Program Guide 2011–2012
Dear fellow New Yorker,

Congratulations on taking the first step toward making a difference in our city and becoming one of the thousands of other like-minded New Yorkers who care.

It always impresses me to see the impact one volunteer can make. Changing the face of New York City and supporting 400,000 at-risk New Yorkers is no small task, but through the help of our growing family of 54,000 volunteers and 1,200 Community Partners, New York Cares is accomplishing just that. Every day, we make this happen by connecting New Yorkers who are dedicated to making a difference with a Community Partner who needs additional resources.

Our long-standing partnership with Homes for the Homeless is a perfect example of our collaborative approach to supporting our city. Every week, April Frazier, Family Program Coordinator for Homes for the Homeless, works hand-in-hand with a team of 10 New York Cares volunteers to improve the financial health of women in need by teaching them how to create budgets and conducting savings and spending training. Since partnering with New York Cares in 2005, this Community Partner has been able to significantly increase its weekly programming and provide extra support through a variety of volunteer projects, such as our Book Club and Play and Read.

Another great example is Jenny Benitez, who is the chief gardener of the Riverside Valley Community Garden (but everyone really calls it Jenny’s Garden). Jenny’s Garden used to be a vacant lot, but because of her ongoing dedication and the crop of New York Cares volunteers that assist her each season, her garden continues to blossom year after year with plums, berries, flowers and veggies.

With your dedication and commitment, you, too, can take your every day passions and use them to help change people’s lives, either by joining us as a volunteer or as a Community Partner, or both! From keeping senior citizens company to teaching children healthy eating habits, our Program Guide provides numerous ways that you can begin writing your own success story and begin making a bigger and greater difference in New York City today.

Thanks for committing your time, heart and talents to improving our city. I can’t wait to see you at a project soon.

Meghan Moloney
Senior Director, Programs
Our mission is simple:
New York Cares meets pressing community needs by mobilizing caring New Yorkers in volunteer service.

Founded in 1987 by a group of friends who wanted to take action against social issues facing the city, New York Cares provides vital volunteer support to nonprofits, city agencies and public schools — our Community Partners. Each volunteer team we deploy is led by a volunteer Team Leader, who ensures the quality of our projects and extends the reach of our staff. As a result, we place books in the hands of more children, revitalize more parks and gardens and secure more tax refunds for low-income New Yorkers.

By allowing our Community Partners to outsource volunteer management to New York Cares, we bridge the gap between our partners’ needs and the New Yorkers who want to give back — helping to address the city’s critical issues.

When Jazmine Waller joined New York Cares’ Tax Prep and Financial Literacy programs in the spring of 2011, she had never had much of an opportunity to save for the future.

Through the collaboration of New York Cares’ volunteers and our long-standing Community Partner, Ariva, Jazmine secured an astounding $6,800 in tax refunds this year, including $4,800 in Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) dollars. This is money that will go a long way in supporting her growing family.

As a working parent making only $9,000 a year, it is difficult to make ends meet, let alone save any money to provide for my three children,” said Jazmine. “Thanks to New York Cares volunteers I not only secured a tax refund, but I was also able to invest $500 in a savings account, guaranteeing that in one year I will have an extra $250 to put toward my children’s future.”

Jazmine’s story is a perfect example of the powerful impact our volunteers and Community Partners can have on the lives of every New Yorker. Learn more about the team of caring New Yorkers who helped make a difference in Jazmine’s life.

“Tax preparation and financial literacy at Ariva give low-income adults the tools they need to begin to save for their families’ future.”
— Andrew Perricone-Dazzo, Officer, Adult Education Programs
New York Cares Staff Member for 3 years

“Transforming New York City: NEW YORK CARES’ MISSION”

Transforming New Yorkers’ Lives

“New York Cares’ Story”

Volunteer Team Leader

“The free tax preparation service we provide to the community makes such a huge difference in the lives of so many New Yorkers. It is an amazing feeling to see our clients’ faces light up after telling them they will receive money back for them and their families.”

