



THE CENTER
FOR THE ARTS & SCIENCES

Volunteer Handbook

OVERVIEW FOR VOLUNTEERS

What is The Center for the Arts & Sciences?

The Center for the Arts & Sciences (The Center) is Brazosport Fine Arts Council's main conduit to deliver its mission and support community-driven arts and science programs offered to residents of and visitors to the upper Texas Gulf Coast.

What is Brazosport Fine Arts Council?

Brazosport Fine Arts Council (BFAC) was formed by community and business leaders in the Brazosport region of southern Brazoria County in the mid-1960s. Its purpose was to provide support to the cultural organizations that had been formed to accommodate the influx of residents resulting from the growth of industry in the area.

In 1976, BFAC opened The Center for the Arts & Sciences on land with a long-term lease from Brazosport College and began doing business as the Brazosport Center for the Arts & Sciences or, simply, The Center for the Arts & Sciences.

What is the mission of Brazosport Fine Arts Council?

BFAC's mission is to enrich our community by offering arts, science, culture and education programs to residents and visitors to the Texas Gulf Coast.

What programs are provided at The Center?

Below is a basic overview of the many programs offered at The Center.

Brazosport Art League

Brazosport Art League (BAL) was organized in 1955. BAL maintains its gallery to cultivate interest and education in the visual arts. The exhibits in the gallery change every four to six weeks and include a variety of art media. Exhibits include traveling exhibits as well as exhibits by local artists at professional and student levels. The gallery is open to the public, free of charge Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM until 4:00 PM and Sunday from 2:00 PM until 5:00 PM.

BAL facilities also include a studio where workshops, classes and demonstrations are held. BAL conducts art classes for adults and students as well as art demonstrations held monthly in conjunction with membership meetings. These meetings are open to the public.

Potential volunteers don't have to be an artist to volunteer with BAL. There are a variety of volunteer opportunities, including serving as a gallery docent (desk receptionist and gallery greeter), assisting art workshop instructors, providing hospitality during gallery receptions and serving on various committees.

Brazosport Center Stages

Brazosport Center Stages (BCS) was chartered in 1943 and is the oldest continuously operating community theater on the Gulf Coast. BCS offers a minimum of five fully-staged live theater productions per year, including at least one family-friendly summer musical. BCS also offers youth-oriented theater workshops each summer and other theater-related workshops, as available.

Volunteer opportunities with BCS include acting, singing, dancing, directing, design (sets, lights, sound, costumes, props), set construction, costume construction, stage management, set movement, publicity, sound and light board operation, photography hospitality/concessions, and ushering.

Brazosport Museum of Natural Science

Brazosport Museum of Natural Science (BMNS) was chartered in 1964. BMNS's programs include exhibits of archeology, paleontology, malacology, mineralogy, wildlife, and an interactive children's area. Volunteer opportunities with BMNS include serving as a museum docent (desk receptionist and museum greeter), delivering educational programs, assisting with summer children's programs and serving on various committees.

Brazosport Planetarium

Brazosport Planetarium (BP) opened in 1984 and presents most of its programs at the BASF Planetarium, located at The Center. Planetarium shows take place Tuesday nights, weekly and the fourth Friday of each month at 7:00 PM. Brazosport ISD and other area schools bring students to the BASF Planetarium for astronomy classes and enriching science presentations. Summer science camps for elementary grade students are offered.

Volunteer opportunities to help BP include conducting science demonstrations with small groups, selling tickets on show nights, publicity, and hospitality. Volunteers are also needed to assist with presentations, telescope star viewings and special events.

Brazosport Symphony Orchestra

Brazosport Symphony Orchestra (BSO) performs six concerts each season. BSO performs these concerts at our neighboring facility, The Clarion at Brazosport College, but is based at The Center. Volunteer opportunities include performing, serving on various committees, ushering, intermission hospitality and serving as a stage manager or librarian.

Other Volunteer Opportunities

Brazosport Fine Arts Council (BFAC) offers a variety of programs for our community including the biennial Elizabethan Madrigal Feast and an annual art and music festival, CenterFest. Special events require volunteers in a variety of capacities to be successful.

