



BUSIER THAN EVER: BAiP Members Share Their Volunteering Experiences

BAIP PRESENTS, JUNE 27, 2024

Rachel Theilheimer, volunteering with City Harvest to rescue food

What I do:

- Rescue food that Greenmarket vendors don't want
- Pack bulk food into bags for food banks
- Distribute fruit, vegetables and pantry items at mobile markets

Why I do it:

I care about food insecurity and hate seeing food wasted

To volunteer:

<https://www.cityharvest.org/volunteer>

City Harvest mobile market



City Harvest market rescue



Mary Phelan, partnering with Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

What I do: Provide technical and emotional support to VITA clients

I heard about VITA through friends who were enthusiastic about the program

Why do it? I have found it very worthwhile

**To volunteer, contact Arlene Sabdul, Single Stop USA
1 800 290 7189, taxsupport@singlestop.org**

**Steve Cohen,
partnering with
American
Museum of
Natural History
for 18 years**

My role: volunteer “fossil explainer”

Why I do it: opportunity to remain mentally active by staying current on paleontology; interact with non-American visitors and children

Sample opportunities: interact with visitors, work behind-the-scenes in science departments

**To volunteer: email Russell Taragon,
rtaragon@amnh.org**

SUSAN C DESSEL

I volunteer at the weekly Asylum Clinic run by

Beit CONGREGATION
Simchat
Torah | **THE ARK**
IMMIGRATION
CLINIC AT **CBST**

קהלה קדושה בית שמחת תורה

SUSAN C DESSEL

- 2017, I began as a volunteer at the New Sanctuary Coalition's weekly in-person "pro se" Asylum Clinic. "Pro se" indicates that individuals advocate on behalf of themselves in court without the representation of a lawyer.
- 2018, Congregation Beit Simcha Torah (CBST), which was founded in 1973 & is the largest LGBTQ+ synagogue congregation in the world, became a second NSC clinic location.
- 2019, CBST's clinic, THE ARK, became independent, with a focus on serving LGBTQ+ & HIV positive immigrants.
- March 2020, all weekly asylum clinic sessions in NYC moved to Zoom.
- 2021, the NSC clinic shut down due to internal difficulties. NSC transferred funds to the Ark Clinic to facilitate expansion of its services.
- 2022 I began volunteering weekly at the Ark Asylum Clinic which today works with immigrants of all religions, beliefs, sexual orientations, and gender identities. Clinic continues to take place on Zoom.

THE ARK AT CBST

The Ark at Congregation Beit Simchat Torah (CBST) provides *pro se* legal assistance to **asylum seekers** in NYC.

Since its inception in 2018, the majority of those Friends that clinic volunteers have worked with have been **LGBTQ+** and/or **HIV+**, but all who ask for help are welcomed.

Clinic staff and volunteers assist asylum seekers to prepare **asylum, work permit, TPS (Temporary Protected Status)**, and other immigration applications.

Clinic's social work program provides **referrals** to other critical resources and through partner organizations, clinic connects asylum seekers to immigration **court accompaniment**.

HOW & WHAT IT MEANS TO VOLUNTEER AT THE WEEKLY CBST ARK CLINIC

- Wednesdays from 6:00 – 8:00 PM on Zoom
- New volunteers are required to participate in training sessions using CBST Ark Clinic Orientation and Information Videos.
- After completion of the Training, a new volunteer shadows a team before they join a team and work directly with a clinic Friend
- A team generally consists of a computer person/note taker, an interpreter - - non-lawyers - - , and a Friend who has requested help. SPANISH-language speakers are Clinic's biggest need.
- Timelines are guided by each Friend's one year anniversary date of entry into the US. The deadline for filing an asylum application is no later than one year after crossing into the US.

WHAT I DO AS A CLINIC VOLUNTEER

- I (all clinic volunteers) have committed to participating:
 - Without judgement
 - With respect
 - To do no harm; we understand that most Friends have experienced trauma and/or violence
 - To keep everything said during clinic confidential
- As a “computer person/note taker,” I participate in all team discussions and pose relevant questions when completing Intake Forms, I-589 Asylum Applications, creating Affidavits, & other forms. I upload the forms and complete a Team Sheet after each clinic session ends.
- As each form is completed, a volunteer lawyer joins the team to review the document, speak with our Friend, and recommend the next step. Clinic lawyers are volunteers and do not represent our Friends in court.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO: [HTTPS://CBST.ORG/SOCIAL-
JUSTICE/IMMIGRATION/](https://cbst.org/social-justice/immigration/)**

To volunteer or to be added to the mailing list, contact:

Noah Habeeb

Immigration Clinic Director

sanctuary@cbst.org

Susan can be contacted at scd@desselstudio.net

**Nancy Schneider,
partnering with
Health Insurance
Information
Counseling and
Assistance
Program (HIICAP)
and State Health
Insurance
Assistance
Program (SHIP)**

What I do: Medicare consultant

Volunteer since 2018

Why do it? I enjoy helping people understand a complex program like Medicare

To volunteer: see next page

GET MORE INFO ABOUT HIICAP/SHIP

- Medicare Questions? Call HIICAP/SHIP
 - In NYC: 212-AGING-NYC (212-244-6469)
 - Outside of NYC: 1-800-701-0501
 - Outside of New York State: <https://www.shiphelp.org/> - SHIP Locator
- Learn More About Medicare
 - Attend a Medicare Orientation webinar
 - <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/health-insurance-assistance.page>
- Volunteer with HIICAP – Become a Counselor
 - <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dfta/services/volunteer.page>

**Teresa Elwert,
partnering with
Riverside Park
Conservancy
to garden in
Riverside Park**

**What I do: plant, weed, prune shrubs,
rake leaves, pick up trash**

Volunteer since 1995

Why I do it. I love being outdoors!

To volunteer:

<https://riversideparknyc.org/volunteer/>