— Jim Wong, Volunteer Team Leader
New York Cares Volunteer for 11 years

Community Partner

“In 2011, Ariva filed more than 7,000 free tax returns, returning almost $12 million in total refunds to struggling parents like Jazmine. We simply could not make such a big impact without the support of the New York Cares staff and volunteers.”

— Diana Breen, Executive Director, Ariva
New York Cares Community Partner for 4 years

New York Cares

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New York Cares Staff Member for 3 years

Transforming New Yorkers’ Lives
Are you interested in becoming one of the 54,000 volunteers who change the face of this city every day? Earn the badge of honor as a volunteer, and wear it with pride as you donate your time to bettering the lives of seniors, enhancing children’s education and providing homeless families with food and support.

Follow these three simple steps to become a New York Cares volunteer, and begin giving back to your community today.

1. Be Inspired.
   Attend one of the forty orientations New York Cares holds each month throughout the city’s five boroughs.

2. Take Action.
   Register online for a project that inspires you.

3. Make a Difference.
   Roll up your sleeves, and show you are a proud New Yorker who cares by volunteering today.

Meet the Volunteer Relations Team

Have a question about orientation? Can’t remember your password? Want to become a Team Leader?

Our Volunteer Relations team is always on site and ready to answer any questions you might have. Additionally, our dedicated team looks forward to getting your feedback about your experience with New York Cares, as well as any suggestions you might have for making your project run more smoothly.

For more information, contact 212.402.1101 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Meet the Community Partner Relations Team

Looking for ways to increase your programming? Want to expand your impact on the community? Looking to combat budget cuts by growing your other resources?

Contact a member of New York Cares’ Community Partner Relations team, and we will work with you to provide the volunteer power necessary to meet all of your programming requirements.

For more information, contact 212.402.1127 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Are you a Volunteer or Community Partner?
Programs Serving Children

From education to recreation, our projects inspire the next generation of New Yorkers to live healthier and happier lives.

Keeping Kids Fit...

PROJECT: Sports and Fitness
Volunteers keep kids healthy by engaging them in yoga.

Children’s Education

Young students expand their minds and broaden their horizons through one-on-one tutoring and hands-on learning activities.

Read to Me (Ages 5–12)
New York Cares volunteers embark on a literary journey with children who are homeless or living in low-income neighborhoods by introducing them to their local libraries and expanding their imaginations through the world of reading. Each project concludes with a fun, interactive activity.
Sign Up: Year-round

Bedtime Stories (Ages 5–12)
Storytellers and creative thinkers read books and do crafts with children living in homeless shelters and low-income communities. This provides enriching experiences for some of New York City’s most in-need children and opens their minds to the wonders of the written word.
Sign Up: Year-round

Computer Tutorials (Ages 5–12)
Volunteers provide students from low-income communities with the skills and resources they need to cruise smoothly down the information highway. Students learn how to use such programs as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint and join their families to learn how to navigate a home computer for the first time.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: Year-round

Family Literacy (Ages 5–12 and Adults)
Families grow their love of reading together during this innovative literacy project. Volunteers collaborate with children and their parents to enhance basic skills, engage in paired reading and complete literacy-based games and activities.
Sign Up: September — May

Morning Reading (Ages 6–9)
Volunteers spend their mornings inspiring a new generation of bookworms. Elementary school students gain confidence and expand their love of literature by reading with their peers and adult volunteers.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August — October and December — January
Math Games (Ages 8–11)
Students plus volunteers equal a formula for fun during this project that focuses on using interactive games, such as Flash Card Races, Fraction Bingo and Math Memory, to get kids excited about math. Activities reinforce important math concepts in an easy and engaging way and build students’ confidence in their mathematical abilities.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August — October; December — January; and June