As the providers of administrative, marketing and facilities support for our programs, there are also volunteer opportunities to help with clerical duties, event set-up, poster and flier distribution as well as other duties.

Why are volunteers important to The Center?

Without volunteers, The Center could not offer the programs that enrich so many people's lives. Volunteers help in many ways, from fundraising and event planning to teaching and mentoring, to painting and landscaping, and everything in between. The services volunteers provide save The Center and its programs thousands of dollars every year.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Volunteer Requirements

Volunteers must submit a volunteer application. Adult volunteer candidates must also complete a background check form and submit a copy of their Driver License or other valid ID. Volunteers must also meet with the volunteer coordinator for an interview and orientation. Volunteers should expect additional orientation and instruction, as is required by the program area in which the volunteer will be working. Any person spending time at The Center on a regular basis will be considered a volunteer applicant and must go through the application process, including a criminal background check. Any person spending time with children, whether on a regular or temporary basis, must also receive further training. (See "Maintaining a Safe and Secure Environment" section below.)

PROCEDURE:

1. Complete volunteer application and background check application.
2. Attend general volunteer orientation and training.
3. Attend volunteer training specific to volunteer role, as needed.

Scheduling and Signing in

Volunteers are strongly encouraged to sign in on the volunteer sign-in sheets, located throughout the building, to record their hours worked. Volunteers may also record work they did away from The Center, but on behalf of The Center or its programs, the next time the volunteer visits The Center. Volunteers may also email the volunteer coordinator their volunteer hours if they forget to sign in on the volunteer sign-in sheets. This is extremely important not only for us to coordinate and keep track of who is in the building, but also for funding opportunities.

Some volunteer duties will require special scheduling with Center staff or another volunteer leading the project or program. Before beginning any volunteer activity,

volunteers should check with the front office's calendar to ensure the activities do not disrupt other previously scheduled activities.

Rest Breaks

Volunteers should be aware of their levels of fatigue. Should a volunteer need a break but does not have other volunteers nearby to serve as "relief", call the front desk (979) 265-7661 and ask for assistance. If possible, we will be happy to accommodate or cover for the volunteer while they use the restroom or take a break.

Representing The Center

Our volunteers are ambassadors of The Center and we hope will share our mission and vision with the community. However, volunteers are only authorized to act as representatives of The Center if specifically tasked with this responsibility in their position description. Please obtain permission from the volunteer coordinator or executive director of The Center before engaging in any actions that may affect or hold The Center and its programs liable including, but not limited to public statements to the press, signing contracts or entering into financial agreements on The Center's behalf, lobbying or forming partnerships with other organizations.

NOTE: Photos of volunteers may be taken and used for promotional materials such as, but not limited to, The Center or programs' websites, social media, brochures and displays.

Appropriate Attire

Volunteers of The Center are expected to use good judgment in grooming and dress. Appropriate attire may be defined according to program requirements, but modesty and proper decorum should be observed. Please do not wear clothing with lewd or vulgar subjects or language.

Visitors and Recruitment

We hope volunteers will bring friends to The Center and encourage them to get connected with us as members, patrons, donors, newsletter readers, social media followers and volunteers.

Giving Feedback

We value our volunteers' thoughts, concerns, opinions and observations. If at any time a volunteer has feedback about their experiences or observations at The Center, the volunteer should email, call or meet with the volunteer coordinator. Volunteers help hold our organization to high standards with their comments and suggestions.

If a volunteer feels that they need to make changes to their volunteer assignment description, the volunteer should make an appointment to speak with the volunteer coordinator. We want to make sure volunteers feel comfortable in their positions and

can offer their time and talents in meaningful and fulfilling ways to help The Center achieve its mission.

