



Volunteer Handbook

“So I went down to the potter’s house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him. Then the word of the LORD came to me: “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does?” declares the LORD. “Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.” (*Jeremiah 18: 3-6, NIV*)

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Thank you!

Thank you for your interest in making a difference in your community. We invite you to join us in a hands-on learning experience as we use the visual arts to touch the lives of individuals who are going through difficult transition or are facing a crisis in life's' circumstances.

The scripture Isaiah 61:1 states. "I am going to anoint you to heal the broken hearted, set the captives free, give sight to the blind and release those imprisoned". At our community arts program God has given us a means to begin this process by becoming His hands and feet in a tangible way. As we create art we form community and bonds of trust. God begins His work and we see His love reach people who are broken and seemingly without hope.

Your presence can be in integral part of that healing process. You do not have to be a skilled artist. You only need the ability to love and interact with people where you find them — often hurting, frequently lonely, always in need of a friend.

You are invited to examine the information in this brochure and we welcome your questions. Thanks again for your interest in being a part of this unique healing process.

Gifted Hands: An Overview

Gifted Hands is an organization that leverages over 15 years of hands-on experience to equip churches and faith-based organizations with the necessary tools to create and administer art evangelism programs that reach out to those most marginalized in New York City.

OUR MISSION

The mission of Gifted Hands is to provide marginalized and broken people in New York City the opportunity to participate in a therapeutic and recreational art program that contributes to their physical, emotional and spiritual healing through the love of God.

Through art, Gifted Hands seeks to help individuals recognize that, in the same manner we learn to design and create something beautiful, God has already made a beautiful pattern for our lives and wants to shape us to be in the very likeness of Him.

OUR VISION

The vision of Gifted Hands is to replicate and expand Gifted Hands programs to numerous local churches and social institutions in New York City through the partnership of committed sponsors and donors.

OUR HISTORY

Gifted Hands had its beginning in 1993 when Dustee Hullinger, its Founder and Director, volunteered to serve with a “peanut butter and jelly club” at a family shelter in Harlem. She soon began to notice that her art projects gave her the opportunity to teach life skills to the shelter mothers, while keeping their children entertained. Through this outreach, she saw how the simplest art projects could make a positive impact on a fractured life.

Since then, Gifted Hands has expanded its service to many afflicted communities, which include the homeless, the elderly, HIV patients, drug addicts, and at-risk-youth. Gifted Hands has helped them grow emotionally and creatively by building their self-esteem and confidence, as well as strengthening their community. This program is unique because of its use of biblical principals to minister through art. Its mission and vision has spread throughout New York City, with over 55 programs modeled from the original Gifted Hands program.

OUR VALUES

Gifted Hands is committed to:

- **Christ:** bringing the message of Godt’s love to the community
- **The Bible:** instilling Biblical concepts and values
- **Development:** encouraging the development of creative problem-solving skills
- **Creativity:** stimulating the imagination through art and design
- **Building self-esteem:** improving social skills and building self-esteem through project accomplishments
- **Discovery:** discovering hidden talents and interests
- **Friendships:** forming friendships in a relaxed atmosphere while building team-oriented thinking
- **Hope:** offering hope and renewal to those fractured by life’s circumstances

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- Allows participants to realize their value in Christ. As a result, many become leaders, conquer their addictions, and form lasting relationships within community
- Enables churches and organizations to serve the marginalized through the expression of art
- Gives start-up assistance and ongoing support to churches and organizations for training, lesson plan development, and class/ materials
- Offers a proven model that has served thousands of participants, involved hundreds of volunteers, and created over 55 programs since 1993
- Provides a safe and welcoming place where volunteers and participants can come as they are regardless of abilities or familiarity with the arts

Founder Profile: Dustee Hullinger



Dustee Hullinger’s work experience includes a twenty-year career as a flight attendant, a background in public relations, and experience working with special-needs populations. When an injury required her to take time off from work and physically limited her range of activities, Dustee began to explore how she could use her gifts elsewhere. Dustee had a passion for using art and design to reach people in difficult circumstances. She took the opportunity during her physical disability to develop an art program in which God’s love could be expressed. Her personal experiences and her work with special-needs populations became the training ground for her to become an excellent model and coach for the Gifted Hands program.

