UNITE
Service and dialogue bring people together.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
01.19.2015
MARKETING TOOLKIT AND RESOURCE GUIDE

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
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©2015 Points of Light: MLK Day of Service Toolkit and Resource Guide
Points of Light is excited to offer this adaptable online toolkit, full of helpful ideas and marketing and event strategies to actively support your involvement in the 2015 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service (MLK Day).

Within the toolkit, you’ll find information on how to engage communities in service and dialogue including service project ideas, volunteer leader resources, ideas and solutions for recognizing your volunteers.

In this guide, you’ll find all the essential messages and resources needed to effectively encourage and acknowledge volunteer participation, inspiration and recognition during MLK Day.

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 Millions of Americans will come together on the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, Jan. 19, 2015, in a day of national service and dialogue to honor the memory of Dr. King. Dr. King had a dream that one day all people would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness as called for in the Declaration of Independence. Dr. King called for social justice and opportunity. He asked that we bridge differences and come together in unity.

We have a unique opportunity to unite in volunteer service and issue a call to action to do what we, as Americans, do best – lend a hand, help our neighbors – and build better communities. Since Dr. King was assassinated, tremendous social progress has been made, but much remains unfinished. Americans believe that people have the power to make positive change – in cities struggling with poverty and high unemployment rates – in families where people are going hungry – and in school districts where more than half of our children aren’t graduating from high school.

With many communities struggling to access financial and human services, volunteer service can be a powerful force. Neighbors helping neighbors, young helping old, employees offering skills and companies investing in communities where they do business. We dream of a day when everyone is actively involved in making a better America. This year, Points of Light, in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service and sponsored by GE Volunteer Foundation, will create new and meaningful ways to harness the passion of our nation’s citizens in honoring the memory and promoting the vision of Dr. King.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED

There are many ways to celebrate MLK Day in your community. Whether you’re leading a local nonprofit, organizing an event with your family or looking to make a difference in your school, we have the tools and resources you’ll need.

From hosting an America’s Sunday Supper to leading a service project or recognizing those in your community that have made exceptional service contributions, this toolkit includes information to get started.

WHAT IS AMERICA’S SUNDAY SUPPER?

Inspired by the legacy of Dr. King, America’s Sunday Supper invites people from diverse backgrounds to come together to share a meal, discuss issues that affect their community and highlight the power each one of us has to make a difference. These family and community suppers unite individuals for dinner and dialogue in restaurants, coffee shops, community centers, faith-based organizations and homes across the country. Leading up to and on MLK Day, individuals will participate in a community-by-community, nationwide conversation about our country’s most pressing social issues related to financial literacy, employability, housing, education, hunger, and veterans and military families.

When individuals reach across differences in economic, ethnic, racial and religious identities, meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with neighbors can occur. A sense of community is gained by neighbors working together on projects, resulting in stronger civic engagement and bringing us all closer to Dr. King’s legacy.

Benefits of hosting America’s Sunday Supper:
• Builds awareness, engagement and connections
• Creates significant reflection and service opportunities
• Raises visibility of your organization in your community
• Grows network of community partners
• Connects communities with information, resources and opportunities to get involved in ongoing service

The format of hosting America’s Sunday Supper:
• A shared meal that involves substantive discussion about relevant community issues
• A documentary that sets the context for national and community issues (optional)
• Service incorporated into the event or commitment to serve in the future
• A shared commitment that invited guests will host their own America’s Sunday Supper

For easy steps on how to host your own America’s Sunday Supper including celebrity chef recipes and conversation starters, please download the “Cooking and Conversations Guide” on our website http://www.pointsoflight.org/signature-events/martin-luther-king-jr-day-service.
MLK Day is a great opportunity to get hands-on in your community. You might have a passion for service, or feel inspired after attending America’s Sunday Supper to kick-off 2015 by volunteering. Dr. King’s life and legacy was about his commitment to service and social justice. If you shared a film during America’s Sunday Supper or would like to connect your service project specifically to Dr. King, below are a few ideas.

