



**CONSERVATION
LEGACY**



Community Volunteer Ambassador – Valley Forge National Historical Park

Location: King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

Position Details:

Stewards Individual Placements, a program of Conservation Legacy, provides individuals with service and career opportunities to strengthen communities and preserve our natural resources. The Community Volunteer Ambassador (CVA) Program combines the strength of a national leader in conservation service with the National Park Service to train a diverse group of emerging leaders to assist park units in building lasting connections to communities.

The CVA will be uniquely positioned within the park as a member of both the Visitor and Community Engagement (VCE) and the Natural Resource Management (NRM) teams.

The primary supervisor is the park's Visual Information Specialist (on the VCE team), and the secondary supervisor is the Manager of Natural Resources. The scope of the CVA's work will support new and ongoing projects on both teams, and the supervisor will collaborate with the CVA to identify passion projects that align with this dual role. Depending on the interests and goals of the CVA, work may include website and social media content creation, audio/video production, graphic design, helping the public plan their park visit at the visitor center, interpretive and educational programming, conducting wildlife and vegetation surveys, writing reports and briefs, and supporting existing volunteer programs.

Site Description:

Valley Forge National Historical Park encompasses much of the site of the 1777-78 winter encampment of the Continental Army led by General George Washington during the American Revolutionary War. The fascinating history preserved and interpreted at Valley Forge brings visitors from around the world, but the park also provides valuable opportunities for local recreators to walk, run, bike, hike, and paddle, play, and picnic.

In 1893, Valley Forge was established as Pennsylvania's very first state park, and in 1975, on the eve of the 200-year anniversary of the founding of the United State, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania authorized the transfer of the park to the federal government. President Gerald Ford established Valley Forge National Historical Park on July 4, 1976.

The park is located in southeastern Pennsylvania, 18 miles northwest of Philadelphia, and today, is situated in a rapidly growing urban area. The park comprises 3,452 acres and protects many significant cultural resources, including cultural landscapes, historic buildings and structures, monuments, archeological sites, and archives and collections. As urban and suburban sprawl expands around Valley Forge, the park's value as a refuge for plants, animals, and their habitats also increases. Valley Forge supports more than 1,000 species of flora and fauna and habitats ranging from mixed oak and tulip poplar forests, to tall grass meadows, wetlands, and waterways.

The volunteer program at the park features a dynamic mix of permanent volunteer opportunities across several park divisions and well-established seasonal drop-in opportunities for individuals and groups. Permanent volunteer groups include VOILA! (landscaping volunteers), the Tailoring Brigade, and Visitor Services volunteers who work at the front desk in the visitor center. Drop-in opportunities include programs like Crayfish Corps and Weed Warriors, which are coordinated through the division of Natural Resource Management.

The park has been operating with a general preference for building long-lasting volunteer programs staffed by

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regular volunteers — however, in Fiscal Year 2024 the CVA will have the opportunity to assess the existing list of drop-in volunteer programs and possibly work to expand those offerings.

Position Responsibilities:

In the realm of Visitor and Community Engagement:

- **Climate Change Art in the Park Public Programming:** support, supplement, and expand the existing Art in the Park program to encourage more participation from the local Latinx community in public art making and offer hands-on climate change-related art-making programming. Work with park staff and partners to establish smartphone stand infrastructure and signage at strategic locations throughout the park to encourage the public to take and submit photographs to an online database.
- **Sustainable Transportation Alternatives:** Analyze local transportation options (buses, bicycle routes, etc.) for accessing the park, and make recommendations to help alleviate this barrier to visiting for residents of the Norristown area. Coordinate and collaborate with local planning and multi-modal transportation advocates. Analyze existing transportation plans and efforts that will impact future travel between two sites. Conduct outreach to better understand community needs and transportation barriers to visiting park. Develop educational programming to raise awareness of multi-modal transportation options between two sites (e.g., bike to park with the CVA, using public transportation to get to the park with a CVA etc.) Promote existing programs (national and local) that emphasize health and recreation at the park (e.g., Healthy Parks Healthy People, the existing 78-mile Challenge program, bird walks and trail walks). Find funding opportunities to incentivize or facilitate increased visitation from the Norristown community to the park (e.g., National Park Foundation grants, etc.)
- **Support and grow a new strategic relationship with Centro de Cultura, Arte, Trabajo, y Educación (CCATE):** Tweak and adjust existing park programs to be more relevant and welcoming to the local Latinx community. Help plan and implement new park programs that are co-created between the park and the local Latinx community. Help the park staff and volunteers become more aware of the local Latinx community's knowledge, talents, interests, and needs.
- **Expand volunteer opportunities for the following annual programs:** National service days (National Trails Day, National Public Lands Day, MLK Day of Service), Existing park programs (Junior Ranger Day [Apr], March-Out of the Continental Army [June 19], Homeschool Day [Oct], and March-In of the Continental Army (Dec. 19th).

