

*The Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities*

AURORA

EST 1986

»»» Believe Survivors «««
Change the Culture

Volunteer Application Information

Prospective Volunteers,

Aurora's full name is The Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education. While the work we do is holistic, these two distinct approaches (advocacy and education) entail different components.

The Aurora Center provides free and confidential crisis intervention to victims/survivors of sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and harassment. Aurora also provides services for people who are concerned about a friend or loved one that has experienced these types of trauma. Aurora accepts walk-in clients and operates a 24-hour helpline, which is answered 365 days a year. Trained student volunteers, **Direct Service Advocates** answer the helpline after-hours and on weekends and holidays. We assist over 600 people per year through our advocacy services.

Aurora is equally committed to ending the culture of gender-based violence and stopping harm before it happens. Through our Power of Respect curriculum and customized content, we provide interactive workshops that build on the participants' previous knowledge, and challenges them to understand gender-based violence from its roots to its various expressions in our communities. Aurora's workshops are most often facilitated by student volunteers who are trained as **Violence Prevention Educators**.

Any member of the University of Minnesota community (undergraduate, graduate, faculty, staff, etc.) can volunteer. To become a Direct Service Advocate or Violence Prevention Educator, a **certification training of 40 hours is required** by the State of Minnesota. The schedule for this training has evolved over time in large part with feedback from participants. You are responsible for any negotiation with instructors or employers in order to accommodate the training time.

The next 40-hour training will be both on Canvas and in person.

Canvas Training:

- Week 1: beginning December 27 (6 hours)
 - Week 2: beginning January 3 (6 hours)
 - Week 3: beginning January 10 (6 hours)
 - Week 4: beginning January 17 (2 hours)
- ***All Canvas training will be available to complete starting December 27*

In Person Training:

- Thursday, January 20, 2022 from 3:00pm – 8:00pm (5 hours)
- Friday, January 21, 2022 from 3:00pm – 8:00pm (5 hours)
- Saturday, January 22, 2022 from 10:00am – 3:00pm (5 hours)
- Sunday, January 23, 2022 from 10:00am – 3:00pm (5 hours)

If any changes are necessary before next semester, we will update trainees as soon as possible.

A one-year requirement of service is necessary so students who will graduate in May following training (**seniors**) are not eligible to apply.

Training space is limited so early application is strongly suggested. **The deadline for the application to be submitted is Monday, Nov. 22, 2021 by 4:00pm.**

A pre-training interview is required and will be scheduled when an application and recommendation letter have been received.

Please review the application information documents carefully. Working as a volunteer requires commitment, energy, compassion, and time.

Please feel free to contact me via email with any questions you may have about the program or the volunteer training.

Ashley Harrington
Volunteer Coordinator
harr2187@umn.edu

Mission Statement and Policy on Volunteer Training and Program Participation

The Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education at the University of Minnesota is committed to the belief that all people have the right to live free of violence and fear of violence. We recognize that sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking are not isolated incidents, but rather the individual expressions of a pervasive cultural attitude that tolerates violence. We believe that sexual and relationship violence can best be addressed through social action, education, and advocacy.

The Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education was formed to:

- Ensure the delivery of quality services to all segments of the University of Minnesota community by The Aurora Center and other offices that the victim/survivor may need to contact for assistance.
- Ensure the inclusion of the wide diversity of people of the University as staff, volunteers, and constituents of The Aurora Center.
- Ensure effective communication between The Aurora Center and other people who are concerned about sexual and relationship violence.
- Eliminate, eradicate, or in the very least, identify and reduce the existence of violence against people and other forms of oppression at the University of Minnesota and of the community as a whole.

Aurora strives to provide quality services to the University community and meaningful leadership and volunteer opportunities for students. We welcome students of all races, religions, gender and sexual orientations, and abilities to participate in trainings and work as volunteers.

Volunteer Meetings

All Direct Service and Prevention Education Volunteers following training, meet monthly on one Saturday a month on campus for approximately 3 hours from 10 am to 1 pm in the months of January, February, March, September, October and November.