Bank It! (Ages 8–12)
From piggy banks to bank accounts, young New Yorkers learn the importance of saving for their future. Project highlights include studying the basics of banking and budgeting, as well as researching future career options.
Sign Up: September — April

Lego Robotics (Ages 8–13)
Students enter the innovative world of robotics engineering through our new Lego Robotics program. Students learn about construction and problem solving by working on guided projects or creating their very own robot masterpieces.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August — October; December — January; and June

Mad Scientists (Ages 8–13)
Students dissect the basic skills of science during this project that focuses on applying science to the real world through activities such as making volcanoes, testing kites and building bridges.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August — October; December — January; and June

Team Green (Ages 8–13)
Volunteers grow the city’s next generation of green thumbs by teaching students why the environment is so important in a large city like ours. Activities encourage discussion and challenge students to come up with practical solutions to today’s environmental issues.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August — October; December — January; and June

Homework Help (Ages 8–18)
Struggling elementary, middle or high school students rise to the top of the class as they gain skills to achieve success in school, on standardized tests and beyond the classroom. Students work one-on-one with volunteers who are knowledgeable and passionate about a variety of subjects, such as science, math, reading and writing.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August — October and December — January (Subject toAvailability)

Young Authors (Ages 9–15)
Elementary and middle school students try their hand at becoming New York City’s next must-read author by writing poetry, prose, short stories, songs and memoirs. Students experience a much-needed break from the traditional school day as they unlock the creative writer within.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August — October and December — January

Career Explorations (Ages 10–15)
College graduates and professionals share their educational and career experiences with middle school students and help them develop their future goals. Students learn how their schoolwork and achievements in high school affect their future success in the classroom and beyond.
Sign Up: School Year

Sophomore Skills (Ages 14–16)
High school sophomores work hand-in-hand with a team of volunteers to strengthen their basic math, reading and writing skills, resulting in an enhanced understanding and performance in these core subjects and improved scores on Regents and SAT exams. At the end of this project, students will have taken another crucial step in their path towards a college education.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: December — January

SAT Prep (Ages 16–18)
Students take part in an eight-month SAT course to strengthen their test-taking skills and increase their chances of getting into the college of their choice. With the help of dedicated volunteer tutors, last year’s students increased their average score by more than 250 points. Every tutor receives five hours of comprehensive training to effectively tutor small groups of two to three students for the duration of the school year. For more information, contact kaplan.prep@newyorkcares.org.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: Training begins in August and September

College 101 (Ages 17–19)
Volunteers relive the glory days of college as they share their experiences and provide high school students with a glimpse into the wonderful world of higher education. Students learn how to prepare for their first year of college through a facilitated panel discussion and have the opportunity to address questions and concerns they have about the process.
Sign Up: School Year

College Preparation (Ages 17–19)
Volunteers guide high school seniors through the college application process and help them prepare successful admission applications. Our volunteers meet weekly with eager students to narrow down college choices, complete applications, craft personal statements, secure letters of recommendation and successfully transition into college life.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: August and September

FAFSA Preparation (Ages 17–19)
Volunteers work with high school seniors to turn their college dreams into reality by helping them secure financial aid. Trained by financial aid experts, our volunteers assist families with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and supplemental financial aid applications.
Multi-Session Commitment
Sign Up: November and December

Promoting Environmentalism...

PROJECT: Team Green
Volunteers inspire the next generation of budding environmentalists.
Children’s Recreation

Children experience New York City’s cultural side through field trips, keep fit through exercise and nutritional education and enjoy just being a kid by playing games and participating in arts and crafts.

