



Dear Volunteer,

Thank you for your interest in volunteering with SMYAL!

As you probably know, SMYAL is the only Washington, DC metro area service organization solely dedicated to supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. As a community-based nonprofit organization, we depend on the dedication and efforts of our volunteers to make our programs successful. Enclosed you will find information about our volunteer opportunities and a volunteer application.

If you are interested in volunteering in our Youth Center or in working directly with our young people, you will also need to complete local and federal background checks and sign our Youth Interaction Agreement, also included in this packet. You will also need to complete a two-day LGBTQ youth cultural competency training, an intensive and rewarding workshop led by our staff members to give you the knowledge and tools you need to be an effective mentor to our young people. Once we receive your application, we will let you know about upcoming trainings. In order to maintain a strong distinction between the young people we serve and our adult leaders, we require all volunteers working directly with youth to be at least 24 years old.

We also have many opportunities for volunteers outside of working directly with our youth. Do you have a talent for interior design or are you good with a hammer? We are in the process of revamping our youth space and need both! We also have opportunities for planning events, graphic design, and much more. If you have a special skill that you'd like to bring, let me know and we will see what we can do!

Please read on to learn more about our volunteer opportunities and complete the application. You can return your completed application by E-mail, fax, or mail to:

Andrew Barnett  
Director of Operations & Communications  
SMYAL  
410 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003  
[andrew.barnett@smyal.org](mailto:andrew.barnett@smyal.org)  
Phone: 202.546.5940 ext. 110  
Fax: 202.544.1306

Once I receive your application, I will contact you to schedule a volunteer orientation. Please also feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need more information. Again, thank you for your interest in volunteering!

Sincerely,

Andrew Barnett  
Director of Operations & Communications



## **Volunteer Opportunities!**

### **Youth Center Facilitator**

Provide support and understanding to LGBTQ youth in our after-school Youth Center, the hub of our programming! You'll have many different opportunities to make an impact in the lives of our young people, including providing homework help, helping youth use our Computer Lab, staffing the check-in station, and planning special events!

### **Support Group Facilitator**

Our weekly support group is a safe confidential space for our young people to talk about whatever is on their mind and receive support and guidance from their peers and our facilitators. Past topics of discussion include: coming out, healthy relationships, overcoming peer pressure, and LGBT heroes.

### **Youth Center Improvement**

Are you handy with a hammer or do you have a knack for interior design? Our Youth Center needs a few repairs, a fresh coat of paint, and some TLC. Giving just a few hours of your time during the week or over the weekend could make a huge difference in making our space the best it can be for our young people!

### **LGBT Youth Cultural Competency Facilitator**

Do you have experience in public speaking or organizing training workshops for large groups of people? Part of our mission and ongoing work is to educate school teachers, administrators, and personnel at other youth serving agencies about the unique challenges faced by LGBT youth. Work with SMYAL staff to provide in-depth LGBTQ youth cultural competency workshops!

### **Fall Brunch and Event Planning**

Do you throw the best parties in town? Do you have experience coordinating large events? If so, or if you'd like to learn how, volunteer in our Development department! We hold one major fundraiser each year, the Fall Brunch, and need all the help we can get with planning the event, securing Silent Auction donations, and more! We also hold several smaller fundraisers each year at private homes, and we are always looking for a helping hand with these events, too!



## VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers:

Day: (\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ May we contact you here? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N

Evening: (\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ May we contact you here? \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N

Fax: (\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \*: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Gender \_\_\_\_\_

Are you currently employed: \_\_\_Y \_\_\_N

What is your occupation?  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you are a social worker or medical professional do you have a license or a certification?  
\_\_\_Y \_\_\_N

If yes please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the highest level of education you completed?

- High School
- Vocational/Technical School
- College
- Graduate School (Master's or PhD)

*\*(Unless you request otherwise, we will add you to the volunteer e-newsletter.)*



Have you volunteered in the past for other organizations?