In the realm of Natural Resource Management:

- **Parks After Dark Programming:** plan and develop event programming, collaborate with Maintenance staff on all program setup and logistics, confer with Law Enforcement staff about event volunteer safety and training, work with the parkwide volunteer coordinator to recruit, plan, and train volunteers, and record and submit volunteer hours. The CVA will also work alongside park partners (e.g. Valley Forge Park Alliance, County Visitor Convention Bureau, Valley Creek Partnership, Hopewell Big Woods Partnership) to develop and disseminate outreach materials.
- **Support service learning trips for CCATE summer program youth and other local groups as part of the popular Weed Warriors and Crayfish Corps volunteer programs.**

CVA Minimum Requirements:

- A strong interest in being part of a great team.
- Proficiency in spoken and written Spanish.
- Excellent interpersonal communication skills: be able to treat visitors, park staff, park partners, and park volunteers with professional courtesy, ask for help when needed, and give input and receive feedback with candor and grace.
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office (or equivalent) software tools, such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams (chat and video conferencing), and Outlook (email and calendar).



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- Ability to follow applicable federal, state, and local laws/policies, as well as directions from staff.
- Ability to stand/walk/work for extended periods of time both indoors and outdoors in a variety of surfaces (e.g., natural, paved, uneven), weather (e.g., heat, cold, humidity, rain, wind, etc.), and conditions (e.g., ticks, snakes, animals, pollen, etc.).
- Participate in the CVA National Early Service Training in late March/early April 2024 (date TBD)
- Be a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident
- Be 18-30 years old at time of service (veterans up to 35 years old)
- High School Diploma/GED
- Pass fingerprint-based FBI, state criminal, and a national sex offender checks.
- Be able to provide proof of a driver's license and complete a MVR check
- Must be over 21 years old or have had license for at least 3 years to be insured in this position.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Fluency in spoken and written Spanish.
- Knowledge of Norristown Latinx community and culture.
- Experience with coordinating, planning, and leading public education programs with diverse audiences.
- Experience supervising youth and/or adults in a professional capacity (e.g., volunteers, at work).
- Experience using Adobe Creative Cloud (or equivalent) software, such as Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, and Premiere.

Additional Information:

Opportunity to work at multiple sites: Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site (HOFU) and Valley Forge National Historical Park are managed by the same superintendent, and the Natural Resource Management staff oversee both park units. The CVA's work will also benefit HOFU, and there will be some opportunities to work there, however the main focus will be at VAFO.

Collaborative and dynamic work environment: The staff at Valley Forge National Historical Park are friendly, smart, and passionate. Common aspects of our working culture include a strong focus on safety, health and wellness, and a highly collaborative and communicative process for goal setting, planning, and after-action reviews. The staff have a lot of experience working with CVAs. The CVA will be closely supported by three staff: Visual Information Specialist (primary supervisor), Natural Resource Manager (secondary supervisor), parkwide Volunteer and Youth Program Coordinator (administrative and project support).

Housing provided: CVA will be housed in one of our furnished seasonal dorm style housing units. Most of these are single family home structures originally built from the mid-1850s to the early 1900s and furnished today as seasonal housing units. The CVA may have a housemate but will have their own room. Housing is mixed gender. Rooms are single occupancy with twin beds. Bedrooms have locking doors that are secured with separate keys assigned to the individuals in the room. Housing has a communal kitchen (microwave, stove, refrigerator, oven, pots, pans etc.), living room, dining room and bathroom. Kitchen appliances, furniture, washer, dryer, and cleaning supplies are provided, but food, towels, bedding, and personal toiletries are not provided. WiFi, TV/video, and heat and cooling units are provided. A majority of the housing options are within a 3-minute walk to the primary office location, or a 20-minute bicycle ride/10-minute drive to the secondary office location. The nearest hospital is less than four miles away, the nearest police station is less than three miles away, and the nearest fire department is less than one mile away.

Benefits:

- CVA will receive a weekly stipend of **\$600**
- Housing provided by site.
- Limited health care/childcare benefits



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- The position is eligible for an AmeriCorps Education Award \$6,895.00 (pre-tax) upon successful completion of the program
- \$1,200 in professional development funds for training, networking, conferences, and/or travel.
- Networking opportunities within the National Park Service and partnering organizations
- Public Land Corps Hiring Authority
- Week-long in-person training at NPS site with travel/meal expenses covered.

How to Apply

Please visit [Community Volunteer Ambassador \(cvainternships.org\)](https://www.nps.gov/cvainternships.org) to review “Member Positions” by region and find instructions on how to apply.

The CVA position will start on **Monday, January 22nd, 2024**, and run for 48 weeks until Friday, December 20th, 2024. Applicants will need to apply here: <https://form.jotform.com/StewardsIPP/cva-member-application-winter-2024>. Application form requires a resume, cover letter, professional references.

Please ensure your cover letter addresses how your experience aligns with the CVA program, your experience working with diverse populations, and position details for this park/position. You may submit one application for multiple positions by selecting all sites you are interested in.

Applications Deadline

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. First review will occur in early November. Final deadline is **Sunday, December 10th, 2023**.

For Application Questions:

Please contact Geoff Elliot, Program Director at gelliot@conservationlegacy.org

Conservation Legacy is an equal opportunity employer. We are committed to hiring a breadth of diverse professionals and encourage members of diverse groups to apply. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, political affiliation, protected veteran status, disability status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law. We also consider qualified applicants regardless of criminal histories, consistent with legal requirements. If you need assistance and/or a reasonable accommodation due to a disability during application or recruiting process, please send a request to the hiring manager.