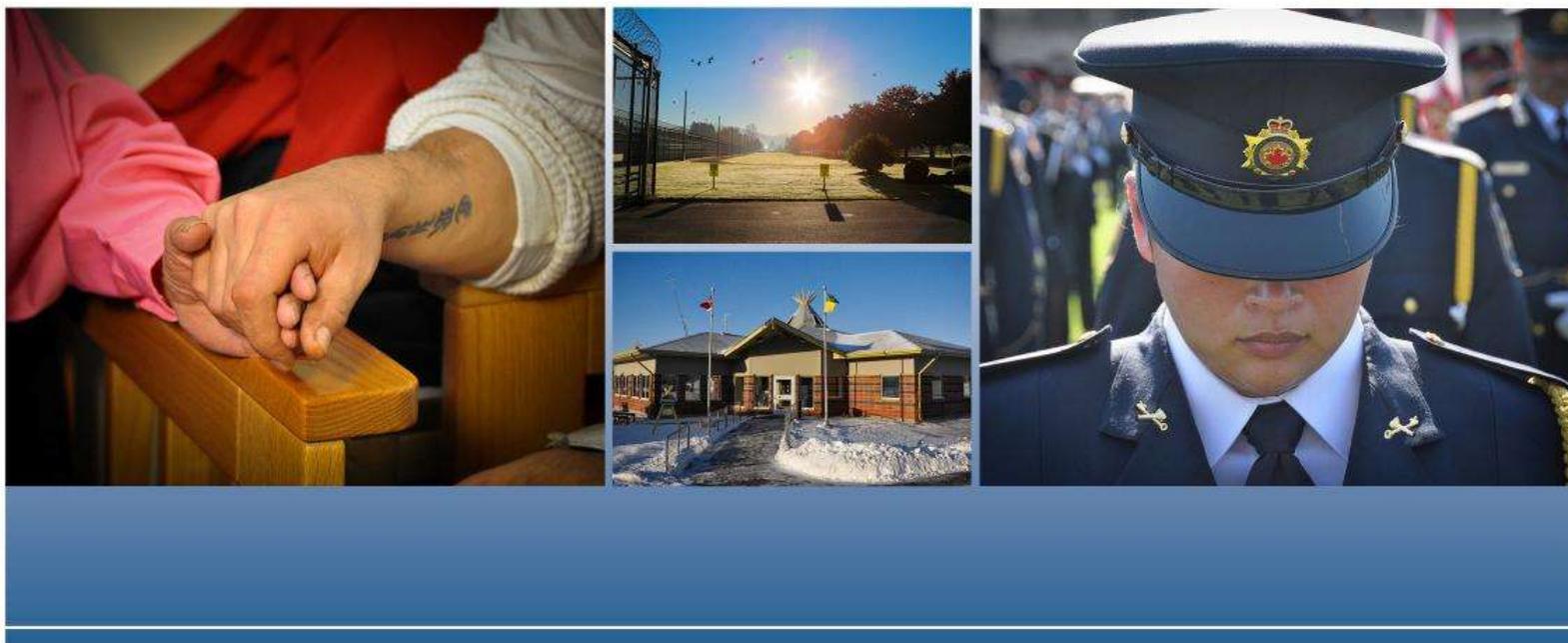




CORRECTIONAL SERVICE CANADA

CHANGING LIVES. PROTECTING CANADIANS.



Demonstrating the Value of Working with Student Volunteers (World Congress on Parole and Probation)

September 2022



Correctional Service Canada
Service correctionnel Canada

Canada



Introduction

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC)

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Tina Evans, CSC Community Volunteer Coordinator

(Greater Ontario and Nunavut district)

Assisted in the creation and development of the Queen's Correctional Services Volunteers (QCSV)



Alicia Mora, CSC Student Volunteer

Former President and Programs Coordinator of the Queen's Correctional Services Volunteers (QCSV)

Slide 2

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I included this line because it should indicate somewhere what CSC stands for. This can be relocated if necessary but should either be on this page or the title page.

Alicia Mora, 2022-08-10T03:42:11.004



Overview

- CSC Introduction
- Role, Commitment and Considerations with Student Volunteers
- Case Study: Queen's Correctional Services Volunteers (QCSV)
- Benefits of Student Volunteers
 - Offenders
 - Staff
 - Volunteers
- Best Practices / Lessons Learned
- Additional Resources





CSC's Mission Statement

As part of the criminal justice system, and respecting the rule of law, CSC contributes to public safety by actively encouraging and assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens, while exercising reasonable, safe, secure, and humane control.