MAINTAINING A SAFE AND SECURE ENVIRONMENT

Volunteer Safety

The safety of staff and volunteers is critical to the successful operation of The Center and our programs. It is important that every volunteer know the location of fire alarm pull stations, first aid kits, emergency response folders, telephones, AED and emergency exit routes. Some programs require the frequent use of ladders and elevated platforms. Volunteers and staff are required to use ladders, scaffolding and powered lifts safely. Power tools, special equipment (sound and light equipment, for example) and hazardous materials should only be used by competent individuals trained in the proper use and handling of the equipment and/or materials. No one under the age of 18 may use powered saws or other powered equipment that could cause significant injury or death. Further, nobody should use power tools, climb ladders or elevated platforms or handle hazardous equipment without another individual within view who can render assistance in case of an accident. Do not disable or remove safety features of powered equipment and always report unsafe conditions to staff immediately. Always use common sense and always consult with a staff member if there is any question concerning safety or the safe use of equipment. Further, volunteers should always wear proper footwear, clothing and personal safety equipment, as determined by the tasks the volunteer is performing.

All accidents, no matter how seemingly minor, must be reported. Incident report forms are available in the front office and in each of the emergency response folders. Once the incident has been resolved, it is important that a witness complete the incident report immediately while the memory of the incident is fresh. Submit the report to the front office.

Smoking, Alcohol, Drug and Firearms Policy

We have a zero-tolerance policy for the use of firearms, tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs in our building. Do not bring them or use them at The Center. Exceptions may be made at special events where alcohol is served to attendees who may legally consume alcohol. Volunteers, while on duty, are ambassadors of The Center. People serving as a volunteer should limit consumption to avoid inebriation.

Sexual and Other Harassment

BFAC prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment based on race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation or any other

characteristic or status protected by law.

BFAC prohibits discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment.

Prohibited harassment is any unwelcome verbal or physical conduct when such conduct is discriminatory (i.e., pertains to, or is motivated by, a characteristic protected by law).

Harassment includes unwelcome discriminatory conduct of a verbal or physical nature when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. For example, harassment can include unwelcome verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual or discriminatory nature, such as: unnecessary touching of an individual; graphic or verbal commentary about an individual's body, skin color or ethnicity; degrading verbal abuse; a display in the workplace of sexually suggestive or otherwise offensive objects or pictures; offensive jokes; and physical assault. The harassment may also include, among other things, unwelcome propositions, blocking or impeding exit from a room, derogatory comments (verbal, in writing, electronically and on social media), flirtations and requests—whether express or implied—for sexual favors.

Sexual harassment also includes any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct of a verbal or physical nature when submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for a volunteer decision affecting that individual. No volunteer shall threaten or insinuate that another volunteer's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect any aspect of that volunteer's position.

Any volunteer who is subjected to any offensive or unwelcome comments or behavior has the right to inform the individual that such comments or behavior is unwelcome or offensive and should promptly do so. Making clear to others what is unwelcome or offensive is the first step in preventing unlawful harassment from occurring.

If any volunteer feels that he or she is a victim of any type of discriminatory harassment, including any of the conduct listed above, by any worker, volunteer, supplier or other person, he or she should immediately contact his or her supervisor or the BFAC executive director ("ED"). Likewise, employees or volunteers witnessing harassment of volunteers should immediately report any such incidents to their supervisor or the ED.

Prompt reports are important. They help eliminate discrimination and harassment and

facilitate prompt and thorough investigations. For this reason, the volunteer should always make a report as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours of the offensive conduct. Volunteers should not wait for a situation to become worse or unbearable before making a report. Volunteers have a responsibility to enforce the policy and to eliminate harassment.

All supervisors and managers have the responsibility to eliminate all harassing behavior. This responsibility includes communicating the BFAC anti-harassment policy, educating any volunteers under their supervision about the policy and how to use it, and enforcing the policy.

BFAC encourages good-faith reports and prohibits retaliation. Under no circumstances will a volunteer who in good faith reports alleged incidents of harassment, or who cooperates in an investigation of any such report, be subjected to any form of reprisal or retaliation on account of his or her report or cooperation in such an investigation. Any volunteer who feels that he or she has been threatened with, or subjected to, such reprisal or retaliation should immediately report the reprisal or retaliation to the volunteer coordinator or the ED.