Her work with the special-needs population includes the development of vocational training for at-risk-youth in foster care. At Saint Christopher’s All Regents School of Travel and Tourism, she formed partnerships with businesses that provided internship opportunities to students with limited resources. At Gifted Hands, her expertise and involvement with special populations provided the sensitivity she exemplifies and is required of a program that ministers to at-risk youth, HIV/AIDS patients, and senior citizens, among others. Through Dustee’s feedback and example, volunteers can begin to recognize how to interact appropriately with participants.

Dustee is both creative and compassionate and her love for others is inspiring. Her passion for the ministry has developed a core of volunteers wherever a Gifted Hands program has been established. By imitating Dustee’s personal touch and gentle instruction, volunteers are able to help participants with their artistic creations.

Current Programs Overview

COVENANT HOUSE ART PROGRAM | This program reaches out to women and children in need and runaway youth. Includes 40 different art projects a year. Volunteers assist with art programs and community building.

When — Wednesdays from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM, 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month

Where — Covenant House, 427 West 52nd Street, NYC

Contact — Dustee Hullinger (dusteeh@gmail.com)

LAMB'S ART GALLERY | This gallery program helps to further the Gifted Hands mission of promoting the ongoing understanding of art as a fundamental form of human expression while nurturing and exploring the artist within each participant.

Participants will develop basic concepts of design and elements of art; be enhanced intellectually by the history and style of the visual arts; celebrate and respect works of art from global cultures; learn to be supportive and respectful of the visual art works of others; create pieces of art work that portray emotions and personality; learn the skills to apply the arts to all areas of their personal and professional lives and develop a growing appreciation of the artist, works of art and development of the arts in the community.

When — Four shows a year; dates to be announced

Where — The Lambs Church, 61-63 Rivington St, NYC; NYC Art Gallery entrance)

Contact — Blake Reuhrwein (blakeruehrwein@gmail.com)

RIVINGTON HOUSE JEWELRY, ART AND DESIGN PROGRAM | This program reaches out to the HIV/AIDS community. Learn over 24 jewelry designs a year.

When — 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month from 7 to 8:30 PM

Where — Rivington House, 45 Rivington St, NYC — penthouse apartment

Contact — Dustee Hullinger (718.601.1870) or Blake Reuhrwein (blakeruehrwein@gmail.com)

WOODSTOCK SENIOR CRAFTS PROGRAM | This program reaches out to seniors and covers 20 different crafts a year including crochet and knitting.

When — 3 Saturdays a month from 1–2:30 PM. Please contact Bill Sattan (below) for specific dates.

Where — Woodstock, 127 W 42rd Street, New York, NY 10036

Contact — Bill Sattan (sattanb@yahoo.com)

CROWN COMMUNITY CHURCH AND MUSIC PROGRAM | This program is held in the kitchen of the Crown Residence, an HIV/AIDS shelter. It supports homeless individuals and those living in low income situations. Includes singing, sharing, and teaching people to support and pray for each other.

When — Tuesdays from 6:30 – 8:30 PM

Where — The Crown Residence, 136 W. 44th St (between 6th Ave and Broadway), NYC.

Contacts — Rose Marie Todaro — rmtodaro@hotmail.com or Kellie Dystra (kdystra@dwight.edu)

CLINTON SCRAPBOOKING CLASS | Program reaches out to women and children living in a transitional center. Volunteers work with the women creating scrapbooks with devotionals and also provide child care (needed at all classes).

When — Thursdays at 4 PM.

Where — Clinton Family Center, 521 W 49th St., NYC.

Contacts — Mary Knoll (maryknoll24@gmail.com)

ARTIST ON CALL | A program where artists and musicians reach out to the terminally ill and bedridden through music and art.

When — Create your own schedule with a resident 2-4 times a month

Where — HIV/AIDS residence at Rivington House, 45 Rivington St, NYC

Contact — Dustee Hullinger (917.604.6171)

The Impact of Gifted Hands: Personal Accounts

Note: Slightly edited for grammatical clarity — certain text maintained for each individual expression.

RUTH M. TUMBLIN

Participant

Courtesy of: www.giftedhandsnyc.com

My name is Ruthie. I am a 27-year-old, single mother of one. While in the shelter system, I was in a constant state of depression. I had lost a relative to a violent crime and I was losing another to AIDS. Because of my homeless situation, I needed answers, and I needed comfort. Nothing was making me feel better.

