

the Akaa. project

*Creating Opportunity for Families
in the Eastern Region of Ghana*

Using Volunteer Experience on a Resume

Creating a resume is an essential part of the college and job application process. Many institutions recommend or require seeing volunteer experience on an applicant's resume.

The Akaa Project is powered by volunteers so we have extensive experience in working to ensure volunteers can make the most of their experience. We have created a guide to including volunteer experience information on your resume.

In this guide, we will cover:

- Why colleges and employers care about volunteer experience
- How to organize a resume and how to include volunteer participation.

Why do colleges and employers care about volunteer experience?

Michigan State University: “As youth make choices about how to spend their out-of-school time, it is often helpful to think about the life skills they will be learning through various activities or experiences. [Volunteering] can give youth opportunities not only to learn, but also to gain confidence and competence in skills that will help them later on in the job market.”



Helping Others

While volunteering can take many forms, helping those in need is usually a top priority in any activity. Volunteering with organizations that provide aid or service to individuals and communities in need show colleges and employers that you are willing to help others and would be a great asset to their office or school.

Volunteering as a requirement

Sometimes your high school or college may have a graduation requirement that includes a certain number of volunteer hours. Colleges and employers want to see that you can meet requirements and have made an effort to contribute toward your future!

Comfort Zone

By volunteering, you can also demonstrate and experience stepping outside your comfort zone. You will develop skills in adaptability, conversation and diversity.



Colorado State University: “Volunteer projects and programs teach life skills. Communication, citizenship, decision-making, leadership, interpersonal relations, and community/global awareness are central to volunteer participation in community activities. These skills help prepare people for their next steps, whether in school or the workplace.”

How to organize volunteer experience on a resume

Organizing your resume is extremely important! It should look neat and organized, and we suggest you organize your resume by importance. This way, colleges and employers can read the resume fluidly, they will begin by reading the most important information, and if they only have time for a quick glance at your resume their eyes will be drawn to the highlighted, bolded and first items – which is the important stuff! It is up to you how you want to categorize your resume (especially depending on your industry) but we suggest the following.

1. Education
2. Honors and Awards
3. Work Experience and Leadership
4. Volunteer Experience
5. Extracurricular Activities

Resumes should generally be 1 page. If needed, it should be 1 page, doubled sided, but no more than that! We certainly don't recommend this:

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**“We’re a big company with big ideas,
and by gosh, I really like your big résumé!”**

More tips

Keep a written record of your volunteering

Keep track of hours and dates you volunteered, deadlines you met, problems you have faced and how you overcame them, your decision making process, and a description of your volunteer position duties. With this record you can transfer information (hours, position, descriptions, etc.) directly to your resume. You will also have this information readily available to add to any other applications.

Focus on more recent activities and accomplishments

If you are a college graduate or currently enrolled in college, focus on your collegiate career rather than on what you did in high school.

Use bullet points instead of paragraphs

Because people tend to scan resumes, bullet points make it easier for readers to pull out the important information and make it more appealing to the eye.

List your volunteer positions by importance

While chronological order is a good idea for most of a resume, you want colleges and employers to see what you thought was the most important of your volunteering. Take pride in your accomplishments!

Include volunteering timeframe

As with most of your activities on your resume, make sure to include the amount of time you volunteered. For example: March 2013 to August 2013, or March 2013 to present.

Be true to your work

Don't lie or embellish your experience. Instead, reflect on what you actually learned and who you impacted and write about that.



Sample Resume 1

Curriculum Vitae/Resume
John Smith
Master of Arts in Education

Lisa M. Smith

123 Street Road
City, STATE 01234

(123)456-7890

██████████@gmail.com

EDUCATION

The College of Wooster, Wooster, OH

Communication Studies Major, graduated May 13, 2013 Cum Laude, Departmental Honors, Lambda Pi Eta

Senior Independent Study: *Ears, Hooks, Hunchbacks and Fins: An Ideological Analysis of Physical Disability in Disney's Animated Films*, year-long research project resulted in a 98 page thesis paper and a successful oral defense

HONORS AND AWARDS

Dean's List at The College of Wooster for three consecutive semesters, 2009-2010, as well as additional semesters in 2011 and 2012.

