Complete the form and be sure to select "Illinois Veterans Day of Service" under "Is this opportunity associated with a day of service or disaster event?"

Click "create," and you are done!

*If you are looking for an opportunity to join forces you can find more information about service projects near you by following this link: Volunteer for Serving Those Who Served

*Just click the find ways to serve button on the widget!

Youth Involvement

Engage Youth, Teachers, and Families Too!

Reach out to your local schools!
Students can help too!

Have them write thank you letters to troops.
Create art to say Thank you!
Have a care package drive.
Join in on a service Project!

Informational Calls

Want to make sure you are on the right track?

Join Director Jeffries, Assistant Director Sawyer, and Dave MacDonna, all of Department of Veteran Affairs. Scott McFarland with Serve Illinois as well as Jenne Meyers with Chicago cares will also be in attendance for an informative webinar on how to use the widget, apply for a mini grant, and any other questions or concerns.

The webinar will take place

Thursday

August 18, 2016

9:00 A.M CST

To join AT&T Connect Conference:

Click here: https://connect17.uc.att.com/stateofil/meet/?ExEventID=84037150212

For dialing-in only:
---
1. Dial: Toll-Free (in USA): 888-494-4032.
2. When prompted, enter the Meeting Access Code: 4037150212#

For More Information, Please Contact:

Dave MacDonna
217-524-0629
Dave.MacDonna@illinois.Gov

Scott McFarland
Desk: (217) 524-2243
Cell: (217) 685-5930
Scott.McFarland@Illinois.Gov

Serving Those Who Served Gear

Want to support a veteran owned business? Look the part? Have a keepsake?

***Look no further than Rags of Honor , phone number Office: (312)386-5349, for your Serving Those Who Served gear!

***Gear for Serving Those Who Served is optional. It is not required that you purchase the items suggested. This is just a way to enhance the movement, and offer a keepsake for those who participate.

More information on how to directly order your Serving Those Who Served Gear will be announced at a later time.

Media Template

Customize the below media template for your use in getting your project out in the public eye. You can distribute to local media to build awareness and participation for your Serving Those who Served Veterans Day project!

INSERT ORGANIZATION LOGO HERE

MEDIA ALERT FOR SERVING THOSE WHO SERVED DAY OF SERVICE

EXAMPLE HEADLINE: Join Serve Illinois and IL Department of Veterans Affairs in Serving Those Who Served This Veterans Day!

EXAMPLE SUBHEAD: Volunteers all over Illinois are encouraged to honor Illinois Veterans and make this Veterans Day one to remember!

What: SAMPLE TEXT: Volunteers will meet at the Veterans home here in Springfield where they will serve a feast, present artwork made by local students, and offer thanks for their service.

Why: SAMPLE TEXT: Serving Those Who Served will become an annual day of service dedicated to serving Illinois veterans. Our Veterans deserve a thank you every day; but today is their day of recognition. What better ways to say thanks than to serve great food, brighten their day, and offer personal recognition?

When: SAMPLE TEXT: Friday, November 11th, 2016,
.
Where: SAMPLE TEXT: All across Illinois

Who: SAMPLE TEXT: Volunteers across Illinois will band together and serve in service projects benefiting veterans.

Volunteer Program Coordinator, Serve Illinois
• [LIST OTHER VIP PARTICIPANTS]

For more information regarding Serving Those Who Served, please visit [insert your website] or
Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs

INSERT ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION HERE (NAME, PHONE, EMAIL)

Press Release Template

Customize this template to fit your organization and plans, and distribute to local media to build awareness and participation for your event.

SAMPLE HEALDLINE: ORGANIZATION NAME Announces Service Plans for Illinois 2016 Serving Those Who Served Day of Service.

SAMPLE SUBHEAD: Join Us and Thousands of Volunteers Across Illinois to Serve Veterans.

CITY/STATE, MONTH DAY – ORGANIZATION NAME, ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION, today
announced plans to participate In Honoring Veterans Nov. 11th, 2016; which marks the 1st annual Serving Those Who Served Day of Service.
ORGANIZATION NAME is joining IDVA, Serve Illinois, Campus Compact, SVA, Chicago Cares, and Illinois Joining Forces, to engage Illinois in acts of service geared towards aiding veterans through service projects and dialogue all across the state.

INSERT SERVICE PROGRAM OVERVIEW HERE:
WHAT IS TAKING PLACE?
WHERE IS IT HAPPENING?
WHO IS PARTICIPATING?
WHAT IS THE IMPACT?
"INSERT ORGANIZATIONAL QUOTE HERE RE: SERVICE PROJECT AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY ON VETERANS DAY."
INSERT PROGRAM DETAILS HERE: HOW CAN LOCAL VOLUNTEERS LEARN MORE OR GET INVOLVED. (Feel Free to use quote from Director Jeffries below)` `

"Veterans Day is a day set aside to honor the men and women who have served our great nation. On this day of service, we are proud to offer opportunities for Illinoisans of all ages and in every corner of the state to volunteer their service for those who have served. The "Serving Those Who Served" day of service is our opportunity to say 'thank you' to our heroes - the veterans of Illinois," said Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs Director Erica Jeffries.

Serving Those Who Served is a day of service created to thank service men and women, our veterans, and their families. On November 11th, people all over the state of Illinois will spend the day engaged in volunteer service projects focused on benefiting our heroes!
You, your family, your friends, your church, civic club, scout troop – you name it! – could be a big help to a group of men and women who would never ask for help! Whether it's painting, landscaping, assisting with an event, writing thank you letters to the troops, or visiting our heroes in our Veterans' Homes – WE WANT YOUR HELP! Find the Perfect opportunity to honor our Vets!

DISCLAIMER: Volunteering to be part of this statewide program may result in a smiling face, a warm heart, and intense sense of pride knowing that you served Those Who Served our great nation!

Tips

- Call in to the informational webinar/call
- Utilize Social Media
- Send out a Save the Date for your project
- Start early- this is a great way to get organized, and be prepared to meet all the project goals and needs.
- Determine the goals of the project, decide what materials may be needed, create a deadline to have all materials accounted for, decide how many people it may take to implement.
- It may be helpful to create groups to break up the work in sections, organization is key
- Have monthly meetings to track progress, and ensure deadlines are being met
- Reach out to local media and organizations, be excited and let it show in your media and press releases.
- Most Importantly Have Fun!

An Illinois Department of Veterans' Affairs program
SERVING
THOSE WHO
SERVED
SERVE ILLINOIS
NATIONAL & COMMUNITY SERVICE
CHICAGO CARES
IJF
ILLINOIS JOINING FORCES
SVA
Campus Compact
Save The Date
Friday, November 11, 2016
1 Day. 1 Cause. 1 Deed.
Serving Those who Served
By Thanking a Veteran!
Go here to learn more:
http://go.usa.gov/chvkR
Illinois Department of
Veterans' Affairs