- **Poverty:** Organize a canned food drive for your local shelter. Expand the drive to include donating blankets, gloves, etc. to keep the homeless in your community warm during the winter months.
- **Education:** Organize a school supply drive.
- **Community:** Learn about the history of the community where you live. Identify cultural and religious groups in your community that might be neglected. Discuss how you can learn about their culture and help support them in preserving it.
- **Youth:** Organize a toy drive to provide less fortunate children in the community with toys and games.
- **Military/veterans:** Assemble care packages for military members overseas. The Community Blueprint is a set of tools and practices that provide a framework for communities to produce positive, measurable outcomes for veterans, military members and their families.
- **Women’s empowerment:** Identify gaps in your community where women don’t have equal opportunity. Develop a plan to provide literacy classes, teach English, offer vocational skills or train on financial literacy.
- **Food security:** Donate to the local food bank.

Included in this toolkit are all the resources you’ll need to plan your service project. You can also join projects already organized by checking with your local HandsOn Network affiliate or check All for Good, the largest database of volunteer opportunities. Additional resources for AmeriCorps Alums can also be found on the AmeriCorps Alums website. See the Appendix for additional event planning resources.
MLK Day kicks-off the service year and is a great time to recognize those in your community doing exceptional work. Here are some ideas on how you can say thank you to the wonderful volunteers who have given their time, talent and resources:

• Honor volunteers with the MLK Drum Major for Service. Recognizing and honoring volunteers sets a standard for service, encourages a sustained commitment to civic participation and inspires others to make service a central part of their lives. The President’s Volunteer Service Award recognizes individuals, families and groups that have achieved a certain standard – measured by the number of hours of service over a 12-month period or cumulative hours earned over the course of a lifetime. Depending on which award package is ordered, award recipients can receive:
  - A congratulatory letter from President Barack Obama
  - An official President’s Volunteer Service Award lapel pin
  - A personalized certificate of achievement

• Nominate a group or individual for the Daily Point of Light Award. This award honors individuals and groups that create meaningful change in communities across America. Each weekday, one volunteer or volunteer effort is selected to receive the Daily Point of Light Award. Only 260 awards are issued each year. Each honoree receives a certificate signed by former president George H. W. Bush and a feature story on the Points of Light website.

• Send thank you letters to donors, sponsors, volunteers, speakers and others who have contributed to your project and include a picture of the project at work. A template is included in this toolkit.

• Publicize volunteers’ activities through your newsletter with pictures, if possible, and list the volunteers’ names.

• Publicize the project through local newspapers. Submit press releases, articles, photos and other information about your successful project.
We’ve shared information on how to plan an America’s Sunday Supper, organize a service project and recognize outstanding volunteers in your community. What if these options don’t fit your needs?

Dr. King’s work brought together people of all different backgrounds and united them through service and community engagement. Throughout the next few pages, you’ll find links to connect you to the resources you need to celebrate MLK Day.

GenerationOn, the youth enterprise of Points of Light, inspires, equips and mobilizes youth to take action that changes the world and themselves through service. GenerationOn MLK Day resources are designed to provide students, parents, teachers and youth service organizations with the tools and resources needed to plan and run meaningful MLK Day service projects at school or in the community.
Corporations across the country are consistently using their resources to address some of our nation’s most pressing issues. MLK Day is a great opportunity to engage employees in service and raise awareness of their power to make a difference in the communities where they live and work while honoring the memory of Dr. King. Here are a few easy, but impactful ways to observe MLK Day and demonstrate the significance of this day of service in your company.

• **Letter from your CEO:** A personalized letter from your CEO acknowledging and promoting MLK Day is a great way to encourage employees to get involved.

• **Connect your special interest groups:** Dr. King believed in equality for all and dreamed of uniting people from different backgrounds to create change. Make sure your diversity officer, cultural committee or affinity groups are aware of project activities, celebrations, dialogues, etc., and connect them with opportunities in your area.