Lambda Pi Eta at The College of Wooster, Communication Studies Honor Society, 2010

3.684 Cumulative GPA, Cum Laude, Departmental Honors, 2013

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS AND VOLUNTEER WORK

The Underground The College of Wooster

March 2010 to Present

Inventory Manager

Part of management team which is liaison between managers and staff members

Primary employee in charge of ordering and keeping inventory of merchandise

Work closely with faculty supervisor along with other members of Wooster faculty

Alpha Gamma Phi (Local Sorority) The College of Wooster

March 2011 to Present

Vice President

Elected as Vice President for two consecutive years

Participate on an executive cabinet that makes decisions for the sorority

Served as liaison between the group and the school administration

Planned and executed all social and charitable events for the group

The Akaa Project The College of Wooster, Village of Akaa in Ghana

2011 to Present

Volunteer and Student Team Leader

Traveled to Ghana as a volunteer in remote village of Akaa

Taught in village school, helped villagers with micro-finance initiatives through The Akaa Project (501(c)3 non-profit)

Co-lead a team of students involved in The Akaa Project for 2012-2013 school year

Returned to village in December 2012 and continued progress in community school and other initiatives

City on a Hill II Charter Public School Roxbury, MA

August 12, 2013 to August 2014

Lead Tutor

One year contract to tutor freshman students in English and Mathematics

Work in an urban charter public school in Roxbury, MA (Dudley Square)

Lead tutor responsibilities include tutoring a full schedule of students as well as supervising and assisting a team of 7 tutors in lesson planning, behavior management, and collaborative brainstorming

COLLEGIATE EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Varsity Field Hockey, Co-Captain, Four year letter-winner,

All North Coast Athletic Conference, All Great Lakes Regional

"After These Messages" Acapella Choir, Music Director

Education Field Placements

Communications Club Member

the
Akaa.
project

Sample Resume 2

Watson Turtleby

123 Street, State ZIP | (XXX) XXX-XXXX | XXXX@gmail.com

Summary

After acquiring a bachelor's degree in neuroscience I have decided to enter the field of healthcare as a nurse-midwife and plan to work in medically underserved areas in the U.S. and internationally.

Education

The College of Wooster, Liberal Arts (2009-2013)

Bachelor's Degree in Neuroscience

North Oldham High School, Magna Cum Laude, 2009

Research

- Thesis: "The Effect of Intergroup Contact on Reaction Time and Implicit Associations: A Study of The Other-Race Effect"

Relevant Coursework

- Medical Anthropology, Behavioral Neuroscience (with lab), Human Neuropsychology, Cellular Neuroscience (with lab), General Chemistry (with labs), Organic Chemistry (with labs), Human Physiology, Psychology of Women and Gender, Physics, Statistics

Volunteer Experience

The Akaa Project (August 2010-present)

- Three service trips to Akaa, Ghana with the Akaa Project, a non-profit organization that works with rural families to create educational, financial and healthcare opportunities.
- Assisted Healthcare Coordinator in a medical needs assessment, health initiative development and stomach de-worming.
- Oversaw development of sustainable initiatives in Akaa community, including pig farm and digging two borehole water wells which gave clean water to 400 people.
- Lead College of Wooster student Akaa Project group on campus. Worked collaboratively with 20 peers to coordinate events, increase awareness and organize service trips.

Kosair Children's Hospital (June 2007-August 2008)

- Assisted patients and families during their stay at the hospital and held infants in the NICU.

Americorps Summer VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America) (Summer 2012)

- 10 week employment through The Community Builders in a low income housing community. Worked in the community center and developed an educational curriculum specifically designed to mitigate summer learning loss in active and fun ways.
- Daily supervision of 35-40 children ages 4 to 17 years old.

STEPS Mentor (October-November 2011)

- Weekly mentor to a local high school student (with a focus on substance abuse prevention).

Work Experience

College of Wooster Student Employee (2010-present)

- Announce lacrosse games, call field hockey recruits, manager of the Women's Athletic and Recreational Association concession stand.

Day Camp Counselor (June 2010- August 2011)

State Farm Secretary (2010)



Volunteer with the Akaa Project

In and out of Ghana, we are powered by volunteers and need your help!

Learn more at:

www.theakaaproject.org/volunteer

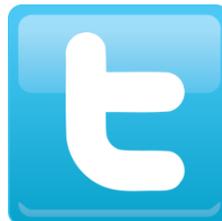
For more resources visit:

www.theakaaproject.org/resources

Have a suggestion for our next resource or a question?

We want to hear from you! [Contact us](#)

Connect, Share and Learn with Us:



The Akaa Project is a non-profit organization creating opportunity in the Eastern Region of Ghana. We work with the Akaa community on educational, financial and healthcare initiatives that impact 100 children and 300 adults. [Make a difference today.](#)