One day, when I saw a sign that said an Art and Design class on Wednesday at 3:00, I was interested. When Wednesday came, I went to the class and it was great. The woman that gave the class was patient and nice to all these women, who were often very tense - agitated. It was amazing how a simple crafts class changed these women. Some of us didn't think we could make something with our own hands and discover hidden talents we didn't know we had. I wanted to be part of this.

"It was amazing how a simple crafts class changed these women...I wanted to be part of this."

One day, when I was especially frustrated, I was excited when it was time to go to class. Because I arrived early, I had an opportunity to talk with the volunteers which made me feel a lot better. I continued the classes up until the time I moved. Since then I have been developing my work experience with Gifted Hands. Now I am learning how to use my talents for good - I train others in the arts. These classes teach more than just art. They teach respect, responsibility, and patience. Art teaches us how to share and be more creative with our time. It gives women more self-worth and self-respect. Gifted Hands connects these women to churches and allows them to hear the Word. It could be the only time that they would be exposed to Him truth.

I have learned so much that I am ready to go out and teach a Gifted Hands program on my own. I have a lot more self-respect and confidence in God's provision and I know that my future will be a great one!

Post Script for Ruth: Ruth Tumblin started a program modeled after Gifted Hands at a local church in Washington Heights serving welfare mothers and their children.

ROY CHAN

Volunteer

I have been an urban planner and community organizer for over ten years, and one day I came to the realization that I was leading people to a place I had never truly been to before: community. Then one fall day, God led me to a place hidden in the Lamb's Theatre basement in Times Square. It was a free art class for the neighborhood called Gifted Hands, and I soon realized that it was so much more than that. I returned every week, bringing the broken pieces of my life and laying them on the table along with others going through very different life circumstances. For two hours, we are invited to assemble these broken pieces together with our hands into works of art and reflections of God's grace. Whether it's a clay sculpture, watercolor painting, or stained glass, art has become an opportunity for me not only to share and develop artistic gifts, but offers an open invitation for me to enter into the lives of so many others. And together as we enter into a shared brokenness, we soon recognize God in our very midst. Our time of art has transformed into a time of healing, and a place where I have discovered community.

MICHAEL O'NEILL

Executive Director of Hope for New York, Sponsoring Organization

Gifted Hands is an amazing organization that we have supported for many years. Their extensive use of volunteers allows them to expand programming in a cost-effective and efficient manner. Their volunteers are clearly impacted by the passion and energy of those running the organization - their enthusiasm is there for all to see! Gifted Hands works through the medium of art to serve others, but the real "art" is the love and genuine compassion at the center of all they do.

Volunteer Guidelines & Information

Gifted Hands asks that volunteers perform to the best of their ability and maintain a positive attitude in regards to being stretched and challenged.

In order to maintain a high standard of safety and quality service, Gifted Hands expects that volunteers will treat others with respect and dignity and comply by the following guidelines:

1. Abide by the rules and policies established by each affiliate ministry.
2. Abide by the child protection policies established by each affiliate ministry.
3. Dress and act sensibly.
4. Arrive on time to a project and stay for the duration of the project, including clean-up time.
5. If you have registered for a project, but need to cancel, please do so at least 24 hours in advance.
6. Uphold confidentiality of all privileged information, unless a danger exists of a client/participant hurting themselves or someone else.
7. While on a project, volunteers must not engage in the following:
 - The use of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - Smoking
 - Physical, sexual or verbal harassment
 - Giving money to clients
 - Giving out your contact information to clients
 - Any unlawful or inappropriate activity
8. Do not engage in derogatory conversation about the staff/leadership of the ministry with clients.
9. Do not aggressively evangelize to clients. Gifted Hands is a holistic ministry, recognizing the importance of one's spiritual, physical, social and mental needs. Therefore, Gifted Hands recommends 'Friendship Evangelism.'

Questions of harassment, abuse, or the possibility of harm must be directed to a ministry staff member immediately. If you have any questions regarding the above guidelines, please contact the Hope for New York Volunteer Coordinator at (212) 808-4460 x208.

