

University Retirees Volunteer Center
FY 2023 Annual Report
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Since 1987 the University Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC) has served the University of Minnesota by matching volunteers with UMN and community projects in need of assistance. Many of our volunteers are University faculty and staff retirees. The re-affiliation of URVC with the UM Retirees Association (UMRA) in FY22 has provided increased opportunity for growth and impact this past year.

A feature that distinguishes URVC from other volunteer organizations is the communication between the URVC staff and project site coordinators. By developing these working relationships, the URVC Projects Director and staff create accurate and comprehensive project descriptions that ensure volunteers fully understand what is expected of them and that those referred to an opportunity have appropriate interests, skills, and/or backgrounds.

Key Outcomes for FY 2023:

- Developed the “Silver Gopher Service Corps,” designed for teams of University retirees to work collaboratively on both campus and community-based service activities. Initially conceived by UMRA President Ron Matross, the Silver Gopher Service Corps provides a clear example of the benefit of the recent UMRA and URVC reaffiliation. The Silver Gopher Corps facilitates social engagement with fellow volunteers while providing meaningful service to the University and community.
 - Initial partnership Silver Gopher projects established with UM’s Admissions office:
 - Eleven UMRA members joined Admissions staff in welcoming newly admitted, but not yet committed, students and their families to campus via “Future Gopher” program in April.
 - This summer, 18 UMRA members have filled 30, four-hour shifts to assist in Admissions’ “Sneak Preview” events which bring prospective students and their families to campus to discover and explore academic programs and majors.

- Additional collaboration with student service areas under discussion for development in FY24 include career service events, student orientation, commencements, collegiate alumni events.
- New community-based partnerships also allow Silver Gophers to work as service teams:
 - Thirteen volunteers loaded backpacks with food and other essentials for youth experiencing food insecurity in partnership with the Roseville-based “Every Meal” organization. The volunteers contributed approximately 40 hours of service in their first engagement.
 - Community-based activities such as landscape restoration projects and mock trials at Hamline-Mitchell Law School are also being developed using the Silver Gopher team approach.
- URVC and UMRA have collaborated on developing and offering for sale (at cost) Silver Gopher Service Corp tee-shirts to participants to wear during projects, promoting both team spirit and University identity.
- URVC continues to play an important role in identifying retirees to participate in University research projects, particularly in health and social sciences. Recent projects have included areas related to hearing loss, movement disorders, technology use, and gift card scams.
- URVC’s connection to University Relations and service contributions to the University community were significant factors in gaining approval for members of UMRA to retain their University Google email addresses and accounts. This is a significant “carve out” in the new OIT policy that limits these accounts to current faculty, staff, and students only.
- Revisions of URVC and UMRA bylaws reflect the changes in both organizations directly related to the re-affiliation of the two organizations.
 - URVC Board of Directors is now its “Leadership Council.”
 - URVC Leadership Council Chair is a member of the UMRA Executive Committee and Board of Directors.
 - UMRA President-Elect serves on the URVC Executive Committee and Leadership Council.
 - Nominating committees are cross-populated and election processes are coordinated.

URVC Volunteer Projects Summary, May 2022-April 2023

	2021-22	2022-23
Total Number of Volunteers, Currently Registered in Better Impact ¹	538	435 ²
Number of Active Volunteers, May 2022-April 2023	190	189
Total Number of Reported Volunteer Hours ³	6867	8161
Projects Promoted by URVC:		
Number of Projects, Total	52	58
Number of University Projects	24	21
Number of Community Projects	28	37
New Projects Announced May 2022 – Apr 2023		
University	19	13
Community	14	13
April 2023: includes special “Month of Service” projects--“Future Gophers” and “Every Meal” (hours/ number of volunteers)		881 / 79

¹ Better Impact (BI) is the data management system used to register and track volunteers and projects. In FY23, URVC staff reviewed all accounts and remove those inactive for the past three years. In addition to more accurately reflecting active volunteers, this also resulted in a significant reduction in the annual fee BI charges to URVC.

² Total number of volunteers does not include participants in U of MN research studies due to confidentiality regulations (IRB and HIPPA)

³ We understand that “reported” volunteer hours significantly understates “actual” hours of service. Despite staff reminders, volunteers often either forget to record all their hours or disdain the perceived bureaucratic request to report them. This is a frequent discussion topic at URVC leadership meetings.

The URVC appreciates continuing financial support (\$4,000 annually) provided by the Office of University Relations. These funds are used primarily to cover the annual cost of our volunteer management software system (Better Impact) and our Work Study students who provide essential administrative and communications support. The attached SNAPSHOT reflects the quality of work our students produce.

Attachment: URVC Snapshot



University Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC) Snapshot

What is the University of Minnesota Retirees Volunteer Center?

The University Retirees Volunteer Center (URVC) provides opportunities for volunteers to use their knowledge, skills, and interests in volunteer service to the University of Minnesota and surrounding communities. URVC is an affiliate of the University of Minnesota Retirees Association (UMRA).

QUESTIONS?

For more information contact the URVC Office at urvc@umn.edu

CURRENTLY

500+

University of Minnesota—Twin Cities retiree volunteers contribute approximately

8,106 hours annually

with projects inside and outside the University of Minnesota.

Who are University Retirees Center Volunteers?

All members of the University of Minnesota community can register to participate in URVC projects and activities.

While the organization is led primarily by UMN retirees (including faculty, staff, spouses, and partners), it welcomes retirees and non-retirees from the broader community who are interested in pursuing volunteer service.



What are University Retirees Center Objectives?

- To provide opportunities for service that are rewarding for volunteers.
- To gather, assess, and deliver relevant information about opportunities for volunteer service within the University and the Twin Cities communities at large.
- To act as a referral service for University units and community agencies seeking volunteers.

University of Minnesota Retirees Center Volunteers in Action



- ❖ Academic Integrity Matters (UMN Student Development)
- ❖ Community Teacher Health Inter-Professional Education (Academic Health Sciences)
- ❖ Future Gopher Admit Day (Office of Admissions)
- ❖ Gift Card Scam Study (School of Social Work)
- ❖ MRI Research Study (Center for Magnetic Resonance Research)
- ❖ OLLI Course Proposal/Instruction (OLLI)
- ❖ Standardized Client Law in Practice Program (UMN Law School)
- ❖ Airport Foundation: Travelers Assistance Program
- ❖ Citizenship Group Processing (International Institute MN)
- ❖ Every Meal Weekend Food Gap Program for K-12th students (Every Meal, Roseville)
- ❖ Metro South Adult Basic Education Center: Assist in English Instruction (MSABE)
- ❖ Reader/Writer Program (7th – 8th grade; Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools)
- ❖ River Valley Riders – Equine Therapy