

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

*Please note that the suggestions given below have additional forms, information or ideas included in the **TIPS for Successful Projects** section of this notebook with material provided by **The National Retired Teachers' Association, AARP's Educator Community**. **NRTA** ideas are presented below in brief form.*

1. Organize your project by dividing it into elements that help you decide the scope and size of the project: geographically, chronologically, needs, areas of responsibilities.
2. Post and solicit the different kinds of tasks needed by using a **Volunteer Position Description**.
3. Utilize many types of outreach to recruit volunteers to assist such as public speaking opportunities, mass media, special circulation publications, printed flyers, referrals to other organizations, direct mail, booths and exhibits.
4. Conduct well-organized planning meetings taking steps to insure that everyone feels a part of the group whether they are or not.
5. Explore the various communication formats about the project that you need to have with both internal and external audience. (see more extensive discussion in Tips section)
6. Develop elevator statements when eliciting support from external sources.
7. Publicize your event from start to finish, enlisting additional volunteers to attend planning meetings all the way to providing a series of announcements throughout the conduct of the campaign.
8. Utilize the NRTA elements of a good press release and sample release in Tips section of this notebook.
9. Develop a variety of methods to thank and recognize the efforts of the volunteers.

ATTRACTING NEW RTA MEMBERS THROUGH COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

REMEMBER RESEARCH ON BOOMERS SUGGESTS THAT THEY OFTEN WANT TO BELONG TO ORGANIZATIONS THAT SERVE THE LOCAL OR LARGER COMMUNITY.

1. Have a standard sign-in at the event. Collect contact info.
2. Follow-up with prospects quickly after an event. Thank them for coming and invite them to an RTA event.
3. Encourage members to bring guests-especially retired educators-to volunteer events.
4. Have membership materials and your RTA banner at every community service project with information about your unit and state applications for NYSRTA.
5. If you do a project with another community group, ask if you can speak to their members about your organization, post a notice for an upcoming meeting in their newsletter or provide them with some brochures about the RTA to share with their members. After all, many community members have relatives or friends who are educators. Develop that network!
6. Choose to support community service projects that will appeal to the people that you want to attract as members. Partner with some high profile organizations to maximize publicity.
7. If you have attracted new volunteers to help you, be sure to follow up with recognition of their effort and to learn more about how else they might like to be involved.