In this issue: Read about creating an annual volunteer plan with actionable goals and why you should report your volunteer service.

Upcoming Events: Volunteer Phonebank on January 29, People with Parkinson’s Council Open House on February 12 and Spring Volunteer Leadership Call on March 12
New Year, New Volunteer Goals

Start off the new year right by creating your annual volunteer plan with actionable goals. Setting goals helps you stay accountable and have something to work towards. When working on your goals, meet with your local chapter staff to discuss how your goals can align with the Foundation’s most urgent volunteer needs, and keep your goals on track using the SMART method. This acronym reminds us that goals should be:

- **Specific:** Your objective should be clear and detailed.
- **Measurable:** Make your goal tangible, what will it look like when your goal is complete? How will you measure success?
- **Achievable:** Start small. Begin by doing something you know you can achieve and work your way up to doing more throughout the year.
- **Relevant:** Does your goal make sense for yourself and the Foundation? Is it something that will impact the community?
- **Time-bound:** Set milestones throughout the year to help keep you on track and moving forward towards your final goal. Providing time constraints creates a sense of urgency.

Once you have created your goals, commit to someone other than yourself — tell your friends, family and peers. Set up regular accountability check-ins to increase your chances of success. When you do reach a goal be sure to celebrate! By celebrating or rewarding yourself for achieving a goal, you wire your brain to look forward to the next. Contact your local chapter staff or volunteer@parkinson.org for help setting your volunteer goals for 2021.

*About the Author: Tiffany Birge volunteers with the Parkinson’s Foundation Rocky Mountain Chapter in Salt Lake City, UT.*

Volunteer Spotlight: Michelle Haub

Michelle is a certified Speech Language Pathologist and has been a part of the Parkinson’s Foundation Heartland Chapter for 14 years. Michelle works for the Meadowlark Parkinson’s Program in Manhattan, KS, and chairs several Parkinson’s support groups in the area. In 2020, Michelle was awarded a Parkinson’s Foundation Community Grant for a new nutritional program serving people with Parkinson’s in the Heartland Chapter.

Michelle is also a certified Rock Steady Boxing instructor and serves as an Aware and Care Ambassador. She has also been a guest speaker at Parkinson’s events, and shared her knowledge during two PD Health @ Home programs – “Beyond the Diagnosis” and “Putting Your Best Voice Forward with PD.”

Michelle is married with two school-aged boys and the family’s rescue dog… and is incredibly busy! The Foundation is grateful for Michelle’s support and her dedication to helping make life better for people living with Parkinson’s. She is a wonderful ally and Parkinson’s warrior in every breadth of the word.

*About the Author: Steve Peters is living with Parkinson’s and volunteers as an Aware in Care Ambassador with his wife Leslie serving the Parkinson’s Foundation Rocky Mountain Chapter in Colorado.*
Why I Volunteer

In 1993 I was rear ended at 30 miles per hour. Following the accident, I was no longer able to play the flute as well, which I played in an orchestra. My physical therapist suggested I see a neurologist, which led to a Parkinson's diagnosis. I received a second opinion from a movement disorder specialist and heard the dreaded words, "You have Parkinson's." I was angry and could not believe it. My aunt had Parkinson's. Now I was walking in her footsteps.

As a breast cancer survivor, I was somewhat sure I could handle this challenge. I went through the usual steps of denial, anger, acceptance, asking why and circling back again. I went to my first support group meeting, which was about to disband due to lack of volunteers. I knew I needed support to learn about the disease, so I volunteered to manage their newsletter. Eventually, I became the support group leader. It has now grown to be the Brevard Parkinson's Alliance. One person can make a difference. I continue to make a difference as an Aware in Care Ambassador for the Parkinson's Foundation.

Volunteering to help others as they walk their journeys with Parkinson's has been such a blessing. It has tested me and helped me become braver while advocating for better care. The Parkinson's Foundation provides so much information for people living with Parkinson's to make informed choices for their care. The materials the Foundation offers at no charge are vital to understanding the disease and possible treatments.

I am thankful for the opportunity to share Parkinson's Foundation resources, to comfort those newly diagnosed and to meet the wonderful staff who work with us. The Parkinson's Foundation is the leader for better care, education and research. Together, we are a team. It has been quite a ride to be one of many volunteers who takes lemons and makes lemonade. Visit Parkinson.org/NewlyDiagnosed to learn more about resources available to support you on your Parkinson's journey.

About the Author: Dan Novak is living with Parkinson's and volunteers with the Parkinson's Foundation Greater Texas Chapter in Fort Worth, TX.

Recording Your Volunteer Service

You can now record your volunteer service with the Parkinson's Foundation using a simple online form. The Foundation is excited for this new opportunity to track and measure the Volunteer Network’s impact. Here are several reasons to start submitting your volunteer service hours today:

- It feels good to know you are investing your time in a worthwhile cause.
- It increases your self-confidence and promotes personal growth and self-esteem.
- Volunteering combats depression by reducing stress and improving your overall health.
- The Foundation wants to say thank you for everything you do to make life better for people with Parkinson's.

Thank you for your service on behalf of the Parkinson's Foundation.
Submit your volunteer service activity at Parkinson.org/Volunteer-Reporting.

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Ask a Volunteer

**Question:** “How can I, a person with PD, support the Parkinson’s community and volunteer from home during the colder months?”

The first and most important thing you can do to help the Parkinson’s community this winter is take care of our own physical and mental health. Winter can be a particularly difficult time of year and staying safe from COVID-19 can make this winter especially challenging. Do a quick self-evaluation, are you getting enough exercise, nutrition and sleep? How is your emotional well-being? Remember, the Parkinson’s Foundation is here to support you. Visit Parkinson.org to utilize the Foundation’s many resources and stay engaged.

Next, share Foundation resources with your community. Connect with people with Parkinson’s, care partners, support groups and healthcare providers. Many people need connection this time of year and the emotional support your outreach provides helps boost moods and fight off seasonal depression. Let your community know we are there for them and there are resources available.

Lastly, visit your local chapter website to reach out and ask how you can help raise awareness and educate people about Parkinson’s. Education is one of the easiest ways to volunteer. Prepare an “elevator speech” and discuss it with anyone you can. You will be surprised by how many people are interested in learning more.

**Find ways to get involved with the Parkinson’s Foundation at Parkinson.org/GetInvolved.**

Submit your volunteer questions for our next issue to volunteer@parkinson.org.

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Join us for Moving Day this Spring!

At Moving Day we fight Parkinson’s and celebrate movement. This spring move with us one of our 31 contactless or online Moving Day events.

You can also join us virtually for our nationwide event, Moving Day USA on April 11.