



# **CIRCUS JUVENTAS VOLUNTEER INFORMATIONAL GUIDE**

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Circus Juventas is a performing arts youth circus school dedicated to inspiring artistry and self-confidence through a multi-cultural circus arts experience.

# VOLUNTEERING AT CIRCUS JUVENTAS

Unlike other organizations, CJ does not mandate volunteering to our parents. However, with roughly 750 volunteer shifts to fill every spring and 1,300 every summer, we do rely heavily on families' engagement, especially during the performance season. Most Circus Juventas volunteers have an existing connection to our community — they are moms and dads or grandmas and grandpas of performing students — and we are very proud to have voluntary, engagement opportunities for our families. But not all volunteers have an existing connection! Feel free to bring a friend to volunteer with you who has never been to CJ before.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### **Why should I volunteer?**

There are a million reasons to volunteer at Circus Juventas. Here are just a few:

- Help a non-profit, help yourself! If CJ were forced to pay for all of the volunteer positions we fill, tuition would be sky high.
- Share in your child's enthusiasm! Be a part of the community that your child is always talking about at the dinner table.
- Meet wonderful people! Circus Juventas is a unique community: our volunteers are just as cool as our students.

### **I'm very busy: I already feel overextended. Can I really help?**

Yes! In our fast paced culture, we understand that squeezing one more thing into your schedule can be challenging. Our volunteer shifts range from a two to six hour time commitment (depending on the job). You can consider taking one 2 hour shift, it will still help. If we all give a little, no one has to take on too much.

### **Can I watch the performance while I volunteer?**

Yes and no. Some volunteer positions lend themselves easier to watching the performance (spotlight operators, riggers, arena ushers, etc.) while others don't (concessions, ticket scanners, etc.) That being said, two things are true: one, most of our volunteers are also CJ parents and will likely "cover" for you if you want to sneak away from concessions to watch your student perform their Side by Side routine. And two, all volunteers are working at all times: that should always be the focus.

### **I'm really only interested in volunteering if I can be near my child; is that possible?**

Act Captains and other backstage positions do allow our parents the opportunity to be near their performer. But keep in mind that working backstage requires volunteers to supervise groups of students, not just one or two. Should you decide to volunteer backstage, you are taking responsibility for many students.

### **As a parent, am I required to volunteer?**

Nope. Every year, we operate under the assumption that our community will fill all of the required shifts. Some volunteers are here for every single rehearsal and every single show, while some sign up for one concessions shift and call it good. No matter the amount of time you can give, it all MATTERS and it all HELPS!

### **Most of the positions require evening availability. Is there anything I can do during the day?**

Yes! There are a select number of positions in which volunteers can work during the day, namely Costume Floppers and Costume Stitchers (see job descriptions for more detailed information).

### **What if I'm signed up to volunteer, but can't make it: who do I contact?**

If you need to make changes to your schedule (with more than a day's notice), please email the Volunteer Coordinator: [shannon@circusjuventas.org](mailto:shannon@circusjuventas.org). If you are signed up to volunteer THAT DAY, but cannot make it due to an emergency/other last minute schedule change, please EMAIL AND CALL!

### **How do I sign up??**

When volunteer slots are available, they will be posted in Sign Up Genius (SUG). The links to SUG will be posted in our newsletter, on social media, and on our website! So just follow us to make sure you can get involved! You can also reach out to CJ's volunteer coordinator, Shannon Hartle, and she will help you sign up.

# VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Circus Juventas strives to create a safe, nurturing and respectful environment for all those who participate, including students, coaches, staff, and volunteers. Volunteers play a significant role during the performance season in maintaining smooth operations and often are the first face patrons see when they enter the big top. They are also heavily responsible for the safety and security of our student performers. It is within this context that CJ has established the following Code of Conduct.

