



Metropolitan Volunteer Program

Fiscal Year 2015

Student Fees Advisory Committee

Program Questionnaire

- 1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, how you accomplish your unit's mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of benefits for students.*

The mission of the University of Houston Metropolitan Volunteer Program (MVP) is to create and provide service opportunities for students by collaborating with campus and community partners.

Through this, we aim to develop responsible citizens with a lifelong commitment to service while creating sustainable change in our campus and community.

We accomplish our mission by providing University of Houston students with opportunities to serve the community on campus and off. By marketing effectively we spread the word and increase student interest in our events and volunteering. We believe that it is important for University of Houston students to give back to their community.

Last year MVP hosted a total of 23 service opportunities. This semester we have already hosted 13 service opportunities and by the end of the semester we will have had a total of 25 service opportunities, more than we had last year alone. MVP positively impacts the University and surrounding community through different events such as taking students to the Adopt a Beach event, helping to feed the less fortunate by volunteering with Community Garden, bringing students from the Boy's and Girl's Club of Houston to the University of Houston campus for Frontier Fiesta's Family Fun Day, and this year we participated on the UH1UP Challenge; which is a campus wide scavenger hunt put on by the University of Houston's Marketing office.

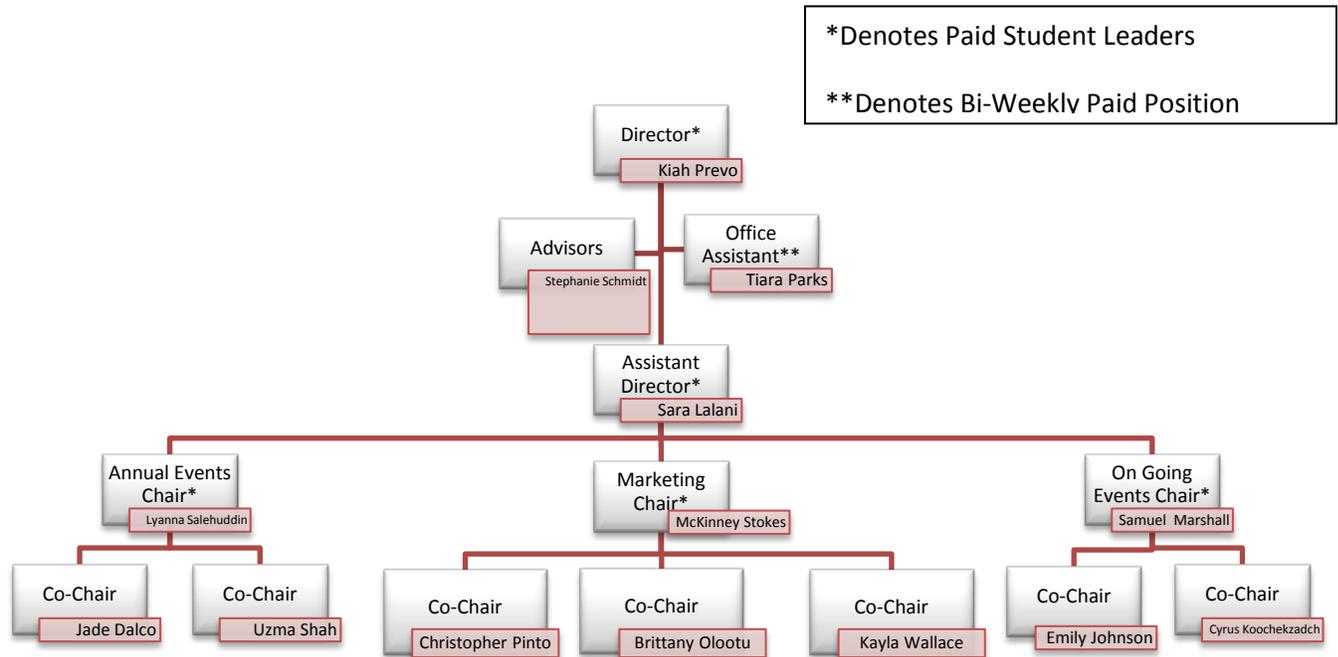
Through volunteering University of Houston students gain valuable knowledge and skills outside of the classroom. Real life lessons are learned through service and help to build student's skills and their resumes to better prepare them for their careers. MVP is important not only because of the service to the community but also because students leave with more than just volunteer hours; they leave with lessons that have real world applications and knowledge that will make them responsible and active citizens.

