Aurora Volunteer Applicant Informational Packet
Prospective Volunteers,

Thank you for considering a volunteer role with Aurora. Our mission is to serve all victims/survivors/concerned people of sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and sexual harassment at the University of Minnesota and Augsburg University. Aurora also prioritizes the goals of building partnerships across campus, creating awareness, and prevention strategies, and providing meaningful volunteer and leadership opportunities. This is where you come in!

The Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education 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 drop-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 first 20 hours of training happens asynchronously, with volunteers watching recorded webinars either on their own timeline or our recommended timeline below. The second 20 hours of the training happens synchronously in person and is facilitated by Aurora staff.

Suggested timeline for Canvas Training:

- Week 1: beginning January 2 (6 hours)
- Week 2: beginning January 9 (6 hours)
- Week 3: beginning January 16 (6 hours)
- Week 4: beginning January 23 (2 hours)

***All canvas training will be available to complete starting December 14th and must be completed before February 2nd***
In-Person Training

- Thursday, February 2, 2022 from 3:00pm-8:00pm (5 hours)
- Friday, February 3, 2022 from 3:00pm-8:00pm (5 hours)
- Saturday, February 4, 2022 from 10:00pm-3:00pm (5 hours)
- Sunday, February 5, 2022 from 10:00pm-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 required. Therefore, 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 mandated 40-hour training is Monday Nov. 21, 2022.

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.

I am looking forward to reading your application and meeting you! Thank you for your interest in doing this work.

Ashley Harrington
Volunteer Coordinator
The Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education
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.

TAC 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 in Bruininks Hall on campus for approximately 3 hours from 10 am to 1 pm of January, February, March, September, October, and November.

Spring Semester 2023 Monthly Meetings:
- January 28th (new volunteers will not attend this meeting)
- February 18
- March 18
- Recognition Ceremony: April 28th at 4pm

Because these meetings continue the training process, they are mandatory. Please mark them in your calendar if 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
- Engage in prevention efforts no less than 2-3 times per semester
- 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:
- Facilitate prevention workshops 2-3 times per semester
  - Prepare for workshop facilitation preferably in person, or via email, with Aurora prevention staff
  - Practice workshop slides/learn content before each workshop
  - Other Prevention efforts include
    - Serve as an advocate during an event
    - Representing Aurora at tabling events as needed
    - Event planning or participation
- Call the staff member on call (or helpline) 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
- Ongoing training at Monthly volunteer meetings (see page 3) and by debriefing after any client interactions
- Semester reviews
- 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 office hours and on weekends
- 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 2-3 shifts per month
  - Shifts are M-F 4:30pm to 8:00am & Sat/Sun 8:00am-8:00am
  - Volunteers can be on call from home and use their own cellphones
  - Answer helpline calls, respond in-person to provide medical advocacy at 3 campus hospitals, and respond in-person on campus to support victims in police reports
  - Other direct service opportunities include:
    - Serve as an available advocate during an event
    - Represent Aurora at tabling events as needed
    - 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, in person or on the phone
- Provide thorough and professional helpline advocacy, information, referrals, and follow-through
- 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
- Ongoing training at Monthly volunteer meetings (see page 3) and by debriefing after any client interactions
- Semester reviews
- 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. Which role are you interested in applying for?
   - Direct Service Advocate
   - Violence Prevention Educator
   - Not Sure/Either

2. How did you hear about The Aurora Center and what draws you to do this work with us?

3. If we asked someone you worked with or someone who is close to you to describe you, what do you think they'd say?

4. If someone asked you “How can you best prevent sexual assault from happening?” What would you say?

5. Describe a time when you saw something you knew was wrong and stepped in to help. What happened?

6. Describe a time when you had to make a public presentation. How did you feel? What went well? What challenged you?

7. 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 an Aurora table, what do you remember about it? If you were to volunteer at an Aurora table, how would you interact with the folks coming to the table?

8. At The Aurora Center, almost all of our work is collaborative. When working on a team, maybe on a class project for example, what role do you typically take?

9. How would you respond to someone who tells you they were sexually assaulted?

10. If you are chosen to be a volunteer at The Aurora Center, you'll have to dedicate some of your time to volunteering (either by being on call for 2-3 shifts each month as a Direct Service Advocate or facilitating at least 2-3 presentations a semester as a Violence Prevention Educator). How will you ensure you have enough time to dedicate to volunteering with us?

11. The monthly meetings are 1 Saturday a month and go from 10am-1pm. How will you accommodate the monthly meetings into your schedule?

12. Because we are concerned about your well-being and the well-being of the people we serve, do you identify as a victim survivor of sexual violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual harassment
or other? (We welcome victim survivors to apply but we want to ensure you feel safe and supported enough to do this work)

Please highlight/circle your answer. YES  NO

13. What has been helpful in your healing from this experience? Do you feel ready and safe to do this work?

13. Mental Health is very important. What do you do when you, or a friend, are experiencing things like worry, sadness, depression, or anxiety? How do you practice self-care?

14. How might volunteering with the Aurora Center support you in your future career or professional goals?

15. What other experiences do you have that may be helpful for The Aurora Center? Organizations you're involved in on campus, work experience, or other things you enjoy being involved in?

16. The Aurora Center is grounded in a social justice model. Sexual assault and relationship violence happen to all regardless of race, gender, class, ability, age, etc. 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? Describe your identities and how they show up in the world.

17. Sexual assault and relationship violence happen to all regardless of race, gender, class, ability, age, etc. How would you show up or advocate for someone who was different than 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 21st, 2022.

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!