• **Skills-based volunteering (SBV):** MLK Day is an ideal time to kick off an SBV project within your Employee Volunteer Program. SBV utilizes the skills, experience, talents and education of volunteers and matches them with the needs of nonprofits. Consider partnering with a local nonprofit to identify capacity building opportunities or adopt a school to mentor the students and teach life skills. Get information on SBV projects.

• **Recognize your volunteers:** Use MLK Day to recognize the incredible employee volunteers within your company. Check out the many recognition opportunities found in this toolkit including the President’s Volunteer Service Award.

**What if your employees don’t have the day off?**

There are several activities that employees can participate in from the office that will allow them to serve and honor the memory of Dr. King. Consider the following ideas:

• **Civic cinema at lunch:** Host a viewing of a civic film that can raise social awareness and encourage dialogue. Consider inviting nonprofit partners to participate.

• **Write letters or send care packages to the military:** Identify employees that have family members serving in the military and begin a letter writing campaign or send them packages with items that remind them of home.

• **Join an online dialogue:** Join participants across the country via Twitter and Facebook to share experiences, perspectives and insights, generating a national dialogue.

• **Organize a book drive:** Identify a school or classroom that needs books and encourage employees to bring in age appropriate or grade level books.

• **Micro-volunteering:** A form of virtual volunteering which allows participants to complete short-term needed tasks of a nonprofit from a computer or smart phone.

• **Host a food drive/toy drive:** Encourage employees to donate canned food items to help combat hunger or collect toys to share with less fortunate children in your community.

The Points of Light Corporate Institute can provide more project ideas and resources. Interested in customized projects for your employees on MLK Day? Please contact Events at events@pointsoflight.org.
• On January 19, 2015, Points of Light – in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service and sponsored by GE Volunteer Foundation, and dozens of local volunteer action centers across the country — will mark MLK Day with service and dialogue.

• **Points of Light and its partners will mobilize 50,000 volunteers** in service projects designed to improve the economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged individuals.

• Points of Light’s **national partners** on MLK Day include Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity and Global Citizen.

• The MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service – a “day on, not a day off.” It’s a way to transform Dr. King’s life and teachings into community action that helps solve social problems.

• **Dr. King stressed volunteer service as a means to social justice.** As he famously said: “Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

• On MLK Day of Service, we are calling people to:

  1) **Volunteer.** The need is greater than ever, and no act of service is too small to make a difference. With communities across America struggling to provide basic services, volunteers save lives and transform communities. Go to [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org) to find a volunteer opportunity.

  2) **Host or attend an America’s Sunday Supper,** a local gathering designed to bring people together to share a meal, talk about critical issues, and discuss ways people can unite to meet urgent local needs. To date, hundreds of thousands have participated in America’s Sunday Supper across the country.

Go to the Points of Light website to find a volunteer opportunity and a toolkit to help you organize an America’s Sunday Supper.
Please customize the below media advisory for your specific needs (e.g., service project vs. America’s Sunday Supper) and distribute to local media to build awareness and participation in your event.

INSERT ORGANIZATION LOGO HERE

***MEDIA ALERT FOR MLK DAY***

SAMPLE HEADLINE: Celebrate MLK Day with Park Restoration Project
SAMPLE HEADLINE: Celebrate MLK Day and Share Community Ideas at America's Sunday Supper

SAMPLE SUBHEAD: More than 200 Volunteers Expected at Piedmont Park to Pick-up Trash, Plant Trees, Install New Playground Equipment
SAMPLE SUBHEAD: Share a Meal and Great Conversation with Your Local Community and Communities Around the Country

What: SAMPLE TEXT: More than 200 volunteers from surrounding neighborhoods including local dignitaries, teen service leaders and elementary school children will work together to beautify Piedmont Park in Midtown Atlanta.

What: SAMPLE TEXT: Atlanta invites members of the community to celebrate the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with America’s Sunday Supper. People from diverse backgrounds spanning metro Atlanta and the surrounding area will come together to watch a documentary film, share a meal and discuss issues that affect their community.