## Personal Responsibility

Volunteers are expected to:

- Be dependable, recognizing the commitment and responsibility associated with volunteer work at Circus Juventas.
- Be communicative, alerting the Volunteer Coordinator to changes in scheduling AT LEAST 24 hours in advance of a scheduled shift.
- Be realistic, signing up ONLY for jobs in which ALL requirements are met by the volunteer.
- Be flexible, understanding that a certain amount of flexibility is necessary when working with kids and in the performing arts.
- Be receptive, respecting feedback from supervising volunteers and/or staff in order to do the best job possible.
- Be patient, keeping in mind that a volunteer's first concern is always the customer, whether that be the performers backstage or the ticket buying patron.
- Be happy, contributing to CJ's commitment to a fun environment for all!

## Culture of Respect

Volunteers are expected to:

- Treat all individuals with a sense of dignity, respect and worth.
- Avoid profane or abusive language and disruptive behavior that is dangerous to self and others.
- Respect all confidential information. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer.
- Respect and use all equipment appropriately and as required for volunteer assignment(s).
- Respect the time of Circus Juventas staff and coaches and limit conversation to task-specific topics, avoiding non-volunteer

## Volunteer Access

Volunteers must remember that:

- Volunteering at CJ is not a permanent state of being. In other words, volunteers are allowed certain levels of accessibility and privilege only when working as a volunteer. (ie: if a volunteer signs up for a Blue Team, 1st Show Act Captain shift, this does not mean backstage access is granted for the entire run of the blue show; the volunteer is only allowed backstage while actively volunteering.)
- Volunteers are not allowed access to volunteer areas at other times throughout the course of the year (ie: parents are not allowed onto the arena floor during class times, even though they may be allowed in the arena while working as an usher during performance season.)
- Volunteers who put in hours outside of the performance/gala season, especially those who spend frequent time out on the arena floor, must be approved for access on a project by project basis (ie: if a volunteer is approved for a project that takes a month to complete, that volunteer is expected to cease from being in the arena after that period of time, or until another project arises.)

# LEAD VOLUNTEERS

Lead Volunteers play an important part in the volunteer "chain of command". These volunteers work within their assigned department to manage other volunteers assigned to that area as well as complete certain lead specific tasks. Typically, "Leads", as we call them, have been volunteering with CJ for many years before stepping into this leadership role.

Lead Volunteers are hand selected by CJ staff with assistance from current season Leads. If you are interested in being a Lead, have been volunteering with CJ for several seasons, and meet the individual criteria listed below AND in the detailed job descriptions in later pages of this guide, let us know!

## **Backstage Coordinator**

Oversee and supervise ALL backstage volunteers, performers, and activities. Time commitment is at least two hours prior to the start of tech/dress and/or performance all the way through to very end. This volunteer is typically one of the first to arrive and last to leave.

## **Box Office Lead**

Assist in the distribution of Will Call tickets, Turnback tickets for resale, sell tickets using our online ticket selling system, and supervise other Ticket Sales volunteers. Time commitment is one hour prior to start of performance through end of intermission.

## **Concessions Leads**

Sell and distribute concessions pre-performance and during intermission, as well as supervise other Concessions volunteers (Arena and Lobby). Time commitment is two hours prior to start of performance through the very end.

## **Arena Sales Leads**

Sell and distribute merchandise pre-performance, during intermission, and post-show as well as supervise other Merchandise Sales volunteers. Time commitment is one hour and 15 minutes prior to the start of performance through the very end (lobby empty).

## **Parking Lot Lead**

Work with hired police officers to direct the flow of the parking lot pre-performance. Time commitment is one hour prior to the start of performance to roughly 30 minutes into the show.

## **Rigger Leads**

Assist CJ Head and Assistant Riggers with act rigging during tech/dress rehearsals and performances, as well as supervise other volunteer riggers. Time commitment is 4:00 for tech/dress and one hour prior to performance through the very end. Lead riggers MUST commit to all shows.

## **Sound Technician**

Run sound (music and additional effects) during rehearsals and performances using CJ sound board and Show Cue Software. Time commitment is one hour prior to start of tech/dress and/or performance through the very end. This job also requires additional hours outside of dress/performance times (varied and TBD based on volunteers availability and the needs of the Artistic Director).

## **Spotlight Operator Lead**

Coordinate Spotlight Operators, including assigning positions, training new operators, and updating cue sheets. Time commitment is one hour prior to the start of tech/dress and/or performance through the very end.

## **Usher Leads**

Work with other volunteers and CJ staff in all preparations for front/back of the house "flow". Volunteers act as the "go to" person for all seating, ticketing and general patron issues; works very closely with CJ staff. Time commitment is one hour and 15 minutes prior to the start of performance through the very end (all seats empty).

# SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

Support Volunteers work alongside Leads to get the job done. Often times, the main tasks performed are similar, but typically, Support Volunteers can be less committed in terms of time (ie: Leads are expected to work several performances throughout the run, while Support Volunteers may easily sign up for one or two shifts and be done for the season). They are also not asked to supervise other volunteers.

## **Act Captains**

Supervise a specific group of kids backstage during performances. May be assigned to a specific act OR an area backstage. Time commitment is one hour prior to performance through end of intermission OR very end (depending on which group volunteers are assigned to supervise).

## **Box Office**

Assist in the distribution of Will Call tickets, Turnback tickets for resale, sell tickets using our online ticket selling system, and supervise other Ticket Sales volunteers. Time commitment is one hour prior to start of performance through end of intermission.

## **Concessions**

Sell and distribute concessions pre-performance and during intermission). Time commitment is one and a half hours prior to start of show through restocking after intermission; one volunteer will stay through to the very end with the lead volunteer.

## **Costume Floppers**

Help exchange one show's costumes for the next by rotating them to/from the storage space to/from their locker rooms, where costumes are "checked in". Time commitment is one to two DAY TIME hours between shows.

## **Costume Stitchers**

Alter costumes by embellishing, cutting, hemming, tailoring or otherwise improving the fit/appearance to enhance stage worthiness. Volunteers may be recruited for this task in the weeks leading up to tech/dress and/or performances as well as during performances.

## **Grounds Crew**

Assist in the ongoing maintenance and improvement of CJ grounds. In preparation for Spring and Summer performances there are often unique or specialized projects and clean-up days. Time commitment is flexible around those.

## **Locker Room Attendant**

Supervise performers in the locker rooms, including aiding with costume changes and tracking performer readiness. Time commitment is 4:00 for tech/dress through end of intermission; two hours prior to start of performance through the 2nd act of 2nd half.

## **Merchandise Sales**

Sell and distribute merchandise pre-performance, during intermission, and post-show. Time commitment one hour and 15 minutes prior to the start of performance through the very end (lobby empty).

## **Parking Lot Attendant**

Assist Parking Lot Attendant Lead to direct the flow of the parking lot pre-performance. Time commitment is one hour prior to the start of performance to roughly 30 minutes into the show.

## **Raffle Ticket Sales**

Sell raffle tickets to patrons before and during performances. Time commitment is one hour prior to the start of performance through the end of intermission.

# SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS CONTINUED

## Riggers

Assist with act rigging during tech/dress and/or performances, including pre-show set up. Time commitment starts at 4:00 for tech/dress and one hour prior to show through the very end. STRONGLY ENCOURAGED to commit to all performances in a show team.

## Spotlight Operator

Run spotlights (according to cues) during tech/dress and /or performances. Time commitment is 30 minutes prior to start of tech/dress and/or performance through the very end.

## Ushers

Assist with the set up of the arena pre-performance, as well as assist patrons with ticketing and seating questions throughout the duration of the performance. Time commitment is one hour and fifteen minutes prior to the start of performance through the very end.

## Ticket Scanners

Greet patrons at the front doors/entrance to the arena and scan pre-purchased tickets. Time commitment is one hour and fifteen minutes prior to the start of performance to 30 minutes into the performance.

# HAND SELECTED VOLUNTEERS

A certain number of volunteers positions require extra experience and for that reason they are hand selected. These positions include:

- Backstage Floater
- Production Assistant
- Volunteer Check In
- SPIRE Suite Concierge

If you would like to know more about the jobs above and/or have an interest in volunteering for those jobs, please contact the volunteer coordinator, Shannon Hartle, at [shannon@circusjuventas.org](mailto:shannon@circusjuventas.org)