The Metropolitan Volunteer Program is valuable to the University of Houston because it is one of the few, if not the only, organization that is solely dedicated to service and volunteering. Due to the fact that we are a fee funded organization, we are open to all students and are able to provide our volunteers with transportation, volunteer t-shirts, and refreshments all at no cost to them. Any student at the University of Houston can come to MVP alone or with a group of friends and be provided with an opportunity to serve. That is what really makes MVP special.

In our Fiscal year 2015 SFAC Report you will find an overview of our organization chart and a brief job description of each position. We will illustrate how our goals from Fiscal Year 2014 were achieved and quantitative data illustrating our event successes. We will also discuss our

strategic initiatives for Fiscal Year 2015 and address our budgetary concerns for Fiscal Year 2014 and 2015.

2. Provide an organization chart of your unit. Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for each program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position (e.g. counselor, custodian, etc), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.



Director- Sets direction and vision for the organization and oversees its events and organizational processes.

Assistant Director- Manages internal operations of the organization and assists the Director with setting vision and overseeing events.

Office Assistant- Manages record keeping, scheduling, and logistics within the organization.

Annual Events Chair- Coordinates and plans larger annual signature events such as Rock the campus, Adopt a Beach, and Rock the Block.

On Going Events Chair- Coordinates and plans smaller biweekly and monthly service opportunities such as Community Garden, the Children’s Museum, and the Food Bank.

Marketing Chair- Markets and informs student body of all the organization’s events and programs.

Co-Chairs- Volunteer position which assist each chair in the planning and implementation of all events and marketing.

3. List your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2012-2013 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs Strategic Initiatives (http://www.uh.edu/dsa/about_student_affairs/strategic_plan.html) and University of Houston Strategic Goals (<http://www.uh.edu/president/vision-priorities/>) to which they relate. Please comment on your success in achieving these strategic initiatives/action steps. If a strategic initiative/action step changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new strategic initiatives/action steps, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these items.

1) Revamping the structure within the organization for a more organized MVP:

Changed

In the FY 2013 request, MVP stated that an objective for the 2012-2013 academic year was to change the structure of MVP by creating multiple departments including Cougar C.U.B.S, Houston H.O.P.E, Enriching Houston, and Senior Smiles to provide opportunities relating to education, health, the city of Houston, and senior citizens respectively. MVP was unable to expand the number of coordinators because of a lack of resources. Consequently, Cougar C.U.B.S merged with Enriching Houston and Senior Smiles merged with Houston H.O.P.E. In Fiscal Year 2013, MVP made the decision to have the Houston H.O.P.E. Chair plan and organize the larger, annual events such as Rock the Campus, Rock the Block, and Adopt a Beach while having the Enriching Houston Chair organize smaller, ongoing service projects that are done on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis such as the Children's Museum, Houston Food Bank, and Community Garden. This revised structure proved to be more effective because it provided MVP with a more simplified structure and a clear division of responsibilities. As a result, the titles of Houston H.O.P.E. Chair and Enriching Houston Chair have been changed to Annual Service Events Chair and Ongoing Service Events Chair in FY 2014 to better reflect the roles and responsibilities of each position.

2) Providing more opportunities; less events:

Changed

One of MVP's goals in the FY 2013 request was to focus less on hosting events and more on providing "ready to work" opportunities so that students would not have to wait for long periods of time to find a volunteer opportunity that fits their schedule. In the 2012-2013 year, MVP increased the number of opportunities it provided to students by including 2-3 volunteer opportunities from outside local nonprofits in the "other opportunities" section of the weekly newsletter as well as by hosting Revolution of Heroes each semester to increase awareness about nonprofit and volunteer agencies in Houston that are seeking volunteers.

With the addition of the Associate Director of Leadership & Civic Engagement's position in the Center of Student Involvement, MVP was also able to continue focusing on hosting and organizing more events as the Center for Student Involvement begins to serve as an additional contact point for non-profit and volunteering information. MVP believes that organized volunteering events are an important starting point for students who are interested in service but may not participate on their own. Organized volunteering events also encourage students to give

back to their communities along with fellow students in order to build lasting connections and present a united front as a university.

This MVP initiative promotes the **Division of Student Affairs' Strategic Initiative 3.2:** "Establish co-curricular, globally focused initiatives that provide students with opportunities for engagement on campus, in our surrounding environments, and beyond" as well as the **Division of Student Affairs' Strategic Initiative 3.3:** "Explore and enhance multicultural-based collaborative programs with departments outside of the Division and in partnership with agencies in our surrounding environments."