Why: SAMPLE TEXT: Millions of Americans will come together on MLK Day, Jan. 19, 2015, in a day of service and dialogue to honor the memory of Dr. King. This year, Points of Light, in partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service and GE Volunteer Foundation, will create new and meaningful ways to harness the passion of our nation’s citizens in honoring the memory and promoting the vision of Dr. King. Projects range from school makeovers, to feeding homeless families to city-wide parades and much more.

Why: SAMPLE TEXT: MLK Day is the perfect opportunity to kick-off a new service year by joining your community to offer your time, talent, voice and resources to community service," said Tracy Hoover, President of Points of Light. “By spending time volunteering, we are bringing to life Dr. King’s dream for a better America.
When: SAMPLE TEXT: Jan. 19, 2015, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
When: SAMPLE TEXT: Jan. 19, 2015, 6 – 8:30 p.m.

Where: SAMPLE TEXT: Hands On Atlanta, 600 Means St. NW Atlanta, Ga. 30318

Who: SAMPLE TEXT: Volunteers will be joined by local residents, community leaders, teen service leaders as well as an Atlanta spokesperson.
• Executive Director, Hands On Atlanta
• [LIST OTHER VIP PARTICIPANTS]

For more information regarding MLK Day events, please visit [insert your website] or www.pointsoflight.org

INSERT ORGANIZATION CONTACT INFORMATION HERE (NAME, PHONE, EMAIL)
Please customize the below media advisory for your specific needs (e.g., service project vs. America’s Sunday Supper) and distribute to local media to build awareness and participation in your event.

SAMPLE HEADLINE: ORGANIZATION NAME Announces Service Plans for 2015 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service
SAMPLE HEADLINE: ORGANIZATION NAME Announces Plans to Host America’s Sunday Supper to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

SAMPLE SUBHEAD: Local Volunteers Encouraged to Participate in MLK Day, Opportunities for All to Get Involved
SAMPLE SUBHEAD: Share a Meal and Great Conversation with Your Local Community and Communities Around the Country

CITY/STATE, MONTH DAY – ORGANIZATION NAME, ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION, today announced plans to celebrate MLK Day on Jan. 19. MLK Day marks the beginning of the service year as millions of Americans honor the memory of Dr. King by contributing their time, talent, voice and money to improve their communities.

On MLK Day, ORGANIZATION NAME is joining HandsOn Network, Americorps Alums and generationOn, enterprises of Points of Light, to engage 250,000 individuals in acts of service through thousands of service projects and dialogue in more than 50 communities across the nation.

“INSERT ORGANIZATIONAL QUOTE HERE RE: SERVICE PROJECT AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY ON MLK DAY.”

INSERT PROGRAM DETAILS HERE: HOW CAN LOCAL VOLUNTEERS LEARN MORE OR GET INVOLVED.

Dr. King’s work and message impacted many aspects of our society and are more pertinent today than ever before. He invested a deeper meaning into the “beloved community” of America where brotherhood is a reality that does not allow poverty, hunger or homelessness to exist.

“MLK Day is the perfect opportunity to kick-off a new service year by joining your community to offer your time, talent, voice and resources to community service,” said Tracy Hoover, President of Points of Light. “By spending time volunteering, we are bringing to life Dr. King’s dream for a better America.”
About Points of Light
Points of Light – the world’s largest organization dedicated to volunteer service – mobilizes millions of people to take action that is changing the world. Through affiliates in 250 cities and partnerships with thousands of nonprofits and corporations, Points of Light engages 4 million volunteers in 30 million hours of service each year. We put people at the center of change. For more information, go to www.pointsoflight.org.

About the Corporation for National and Community Service
The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages more than 5 million Americans in service through Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and the Social Innovation Fund, and leads President Obama’s national call to service initiative, United We Serve. CNCS supports Points of Light through grants which are distributed to sub-grantees to mobilize hundreds of thousands around the country in service on MLK Day.

About GE

About INSERT ORGANIZATION NAME
INSERT ORGANIZATION BOILERPLATE INFORMATION
Hi,

Wanted to send you a quick note to let you know that ORGANIZATION will be hosting a service event on Jan. 19 to celebrate the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service by ACTIVITY DETAILS INCLUDING: WHO IS PARTICIPATING, WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND WHAT YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH THROUGH YOUR SERVICE PROJECT. ALSO INCLUDE ANY DIGNITARIES OR LOCAL CELEBRITIES WHO ARE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE.