CSC Background

CSC administers all court sentences of two (2) years or more across Canada.

- CSC manages:
 - **43 institutions** (six maximum security, nine medium security, five minimum security, 12 multilevel security and 11 clustered institutions)
 - **14 community correctional centres (CCCs)**
 - **10 healing lodges**
 - **92 parole offices** and sub-parole offices
- At the end of fiscal year 2020-2021, CSC was responsible for **21,512 offenders**:
 - **12,399** were in custody
 - **9,113** were supervised in the community



The Role of Volunteers

CSC cannot do its work alone.... community assistance is needed to rehabilitate and reintegrate offenders, which we get in part through community volunteers.

Volunteers help us to:

- Liaise with and understand the public's interest in corrections and conditional release
- Gain community assistance in the rehabilitation of offenders and reintegration back into our communities
- Offer diverse supports to individuals in our care and custody that go beyond what staff can provide
- Promote and increase support for corrections and conditional release in their communities and networks



Volunteer Profile at CSC

Over **4000 registered volunteers** in institutions and the community offer a range of services, including:

- **In the institutions**, supporting:
 - chaplaincy
 - recreational and cultural activities
 - pen pals/book clubs
 - support groups
 - non-security escorts for temporary absences
- **In the community**, most often providing accompaniments to appointments and helping offenders on release to organize their personal needs, such as medical care, banking, employment and housing.

CSC also benefits from approximately 400 volunteers who contribute to various advisory committees.



The Value of Volunteers

- Evidence shows that volunteers play a key role in rehabilitation and reintegration by:
 - connecting offenders to the outside world
 - promoting pro-social behaviour
 - helping released offenders re-adjust to life in the community
 - improving the quality of life for some offenders
- Measuring the value through research, performance measurement, and evaluation is a priority.
- CSC will chair a new Network Group for volunteers through the International Corrections and Prisons Association. If interested in participating, please connect with us.



Benefits of volunteers for offenders

Benefits for Offenders:

- Exposure to a wider range of activities, knowledge, and interests
- Improved communication skills
- Increase in positive role-models and mentors
- Assists in institutional adjustment
- Increased reintegration potential in the community
- Improved mental wellness (e.g., decreased sense of isolation and stronger community links).
- Improved quality of life (e.g., long-term aging offenders and those with disabilities and mental health concerns).



Discussion

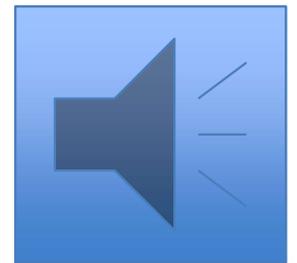
1. Do you have volunteers in your service?

If so, are they integrated into the rehabilitation process in institutions and/or in the community?

2. What do your volunteer demographics look like?

Do student volunteers represent a large proportion of your volunteer population?

3. What is your biggest challenge with respect to volunteers?





Student Volunteers

In Canada:

- 73% of undergraduate students reported engaging in some form of volunteer effort (*Smith et al., 2010; Yuriev, 2019*).
- CSC has benefited from the contributions of student volunteers over the last decade.
- Including co-op education placements, internships, research affiliate programs, or independently.



Student Volunteering at CSC

Typically, student volunteers work in the community and offer services such as:

- Special activities such as: Board Game Days, art classes, and hobby crafts
- Practical skills development workshops (e.g. interview, etiquette, resume/CV creation, financial literacy)



Overview QCSV

The Queen's Correctional Services Volunteers (QCSV):

- Undergraduate student club founded in 2015 at Queen's University in Kingston (Province of Ontario).
- Independent from CSC, students create and run workshops, programs and events for federal offenders.
- QCSV helps tackle stigmas and misconceptions associated with incarceration.
- By 2022, has grown into a diverse team of 25 highly skilled students.



QCSV's Mission:

"To equip offenders with the necessary practical and pro-social skills to succeed in their rehabilitation plan, while facilitating a healthy reintegration back into the community."



QCSV Vision

QCSV's Vision: By providing Queen's University students with regular volunteer opportunities inside and outside federal penitentiaries, we aim to address gaps and aid in existing CSC programming by providing meaningful social interaction and creating community ties with incarcerated individuals.

