My job was to find volunteers for our three big campus events and to relay that information to the Event Chairs. The events are:

**NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION (NSO) Third week in September**

**PARENTS WEEKEND Last Friday and Saturday of February**

**ADMIT WEEKEND Last Thursday-Saturday in April**

At the beginning of the VP of Volunteer’s term, it is smart to determine how you would like to manage all of the emails that you will be dealing with for this job. I created a special email address for my club emails and that system worked well for me. Others will prefer to use their own regular email address and just keep emails in folders.

**Starting about two months before each event:**

Meet or contact the Event Chairs to make plans for coordinating event information. If possible, attend the meeting with the Stanford event liaisons with the Event Chairs. Agree on who will do each task. For example, who will create the spreadsheets, and who will be sending detailed shift information to volunteers.

I feel that the easiest way to tackle an event is to have the VP of Volunteer (VPV) be in charge of the following:

1. Check with the Event Chairs and the Sales Coordinator about their volunteer needs.

2. Confirm the exact shifts, times, days, and the number of people needed.

3. Agree on the type of spreadsheet everyone prefers (excel, google, etc.) and decide on the best way to share it. In my opinion, it is best to put the spreadsheet on the cloud so that everyone can see it in real time. Google docs can work for this. **Note:** For Parent’s Weekend Stanford uses a certain spreadsheet format for Registration, Class Hosts, Mike Holders and Tours that is a little cumbersome for
our purposes. So you may want to use two different spreadsheets for that event. They are not interested in our other shifts, such as sales.

4. The VPV should make a draft spreadsheet for the shifts and reconfirm its accuracy with the event and sales chairs. I recommend that you put both the first and last name in the same cell, otherwise it just means more cutting and pasting.

5. Communicate with the President and draft the email that will be sent out to members asking for volunteers. Decide on which day this should be sent out. I liked using a code for each shift so that people could simply write a code and not the whole shift. This keeps things clean and simple. Otherwise they tend to write on and on about when they are available and it is difficult to figure out what they want. Whatever works for you!

6. Start recording the volunteers and which shifts they want. Reply to all emails.

7. Keep a separate list of the shifts and eliminate a shift once it is full. This list helps you when you reply to people with the “currently available shifts”.

8. Be efficient. Keep a few pre-written replies ready for when you are responding to emails. For example, a nice letter thanking them for volunteering and that their shifts will be ______. Or another that says the shifts they requested have already been taken, but would they consider a shift from these that are still available: (copy currently available shifts list)

9. Communicate with the President and decide when and if you want to send out a follow-up recruiting email that lists the available shifts.

10. Make sure that the Event Chairs are communicating with Stanford with volunteer list updates or whatever information they need. But this really isn’t your job.

11. As you get closer to the event, the Event Chairs need to send out instructions and confirmation emails to the volunteers. (Unless they have somehow convinced you to do this.) Make sure that the Event Chair keeps track of who has confirmed their shift. Decide on who will follow-up with those who do not confirm.

12. At this point, you have done your job. It is fun to attend and volunteer at the event, but you are not obligated to be there. The Event Chairs will check in volunteers and manage last minute cancellations. (Their cell phone numbers should be on the instructions to volunteers.) But continue to check your emails, as some people may cancel by email.
13. After the event, make sure that the Event Chairs have sent out thank yous. If not, ask them if they need help.

OVERVIEW

STANFORD PARENTS’ CLUB VICE PRESIDENT OF VOLUNTEERS 2012-2013 REPORT

The VP of Volunteers has two jobs, the more important of which involves finding volunteers to staff Parents’ Club/Stanford activities. Specifically, the VP of Volunteers is responsible for staffing New Student Orientation (NSO) in the fall, Parents Weekend in February, and Admit Weekend in April. To perform this job, the VP of Volunteers works closely with the Chairs of NSO, Parents Weekend and Admit Weekend, and in some cases, with representatives of Stanford University. The second job of the VP of Volunteers is to serve on the Finance Committee to help review the current club budget and develop the following year’s budget. Although in the past the VP has apparently helped with fundraising, this is no longer within the scope of this position.