BFAC will take all allegations of harassment or retaliation seriously and will investigate as promptly and confidentially as possible. BFAC will take appropriate corrective action, if warranted. Any volunteer who, after an investigation, is determined to have engaged in any form of discrimination, harassment or retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

BFAC is committed to preventing and correcting unlawful discrimination, harassment and retaliation. BFAC also recognizes that false accusations of discrimination, harassment or retaliation may harm an innocent party who is falsely accused. Accordingly, any volunteer who, after an investigation, is found to have knowingly made a false accusation of discrimination, harassment or retaliation may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. However, if a volunteer makes a report of what he or she in good faith believes to be harassment or retaliation, the reporting volunteer will not be subjected to disciplinary action even if the reporting volunteer turns out to have been mistaken.

For any problem set out in this section where the problem relates directly to the volunteer coordinator or the ED, the volunteer should present the problem to the BFAC President.

If the BFAC President is perceived to be the cause of the problem the report will be

made to the BFAC Secretary, who will undertake the necessary investigation and action.

Video and Photography

Use of video or photography in bathrooms, dressing rooms or spaces temporarily being used as such, or in other areas where an expectation of privacy is granted, such as offices, is strictly prohibited.

Further, publication of videos or photos of minors without the written consent of the parents or legal guardians of the minors is prohibited. Exceptions are in situations when there is no expectation of privacy, such as in public spaces.

Use of Security Cameras

Except in bathrooms, changing rooms and private offices, there should be no expectation of privacy in The Center. Security cameras are positioned both inside and outside The Center and record sound and images.

Social Media

Volunteers are encouraged to share posts originating from The Center and its programs' social media accounts.

Posting Center-related private or confidential information on social media or other electronic platform is grounds for volunteer dismissal. Airing of grievances concerning The Center, its staff, other volunteers or programs on social media is also grounds for volunteer dismissal. If in doubt of what is appropriate, please speak with the volunteer coordinator, executive director or BFAC President before posting.

Background Checks

The volunteer coordinator performs a background check on potential volunteers with state and federal agencies. Background checks for current volunteers will be re-submitted every 24 months. If any volunteer has been convicted of any crime involving violence, violence or abuse against children, theft, fraud, destruction of property, sexual offenses or other convictions involving moral turpitude, they may be asked to not participate. The Center and its programs reserve the right to refuse, suspend, dismiss or reassign volunteer service for any reason deemed necessary to maintain a safe, harmonious and welcoming environment.

Working with Children and Other Vulnerable Populations

In addition to background screenings, volunteers working closely with children or other vulnerable populations will be required to attend special training that addresses best practices to keep our participants safe. The volunteer coordinator will provide the necessary resources to volunteer candidates electing to work closely with children and

vulnerable populations. Volunteers should expect periodic refresher training, along with updated background checks.

No volunteer should put themselves in a compromising situation by being alone in a room with minors or other vulnerable individuals. If a volunteer finds themselves in such a situation, whether the volunteer has been tasked with chaperoning or not, the volunteer should call the front office to request a staff member or other non-related adult to be present.

Special care should be taken when physical contact with a minor or vulnerable individual is necessary, such as costume fittings. A second non-related and screened adult should be present and witness to costume fittings and similar situations.

CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

While volunteers will not generally have access to confidential information, it is important that volunteers are able to identify what information is considered confidential. Listed below are document items, which must be kept confidential:

- Board member records
- Personnel records
- Volunteer records
- Donor records
- Salary information
- Donor, volunteer, board member personnel files
- Financial records
- Any document (hard copy or electronic media) marked “Confidential”
- Photography deemed private or showing others in compromising situations
- Transcripts or recordings of private meetings

No volunteer may share the personal information of any donor, employee, volunteer or visitor.

Important Contact Information

Terri Martin, Volunteer Coordinator
979.265.7661
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Wesley Copeland, Executive Director
979.265.7661
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Elaine Polemenakos, BFAC President

adopted Dec 2019, rev. March 2020

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Acknowledgment of Receipt of Volunteer Handbook

I acknowledge receiving The Center for the Arts & Sciences' Volunteer Handbook and understand that the handbook is not a contract but a guide to policies, which can be changed or discontinued at any time by Brazosport Fine Arts Council, Inc.

Signature

Print Name

Date