We have images and interview opportunities available. If you’re interested in participating yourself to support ORGANIZATION and MLK Day, please let me know. If you’d like additional information on MLK Day, please visit www.handsonnetwork.org/events/mlk.

Thanks,

YOUR NAME
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

[INSERT BODY COPY OF PRESS RELEASE HERE]
Hi,

Wanted to send you a quick note to let you know that ORGANIZATION will be hosting America’s Sunday Supper on Jan. 19 to celebrate the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service and the America’s Sunday Supper initiative. INCLUDE ACTIVITY DETAILS: WHO IS PARTICIPATING, WHAT YOU ARE DOING AND WHAT YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH THROUGH YOUR SUNDAY SUPPER. ALSO INCLUDE ANY DIGNITARIES OR LOCAL CELEBRITIES WHO ARE EXPECTED TO PARTICIPATE.

We have images and interview opportunities available. If you’re interested in participating yourself to support ORGANIZATION and MLK Day, please let me know. If you’d like additional information on MLK Day, please visit www.pointsoflight.org

Thanks,

YOUR NAME
YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

[INSERT BODY COPY OF PRESS RELEASE HERE]
Some journalists might be looking for an interview. Designate your representative ahead of time who will speak with the media. If you have interest from a local reporter, make sure to put them in touch with that local representative in a timely fashion (media often are working under tight deadlines). Ensure your appointed spokesperson has reviewed the key messages and press release provided and is comfortable delivering this information.

If possible, also identify a volunteer or service recipient who would be willing to share their story with the media, either the reason why they volunteer on MLK Day or how the service project will benefit them, their family or their community.

A call to action is crucial, and can be as simple as “people can visit www.pointsoflight.org for more information about how to get involved.” Try to get this message – or one tailored to your own organization – in any and all interviews.
Outlined below are tips for approaching your local media outlets to help you secure coverage for MLK Day:

Try to take advantage of current news or trends, if appropriate or helpful. If you can pitch MLK Day activities to a reporter in the context of a larger news trend you are seeing in your local market, you will increase your chances of coverage by making the pitch seem less commercial. However, do not ever link MLK Day to stories that might be political in nature, polarizing or overly controversial. The purpose of MLK Day is to promote unity through service.

To enhance your relationship with a reporter, you can offer to provide them with access to your organization and the people you serve before the event. This will allow them to learn about what you went into planning the service project itself, covering it from the perspective of a volunteer rather than as a separate third party.

For television, call the station and ask which producer covers stories related to local charitable organizations and service projects. Ask how yours might be included in their coverage. For example, maybe they are open to having an organizational representative on their show to discuss local service projects.
MEDIA OUTREACH TIPS

Organizations with marketing managers and/or local PR agencies or consultancies are encouraged to contact local broadcast (TV and radio), print (newspapers, weeklies and magazines) and online outlets (blogs, websites).

Research the relevant outlets and reporters/editors in your market who have covered your organization or similar charities and nonprofits in the past and who might be interested in your MLK Day programming in order to compile an up-to-date media list. You’ll find that Google News is a great tool for this.

If you think your MLK Day program would fit nicely in a certain column or correspond to a recent article you read, suggest that to the reporter, showing you have done your homework. If you call the front desk of any outlet, they will be able to provide you with the phone numbers and email addresses of the journalist you’re looking for. You can also ask, “Who covers philanthropy and nonprofit organizations?” and they will direct your call.

Local markets should feel free to target local online publications and blogs to announce the MLK Day program and recruit volunteers. Conducting a Google search using key words like “service,” “volunteerism” or “charities” coupled with the name of your market, or checking local portals in your market – like Boston.com – is a good place to start. If pitching blogs, identify the blog host and pitch them as you would pitch a reporter. Remember to always be transparent and identify yourself as someone representing your organization, not just an interested citizen.