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION - September 18, 2012

The Co-Chairs of NSO, Linda Chin and Jan O’Flaherty, began planning for this event in June. I was invited to a meeting in June with the Co-Chairs, Stanford Event Coordinator Jody Nyberg and Stanford Freshman Transition Coordinator Jennifer Wylie to discuss logistics, volunteer requirements, and identification of supplies and support to be provided by Stanford. From this meeting and follow-up discussions, Linda and Jan developed a list of volunteers they wanted me to secure to staff three activities, including the Parents’ Club Lounge (10 volunteers requested), the Sales and Information Booth (18 volunteers requested), and the Parents’ Dinner with the Provost (12 volunteers requested), all of which activities would take place on September 18. There was also
a Parent Panel, but staffing was handled by Jan O’Flaherty. The morning shifts went from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m; the afternoon shifts ran from 12:15 p.m. to 4:15 p.m.; and the dinner shift went from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The first official solicitation was sent out by Marcia Hansen in a general e-mail on July 31. Once this e-mail came out, I started soliciting for volunteers at the Board and General Meetings in August and September. Marcia Hansen sent out several additional e-mails soliciting volunteers prior to the event. I created a chart listing the activity, name, e-mail and phone numbers for volunteers, and transferred the list to the Co-Chairs, who then sent out information letters to the volunteers containing resources to help volunteers prepare for questions they might receive, parking suggestions and a volunteer roster with tasks, location, shift times and area managers. In total, 40 volunteers worked this event.

PARENTS’ WEEKEND – February 22 – 23, 2013

For the Parents’ Club, Parents Weekend (PW) is the most significant event in terms of the number of volunteers that are required. There were several aspects to volunteer recruitment:

Stanford asked the Parents Club to provide about 100 volunteers to staff five different activities, including Registration, Conversations with Parents, Class Hosts, Tours, and Extravaganza.
We staff our own Parents’ Club Sales Booth and this year, 22 additional volunteers were identified.

We also staff a Parents’ Corner, but this year the Co-Chairs covered this and I was not required to staff this activity.

This year there were two Parents’ Club Co-Chairs of PW and an additional person in charge of Extravaganza. As VP of Volunteers,
the first job is to meet with the Chairs of Parents’ Weekend (PW) and discuss who is doing what. This should be done about two months ahead of PW. This is very important, because this year there was an issue as to the division of labor between the VP of Volunteers and the Parents Weekend Co-Chair in charge of volunteers. As VP of Volunteers, I thought that my job was simply to solicit and identify volunteers to work the event, after which I would turn the names over to the Co-Chair of PW, who would then follow up with volunteers, send letters of instruction to volunteers, and confirm that they were going to show up. This did not happen, due to unfortunate work conflicts on the part of the PW Co-Chair with responsibility for managing Volunteers. As a result, in addition to securing volunteers, I also volunteered to draft instructional letters to volunteers, and follow up and confirm their attendance.

After the initial contact with the Co-Chairs, the next step was to interface with Stanford to see what their volunteer requirements were. Our contacts this year were with Ms ChiSook Hwang and her colleague Jackie Chua, both of Stanford Events. At my request, the Parents’ Club Co-Chair contacted Ms. Hwang who sent me Stanford’s volunteer requirements. I then typed up a very lengthy sign-up sheet that I could circulate at Parents’ Club meetings that included the activity, dates, times, associated volunteer responsibilities, and a place to sign-up. I made several presentations at Board Meetings and General Meetings to encourage and solicit volunteers, and worked with President Marcia Hansen to craft several mass e-mails that would be sent to our membership to secure volunteers.

About two months ahead of PW, I began the process of securing volunteers. This was accomplished almost exclusively via e-mail, as not many people signed up at Parents’ Club Meetings, notwithstanding the presentations and the availability of sign-in sheets. I must admit that I was surprised at how many parents contacted me, especially parents who lived out of the area. I
estimate that I sent out at least 500 e-mails to secure volunteers and confirm their attendance. As soon as you have a critical mass, it is important to send the names to Stanford Events (Ms. Hwang and Ms. Chua), and keep

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them updated when changes occur. However, SU is not interested in who staffs our Parents Club Sales Booth, so it is not necessary for them to have these names. It is also necessary that PW Co-chairs be kept updated as to the status of volunteers, and that the individuals in charge of the Sales Booth be given the names of the volunteers who will assist them in this activity.

I believe that it is in your best interest to understand the responsibilities of the volunteers. As an example, one of the two Class Host volunteers is required to read a short biography of the speaker. When I solicited for volunteers, I asked for an individual who would be willing to read the biography. Some people were nervous about this and it was important to reassure them of the simplicity of their assignment. It was imperative to make sure that one of these volunteers committed to read the bios.

