

Employee Volunteerism at USI  
Proposal prepared for President's Council  
April 4, 2019

## **Overview**

To promote a culture of volunteerism for benefit eligible employees of the University of Southern Indiana (USI), Administrative Senate, Staff Council, and Faculty Senate propose the following pilot program, which will encourage and empower employees to use time during the work day to volunteer. During the pilot year (2019/2020) we suggest USI-centered events are the focus of these volunteer hours; this will not only benefit the USI community but also engage USI employees with various areas of campus. Long-term, allocating work time for volunteerism has positive outcomes, including employee retention and job satisfaction.

## **Background**

The original motivation to research employee volunteerism in the workplace was the result of an item for consideration submitted to Administrative Senate in fall 2017. The submitter noted that their department was in need of volunteers at various events that take place during the work day and thought USI employees might be able to help.

Since that charge, the Employee Outreach Committee of Administrative Senate has been working to investigate employee volunteerism at USI. Questions were added to the 2018 fall survey for administrators pertaining to employee volunteerism; a small fraction of responses indicated employees wanted to volunteer but were not able to do so due to lack of support from their supervisor or uncomfortable feelings about asking for time to do so (See Attachment A). From this survey and discussions amongst Administrative Senate after, it was determined there is likely inconsistency amongst departments related to encouragement of employee volunteerism.

Meetings with University leadership and Human Resources have been held. The overall consensus at this time is the best way to increase employee volunteerism is clear communication from University leadership and supervisors, encouraging employees to volunteer at causes they care about and providing opportunities to volunteer.

## **Specifications**

1. The pilot program will take place during the next fiscal year - July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.
2. Benefit eligible employees will be encouraged to volunteer up to 7.5 hours within each fiscal year. This is a supplemental program and not meant to deter any individual or department from other volunteer work they are already taking part in. Approval of additional volunteer hours (above 7.5 per fiscal year) is at the discretion of each employee's supervisor.
3. Volunteer hours may be taken during the normal USI workday, with prior supervisor approval.
4. Volunteer hours may be taken one at a time or all at once.
5. Employees will be required to log volunteer hours with Volunteer USI but otherwise not on biweekly or monthly time reports.

6. Human Resources will receive a monthly automated Banner report from the Database manager of the USI Foundation, which will include employees who have volunteered and the number of hours affiliated with each person from the Volunteer USI system.
7. For the pilot year, employees also will be encouraged to volunteer at USI-sponsored events, including but not limited to the following:
  - a. Welcome Week
  - b. Housing Move-In
  - c. Assessment Day (Fall and Spring)
  - d. USI booths at Fall Festival
  - e. Varsity Club events
  - f. Alumni Association Events
  - g. Heritage Artisan Days
  - h. Reading to children at the Children's Learning Center
  - i. United Day of Caring
8. An overall call will be made for volunteer needs on USI's campus by Volunteer USI, which will allow for a more comprehensive list of volunteer opportunities at USI. This list will be available on the Volunteer USI website.
9. University leadership will produce a bi-annual reminder of USI's view on employee volunteerism; in this reminder, they will also include a link to USI volunteer opportunities on the Volunteer USI website.
10. Upper administration will promote and encourage the volunteerism pilot to their division heads and directors.
11. Third shift employees should consult with their supervisor; committee suggestion is for supervisor to allow an early release for daytime volunteering.

## **Goals**

1. Establish a communications plan to promote employee volunteerism at USI by working with USI communications department.
2. 100% participation for those who would like to volunteer at USI events during work hours, which can be measured by adding questions to the annual fall survey as well as Volunteer USI reporting.
3. Overall increased culture of volunteerism at USI, which can be measured by adding questions to the annual fall survey and through the Volunteer USI reporting.
4. Creating job satisfaction at USI, which is fostered by the sense of community that is created by volunteering. This can be measured by questions on the fall survey.
5. Reevaluate at the end of the fiscal year.

**Attachment A  
2018 Fall Survey**

**Fall Faculty Staff Survey 2018 - Administrative Senate Questions**

*created for Ingrid Lindy by OPRA 9-20-18*

**Which of the following statements best fits your experience in regard to volunteering for USI related or supported activities during regular working hours and not being required to take vacation to do so.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 I've asked to and my supervisor was supportive.	116	16.3	50.7	50.7
	2 I've asked but was told no by my supervisor.	5	0.7	2.2	52.8
	3 I've never asked.	108	15.2	47.2	100.0
	Total	229	32.3	100.0	
Missing	System	481	67.7		
Total		710	100.0		

**Please select the statement that best fits your experience.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 My supervisor encourages staff to volunteer.	123	17.3	53.7	53.7
	2 My supervisor discourages staff to volunteer.	6	0.8	2.6	56.3
	3 My supervisor neither encourages or discourages staff to volunteer.	100	14.1	43.7	100.0
	Total	229	32.3	100.0	
Missing	System	481	67.7		
Total		710	100.0		

**Are you a supervisor of other full-time employees at USI?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	118	16.6	50.6	50.6
	2 No	115	16.2	49.4	100.0
	Total	233	32.8	100.0	
Missing	System	477	67.2		
Total		710	100.0		

**How often do you have employees under your supervision ask to volunteer for USI related or supported activities during regular working hours and not be required to take vacation to do so?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 At least once a month	11	1.5	9.6	9.6
	2 At least once a semester	38	5.4	33.3	43.0
	3 At least once a year	28	3.9	24.6	67.5
	4 Never	37	5.2	32.5	100.0
	Total	114	16.1	100.0	
Missing	System	596	83.9		
Total		710	100.0		

**As a supervisor, would having a formal policy encourage you to be (more) supportive of allowing employees to volunteer for USI related or supported activities during regular working hours?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Yes	61	8.6	53.0	53.0
	2 No	16	2.3	13.9	67.0
	3 Not sure	38	5.4	33.0	100.0
	Total	115	16.2	100.0	
Missing	System	595	83.8		
Total		710	100.0		