Art Explorers (Ages 6–12)
Children embrace their creative side through a variety of art-based activities, including dance, music, theater, photography, craft projects and other specialized workshops.
Sign Up: Year-round

Healthy Eating (Ages 6–12)
Adults train children to be New York City’s next Top Chef by teaching them how to create healthy meals for themselves and their families with food they can get from their very own neighborhood.
Sign Up: Year-round

Sports and Fitness (Ages 6–14)
Children run and play their way to a healthier future by participating in outdoor and indoor games, such as kickball, dodgeball, tennis and basketball.
Sign Up: Year-round

Snacktivities (Ages 6–14)
From making strawberry ladybugs to vegetable flowers, students explore the possibilities of food and learn about healthy food options. At the end of each activity, students enjoy tasty, non-cooked lunches or snacks.
Sign Up: Year-round

Urban Adventures (Ages 8–16)
Low-income and homeless children explore new worlds and opportunities through monthly adventures, such as rock climbing, ice skating, bowling, visiting museums and more. Please note: Due to the expense of these projects, volunteers may be asked to cover the cost of their admission to the venue.
Sign Up: Year-round

Exploring New York City...

PROJECT: Urban Adventures
Volunteers introduce children to the “wilds” of New York City.

Children with Special Needs

Children with special needs receive the care and attention they deserve through a range of active, engaging and enjoyable activities. (Also see: Adults with Special Needs.)

In-house Recreation (Ages 6–18)
Children or students with special needs take their imagination to new heights and get creative through hands-on arts and crafts projects. They also discover their inner chef by preparing simple meals to enjoy with volunteers.
Sign Up: September – June (subject to availability)

Education Programs (Ages 6–18)
Volunteers expand the minds of students and help them get ahead in school or prepare for post-school activities. Projects include tutoring school subjects, helping with homework, preparing for state exams or writing college essays.
Sign Up: Year-round

Recreational Outings (Ages 6–18)
Each month, children join volunteers in exploring the wild side of New York City by participating in rock climbing trips, visiting museums or the zoo, bowling and much more.
Sign Up: October – June

Sports and Fitness (Ages 6–18)
Volunteers help students stay fit and active through structured activities such as yoga and therapeutic horseback riding, as well as through open-ended sports, games or swimming sessions.
Sign Up: September – June
Programs Serving Adults

Adults get back on their feet and start new lives as they work with volunteers to plan for better and brighter futures.

1. Citizenship through English
   - Immigrants take their first step toward achieving the American dream by preparing for their U.S. citizenship exam. Volunteers instruct and quiz participants on U.S. history, which will enable them to practice their English conversational skills and learn the information they need to pass the exam.
   - Multi-Session Commitment.
   - Sign Up: September, January, April and July

2. English Conversation Partners
   - Volunteers chat with adult immigrants to help them develop their English language skills. Through these one-on-one conversations, participants improve their ability to navigate their daily lives and gain skills that are critical to their success.
   - Sign Up: September, January, April and July

3. Computer Tutorials
   - Volunteers open the doors to a new digital world and work with New Yorkers in need to explore all that computers have to offer. Participants’ confidence grows as they begin the project not knowing how to use a mouse and leave with the ability to send and receive emails.
   - Sign Up: Year-round

4. Volunteer Tax Preparation
   - Each year, volunteer tax preparers help reclaim millions of dollars for the New Yorkers who need it most. Volunteers receive comprehensive training through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, prepare tax returns for struggling New Yorkers and make a direct and lasting impact during the process. Please note: All volunteers are provided with a mandatory online course and training.
   - Multi-Session Commitment.
   - Sign Up: October – December

5. Financial Literacy
   - New York professionals share their career expertise and personal experiences to help New Yorkers become financially savvy. Participants explore effective strategies to make ends meet, such as opening a bank account, creating a budget, paying for college and avoiding predatory lending practices. At the end of this project, adults and their families will have the tools to make informed and effective financial decisions now and in the future.
   - Multi-Session Commitment.
   - Sign Up: Year-round
Adult Recreation

Adults living in homeless and transitional shelters get social through a variety of activities. Whether it’s knitting, dancing or going on a cultural outing, these adults get the most out of our volunteer support.