Organization / Agency	Location	Volunteer Activities	Start and end dates

Do you fluently speak:

\_\_\_\_\_ Spanish

\_\_\_\_\_ American Sign Language

\_\_\_\_\_ Other language other than English: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any other special abilities or hobbies that you'd be interesting in bringing to SMYAL: (i.e. gardening, painting, computer skills, writing talents)

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How did you hear about volunteering at SMYAL:

Ad

Friend

Newsletter

Called

Another agency referred me

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate your preferred interests in volunteering at SMYAL:

Youth Center Facilitator

Support Group Facilitator

Youth Center Improvement

LGBTQ Youth Cultural

Competency Workshop Facilitator

Fall Brunch and Event Planning

Administrative Support

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to:

Andrew Barnett

Director of Operations & Communications

SMYAL

410 7<sup>th</sup> Street, SE

Washington, DC 20003-2707

[p] 202.546.5940 ext. 110

[f] 202.544.1306

andrew.barnett@smyal.org



## Youth Interaction Policy

SMYAL recognizes the inherent power imbalance between youth and adults, and the need to exercise extreme care so as not to take advantage of this imbalance in delivering services. The following guidelines for relationships between volunteers and SMYAL youth (a young person under the age of 22 who has sought or expressed any interest in seeking SMYAL services) are intended to assist SMYAL and its volunteers in maintaining a high standard of professionalism and responsibility in leadership.

Volunteer interactions with SMYAL youth, outside of formally scheduled SMYAL activities, should be limited to unplanned contacts in public places. In addition, the following standards must be followed:

1. Volunteers will not share in or encourage the use of alcohol or illegal drugs by any SMYAL youth.
2. Volunteers will not make a habit of seeing or talking to SMYAL youth outside the context of SMYAL activities. Phone calls to/from youth, e-mail contact, and one-on-one meetings of any kind with youth are beyond the accepted volunteer role. Contact with individual SMYAL youth after hours for social, recreational, personal, or counseling purposes is **strictly prohibited**.
3. Volunteers are responsible for assuring that interactions with SMYAL youth are non-sexual and that no messages are given to SMYAL youth that imply a sexual interest. Any contact involving or suggesting the establishment of intimate and/or sexual relations between volunteers and SMYAL youth, or between volunteers and members of a SMYAL youth's family, is **strictly prohibited**. (SMYAL volunteers are **additionally expected to refrain from sexual activity with any youth under age 18.**)
4. Planned social activities outside of SMYAL facilities must receive prior approval from the Director of Programs and should be offered openly to all SMYAL youth.
5. Volunteers who are approached by SMYAL youth seeking to establish a relationship or obtain services beyond those provided by volunteers (i.e.: being asked for a home/office phone number or address, a place to stay, or counseling services) should inform the youth of the prohibitions on volunteer-youth interactions and refer the youth to the SMYAL staff for additional services.
6. Volunteers should inform the Director of Programs if they have a pre-existing relationship with a SMYAL youth or potential SMYAL youth under age 22.
7. Violation of any of the above policies is grounds for the immediate termination as a SMYAL volunteer.



## Youth Interaction Policy Agreement

I have read and agree to abide by SMYAL's Policy on Volunteer Interaction with Youth. I understand that violation of this policy may be grounds for my dismissal as a SMYAL volunteer.

Further, I agree that if I become aware of instances where another volunteer has violated the Policy on Volunteer Interaction with Youth, I will report such violations to SMYAL's Director of Programs.

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

The above-named volunteer has agreed to abide by SMYAL's Policy on Volunteer Interaction with Youth, has completed training requirements to become a volunteer, and is accepted as a SMYAL volunteer.

\_\_\_\_\_

Director of Programs

\_\_\_\_\_

Date



## **Background Check Procedure**

In order to create a safe environment for our youth, we require all employees to undergo a local and federal background check. The procedure for the background check is outlined below.

You will need to get a local background check at the Metropolitan Police Department, which is located at:

Metropolitan Police Department  
300 Indiana Avenue, NW  
Room 3055  
Washington, DC.

The MPD is open Monday through Friday from 9am-1pm and 2pm-5pm. The cost for this process is \$7.00 in the form of a money order.

You must also go to Central Business Services to be fingerprinted for a federal background check. The office is located at:

The Central Business Services  
1634 I Street, NW  
Suite 406  
Washington, DC 20006  
202.628.3716

The office hours for the CBS are Monday through Friday from 8:30am-5:30pm. The cost for this process is \$15.00 for the background check (payable by cash or money order) and \$18.00 dollars in the form of a separate money order made payable to the U.S. Treasury. After you have been fingerprinted, the Central Business Services will provide you with information to mail your fingerprints to the FBI. You are responsible for completing this step.

Please submit both background check results to Andrew Barnett as soon as you receive them. If you have questions, please contact:

Andrew Barnett  
Director of Operations & Communications  
(202) 546-5940 ext. 110  
andrew.barnett@smyal.org