

## COLUMBIA COMMUNITY OUTREACH

**SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2009**

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Columbia Community Outreach (CCO) is a 12-year old tradition that began as a student initiative to give back to the community surrounding Columbia's campus. Now, hundreds of Columbia students, faculty, staff, alumni and neighbors carry on the tradition of volunteering in and around Morningside Heights every year. With the participation of over a dozen alumni clubs around the world, CCO now connects alumni with this important campus initiative, with each other, and with their local communities.

To set up a volunteer project in your area, we recommend that you consider the following steps:

- 1. Appoint a club leader or member to organize the project**
- 2. Identify a nearby not-for-profit or volunteer organization:**
  - a. Members of your local alumni club might have a connection with a not-for-profit in your area. Alternately, there are several online resources for identifying and contacting organizations that need volunteers.
  - b. Examples from other alumni clubs over the past years:
    - i. National park clean up in the Pacific Northwest
    - ii. Charity paintball game in Athens
    - iii. Painting and restoring elementary school facilities in Beijing
    - iv. Sorting and organizing inventory at a homeless shelter in Miami
    - v. Packaging cans and boxes for a city food bank in San Francisco
    - vi. Storytelling and arts and crafts with children at a halfway house in the Bronx
- 3. Set up a project on or around *Saturday, March 28, 2009***
  - a. Most alumni clubs chose to do their service project in the morning, although this is at your discretion
  - b. Consider a project that is child-friendly so alumni with families can participate
  - c. Estimate the number of local alumni who will participate so the organization can prepare accordingly
    - i. These projects tend to attract smaller groups of alumni (for a mid-size club, we estimate 10-15 participants). However, we see that new faces often come to this project as it can appeal to a type of alumnus/a that is not otherwise involved in the club.
  - d. Standard volunteer projects last 3-4 hours, or a half-day. Please consider meals when making your plans (will they be provided? Will the group meet at a place nearby? Are people expected to eat before/after the project or to bring a bag lunch?).
- 4. Advertise the project to area alumni**
  - a. Include in newsletters/emails coming from the club; post on your club website
  - b. Work with the Office of Alumni and Development to send a branded email to all alumni in your area (event announcement + club membership notice). [2008 Example](#).
  - c. Be sure to include exact details like direction, description of project, advised dress and/or equipment, need to bring a packed lunch or if food is provided, RSVP, and day-of contact. If the location is unfamiliar or difficult to locate, we advise including a club member's cell phone as a point of contact.

*Please let us know what you chose to do so we can note this on our CCO webpage and encourage alumni in your area to participate. If you have any questions, contact your Office of Alumni and Development liaison.*

