

Why you should volunteer

By Richard Diaz

I want to speak for a moment on why volunteering is important. Often the efforts of volunteers become so goal-oriented (complete this show, pull off this event), that the spirit of volunteerism can be forgotten. At MVCC we are occasionally at fault for this, but I think all the heartfelt thank-you's in the world wouldn't matter if you don't realize why you are needed and what you gain from the experience.

You're needed because you have a skill. Whether it's baking cookies, smiling after 8 hours at a raffle booth, or running a camcorder after taking the Basic TV class, you can do something others can't. One example we see often is the large amount of school events taped by parents, who have the right heart but no real concept of producing a video. No matter how seemingly mundane or trivial, you have abilities that community groups and charities need.

You provide a unique experience and insight to a group or organization. Offering your thoughts and opinions can be as useful as any technical expertise. At MVCC, one of our strongest features is the diversity of our people -volunteers and staff.

Non-Profit organizations and clubs rely on help from the community to achieve their goals; there IS one that matches your interests. www.VolunteerMatch.org is a good place to start. That may be obvious, but what's not is how amazingly little video savvy most non-profits have. You have the ability to significantly effect an organization by showing their community involvement and impact, providing an avenue for an unfiltered message, and promoting awareness. You can offer all that, delivered to over 40,000 homes, and all the equipment and airtime is free!

But just as importantly, at MVCC, individual producers need your help. We empower our producers to express their vision and convey it at the grass roots level through us. But a successful video employs a team concept, and for that we need you.

I'm not going to expound on the obvious benefits of volunteering - the friendships you'll make, the memories you'll have, the sense of accomplishment you'll feel, and in MVCC's case, a viewable reminder of your efforts. But I can't think of a better way to meet people, achieve something, and have fun doing so, than volunteering.

I'll step off my soapbox now...but I do want to finish with a quote I use, both as a guide to life, and to get my butt off the couch and help someone: "Our legacy as a person is defined through the memories of others."