3) Collaborate with other student organizations/Greeks at the University:

Achieved

During the past year, MVP collaborated with other organizations at the University of Houston for multiple events. Several Greek organizations, including all of the fraternities in the Interfraternity Council and many of the sororities from Houston Panhellenic Council, volunteered with MVP at Rock the Block by hosting games for the children in the Third Ward and picking up the extensive litter in the neighborhood. Similarly, many of the Greek Organizations volunteered with MVP at the Community Garden during the Fall and Spring Semesters. MVP also worked with Frontier Fiesta to participate in Family Fun Day by chaperoning a group of 32 children from the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Houston. Additionally, we participated in the Homecoming Block Party by hosting a booth with games and recruited 40 volunteers for the Homecoming Glow-Run, which was eventually cancelled due to inclement weather. We believe that MVP can better serve the student body and provide more volunteering opportunities by collaborating with other organizations at the University. MVP looks forward to building relationships with more organizations in the coming years. This initiative promotes the **Division of Student Affairs' Strategic Initiative 6:** "Create and engage in strategic partnerships".

4. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the aforementioned strategic initiatives and/ or action steps and their importance as compared to others that you might pursue. Where data exist, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and any assessment measures and/or learning outcomes used to evaluate program success. Please provide the method for collecting these data.

- **Volunteer Information**

In order to recruit volunteers for service projects and inform students about volunteering opportunities and events during the 2012-2013 academic year, MVP used the following marketing strategies:

- Listed the events on the weekly MVP newsletter, which currently reaches 1738 students on campus. The listserv continues to grow each semester and at least 400 of the students in the listserv have been added just since the start of the Fall 2013 semester.
- Promoted volunteering opportunities and events on MVP's Facebook and Twitter social media pages as well as our website (www.uh.edu/mvp)
- Posted flyers around campus and in residence halls
- Put up banners around the UC Satellite as well as the Campus Recreation & Wellness Center
- Advertised larger volunteering events, meetings, and Revolution of Heroes in the Daily Cougar and Coog News
- Passed out handbills at informational tables at the UC Satellite and outside the University Center
- Offered Cougar Trading Cards at major MVP Events

In the 2012-2013 academic year, MVP used various methods to allow students to sign-up for volunteer events, such as asking them to RSVP by emailing the chair that is organizing the event or signing up at our recruitment tables at the satellite and outside the UC. For Rock the Block, MVP directed students to use a form on the new Get Involved website. Because of the ease and enormous success of using the Get Involved Website, MVP is moving towards using Get Involved forms to sign-up volunteers for most of our events in the upcoming years.

MVP has previously used a variety of methods to evaluate the success of our programs which included holding follow-up meetings with our community partners and verbally interacting with volunteers at events to gain feedback. As of Fall 2013, MVP has made a more consistent process of assessing the effectiveness of our volunteering events by creating a standard survey and asking volunteers to provide feedback after each event.

- **Recruitment**

MVP's greatest periods of recruitment occur during the beginning of each semester at organization fairs and Cat's Back. We evaluate the success of our marketing campaigns by counting the number of students that attend Informational Meetings and General Meetings throughout the year. Each semester is launched with an Informational

Meeting, which is generally larger than General Meetings, more interactive, and offers food and prizes. General Meetings are offered throughout each semester to keep previous volunteers engaged and inform students about upcoming volunteering opportunities. However, all students are welcome to attend both the Informational as well as the General Meetings.

Informational Meeting (Fall 2012)	67
General Meeting 1 (Fall 2012)	60
General Meeting 2 (Fall 2012)	42
Informational Meeting (Spring 2013)	60
General Meeting (Spring 2013)	35

- **Revolution of Heroes**

Revolution of Heroes is a volunteer fair hosted by MVP every semester for the purpose of providing information to students at the University of Houston about service opportunities with volunteer and non-profits agencies in the greater Houston area. In both the Fall and Spring semester, representatives from 22 volunteer agencies attended the event to showcase service opportunities that are available to students. In the Fall semester, 88 students attended the event and in the Spring semester, 40 students attended. Attendance was much lower in the spring semester due to an unforeseen power outage at the University Center, for which the event was rescheduled. In the Fall of 2013 marketing for Revolution of Heroes was improved and a change of location to Lynn Eusan Park resulted in an attendance of 125 students.

- **Adopt a Beach**

In conjunction with the Adopt-a-Beach Program by the Texas General Land Office, MVP took a group of 49 UH students to the Galveston coast line to spend the morning picking up trash and cleaning the beach. Each student volunteered for 2.5 hours for a total of 122.5 hours. The event gave volunteers the opportunity to bond with other students and continues to be one of MVP's most popular service projects each year.