In-house Recreation
Formerly homeless adults learn about the importance of teamwork, while volunteers provide much-needed positive social interaction. Project highlights include knitting, dancing, playing sports and taking part in other cultural activities to provide recreation and exercise.
Sign Up: Year-round

Adults with Special Needs

Adults with special needs receive much-needed attention through recreational and educational activities. (Also see: Children with Special Needs.)

In-house Recreation
Volunteers provide company to adults with special needs by competing in Bingo tournaments, knitting hats and scarves, making jewelry and more.
Sign Up: Year-round

Job Readiness
Unemployed or underemployed adults gain a competitive edge in the job market by joining volunteers to revise resumes, write compelling cover letters, practice interview skills and conduct online job searches.
Sign Up: Year-round

Parenting Club
Parents share their experiences and socialize with other single parents during this open discussion, which focuses on a different topic each session. During the project, participants create a related craft activity for children.
Sign up: Year-round

Seniors

Seniors, who otherwise might have no one, are visited by volunteers and are encouraged to dance, read, participate in crafts and more. (Also see: Meal Programs and Health and Wellness.)

Arts Programs
Seniors rediscover the artist within by painting, knitting and doing imaginative arts and crafts.
Sign Up: Year-round

Fun and Games
Volunteers join seniors to play exciting table games, hit high notes and high kicks in sing-a-longs and dances and share enjoyable conversations over coffee and during social hours.
Sign Up: Year-round

Reading Programs
Volunteers encourage seniors to share prose, poetry and reflections on current events to keep their minds active and engaged.
Sign Up: Year-round

Teaching Computer Skills...

PROJECT: Computer Tutorials
Volunteers provide vital computer skills to seniors and struggling New Yorkers.


Programs Serving Adults
Volunteers revitalize public spaces, schools, parks and gardens to instill a sense of community pride.

Community Gardens
Volunteers spread the green by maintaining local community gardens throughout New York City. Project highlights include raking, weeding, edging and planting.
Sign Up: April – November

Parks Revitalization
Each year, volunteers spruce up the grounds at some of New York City’s largest parks. Project highlights include planting, weeding and maintaining these green spaces.
Sign Up: April – November

Love a Library
New Yorkers revitalize important learning spaces in schools and nonprofit organizations by cataloging and shelving books, bar coding and rearranging furniture.
Sign Up: Year-round

Painting Projects
Throughout the year, schools, community centers and nonprofits receive a much-needed face lift through the painting of murals and walls, adding of line games to children’s play areas and cleaning and organizing of libraries and storage rooms.
Sign Up: Year-round

Recycling
Volunteers reduce New York City’s carbon footprint by working with a variety of green organizations to recycle plastic, paper, e-waste, clothing and textiles. NOTE: Items are usually donated to needy agencies or recycled depending on the event.
Sign Up: Year-round

Sorting Clothes
From baby socks to men’s coats, low-income families and homeless men, women and children in need receive donated clothing. Project highlights include repairing, sorting and organizing clothing.
Sign Up: Year-round

Sorting Materials
Volunteers give back by sorting and packaging donated materials, such as groceries for clients at a food pantry, art supplies for schools or books that will be sold to benefit individuals living with HIV/AIDS.
Sign Up: Year-round
Care for Cats
Shelter cats are given new hope as volunteers socialize with them until they find new homes. Project highlights include playing with cats and restocking, cleaning and maintaining cages as needed.
Sign Up: Year-round

Dog Walking
Volunteers give dogs awaiting adoption attention at shelters or mobile adoptions to increase their chances of finding loving homes. They also help restock, clean and maintain the shelters as needed.
Sign Up: Year-round

Animal Care
New York City’s four-legged friends receive the attention and exercise they need, while they wait to be welcomed into new homes.

Meal Programs
Whether it is serving food or providing companionship, volunteers participating in our meal programs support thousands of New Yorkers each year. (Also see: Programs Serving Adults.)

