

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

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Change the Culture

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 December 25 (6 hours)
Week 2: beginning January 1 (6 hours)
Week 3: beginning January 8 (6 hours)
Week 4: beginning January 15 (2 hours)

All canvas training will be available to complete starting December 15th and must be completed before January 29th at the latest. The above timeline allows for the coursework to be completed before the start of second semester.

In-Person Training

- Thursday, February 1, 2024 from 3:00pm-8:00pm (5 hours)
- Friday, February 2, 2024 from 3:00pm-8:00pm (5 hours)
- Saturday, February 3, 2024 from 10:00pm-3:00pm (5 hours)
- Sunday, February 4, 2024 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. Students who will graduate in May 2024 **are not eligible to apply.**

Training space is limited so early application is strongly suggested. **The deadline to apply is Monday, Nov. 13, 2023.**

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, are required to meet monthly on one Saturday a month in Bruininks Hall on campus from 10-1pm. Meetings occur in September, October, November, January, February, and March. We meet one final time in April for the Aurora Recognition Celebration which is on a Friday evening from 4-6pm.

Spring Semester 2024 Monthly Meetings:

- January 27 (new volunteers will not attend this meeting)
- February 24
- March 23
- Recognition Ceremony: April 26th 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 4)
- At least one full calendar year of service (see page 3)
 - This full year requirement *may* limit the following from volunteering:
 - Seniors
 - Students Studying Abroad
- Facilitate prevention workshops no less than 2 times per semester
- Strict adherence to client confidentiality
- Conduct oneself in a professional and ethical manner
 - Adhere to the mission of Aurora
 - Maintain personal boundaries
- Evidence of effort made towards personal healing if previously experienced violence
 - Healing is a life-long journey, but vital to one's ability to serve as an advocate to others

Prevention Workshop Expectations:

- Facilitate prevention workshops 2 times per semester
 - Prepare for workshop facilitation 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
 - Represent 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 4) 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
- Letters of recommendation (available based on performance)

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 4)
- At least one full calendar year of service (see page 3)
 - This full year requirement *may* limit the following from volunteering:
 - Seniors
 - Students Studying Abroad
- Serve on call after office hours and on weekends
- Strict adherence to client confidentiality
- Conduct oneself in a professional and ethical manner
 - Adhere to the mission of Aurora
 - Maintain healthy personal boundaries
 - Respect client’s choices and empower survivors as an advocate
- Evidence of effort made towards personal healing if previously experienced 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
 - 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
- 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 4) 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

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- Continuous education opportunities
- Letters of recommendation (available based on performance)

Application Materials

Letter of Support

Thank you for thoroughly reviewing the volunteer position descriptions, information about the application process, and information about our volunteer program. Finally, we do ask for a letter of recommendation 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 13th, 2023.***

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 do you know the application and how long have you known them?
- Would you recommend the applicant?
- How would you describe this person in terms of responsibility, professionalism, and potential for leadership development?
- How have you seen this person respond to challenging situations?

Please send your form to the person you are recommending via email to the Aurora's Volunteer Coordinator, Ashley Harrington, at: harr2187@umn.edu

Thank you for your support!