Prior to PW, all volunteers need to be sent letters of instruction regarding their volunteer responsibilities. In the past, a brief cover letter to volunteers, drafted by the Parents Club, was appended to instructions that we received from Stanford for each individual activity (e.g. Registration, Tours, etc). We draft our own letters for volunteers associated with Extravaganza, and the individuals in charge of the Parents Club Sales Booth contact their own volunteers. I was provided a template by the Co-Chair for Volunteers based on last year’s letters, but after reviewing it, I modified it to be more specific. Instead of a generic letter, I
thought that it would be more efficient if we actually indicated in the cover letter exactly where and when individual volunteers had to report. If you are assigned the responsibility to prepare these letters next year, I urge you to review the text of the letters with a fresh eye, with a view towards improvements. This year there was somewhat of a scramble to send these letters out, and I believe that the PW Co-Chair in charge of volunteers should draft these letters at least two weeks before the event, and that we should endeavor to secure the information from Stanford earlier than one week before PW. However, SU Events is also pressed, and apparently they were not able to supply the attachments until a week before the event, so we would not have been able to send our letters of instruction out any earlier. In fact, after I had prepared the letters and attached the SU info, and was getting ready to “push” the button to e-mail the letters to our volunteers, SU changed the attachments and I had to switch out the attachments, which was additional administrative work.

As part of PW, we were asked by Stanford to staff 9 tours on campus, including tours covering Architecture, Campus, Natural Wonders, Libraries, Cantor Arts, Jasper Ridge, Knight Management, Science and Engineering, and Stadium. Volunteers helping with Tours do not actually conduct tours; rather they are assigned the job of carrying a large A-frame tour sign from the Alumni Center to the site where the tour begins, and monitoring the number of people who want to be on the tour. It proved very difficult to find volunteers, and ultimately, I was only able to staff 5 of the 9 tours, and I asked Stanford to staff the other tours, to which they agreed. Stanford actually runs three sets of tours over PW, and the Parents’ Club only staffs one of the sessions. I recommend that next year the Parents’ Club decline to staff this activity. I do not feel that it is an enriching activity for our parents, and carrying a heavy
sign is cumbersome and simply not fun. You should discuss this with the PW Chairs, the President, and SU. I presented this concept at a Board meeting, and I think that the Board agrees with me, as do the Co-Chairs.

I have one small comment regarding communicating with volunteers and the limits of e-mail systems. As I explained, I sent letters of instructions to volunteers. The packet that I received from Stanford for Class Host Volunteers was quite large. It included one attachment that had general instructions, and a second packet of biographical information for volunteers who had agreed to introduce the speakers. The mass e-mail that went out ultimately was rejected by at least four volunteers because of the size of the e-mail, and I had to re-send this e-mail in pieces.

**ADMIT WEEKEND – April 25 – 27, 2013**

Admit Weekend is the second largest event we staff each year. I was concerned that it would be difficult to secure volunteers for this event, since we had just finished soliciting for Parents’ Weekend, but it turned out that it was relatively easy to find volunteers for this activity.

I first met with the Co-Chairs of Admit Weekend, Kathleen Christman and Srila Colvin on March 6 to discuss the weekend, and the division of responsibilities between the three of us. Based upon info we received from last year’s chair, we had concluded that we needed about 94 to 96 volunteers to staff this event. The activities that we needed to staff included:

1. Parents’ Chat Corner (two shifts on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday);

2. Parents’ Club Sales Table (two shifts on Thursday, Friday and Saturday);
3. Assistance with Mother’s Day Cards (two shifts on Thursday);

4. Parents’ Club Mixer (one shift on Thursday evening)

5. Registration Assistance at the Montag Hall Breakfast (one shift on Saturday)

6. Floaters (on all days)

In the past, the VP of Volunteers had not solicited for Mother’s Day Cards or for floaters. In total, we filled 93 slots. This was accomplished by having Marcia Hansen send out general solicitations for volunteers via e-mail, and presentations at Board and General Meetings to invite people to volunteer. As I received a request from an individual to volunteer, I made sure to request that they confirm their assignment via e-mail. By April 11, I had recruited almost all volunteers, and turned the list over to the Co-Chairs, who then sent out instruction letters to all volunteers.

**CONCLUSION**

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Overall, I found this to be a fun but time-consuming job. Soliciting volunteers is a very dynamic process. Volunteers sign up and, not infrequently, at the last minute, they cancel for their own personal reasons. The job is especially intense during the two weeks before the event. Patience and a good sense of humor are definitely job requirements.

This report is a summary of the year’s activities, but please make sure that you check the VP of Volunteers Binder, which contains many documents that will be helpful in the future to perform these tasks.

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