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

- Gifted hands encourages their volunteers to enjoy and learn from the experience of volunteering. Share the Gospel of Jesus with others, whether in the form of meditation, praise, prayer, artwork, song, dance, storytelling, poetry reciting, instrumental presentations or acting presentations. Engage with participants — sit next to a person in need and have a conversation. This is a wonderful expression of God's love and caring. Invite others to a worship service and activities at your Home Church.
- Please refrain from accepting or giving monetary gifts within the scope of your volunteering. Exceptions are small amounts for harmless items (such as \$1.00 for a soda or snack). If you would like to make a donation, please do so through the Gifted Hands director or through the sponsoring church.
- When praying with a participant, do not assume that a receiver of prayer wants to be touched. Always ask pertinent questions, such as: Would you like me to lay hands on your shoulder? Would you like me to hold your hand? Would you like a hug?
- In conversation, please refrain from making promises regarding housing, governmental benefits, employment resources, clothing distribution and food distribution. A list of resources for advocacy, clothing and food can be obtained through the Gifted Hands director or sponsoring church.
- Keep your coat, pocketbook and other personal belongings in a safe place. Ask about a designated locked area at your location.
- Refrain from holding onto secrets regarding any inappropriate behaviors. Always report such behavior or concerns to the Gifted Hands director.

Considerations for the Communities Served by Gifted Hands

WOMEN FLEEING FROM ABUSE AND/OR LIVING IN SHELTERS

- They are under great stress.
- They are in a state of transition and face many of the daily problems involved in transitioning.
- They are weary from being a new mom and with all the responsibilities involved in caring for children who are often crying and sick.
- They live in a situation where they must daily check in, leave their keys at the desk, have a curfew, and have to ask for a weekend pass to spend the weekend away from the shelter.
- They are working through the attitudes of the community they live in and all the people around them.
- They may have been involved in an abuse situation and are fearful of the abuser finding out where they live and coming to take their children away.
- They are fleeing from a drug-related situation.
- They have removed themselves from their family as they may have a crisis pregnancy and their family may have rejected them, or they may have left their family in order to get services from the city.
- They do not have an apartment and are on public assistance, or have no rent money.
- Public assistance has cut them off financially or from food stamps because something went wrong in their case and they have no money to live on.
- They face immigration problems, no job and no working papers, which stand in the way of getting housing as they need an income to get housing. Their children are usually born in the U.S. and get services but the mother does not. The mother does not want to go back to her homeland as she has made contacts in the U.S.
- Many of the women do not have a high school diplomas so are taking GED classes. Studying causes stress when combined with an infant with many needs.
- They feel disconnected from their husband/boyfriend/father of their child and have no income and are raising their children alone.
- Their husband/boyfriend/father of their child has committed a crime and is in jail.
- They are bitter, resentful, angry, depressed and/or evidence a defeated or ready-to-quit spirit.
- They lack consistency. It often takes 3 or 4 tries to ask them out before they agree to do something or before they go through with their promises. They will often agree to do something and then not show up. This makes most people back off. Remember that they have many emergencies and often forget a lot of things as a result or as a way to cope. Find a way to remind them of promises or appointments and do not be discouraged or turned off from developing a relationship. It is a slow building process.
- The women often face major complex issues. You will not be able to solve these issues but we can be someone who can call them, encourage them, be a mentor and meet for coffee, bible study, and/or recreational activity.

THE HIV/AIDS COMMUNITY

- Not everyone who you are working with has HIV/AIDS.
- Someone can be infected with HIV and/or be diagnosed with AIDS, and you may never be able to tell.
- It is important not to try and “ID” people, but rather treat all people equally.
- You must take the same precautions for prevention of HIV transmission when exposed to transmission fluids (blood, semen/pre-come, vaginal fluids, breast milk) with all people regardless of their HIV status.
- HIV is not spread through giving blood, telephones, hugging, toilet seats, sharing food, handshakes, etc.
- People with HIV/AIDS may be facing other issues such as depression or substance abuse problems, which can stem from the stress of living with the disease. Therefore always be kind, considerate, and non-judgmental to lessen the stress of the person. You are there to help them enjoy themselves, not to question them or their behaviors.
- Some people are comfortable discussing details about their HIV status, such as how they became infected, and how they are doing, but some are not.
- To be safe, always let the person you are working with disclose to you without asking them outright, this will be the most comfortable situation for the both of you.
- DO NOT ask people questions about their life expectancy or other details about medical conditions related to their HIV status – this is private information!
- If a participant is discussing private details about their health and lifestyle, it is polite to listen to them and use your judgment if the conversation becomes uncomfortable for you or the participant. You can always steer a conversation to another topic which can be of interest to both of you.