Meal Delivery
Homebound individuals enjoy a hot, home-cooked meal on the weekend from dedicated volunteers who assemble and deliver meals with a smile.
Sign Up: Year-round

Health and Wellness
Volunteers connect with children and adults in hospitals and assisted living facilities to lift their spirits, while brightening their day. (Also see: Programs Serving Adults.)

HIV/AIDS
Volunteers brighten the everyday lives of New Yorkers in need by hosting parties, preparing and delivering meals and giving participants an outlet through art and playing board games at independent living centers and hospitals.
Sign Up: Year-round

Hospitals and Assisted Living Homes
Adults enjoy better days by receiving much-needed companionship. Volunteers challenge them in the latest Wii game, throw a hopping birthday celebration, serve a delicious brunch or make personal greeting cards to put smiles on their faces.
Sign Up: Year-round

Meal Preparation and Service
Volunteers meet a basic need by preparing and serving nourishing meals to hungry and homeless men and women at soup kitchens across the city.
Sign Up: Year-round

Meal Programs Plus
Hungry men, women and children receive food as volunteers prepare and serve nutritious meals, and then stay after to socialize through games and friendly conversation.
Sign Up: Year-round

Helping Sort Clothes...

PROJECT: Sorting Clothes
Volunteers hang, tag and organize clothing to be sold to help provide critical funds for homeless New Yorkers.
Community Partner Profile: Hudson Guild

Twelve years.
Fifteen ongoing volunteer projects.
Thousands of New Yorkers served...

This is the partnership that New York Cares is proud to share with Hudson Guild — a community center serving those who live, work or go to school in Chelsea.

For more than a decade, New York Cares has been recruiting volunteers to support Hudson Guild’s Children and Youth Service initiatives. Projects that are offered each week include on-site tutoring, SAT instruction and recreational and fitness activities.

Hudson Guild’s Creative Arts Coordinator Jennifer Johnson is continually impressed with the level of excellence and diversity of New York Cares’ volunteers. “Having volunteers from various walks of life is an added benefit to working with New York Cares,” said Jennifer. “This type of integration allows volunteers and students to interact with one another in a way that they might not be able to otherwise. It really is incredible.”

With the help of New York Cares, Hudson Guild’s programming has significantly expanded. Instead of 2 to 3 adults serving large groups of students, volunteers can now provide specialized, one-on-one tutoring to each student. The result: school children greatly benefit from dedicated, individualized volunteer time and become more engaged in their education.

“Being a Team Leader and helping kids stay fit through volunteering with New York Cares and Hudson Guild has had a profound effect on me personally,” said Brianne Blessing. “Words can’t explain the thrill I get when I not only teach a kid the importance of living healthy, but also empower them to continue living healthy.”

New York Cares is delighted to support the mission of Hudson Guild and looks forward to working with volunteers, such as Brianne, to ensure that more projects get completed and more New York City children benefit from the power of volunteerism.

In addition to the 14,000 flexible volunteer opportunities New York Cares offers each year, we also run two large-scale volunteer days and two holiday volunteer programs.

April
New York Cares Day
Volunteer for the Environment
New York City gets a good spring greening on New York Cares Day Spring.
Sponsored by HSBC Bank USA, N.A.

October
New York Cares Day
Volunteer for Schools
Thousands of New Yorkers come together to revitalize more than 100 public schools on New York Cares Day Fall.

October – December
Winter Wishes
Holiday wishes come true for thousands of in-need children through New York Cares’ Winter Wishes program.
Sponsored by Robert Pohly and Julie Turaj, 

November – December
Coat Drive
Cold New Yorkers receive the gift of warmth through New York Cares’ Annual Coat Drive.
Sponsored by Health Plus.
Donate today

Support your city by investing in New York Cares. Every dollar donated to New York Cares results in $6 of service being provided to the community through the power of our 54,000 volunteers — resulting in 400,000 in-need New Yorkers being served each year.

Help us keep that number growing.
Make a donation today!