Your affiliated chapters or sponsors in your region could also be a powerful ally in this effort. Be sure to brief them and find out if you can work jointly to release the press materials and contact the media. They may also be able to provide a copy of their media contacts and help act as spokespersons. Be sure to invite them to your MLK Day project.
Here are a few ways you can recognize your projects and share your stories across your social networks in support of MLK Day.

#MLKDay2015

**Facebook**
Like Points of Light on Facebook at facebook.com/beapointoflight and share your MLK Day projects and America’s Sunday Suppers with us and your friends. Be sure to include a link to the event or project if people can sign up for them.

Here are some sample posts you can use to promote MLK Day on Facebook:

**Post 1**
It’s a difficult conversation, but it doesn’t have to be. Join me on MLK Day and host an America’s Sunday Supper with your family and friends. Dine and discuss the nation’s current civil rights climate and how, together, we can continue to improve it. Learn more and register here: bit.ly/mlkday2015 #MLKDay2015

**Post 2**
Celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by serving your community. With help from Points of Light [@tag] you can easily find a volunteer opportunity near you or create your own! Sign up here: bit.ly/mlkday2015 #MLKDay2015

Share these photo quotes from Dr. King, and pair them with a call to action on Facebook or Instagram:

**Twitter**
Follow @PointsOfLight on Twitter to stay up to date on the national day of service and search/use #MLKDay2015 to join the conversation.

Here are some sample tweets you can use to promote MLK Day on Twitter:

**Tweet 1**
I’m honoring Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by volunteering in my community. Join me for a day of service! #MLKDay2015 bit.ly/mlkday2015

**Tweet 2**
Gather your closest friends and family for dining and discussion, host a Sunday Supper. Learn more here: bit.ly/mlkday2015 #MLKDay2015
SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Blog
- Write a post about why MLK Day is important to you and your volunteers.
- Have a guest post to your blog and include a profile of the person who authors the post for your readers.
- How did their service change the community?
- Did Dr. King inspire them to be a volunteer?
- Why is MLK Day important to your organization?
- What does Dr. King’s legacy mean to you?
- What are your tips for organizing MLK Day volunteer projects or America’s Sunday Suppers?
- Send a link to your blog post about Dr. King’s legacy in your community to mmelendez@pointsoflight.org and we may link to it from the Points of Light blog.

YouTube
- Answer the blog writing prompt questions on video and upload it to YouTube, then share it with your Facebook and/or Twitter friends.
- Send a link to your video post to tadkins@pointsoflight.org and we may share it on @PointsofLight and the Points of Light Facebook page.
Points of Light provides free marketing, web resources and event documents that you can customize. Please go to the Points of Light website to download these files.
The day of the event will entail handling many details. The following categories will help you start thinking of how to prepare for your service project.

**Logistics**

Walk through the day from all angles.

- Can people get to the site?
- Are your service projects accessible to persons with disabilities?
- Have you advertised accessibility information?
- Do you have age limits for those serving?
- What are the transportation alternatives?
- Who is managing your project sites? Have they been adequately trained?
- Should participants bring their own food?
- If a building is normally closed on the holiday, will the facilities (like bathrooms) be open for use?
- What happens if it rains or snows?
- Do you need security?
- Assess liability issues for each project site and take appropriate action.
EVENT PLANNING RESOURCES

Prepare a Schedule for the Day of the Event
Prepare a schedule for the day and distribute it to all project leaders (site managers, volunteers, etc.). The schedule should include allotted times for lunch, breaks, cleanup, reflection, evaluations and travel.

Distribute Checklists, Site Maps and Contact Information
Distribute checklist and contact information to team leaders, site managers and volunteer coordinators so they know specific duties throughout the day and who to contact in case of emergency, etc. Also, it would be helpful to distribute a site map so that volunteers and leaders know how to find the restrooms, on-site activities, rest stops, etc.

