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VCS

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# Volunteering & Giving

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**A GUIDE FOR VCS PARENTS**

## **FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL**

Dear Parents,

For those of you who are new to Village Community School, welcome! We're so pleased to have your family join our extended community of students, parents, grandparents, alumni, staff and friends. For those of you who are returning parents, welcome back!

Many new VCS parents are eager to learn how they can contribute to the life of our school. This guide provides an introduction to our myriad opportunities to get involved and to share in the experience of building an even stronger, more vibrant VCS.

Your participation and generosity will make an important difference to your children's experience here, and will ensure our excellence endures for future students and families.

Your interest in helping us be the very best we can be is very much appreciated. On behalf of the entire staff, the VCS Board of Trustees and our community, thank you.

Warmly,



**Eve K. Kleger**

Head of School

## **OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT VCS**

# Contributing to Our Community

VCS parents contribute to our school's vitality in three important ways:

- Serving as volunteers
- Supporting philanthropic efforts
- Attending social and fundraising events

Your active participation benefits our entire community and has a direct impact on the educational opportunities provided to every VCS student, including your child.

Getting involved provides many opportunities to get to know other families, forge new friendships and deepen ongoing relationships.

We strive to make parent engagement a fun, rewarding process. As you consider various options, please do not hesitate to reach out and ask questions. The VCS Office of Advancement is a great resource, as are fellow VCS parents. Together, we'll find the best fit for your interests, time and talents.

This brochure highlights some of the ways you can contribute to our community.

## **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

# Ongoing Commitment

## Class Parents

Class Parents are responsible for effectively disseminating important information to the parents in their class. Throughout the year, they help coordinate volunteers for school-wide events and are active volunteers themselves. Class Parents assist in arranging class trips and other classroom activities, and organize evening social events for the parents of their homerooms. They help create a welcoming environment for families new to VCS. Class Parents also occasionally serve as a focus group for the administration.

At the beginning of the year, the Vice-Chair of the VCS Board of Trustees solicits two parent volunteers from each homeroom to serve as Class Parents for the entire year. Class Parents' responsibilities are varied and important. Parents should volunteer for the position only if they are able to fully meet these responsibilities.

Class Parent meetings are held monthly and are led by the Vice-Chair. Class Parents may alternate attendance at these meetings, but should report to each other the business conducted and share the necessary work. Serving as a Class Parent is an excellent opportunity to help the school while learning more about it.

## Community Service Committee

Committee chairs and members provide leadership for the school's Annual Service Day in early May – suggesting projects and coordinating specific efforts by students and staff in each grade. Coordinators should be amenable to a multi-year commitment and able to meet periodically September – May. Members also support school-wide service projects and share resources with families seeking to volunteer outside of school.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

# Fundraising Events

## Phonathon/Annual Giving Committee



On Phonathon night in November, parent volunteers use their “artful asking” talents to directly solicit Annual Fund contributions from fellow parents.

Time commitment: one workshop a week prior to the event, three hours of telephone conversations during the Phonathon evening and a few hours of follow up the next week.

### **Qualities of a good Phonathon volunteer:**

- Willing to make VCS a philanthropic priority
  - Willing to ask for the gift and maintain confidentiality
  - Willing to educate others about VCS financial needs
  - Enthusiastic, knowledgeable about VCS and our mission
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## VCS Parents’ Night Out



VCS parents put the fun in fundraising at a celebratory social outing in early spring. Proceeds support the Annual Fund or a particular VCS “wish-list” item.

### **Volunteers begin meeting in late fall and skill sets include:**

- Creative ideas and venue knowledge
- Event planning skills
- Enthusiasm for building relationships among parents

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

# Social & Community Events

## VCS Annual Fall Festival



The October Fall Festival is a celebratory evening of food, games and activities for parents, students and staff. We tent the Big Yard, transforming it with decorations and amusements. Many children attend in costume, making Fall Festival a most treasured, memorable event.

### Volunteer opportunities include:

- Set-up, clean-up
  - Guest check-in
  - Leading games and activities
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## VCS Annual Book Fair



For two wonderful days in December each year, the VCS Auditorium overflows with classic novels and great new titles to explore. The VCS Book Fair lets students and families revel in our shared love of reading.

### Volunteer opportunities include:

- Set-up, clean-up
  - Book sorting and packing
  - Room decoration
  - Preparing student artwork displays
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## VCS Annual Square Dance



Lower School families shake off the winter blues at our January Square Dance. Do-si-do and get to know the VCS community.

### Volunteer opportunities include:

- Set-up, clean-up
- Guest check-in
- Guiding participation

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

# Social & Community Events

## VCS Annual Service Day



One of the most fulfilling days of the school year when VCS forgoes its traditional schedule and dedicates a day for all students and staff to participate in various service projects with community partners.

### **Volunteer opportunities include:**

- Parent Coordinators:
  - Year-long commitment
  - Organizing service partner projects
  - Collaborating with staff and community partners
- Day-of Volunteers

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## VCS Annual Family Picnic



As our final get-together of June, the VCS Picnic is a chance to reminisce, wind-down and honor a memorable year while enjoying refreshments and activities.

### **Volunteer opportunities include:**

- Set-up, clean-up
- Guest check-in
- Leading games and activities

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT VCS

# Annual Fund Giving

VCS relies on families' philanthropic gifts for our continued strength and the success of our educational program.

Every member of the VCS community is expected to contribute each year to our Annual Fund. We seek 100% participation at whatever level is appropriate to your family's circumstances.

### Why is Annual Fund giving so important?

As is typical in independent schools, tuition does not cover the full cost of educating each student. Annual Fund contributions enable us to cover these costs. Annual Fund gifts typically generate 10% to 12% of revenues necessary for the VCS operating budget every year.

### Where are my Annual Fund gifts used?

As unrestricted gifts, Annual Fund giving benefits virtually every aspect of life at VCS. Expanded curriculum, faculty development, enriched activities, new technology, tuition assistance and upgraded facilities are all typical uses of Annual Fund gifts.

Contributions are expended during the same school year they are raised. So, your child's VCS experience is directly impacted by the success of each year's Annual Fund giving.

### What amount is an appropriate Annual Fund gift?

We ask each VCS family to make our school a philanthropic priority. Past gifts have ranged from \$50 to \$100,000. All financial gifts to VCS are tax-deductible contributions. Each gift is appreciated and helps us reach our dollar and participation goals.

### Whom do I contact about Annual Fund giving?

Connie Sopic, Director of Advancement, is happy to answer any questions about the Annual Fund and other VCS philanthropy. Please email her at [csopic@vcs-nyc.org](mailto:csopic@vcs-nyc.org).

## **OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT VCS**

# Special Funds Giving

VCS has established several special Funds to enhance specific aspects of our school including, professional development for faculty, technology, financial assistance, endowment and more.

Tax-deductible gifts to these Funds are welcome and encouraged. Please contact the Office of Advancement for more information.

## Stay Informed Online

There are many ways to keep up to date on the latest volunteer opportunities, events and fundraising efforts at Village Community School. VCS issues weekly emails and Monthly Postings to all families, which include calendar updates and important notices.

The Village Community School website is also a great source of information - be sure to bookmark [www.vcsnyc.org](http://www.vcsnyc.org).

## Questions?

For more information on volunteering and giving, please email Director of Advancement Connie Sopic at [csopic@vcs-nyc.org](mailto:csopic@vcs-nyc.org).

# **Thank You!**