

Networking And Volunteering Is Key For Career-Minded College Students And Graduates

(NAPSA)—College students and recent graduates seeking to get a foot in the door in the working world can gain valuable experience through volunteering. The key to success is in thinking beyond traditional jobs to find volunteer opportunities and resources that will jump-start a meaningful and fulfilling career.

Volunteering experience can be a significant asset to the resumes of college students and graduates. Many recruiters now look for volunteer service on resumes as a telltale sign of strong moral character, good work ethic and proven leadership skills. Not only does volunteer experience show potential employers that a candidate is a responsible citizen of the world, but it also provides networking opportunities, a critical component of the business world that may be a new concept for those in college or recently graduated.

Kiwanis International, a global volunteer service organization, and Circle K International, a Kiwanis service leadership program for college students, created the Career Contacts program and job board with the link between volunteering and networking in mind. Designed to promote career



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development by encouraging college students to interact with Kiwanis members, the program offers opportunities for students and recent graduates to introduce themselves to key decision-makers across a wide variety of professional fields. Kiwanis members support the program in many ways; as career mentors, hosts for a “day at the office,” participants in a campus career fair or mock job interview, or just by being listed in the business directory.

“We created this program in hopes of educating today’s youth

on the process of job searching and providing them with opportunities vital to success in today’s working world,” said Casey Keller, director of Circle K International. “Career Contacts is an excellent resource for both potential employees and employers to find prospects with similar, service-oriented interests and backgrounds.”

For other ways to build a circle of professional contacts and gain valuable volunteering experience, consider the following tips:

- Join a service organization or start your own local club.
- Actively seek out volunteer opportunities, job fairs and professional networking events related to your field.
- Ask to job shadow a professional contact met through volunteering.
- Utilize volunteering and networking Web sites to meet like-minded individuals.
- Participate in your school’s local chapter of a larger professional organization.

For more info on Kiwanis International, Circle K International and the Career Contacts program, please visit www.kiwanis.org or call (800) KIWANIS.