Team Leaders
Assign team leaders (also known as project managers or project/volunteer coordinators) so that volunteers know who to approach to answer questions, get clarification on a specific assignment, and to make the crucial decisions (scale up, scale down, get more supplies, move indoors, etc.) This person should be accessible via cell phone, and should be easily identifiable by volunteers (e.g., specific colored hat or shirt).

Emergency Plans
Make certain you know where the emergency facilities are located. Make sure you have a first aid kit, and someone trained to use it, at each site. Have a plan for early or late arriving volunteers, low or high volunteer turnout, weather contingencies and what to do if you don’t complete your work.

Always have plenty of water on hand and easily accessible. Encourage volunteers to stay hydrated throughout their project experience.

Service Project Registration
Registration for volunteers can take place either at the project site or at a special kickoff site. Distributing t-shirts or hats at registration is a good way to build a sense of excitement and purpose among volunteers. Be sure to have volunteers sign the video/photo release form and the volunteer registration form and waiver included in the zipped files of this toolkit prior to or at check-in. It’s also a good idea to have a special check-in area for members of the media so you can keep track of who is covering the event and follow up with them if necessary.
Project Close-Out and Follow-Up
Your MLK Day service project is complete. What’s next? Once the volunteers’ work is done, there are still important pieces left in the process including reflection, evaluation and recognition. The following pages detail how to close and follow up after your project.

Reflection on Service Learning
Reflection is strongly encouraged after every service experience. This process is often referred to as service-learning or community building. While volunteers think about their experiences independently, a conversation among all participating volunteers creates a stronger sense of accomplishment and establishes a deeper connection to the community. A group conversation provides structured time for volunteers to think and talk about what occurred during the project. This group conversation can often deepen volunteers’ understanding of the social issue your project addresses and increase their commitment to service.

Here are some sample reflection questions to help facilitate a reflective discussion about the service project:

• What issue(s) is being addressed by this service project?
• What did you notice happening around you during the project?
• What were the results/outcomes of the project?
• What did you think about during the project activity?
• What effect do you think this activity has had on those intended to benefit from it?
• How has it affected you?
• What are the larger issues that caused the need for you to participate in this service activity?
• How does this service project relate to MLK Day?
• How did your efforts help?
• What more needs to be done to improve these problems?
• How will you apply what you have learned here in the future?
**Evaluation**
Evaluation and feedback are different than reflection. Evaluation is about the actual project – the work, planning, coordination, delivery, implementation, logistics and management.

Feedback is a gift – use it as an opportunity to reflect on the overall management and implementation of the project. If you never know what the volunteers and your community contacts think, you will never be able to adequately address future needs. Therefore, don’t hesitate to ask your project leaders, volunteers and contacts for their honest feedback. Sample evaluation surveys for adults and youth are included in the zipped files of this toolkit to help guide your evaluation process.

For feedback, ask those involved to complete a survey before they leave the project site so the experience is fresh in their minds. Ask a volunteer (possibly the volunteer registrar) to pass out survey forms. Do not ask volunteers to put their names on these forms; people are more comfortable giving anonymous feedback. Do not react or respond to the feedback while at the project site. If a volunteer gives you his or her name and contact information, you should call him or her to discuss it further shortly after the project. If immediate feedback is not an option, you can mail or email participants a feedback form within a week of the project. Simply attach a survey form to the thank you letter or follow-up correspondence. If you are mailing the form, include a stamped return envelope to increase the likelihood of their participation.

**Project Report**
Synthesize information from your volunteers’ evaluation forms and create a project report. The outcomes of your evaluation should be shared with partners, funders, and volunteers if appropriate. The evaluation should examine all areas of the project including planning, risk management and logistics. Generate a final report that summarizes the impact of your project and assesses possible improvements for next year.

**Follow Up**
Following up with volunteers and forming relationships is important to continue the great work you’re doing in the service community. Here a few important steps to take:
- Add the names of new volunteers to your mailing list so you’ll be sure to include them in next year’s events
- Provide volunteers with information about continued service opportunities
- Create a list of groups that would welcome volunteers throughout the year
- Report back to Points of Light regarding the success of your project; include stories, photos and video in your report for possible inclusion on our MLK Day page.