

Spring 5-3-2019

Valparaiso Volunteers. ORG

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Recommended Citation

Talley, Lisa, "Valparaiso Volunteers. ORG" (2019). *Graduate Academic Symposium*. 62.
<https://scholar.valpo.edu/gas/62>

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Valparaiso Volunteers
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Poster Presentation (or if requested adapted to an oral presentation)

For the 2019 Graduate Symposium, it would be a great privilege to represent the many volunteers who serve Valparaiso University. The Valparaiso Volunteers website is a place to locate non-profits that match the reader's needs and desires. It hosts multiple pages for over two hundred on-campus non-profit chapters, an additional two hundred local non-profits in the community and supporting pages such as the CORE Lab page. In addition, it also presents biweekly articles regarding volunteering on the Blog page. By presenting the website via a poster at the symposium I hope to improve the usability, attractiveness and gather new ideas.

Synopsis for 2019 Graduate Symposium:

Valparaiso Volunteers

The inspiration for Valparaiso Volunteers was a recurring conversation that it is difficult to locate a non-profit that would provide a “place to belong” to the volunteer. Many people told me they wanted a place akin to finding the perfect spouse or best friend. The non-profit should be a second home where they feel needed and fulfilled. I was blessed to find places to volunteer that matched my passion and skills. Professor Burow-Flak encouraged me to build a website that promoted volunteer awareness and explore motivation. While we both had little experience with running a website we worked hard to brand Valparaiso Volunteers.

Valparaiso Volunteers is a unique project that evaluates why people volunteer and promotes exploring what that means to the reader. My experience with volunteering is overall positive. Sometimes I learn new skills and grow as a person. Other days I find challenges or even witness tragic circumstances that make me stronger. I am willing to face these challenges because I am invested in the organization. To balance my personal bias, I handed out over two hundred surveys and read over a dozen books on service. The synthesis of this resulted in a more representative website. Now, I would like to present the website to my peers and make the project stronger. My poster would include a link to the website’s blog and a set of forms for participants to fill out. These forms would ask them to describe what experiences they had with volunteering and what prevents them from volunteering and/or what drives them to volunteer.

Mission Statement from the website (<https://valparaisovolunteers.org/>):

Valparaiso Volunteers was built by regular individuals freely giving their resources to enrich our community! By working together, we can make our community a better place. Valparaiso is a filled with outgoing caregivers striving to improve our world through the individual application of skills and interests toward a common goodwill.

Our aim is to encourage the community to bond together in a positive joyful way. The Valparaiso Volunteer Website was created to provide collaborative pages all in one place. We believe everyone should have access to basic information on volunteering regardless of previous experience. We hope everyone is able to find new groups and potential friends to share hidden skills and a new enthusiasm for life. What does it take to change our community for the better?

Volunteers don't need special training or personality traits-only their unique and treasured motivation to begin!

Our Motto:

What's your motivation to do good?

Please check out the website at:

<https://valparaisovolunteers.org/>