



For Immediate Release

SmartVolunteer Launches First Online Marketplace for “Skills-Based Volunteer Projects”

Over 100 Non-Profits Sign Up for Volunteers

New York, NY, February 10, 2007 – In an effort to streamline and strengthen the process of connecting non-profits with volunteers, **SmartVolunteer** has announced the launch of the first website to offer tailored searches for skills-based volunteer projects. The website’s unique focus on skilled giving is designed to enable more individuals to volunteer in projects that maximize their personal satisfaction while at the same time maximizing in-kind contributions to non-profits.

The website’s founding team consists of a non-profit management consultant (**Moshe Bellows, Esq.**), a corporate attorney (**Howard Felson**), a software engineer (**Jeff Schlanger**), a strategy consultant (**Nir Altman**) and a student at Stanford Business School (**Dan Abelson**). The team developed the idea and worked entirely pro-bono for countless hours to implement it, fulfilling its own credo of using professional expertise in socially beneficial ways. The founding team was aided by dozens of other volunteers recruited to assist with technology, design, legal, marketing, PR and other mission-critical functions.

“Pro-bono work isn’t just for lawyers anymore,” says attorney Howard Felson. **“Now accountants, PR execs, graphic designers, consultants, educators, researchers, business analysts and other talented volunteers can get the same satisfaction as lawyers who donate their services. People love to give. We just help them give smarter.”**

To-date, over 100 international, national and local non-profits and charities have partnered with **SmartVolunteer** to offer volunteer opportunities, including: the American Red Cross, ASPCA, Big Brothers, Big Sisters of New York City, Doctors Without Borders, Housing Works, and the Jewish Coalition for Service.

“We founded *SmartVolunteer* to fill a critical void in the volunteer placement arena,” says consultant Moshe Bellows. **“Many programs simply focus on servicing open opportunities, without evaluating how best to utilize their volunteers’ skills. *SmartVolunteer* is dedicated to more effective, efficient and focused volunteerism and has built the leading website for matching a volunteer’s skill set and availability with the particular needs of the non-profits.”**

How the Site Works

The **SmartVolunteer** website (located at www.smartvolunteer.org) enables qualified non-profits to post volunteer projects that require specific professional skills and then allows the volunteers

(affectionately known as “SVs”) to search and apply for the projects that are suited to their skills, time and personal interests.

Getting started for both volunteers and non-profits is as easy as filling out a few simple questions and registering a username and password. Once registered, a volunteer can search directly on the database of volunteer projects or can choose to have *Smart*Volunteer send them a weekly email with pro bono projects meeting their desired criteria. **“No obligations, just a wealth of opportunities,”** says Jeff Schlanger, whose tireless volunteer efforts were devoted to programming the code that runs the website.

With all the buzz surrounding professional and social networking, *Smart*Volunteer made sure to equip its website with a robust member directory complete with messaging, profiles and pictures. Volunteers can browse or search the directory for other members from their colleges, companies or industries and anonymously contact them through the site. The organization plans to run networking events and other social gatherings as its roster of professional members expands through the country.

“We hope to build and support a community of skilled professionals who share a passion for volunteering,” says co-founder Nir Altman. **“By volunteering for opportunities in their area of expertise and connecting with others who share their skills and values, the volunteer will have a more positive experience and come to increase their connection to the non-profit and their overall commitment to volunteering. It’s a win-win!”**

*Smart*Volunteer is also exploring partnerships with corporations to enhance their corporate giving programs, such as co-branded volunteer portals, direct data feeds of non-profit projects and outsourced volunteer coordinator services.

The **name** “SmartVolunteer” was the brainchild of one of the organization’s first smart volunteers, **Dan Abelon**, who joined the SV founding team and for the last several months has been spearheading Smart Volunteer’s West Coast presence and recruiting efforts as a student at Stanford Business School.

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*Smart*Volunteer, like the organizations it seeks to help, is a non-profit with 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Built entirely by volunteers, *Smart*Volunteer is a practical example of the impact that volunteers can make by putting their time and expertise to use in socially meaningful ways. The organization was awarded the 2006/2007 Prestigious Entrepreneurship Award from the NYU Stern School of Business.

The founders, Moshe Bellows, Howard Felson, Jeff Schlanger, Nir Altman and Dan Abelon, dedicated the site to the memory of JJ Greenberg, who recognized that we each have a role to play in making this world a better place.

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For Further Information Contact:
Meredith Waltzer at mwaltzer@smartvolunteer.org

or visit the website at

www.smartvolunteer.org