

## Recruiting Volunteers for an OMOD Workshop



### 1. OMOD volunteers must be:

- 18 years of age or older
- Willing to engage with all the participants in the workshop
- Able to assist the workshop facilitator with classroom setup and breakdown, scribing for participants, and coaching participants on an individual basis
- Respectful to participants with a wide range of disabilities as well as any other volunteers and staff members
- Reliable and be on-time for all classes and/or speaking events
- Excited to learn and help the participants in reaching their goals
- Flexible and patient
- Interested in some aspect of the class – be it writing, performing, working with people with disabilities, meeting new people, etc.
- Have experience working with persons with disabilities (Note: This does not need to be a requirement, as sometimes you will simply not be able to find a volunteer who has that experience, but it is strongly suggested and volunteers with this experience should be sought out.)

### 2. How to Recruit Volunteers:

- Utilize an application such as the one included at the end of this packet and require that all prospective volunteers complete it. This gives you an opportunity to know your volunteers better and see if they will be a good fit for your workshop. Consider the above criteria when selecting your volunteers.
- Hold a mandatory orientation at least one week before the class starts and ideally at the same time as the class. At the orientation, you can gauge your volunteers' interest and willingness to participate. If they are not engaged in the orientation, chances are they will not be engaged with participants in the class and should thus be replaced. (Note: You can find tips for how to effectively run your volunteer orientation in the *OMOD Volunteer Training Guide* which is located in the OMOD Teaching Resources section of the OMOD Facilitator Guide.)
- Remember: Getting to know your volunteers' goals and why they want to assist in this program is a good key to getting outstanding volunteers.

### 3. Where to Recruit Volunteers:

- Your local college's School of Social Work
  - For example: in Austin, you could try contacting University of Texas' School of Social work and see if you could come speak to the students directly about your volunteer opportunities.
- Your local community college or university may also have a Recreational Therapy Department. If so, contact the department's professors and request to speak to their students about your program; then follow up by sending them a flyer to be posted on campus.
  - For example: Austin Community College (ACC) has a Recreational Therapy Department, and its students are required to complete a set amount of hours of field work with persons with disabilities.
- Your local college's volunteer program. Usually there is an online site where you can register and then complete a questionnaire of the skill sets you need in your volunteers.
  - For example: Huston-Tillotson College in Austin has a Volunteer Program Director, who you can contact to have your volunteer opportunity listed on the website.
- Your local community service-oriented fraternities and sororities. These should be easy to find on your local colleges' websites and contact.
- VolunteerMatch.com is another good source for people looking to volunteer for a community project.
- Your local Easter Seals chapter. Just register on their website and complete the request form.
- Some local newspapers also have online volunteer listings where you can list your volunteer opportunity.
- Last, if you have a social media network, be sure to share your volunteer opportunity on all of your sites.

**Note:** Wherever you find your volunteers, you must properly vet them before inviting them to assist. Using an application process and requiring an orientation in advance of the workshop are essential to maintaining a safe and supportive space for your OMOD workshop.



## PROJECT ASSISTANT VOLUNTEER APPLICATION



### OPENING MINDS, OPENING DOORS PROMOTING SELF-ADVOCATES AS SPEAKERS

#### Volunteer Description:

The Opening Minds, Opening Doors project trains self-advocates with developmental disabilities to write and present their personal stories at conferences and other events in Texas. In this six-week class, each participant will write and revise a single story and then develop the public speaking skills to present that story to live audience. As a project assistant, your duties will include serving as a general assistant to the instructors, providing one-on-one coaching support to participants, scribing or describing for participants when necessary, and other duties as required.

- The Project Assistant **must** be 18 years of age or older.
- The Project Assistant reports directly to Eric Clow, Project Coordinator for Opening Minds, Opening Doors.
- The Project Assistant **must** attend orientation and comply with VSA Texas policies.

#### Your Commitment:

- **Orientation – Saturday, March 26, 2016 1:00 – 4:00pm**  
*AGE Building, Room 101, 3710 Cedar Street, Austin, TX 78705*
- **Six-Week Class – Saturdays, April 2 – May 7, 2016 12:30 – 4:30pm**  
*AGE Building, Room 101, 3710 Cedar Street, Austin, TX 78705*

We request that you commit to the full six-week class. We expect you to honor this time commitment and to make a sincere analysis of your other jobs, school, hobbies, or family commitments prior. If you know in advance of any travel, medical dates, etc., for which you will not be available, please let us know. The only absences we generally accept are illnesses or family emergencies.

**Our Commitment:** At VSA Texas, we will value your time, skills, and energy as a Project Assistant, and we want to provide you an opportunity to be thoroughly involved in this program to further your studies, interests, and personal goals.



**TERMS:**

- I am an adult, age 18 or over.
  - I am interested and available to be a Project Assistant for the FULL six-week Saturday class, April 2 – May 7, 2016, 12:30 – 4:30pm.
  - I can attend the orientation on Saturday, March 12, 2016, 1:00 – 4:00pm.
  - I am not available for the following dates:
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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information:

Eric Clow  
Project Coordinator  
[eric@vsatx.org](mailto:eric@vsatx.org)  
512-454-9912

[www.vsatx.org](http://www.vsatx.org)

***Please returned signed application to Eric Clow at [eric@vsatx.org](mailto:eric@vsatx.org), fax to 512-454-1944, or mail to VSA Texas, 3710 Cedar Street, #7, Austin, TX 78705.***