Spring Semester Monthly Meetings:

- January 29
- February 26
- March 19
- Recognition Celebration: April 1 @ 4pm

Because these meetings continue the training process, they are mandatory. Please consider whether attending will be possible for you before you decide to apply.

Violence Prevention Educator

Position Description

Aurora volunteers commit to supporting victim/survivors of sexual violence and to preventing future sexual violence from occurring while working to dismantle systems of oppression.

Required Commitment:

- Completion of Aurora’s 40-hour certification training
- Participation in Aurora’s monthly volunteer meetings (see page 3)
- At least one full calendar year of service (see page 2)
 - This full year requirement *may* limit the following from volunteering:
 - Seniors
 - Early graduation
 - Study Abroad
- Strict adherence to client confidentiality
- Conducting oneself in a professional and ethical manner
 - Adherence to the mission of Aurora
 - Healthy personal boundaries
 - No intimate relationships with clients
- Evidence of effort made towards personal healing if previously experienced sexual violence
 - Healing is a life-long journey, but vital to one’s ability to serve as an advocate to others

Expectations:

- Engage in prevention efforts no less than 3 times per semester
 - Prevention efforts include:
 - Co-facilitating workshops
 - Representing Aurora at 2-3 tabling events each semester
 - Event planning or participation
- Prepare for workshop facilitation preferably in person, or via email, with Aurora prevention staff
- Call the staff member on call for help with questions or concerns
- Provide thorough and professional education and conversation
- Provide emotional support to a client if they choose to disclose to you following a workshop
- Following a workshop, complete the online feedback form for staff to review

Aurora Will Provide to You:

- 40 hour, state certification training
- Entrance interview
- Monthly volunteer meetings (see page 3)
- Semester reviews
- Debriefing after any client interactions
- Annual recognition celebration and potential awards
- Community of people committed to supporting and empowering you
- Leadership and career-building experiences
- Continuous education opportunities

Direct Service Advocate

Position Description

Aurora volunteers commit to supporting victim/survivors of sexual violence and to preventing future sexual violence from occurring while working to dismantle systems of oppression.

Required Commitment:

- Completion of Aurora’s 40-hour certification training
- Participation in Aurora’s monthly volunteer meetings (see page 3)
- At least one full calendar year of service (see page 2)
 - This full year requirement *may* limit the following from volunteering:
 - Seniors, early graduation, study abroad
- Serve on call after hours and on weekends
 - M–F 4:30pm to 8:00am & Sat/Sun 8:00am to 8:00am
- Strict adherence to client confidentiality
- Conducting oneself in a professional and ethical manner
 - Adherence to the mission of Aurora
 - Healthy personal boundaries
 - No intimate relationships with clients
 - Respecting client’s choices and empowering survivors as an advocate
- Evidence of effort made towards personal healing if previously experienced sexual violence
 - Healing is a life-long journey, but vital to one’s ability to serve as an advocate to others

Expectations:

- Serve on call regularly, completing no less than 2 shifts per month
 - Other direct service opportunities include:
 - Serving as an available advocate during an event
 - Representing Aurora at 2-3 tabling events a semester
 - Event planning or participation
- Call the staff member on call for help with questions or concerns
- Debrief with staff following **all** client interactions within 1 business day, preferably in person or via phone
- Provide thorough and professional helpline advocacy, information, referrals, and follow-through
- Respond to calls for medical advocacy at the 3 area hospitals
- Provide emotional support to a client while they report, if they choose to contact local law enforcement
- Following contact with a client, leave a voicemail and complete an online intake form

Aurora Will Provide to You:

- 40 hour, state certification training
- Entrance interview
- Monthly volunteer meetings (see page 3)
- Semester reviews
- Debriefing after any client interactions
- Annual recognition celebration and potential awards
- Community of people committed to supporting and empowering you
- Leadership and career-building experiences
- Continuous education opportunities

Application Materials:

Thank you for thoroughly reviewing the volunteer position materials. The following questions are those which will appear on the application survey form. **Please look over the questions beforehand and consider your answers before beginning the survey.** You are strongly encouraged to type out your answers beforehand so you can simply transfer your answers into the online application form.

