**VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT TIPS**

**Prepare**

* Assess your team’s needs – what roles need to be filled and what tasks your team needs some more help with?
* Use the Volunteer Growth Plan document to start. Next, follow up by utilizing the Team Guide for Volunteer Engagement. Leave spots empty if the right volunteer is not there to fill a spot.

**Have a Conversation**

* Be specific in your ask. Share a simple and clear description of the task you are asking someone to volunteer for.
* Ask people personally as opposed to putting an "all call" out.
* Focus on the benefits that come with volunteering for the specific task. Don't focus on the desperation of needing someone to fill a spot.
* Make a specific ask for a task the team needs help with.
* Have the new volunteer first help an experienced volunteer. Support them as they take on the task both by providing feedback, encouragement and with additional resources.
* Keep in mind that other people may enjoy a volunteer task that you yourself do not enjoy!
* Organize an in-person gathering - a Call-a-Thon to potential volunteers. Provide speaking scripts and tips to make it easier.

**Seek Current Volunteer Engagement**

* Recruit people who may have said “no” in the past - their life circumstances or interests may a have changed and they are now able to volunteer, or a different task may be a better fit.
* Bring all Host Family members into the leadership team. Invite and then mentor them. Find your Team Host Family contacts in MyAFS.
* Ask "departing" volunteers if they would like to be engaged "part time" or fill a role that does not require as many hours.
* Dig deeper into your registered but not currently engaged or less active volunteer list
* Ask more than once! Schedules may not permit people to commit to a task at first. Keep in contact and keep searching for that perfect opportunity for the individual.
* If you used email as the first means to reach out, please know that it will take a few phone calls to follow up. People are more likely to respond if asked personally.
* Don't ask new volunteers to take on roles but ask them if they would help complete specific tasks. They will learn from you and become more engaged.

**Integrate in Team Activities, Meetings, Events**

* Be sure to make your needs clear by asking all volunteers and host families to give a hand to help with tasks.
* Hold learning/info events for volunteers. Make it fun, share stories and facts about AFS.
* Offer a local training (with refreshments!) for tasks your team needs filled. Invite all registered volunteers.
* People like and need to understand just exactly what they would be asked to do. Be ready to describe the task with appropriate level of detail. It may not seem as daunting if they understand what the task involves.
* Set up an Intercultural Activity Night that engages the attendees in activities:
  1. Spin the wheel and win an AFS giveaway prize
  2. Take a short quiz
  3. Teach/learn an app for their phone like Google Translate
  4. Gather contact information and follow up with a contact with another Intercultural tidbit and invitation to become involved with your team.
  5. Have a Game Night. Make an AFS-themed Jeopardy Game using a free online program. Play the game with a mixed team of friends who are both registered volunteers and not current volunteers.
* Ask established volunteers to bring a friend to help at events or activities open to the public. Give a prize to volunteers who bring along a new face.

**Use Social and Print Media**

* Run an ad or write an article for the local paper talking about AFS. Highlight a participant, talk about someone who’s currently on program or about an event your team is currently working on.
* Use SignUpGenius
* Subscribe to volunteer message boards such as VolunteerMatch.com or partner with other volunteer recruitment organizations in your area to advertise for open tasks and roles.
* Ask volunteers to advocate for AFS on Social Media. Feature a story of how volunteering with AFS has made a positive impact on their lives.
* Invite volunteers to "take over" your public social media page to document AFS events.
* Put out an invitation for volunteers on a digital bulletin board, Facebook Page, Community Events section of the newspaper, church bulletins and more.
* Put “Become a Volunteer” pamphlets at Visitors Centers, hotel lobbies, libraries (AFS bookmarks), school libraries, community centers, sports and recreation facilities, fitness centers, dance studios, and other public venues.

**Give Recognition**

* Share some free give-away's with new volunteers and recognize them at team meetings.
* Think about who in your community has done something that helped an AFS participant, host family, volunteer or the Area Team/Chapter. Send them a Thank-You card and invite them to attend your team’s next gathering. That may spark their interest to get involved!
* Recognize a community member at an AFS gathering. Let them share in your activity. Follow up and invite them again just to participate. Later, ask if they would like to become a volunteer.

**Reach Out to Community Based Organizations**

* Connect with other like-minded individuals through community engagement and with other organizations that give back to the community, for instance: Girl and Boy Scouts, school PTOs, or other clubs and organizations. Pair up with community activities that give back.
* Share about the opportunities to volunteer with AFS. Talk 1:1 or in a small group or offer to be a Guest Speaker at a community event and bring an AFS exchange student with you.
* Ask another like-minded organization to volunteer with your AFS team for a third CBO side by side - perhaps a big community event? Wear AFS t-shirts, buttons or hats to trigger people’s interest in AFS. A simple question: “What is AFS?” will give you a chance to talk about AFS.
* Invite AFS exchange students to volunteer alongside you which will naturally spark a conversation about AFS.
* Ask to give a short presentation about AFS and intercultural learning to other, like-minded organizations.
* Post a student bio and/or information about study abroad scholarships in other organizations’ newsletters, bulletin boards or websites.
* Attend/join a networking gathering. Bring AFS fliers and your own AFS business cards

**Participate in Community Events**

* Table at community events that highlight volunteerism for adults. Adults of various ages may have the time and desire to give back to their communities.

**Connect with Schools**

* Partner with high school extracurricular clubs to promote, hosting, study abroad and volunteer opportunities for high school-aged students. Reach out to multicultural clubs, to service clubs such as the Key Club, National Honor Society, and more.
* Share Become a Volunteer pamphlets with school guidance counselors for students seeking community service hours.

**Plant the Seed**

* Stay in touch with current students and families throughout their experience.
* Offer opportunities for students and families to participate in AFS community events.