

2019 CONNECTIONS INSTITUTE NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Information for Volunteer Staff Applicants... Keep this Page!

Thank you for your interest in serving as a volunteer staff member at the 2019 Harold M. Marsh, Sr. Connections Institute! Attached is an application form for new volunteer staff members that must be filled out and returned to the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities by **April 12, 2019**.

What is the Harold M. Marsh, Sr. Connections Institute?

The Harold M. Marsh, Sr. Connections Institute (formerly Metrotown) is the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities' signature youth leadership experience. Since 1993, this peer leadership program has prepared student delegates to make decisions based on an appreciation of the vast diversity within the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Connections experience begins with a five-day residential program during the summer that allows student delegates to break barriers, deal with biased behavior, and develop an action plan to reduce prejudice in their own school communities. In addition, the delegates gain insight into their own lives and values. They are able to forge a connection between what they understand cognitively and how they feel about their experiences with prejudice. In the words of one delegate, Connections is "wonderful and eye-opening – a true life lesson!" This lesson is brought about by carefully constructed interactive workshops, small group discussions, and experiential learning.

Who is the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities?

Connections is conducted by the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities, an organization that works with schools, businesses, and communities to achieve success by addressing prejudices, in all forms, in order to improve academic achievement, increase workplace productivity, and enhance local trust. Through workshops, retreats, and customized programs that raise knowledge, motivation, and skills, VCIC develops leaders who work together to achieve success throughout the Commonwealth.

When and where will Connections 2019 take place?

The 2019 Connections Institute will take place from **Monday, August 5 – Friday, August 9** at the W. E. Skelton 4-H Educational Conference Center, located in Wirtz, Virginia. *In order to best support the program and delegates, volunteer staff members must attend a mandatory training beginning on Sunday, August 4.*

What do volunteer staff members do at Connections?

Volunteer staff members play a variety of roles at Connections. They facilitate workshops and discussion groups, work one-on-one with participants, and serve as role models and mentors. *Resource leaders* (generally newer VCIC volunteers) lead discussion and cabin groups, providing direction throughout the week. *Facilitators* (generally more experienced volunteers) lead large group workshops and participate in all activities. Facilitators with more than 2 years' experience may serve in additional roles at Connections, such as Medical Professional and Mental Health Professional.

What are the qualifications needed to be on staff at Connections?

Volunteer staff members come from a variety of backgrounds and professions, all with a shared interest in working with young people to promote inclusion and respect. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and be one year out of high school by July 2019. The Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities requires that all volunteers complete an application form and a background check through Verified Volunteers in advance of the Connections session.

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 12, 2019

**2019 CONNECTIONS INSTITUTE
NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

[Page 1 of 4]

Full Name (*First, Middle, Last*): _____

Name I Prefer to be called: _____ Home Phone: (_____) _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Summer Address (*if different*): _____

Summer City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Summer Phone: (_____) _____ Cell Phone: (_____) _____

Date of Birth: _____ Email: _____

Please provide the following demographic information. Be as specific as possible.

This information will be used to ensure that we have as diverse a community at Connections as possible.

Gender: _____ **Religious Identity:** _____

Racial/Ethnic Background (*check all that apply and please write in specific ethnic origin*):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian/Native American: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian/Asian-American: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other Identity: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black/African-American/Caribbean: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> White/European American: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Latino(a)(x)/Hispanic/Chicano(a)(x): _____ | |

Is there any other information about your identity that you would like to share (i.e. ability status, languages spoken, national origin, sexual orientation, etc.)? _____

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 12, 2019

**2019 CONNECTIONS INSTITUTE
NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

[Page 2 of 4]

Special Roles I Can Fill at Connections (please check all that apply):

Medical Professional (Doctor, Nurse, EMT) **Mental Health Professional**

Please list below any convictions for misdemeanor or felony offenses. Note that your participation as a Connections volunteer staff member will be reviewed based upon the information provided. Formal background checks will be conducted upon acceptance to the staff. **No convictions**

I certify that the information provided in this application is true and complete. I authorize the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities to investigate all statements in this application and to secure any necessary information from all employers, references, academic institutions and other organizations. I also agree to execute any additional written authorization necessary for Inclusive Communities to obtain access to and copies of records pertaining to this information. I agree to release any person, company, or other institution from any and all cause of action that otherwise might arise from supplying Inclusive Communities with information it may request pursuant to this release.

I understand that any volunteering with Inclusive Communities is contingent upon receipt of satisfactory responses to any or all investigations conducted by Inclusive Communities. I understand that any false answers, statements, or misrepresentations by omission made by me on this application or any related document will be sufficient for rejection of my application, or for my immediate discharge if discovered after I begin providing services.

I agree to comply with all policies, procedures, and rules applicable to employees of Inclusive Communities and I understand that any violation may result in my dismissal.

I further agree to do the following:

- (1) Complete all staff paperwork (including background checks)**
- (2) Attend entire staff training from August 4 – 5 , 2019**
- (3) Attend entire Connections session from August 5 – August 9, 2019**

I hereby acknowledge that I have read and understand the preceding statement:

Signature

Date

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 12, 2019

**2019 CONNECTIONS INSTITUTE
NEW VOLUNTEER APPLICATION**

[Page 4 of 4]

(6) What specific qualifications, strengths, or insights would you bring to the Connections experience? Particularly for those applicants who have not seen the Connections / Project Inclusion program firsthand, what training or experience will be of assistance in assuming your position at the retreat?

(7) After the Connections session, in what ways would you actively support the delegates becoming change agents in their schools, communities, houses of worship, and families? How have you supported other groups/non-profits/youth and youth-serving organizations in the past?

(8) FOR VCIC PROGRAM GRADUATES ONLY: Often, it is challenging for volunteer staff members to be comfortable with being role models to their peers. Accepting this challenge can begin by accepting the idea that the purpose of going back to a VCIC retreat program is not to attempt to repeat the delegate experience but to facilitate the best possible experience for others. How will you focus on that priority?

**IF YOUR APPLICATION IS ACCEPTED, YOU MAY BE INVITED
FOR AN INTERVIEW TO TAKE PLACE IN MAY 2019.**

COMPLETED APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 12, 2019