Volunteers are the human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another. ~Erma Bombeck

How many Americans volunteer?

Significant mental health benefits can be derived from simply volunteering your time to the fellow community members within your area. There are 56% of American adults donating their time, helping them realize that there are intrinsic benefits that come from helping others within the community. (Miller, Schleien, Rider, Hall, & al, 2002) Let’s strive to provoke acts of kindness, compassion, and empathy for the Marquette Community.

How can you lend a helping hand to the community?

Important Factors to Consider when Volunteering:

- **Variety:** One longitudinal study suggests that those who chose to have a variety of volunteering activities had more of a benefit psychologically compared to those who did the same activity every time. (Piliavin & Siegl, 2007) In fact, some organizations may give you more joy than others; find what you would like to invest your time and energy in. (Willigen, 2000)

- **Consistency:** A study helped support that by creating a normal volunteer routine, one will experience more psychological benefits. (Piliavin & Siegl, 2007)

Health Benefits Volunteering:

- **Older vs Younger Generations:** Older volunteers are found to have more of a psychological well-being benefit compared to younger volunteers. (Willigen, 2000)

- **Social Integration:** Volunteering brings people together from all minority groups, stereotypes, and social classes.
• **Utilizing your strengths**: Giving back doesn’t need to be hard! Use your skills and interests in an area that fits your niche. (Miller et al., 2002)

• **Be empowered and create positive attitude changes** (Miller et al., 2002)

• **Increases Psychological Health** (Miller et al., 2002)
  - Self-Esteem
  - Feelings of helpfulness
  - Greater Sense of Social Responsibility
  - Sense of purpose

• **Reduced Alienation**

• **Higher Well-being**: Aristotle’s view was that helping others is the way to higher individual well-being. One study compares volunteers and non-volunteers and their satisfaction with their lives. Indeed, those who volunteer have a higher sense of well-being and are more satisfied with their lives. (Meier & Stutzer, 2008)

Places within the Marquette Community that need help:

- Multiple groups and organizations on the NMU campus
- Marquette County Habitat for Humanity
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- AMCAB
- Superior Alliance for Independent Living
- Look at [NMU's Volunteer Webpage](#) for more volunteer opportunities. The various categories are as follows:
  - Animals
  - Family Services
  - Health Care
  - Mentoring
  - Senior Citizens
  - Youth
  - Nature

- Look at the [UP Volunteer Network's Webpage](#) to see other opportunities

References:


