

new york minute

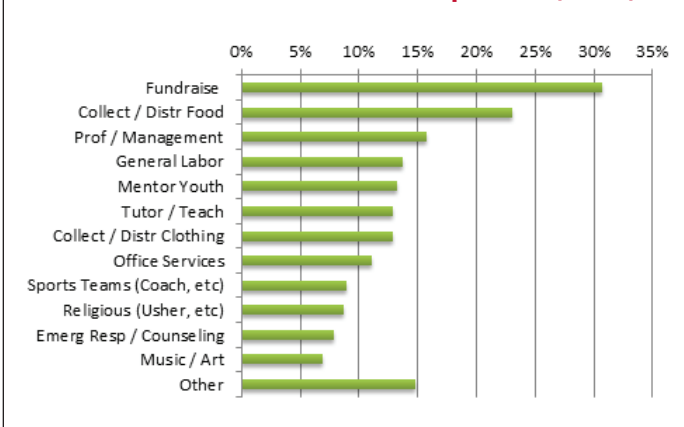
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Volunteering in NYS: Building Community Capacity

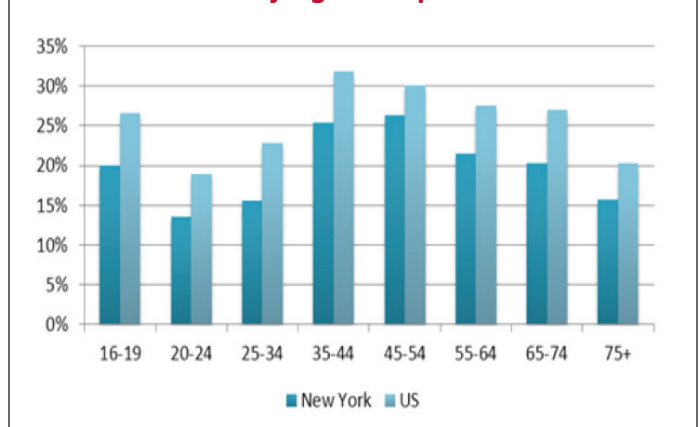
By Jan Vink and Robin Blakely-Armitage, Cornell University

Volunteering is a way to make positive contributions to one's community. Many communities and organizations rely on the resources volunteers provide to build capacity at the local level. Volunteers also benefit from the experience, whether by learning a new skill, meeting new people, developing new interests, expanding career options, or by gaining a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment. That said, New York State has one of the lowest rates of volunteering in the country, second only to Louisiana. In 2012, less than 21% of the state's residents volunteered their time for a community activity, compared to 41% of Utah residents, the highest rate in the nation. Only 14.3% of *urban* New Yorkers volunteer, compared to about 25% of NYS's suburban and rural residents. The urban volunteer rate varies by specific place, however. For example, 18.4% of New York City residents volunteered in 2012 compared to almost 34% of Rochester residents. In addition to urban/suburban/rural status, a number of other factors can influence volunteering rates, including commuting time, the number of nonprofit organizations in a community, race/ethnic group, age, parental status, and more. The sources for data highlighted in this publication are the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the Corporation for National & Community Service. For more information on the characteristics of volunteers in New York State, and elsewhere, visit: <http://www.volunteeringinamerica.gov/rankings.cfm>

Activities NYS Volunteers Participate in (2012)



Volunteer Rates by Age Group, NYS & U.S., 2012



Additional Resources:

"How Americans Volunteer" on C-SPAN's "America by the Numbers" Segment of "Washington Journal"

<http://www.c-spanvideo.org/program/WendyS>

Volunteering in America: Civic data challenge:

<http://www.tableausoftware.com/public/gallery/volunteering-america>



Cornell University