Accomplished through student-created programs using two streams:

- **Practical skills workshops**— develops valuable, real-world abilities (e.g., interview etiquette, resume/CV creation and financial literacy)
- **Therapeutic** programs— nurtures soft skills (e.g., self-expression, mindfulness, and self-esteem)



What makes QCSV unique?

- Ratified club at Queen's University— completely self-funded.
- Separate student hiring and onboarding process— ensures best students selected to represent the university.
- Functions independently— has own internal hierarchy of roles and responsibilities.
- Members create and teach their own workshops and programs.
- Has a Campus and community outreach team— responsible for creating and maintaining external partnerships with other clubs on campus and with community organizations in the area.



Benefits of Student Volunteers

Student volunteers can:

- Assist in filling gaps in programming
 - have access to academic literature, high degree of digital literacy, creativity
 - Help increase the diversity of programming and people available to the offender population
- Bring positivity and passion that can create a ripple effect with staff (and offenders!)
- Increase opportunities for CSC to recruit future employees
- Expand research opportunities
- Help achieve diversity, equity, and inclusions goals



Testimonial

“Volunteering in CSC has opened my eyes to the importance of working with a population that is often overlooked. I have been able to vastly expand my volunteer experience while building my confidence by working in an environment that was outside my comfort zone. I have built meaningful, lifelong relationships with both fellow volunteers and CSC staff, and have found myself a new passion and goal for a future career path.”

~ QCSV Student Volunteer ~



Best Practices Guideline

The QCSV best practices guideline, developed by CSC and QCSV, covers:

- General policies
- Roles & duties
- Hiring process (including interviews)
- Program and workshop guidelines
- Feedback and evaluation
- Conflict management process
- Communications

We are happy to share upon request.

Please contact us for a copy! ✉



QCSV Best Practices

Programs/workshops aim to resolve an existing gap and align with existing programming goals. They:

- Introduce a novel skill that is not currently taught
 - i.e., an educational, professional, or leisurely skill
- Embed equity, diversity, and inclusion in program design
- Maximize resources with the lowest possible cost
- Align and are supported by evidenced-based academic literature

Each workshop/program:

- Delivered in person or virtually
- Evaluated annually with participant input
- Modified or cancelled, as necessary.



Benefits of Student Volunteers

Benefits for the volunteers and the community:

- Practical experience
- Professional development
- Networking opportunities
- Employment and educational references
- Hands-on experience
- Better understanding of the criminal justice system and community involvement in rehabilitation and reintegration
- Stronger ties with the community



What are some of the benefits you have identified that we might have missed?



Lessons Learned

- Tailor volunteer recruitment to target students
 - Adapt information for a student audience
 - Be clear on expectations/commitment required
- Expect turnover (every 2-3 years) and plan accordingly
 - Volunteers begin in September should be hired by the end of January
- Provide positive AM0 reinforcement and support to volunteers
- Be open to new ideas, encourage creativity
- Engage with staff and senior management
 - Share opportunities, success stories, answer questions and provide reassurance

Slide 21

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I can't remember if this is the timeline that was discussed but this may be a bit early.-- would double check this

Alicia Mora, 2022-08-10T04:04:48.205



CSC's Next Steps

With respect to student volunteers, CSC is working to:

- Identify needs by site according to the offenders' needs and interests
- Identify post-secondary institutions to solicit interest in volunteering with CSC
- Reach out and share information with post-secondary institutions
 - e.g., Faculties, student organizations, clubs, etc.
- Continue to promote our volunteer program through social media, word of mouth, and recruitment fairs, including opportunities to target students
- Share our successes



Related Resources

- Commissioner's Directive 024 - Management of Correctional Service of Canada Volunteers (available online: <https://www.csc-scc.gc.ca/acts-and-regulations/024-cd-en.shtml>)
- ICPA members can consult our article “*The Value of Student Volunteers with CSC*” in the Advancing Corrections Journal Issue *What Else Works* Edition #13, Volume 1
<https://icpa.org/resource/advancing-corrections-journal-edition-13-what-else-works-volume-1-acj13-a003.html>)
- QCSV web pages:
 - <https://queenscsv.wixsite.com/mysite-1/post/what-it-means-to-be-a-volunteer>
 - <https://queenscsv.wixsite.com/mysite-1/our-partners>



Questions / Closing

For further information visit CSC's website at:

- www.csc-scc.gc.ca

Contact us via email at:

- volunteer-benevole.GEN-NHQ@CSC-SCC.gc.ca

Thank you!