- **Community Garden**

During the past year, MVP has played an active role in assisting with the upkeep of the campus' community garden by volunteering in the garden 7 times in the fall semester and 4 times in the spring semester. Generally, 10-20 students volunteer with MVP at each Community Garden Event to help with various tasks such as planting seeds, removing roots, and watering the soil. The produce that is collected is donated to the Manna House Third Ward Food Pantry. Several volunteers have commented that volunteering at the community garden has been an educational tool for them and has encouraged them to start their own garden.

- **Rock the Campus**

Rock the Campus is an annual MVP service project that allows students, faculty, and staff to make a difference on our campus by working in teams to pick up litter in designated areas. In Fall 2012, 60 volunteers joined MVP to collect more than 60 trash bags of garbage and gathered for food and music after their shift. MVP is continuing to

expand Rock the Campus in Fall 2013 by adding volunteer opportunities at the Children's Learning Center and the Community Garden in addition to collecting litter around campus.

- **Plant the Pride**

In Spring 2013, MVP worked with UH plant operations to plant shrubs and flowers at the Eternal Flame with the help of 14 student volunteers. This event not only allowed students to make a sustainable impact and beautify our very own campus, but also gave them the opportunity to leave their mark on the University and see their work grow over time.

- **Rock the Block**

MVP partnered with the Southeast Houston Transformation Alliance (SEHTA) to organize a massive neighborhood clean-up in the third ward community surrounding the Agape Development Ministries community center on Keep Houston Beautiful Day. More than 140 UH students volunteered to assist in the neighborhood clean-up by working in teams to collect litter and host a Block Party for children living in the third ward. Several of organizations on campus, including the Muslim Students Association, all of the fraternities in the Interfraternity Council, and some of the sororities in Houston Panhellenic Council collaborated with MVP to make this event a success. In total, 518 lbs of garbage and 320 tires were collected by our students and community partners. The service provided by the volunteers saved the city \$19,651.52. We received extremely positive feedback from SEHTA as well as Agape Development Ministries at debriefing meetings, and they indicated that many of the families in the neighborhood were grateful for our service.

- **Family Fun Day at Frontier Fiesta**

For this event, we worked with the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Houston to host a fun day for 32 elementary and middle school children at Frontier Fiesta. Most of the children that participated had never been to a college campus and benefited from seeing a positive, exciting event taking place on a college campus. 15 MVP volunteers chaperoned the children for 4 hours each as they participated in a variety of activities such as face painting, a petting zoo, and other educational activities. The Program Development Coordinator for the Boys and Girls Club stated that the "kids had an amazing time, and we look forward to continuing to partner with UH for opportunities such as these".

- **Off-Campus Ongoing Events**

MVP hosts multiple ongoing volunteer opportunities off-campus throughout the year in collaboration with volunteer and non-profit agencies in Houston such as the Houston Food Bank and Children's Museum of Houston. In FY 2013, MVP took a group of 10 volunteers to the Children's Museum of Houston in both the fall and spring semester to help children participate in hands-on activities such as Game Show Madness and Mind Fest Mayhem. MVP also took a group of 8 students to the Houston Food Bank in the spring semester to help sort and package food for low-income individuals in the Houston Area.

- **Holiday Cards**

With materials provided by MVP, 46 volunteers gathered for this service project to make a total of 144 holiday cards for patients at the Texas Children's Hospital. Due to the success of this event, MVP will continue to host Holiday Cards for several holidays in the upcoming year, such as Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas.

- **Houston Fire Fest**

In October 2012, MVP provided 16 volunteers for the Houston Fire Fest, which is an event hosted by the Houston Fire Department and Houston Fire Museum to raise awareness about fire safety. MVP volunteers helped in the "Kid's Zone" by helping children navigate through an obstacle course and complete various activities to be better prepared in case of a fire.

In Fall 2012 and Spring 2013, MVP organized and hosted a total of 23 service projects. By the end of the Fall 2013 semester alone, MVP will have 25 service projects completed and we hope to further increase the number of service projects offered in Spring 2014. Not only has MVP increased the number of ongoing and annual volunteer events offered to students, but we are making an increased effort to provide more opportunities to volunteer on campus. MVP is also building upon the community relationships that have been established in the past year with the Houston Children's Museum, Houston Food Bank, and the Community Garden, while focusing on establishing new relationships by volunteering with the Houston Methodist Hospital, Star of Hope, The Beacon, American Diabetes Association, and Casa De Esperanza among many others on an ongoing basis. A significant majority of the students who are volunteering this year with MVP are returning volunteers who have already been to multiple MVP events this semester. As of Fall 2013, MVP is also a recognized certifying organization with the President's Volunteer Service Award and therefore able to certify and track volunteer hours of students to provide the award to students who meet the criteria for each award category. In order to do this, MVP is keeping a log of the hours volunteered by all students at our events, as well as certifying and recording individual volunteer hours earned outside of MVP. This improved record-keeping will allow MVP to provide SFAC with better data about total volunteer hours, volunteer retention, and growth of events in the upcoming years.

5. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last (FY2014) SFAC request, their impact on your programs, and your reason for implementing them. SFAC recognizes that some programs did not receive the funds that they requested, that some programs were impacted by additional expenses after the conclusion of the budget cycle, and that some programs may be ahead of or behind their self-generated income projections. In addition, if your unit concluded FY2013 with a Fund 3 addition to Fund Equity, please describe the conditions which caused the addition.

There was no difference between MVP's SFAC request for FY2014 and the amount received.

Metropolitan Volunteer Program (MVP) concluded FY2013 with a Fund 3 addition to Fund Equity of \$7,251. The remaining balance is partly due to the fact that the Houston HOPE Chair (now Annual Events Chair) Position remained vacated for 8 weeks at the start of the Spring 2013 semester and the Assistant Director Position remained vacated for 6 weeks at the end of the Spring 2013 semester. This impacted the amount of salary paid and also limited the number of larger, annual events that were organized by MVP during that semester. As of August 31st, 2013 MVP fund equity balance in their SFAC Ledger 3 Cost Center was \$32,973.

MVP is not requesting any increases in funding for FY 15 salaries, events, or operations. MVP has already increased the number of volunteer events and opportunities in FY 14 compared to FY 13 and moving forward will significantly reduce the remaining balance.

6. Please list your 2014-2015 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they relate. Larger units may wish to group responses by subprogram. Under each strategic initiative, please state the specific action steps (programs, activities, services, policies/procedures, etc.) that you intend to implement to accomplish your stated initiative.

1. Develop Structure and Guidelines for Operations

- **Action Step 1:** Clear and written policy for internal operations including event management, hour tracking, and marketing
- **Action Step 2:** Improve record keeping
- **Action Step 3:** Develop procedure manual for each chair
- **Action Step 4:** Utilize event proposal and evaluation procedure

DSA Strategic Initiative #4: Develop a culture of innovation and accountability in the redesign of Division policies, processes and procedures.

2. Improve Event Evaluation through Participant Feedback

- **Action Step 1:** Initial survey to gauge student's interest
- **Action Step 2:** Event follow up survey for students
- **Action Step 3:** Event follow up survey for organizations

DSA Strategic Initiative #4: Develop a culture of innovation and accountability in the redesign of Division policies, processes and procedures.

3. Hold Minimum of two Signature MVP Events per semester

- **Action Step 1:** Increase visibility on campus
- **Action Step 2:** Build MVP brand
- **Action Step 3:** Continue to build and grow Rock the Campus, Rock the Block, and Adopt a Beach
- **Action Step 4:** Continue to research other large scale service opportunities

DSA Strategic Initiative #1: Create new opportunities for student success through learning, engagement and discovery.

DSA Strategic Initiative #3: Foster the creation of a global learning community that actualizes and embraces inclusion while preparing students to become active citizens.

DSA Strategic Initiative #5: Cultivate a collective identity that demonstrates a united vision.

4. Foster relationships with more nonprofit organizations in order to diversify our volunteer opportunities
 - **Action Step 1:** Keep running log of organizations we have worked with
 - **Action Step 2:** Purposely reach out to community partners
 - **Action Step 3:** Explore and organize at least one new volunteer opportunity per semester

DSA Strategic Initiative #1: Create new opportunities for student success through learning, engagement and discovery.

DSA Strategic Initiative #3: Foster the creation of a global learning community that actualizes and embraces inclusion while preparing students to become active citizens.

DSA Strategic Initiative # 6: Create and engage in strategic partnerships.

7. What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them (e.g. grants, donations, etc.)? If you receive funds from other sources, please briefly describe the source, purpose, and duration of the funding and report the amounts received in the appropriate rows/columns on the SFAC Spreadsheet.

MVP currently does not have any additional sources of funding available to the organization.

8. Please describe any services that are similar to yours and/or any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.

Although some academic departments and various organizations on campus include volunteer outreach in their mission, the Metropolitan Volunteer Program is the only organization that focuses entirely on providing service and volunteer opportunities. MVP is also unique in that it is not attached to any specific academic unit, is open to all UH students, and does not have any additional membership requirements. Not only is our organization's entire budget is dedicated to providing volunteering opportunities for students, but we also serve as a clearinghouse for non-profit agencies in the Houston area to connect students to service opportunities. In its dedication to foster the spirit of service and volunteerism, MVP is a vital resource for the University of Houston.