1. ***In what capacity are you most interested in serving? (please briefly explain why)***

Direct Service Advocate

Violence Prevention Educator

2. **How did you hear about The Aurora Center (TAC) and what factors encouraged you to want to volunteer with Aurora?**
3. ***Have you ever been accused of a violation of a university or college conduct code or state law specific to sexual misconduct (sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, or sexual harassment)? (please highlight/circle answer) Yes or No***
If "Yes", please explain and what were the consequences?

Have you been found responsible for a violation of a university or college conduct code or state law specific to sexual misconduct (sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking or sexual harassment)? (please highlight/circle answer) Yes or No

Are you willing to have your name submitted to the Office for Community Conduct in order to check your conduct record (please highlight/circle answer)? Yes or No

4. **What does it mean to you to “volunteer”? For whom or what are you volunteering?**
5. **If someone asked you “How can you best prevent sexual assault from happening?” What would you say?**
6. **Describe a time when you served as an ally, that is a time when you saw something you knew was wrong and stepped in to help.**
7. **Describe a time when you had to make a public presentation. How did you feel? What went well? What challenged you?**
8. **You may have already interacted with volunteers at a table with Aurora resources. Tabling is our opportunity for outreach and visibility on campus and a responsibility of all volunteers. If you have seen a TAC table, what do you remember about it? What would you bring to a tabling event? What would challenge you?**
9. **All of the work at Aurora is done with others. Describe a time when you worked on a team or class project? Tell about how you think you work with others? How would you describe the role you take?**

10. How would you respond to someone who tells you they were sexually assaulted?
11. Describe how you plan your time when you are contemplating taking on a new experience. What do you consider? What might you have to change in your schedule in order to meet the job description of a TAC volunteer? How will you accommodate the monthly mandatory volunteer meetings (see page 3) into your schedule?
12. Because we are concerned about your well-being and the well-being of the people we serve, have you had any experience of sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking or harassment that may affect your ability to fulfill your volunteer experience with TAC?
Please highlight/circle your answer. YES NO

What has been helpful in your healing?

13. Mental Health is important. What do you do when you or your friends are confronted by feelings of worry, sadness, mental tension from life, inability to concentrate or enjoy friends and family? How do you practice self-care?
14. What goals do you have in regard to obtaining leadership skill/s by doing this work? What are you hoping to learn or to bring regarding professionalism, careers goals, self-awareness or other skills? What does it mean to you to be a representative of The Aurora Center?
15. The Aurora Center is grounded in a social justice model. Sexual assault and relationship violence happen to all regardless of gender, origins or creed. Because of that, equity and diversity are very important components of the work we do. How do you understand, live and or act on these values in your own life? How would you respond to a client you might not expect to serve or an audience that may not look like you?

Please continue to the last page of information!

Application Materials (cont.):

Letter of Support

Finally, we do ask for a letter of reference to be submitted with your application. Recommenders can email you their letter, to be attached to your online application, or send it directly to us, but ALL MATERIALS INCLUDING A LETTER OF SUPPORT MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE APPLICATION DEADLINE. References may NOT be family members or friends. ***Please plan ahead so your letter can be submitted with your application before the application deadline while providing your recommender with enough time to write a letter. Applications and recommendations are due no later than November 22, 2021.***

Applicant Information:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Desired Volunteer Position (circle/highlight one option): Direct Service Advocate (DSA) or
Violence Prevention Educator (VPE)

Recommender Information:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Recommenders: This form is to recommend a University of Minnesota student, staff or faculty member to volunteer for The Aurora Center for Advocacy & Education. The Aurora Center provides free and confidential support to victims and survivors of sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking as well as offers campus education programs.

Please write a one-page reference letter to this form that addresses the following:

- How you know the applicant and length of time?
- Would you recommend the applicant?
- How would you describe this person in terms of responsibility, professionalism, and maturity?
- How has this person responded to challenging situations? Please give a specific situation.

Please send your form to the person you are recommending (via email), fax it to (612) 626-9933, or email it to our volunteer coordinator at harr2187@umn.edu.

Thank you for your support!