Volunteer Information & Interests

VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Please fill out the following information and send to dusteeh@gmail.com or giftedhandsnyc@hfny.org

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email address _____ Phone _____ Fax _____

1. Please tell us a little about yourself.

2. What are your gifts and talents?

VOLUNTEER INTERESTS

Gifted Hands reaches out to different groups of people through the arts and the gospel. Please mark the areas that interest you.

General Volunteer Work

- Art Project Assistance
- Child Care
- Prayer Support
- Administrative Duties
- Clothing Collection
- Devotional Leader
- Assisting with art projects
- Relationship Building
- Praying for classes in progress
- Helping with Administrative duties

Target Populations

- HIV/AIDS ministry and outreach
- Women and children
- Mentoring / friendship evangelism
- Seniors
- Youth at Risk

Development

- Strategic planning
- Fund raising
- Event coordinating
- Marketing
- Promotional materials
- Outreach
- Grant Writing

Performing

- Music: Singing
- Music: Instrumental
- Dance
- Acting
- Other
- Other (please explain below): _____

Teaching

- Art Classes
- Painting
- Mixed Media
- Craft
- Wood
- Jewelry
- Other: (please explain below) _____

Leadership

- Public speaking and program replication at other sites
- Art Gallery Design
- Art Gallery Team
- Volunteer recruitment
- Volunteer site coordinator
- Other: (please explain below) _____

Volunteer Needs

Please fill out the following information and send to dusteeh@gmail.com or giftedhandsnyc@hfny.org

_____ **Crown Community Church and Music Program** | Tuesdays, 6:30–8:30pm | The Crown Residence, 136 W 44th Street
HIV/AIDS center

Special singing lessons, choir, bible study, prayer, mentoring, all invited. Volunteers needed to set up, pray, talk with people, mentor, bible study, be a support system.

_____ **Rivington House Jewelry, Art and Design Class** | 2nd & 4th Monday of the month, 7:00pm–8:30pm | Rivington House, 45 Rivington Street, Penthouse apartment.

HIV/AIDS population

Volunteers needed to assist with student projects, help get materials to people, build relationships, lead devotionals, and clean up and organization.

_____ **Covenant House Art Classes** | Wednesday, 6:30–8:30pm | 427 W 52nd Street

Mothers & Children Program

Volunteers needed to build relationships and mentor mothers and children, teach classes, assist with children's program, lead devotionals, provide snacks, donate art supplies and provide background live music.

_____ **Clinton Scrapbook Class** | 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month, 3:30–5:00pm | Clinton Family Center, 521 W 49th St

Mothers & Children Program

Volunteers needed to provide child care, build relationships, assist with scrapbooks, assist with set up and clean up.

_____ **Woodstock Senior Arts and Crafts** | Saturday, 1:00–3:00pm | 127 W 43rd Street

Seniors program

Volunteers needed to help set up and prepare materials, work with seniors, and clean up.

_____ **Artist on Call** | Create your own schedule with a resident 2-4 times per month | Rivington House, 45 Rivington Street

HIV/AIDS center

Artists and Musicians needed to play music and create art with the terminally ill and bedridden.

_____ **Volunteers are needed to provide background music at all locations.**

Child Protection Policy and Acknowledgement of Understanding Concerning Prohibition of Corporal Punishment

Gifted Hands would like you to read and sign the following policies if you are working with children. Please carefully review this information and hand the completed form in to your team leader.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Staff and volunteers, including the Executive Director, are forbidden to ever be alone with a child in a secluded environment or private office or room.
- Two adults will always accompany a child to the restroom.
- There will always be two adults present in the nursery at all times.
- The same parent/guardian who dropped off the child in the nursery is the same parent/guardian who will pick up the child from the nursery.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

- The use of corporal punishment upon any child who is served by, or under the care of Gifted Hands is strictly prohibited. Corporal punishment may herein be defined as any type of physical punishment, discipline or retaliation inflicted upon any part of the body of a child who is served by Gifted Hands. This would include such actions as slapping, hitting, punching, spanking, shoving, pinching, striking with sticks, or any other action geared toward inflicting pain or body discomfort upon a child. Any violation of this corporal punishment policy will result in termination of employment or volunteer status.
- In many instances, the use of corporal punishment may result in a child abuse investigation and an indicted finding of abuse with a subsequent record of child abuse in the State's Central Registry. It is also conceivable that the child, child's biological parents or guardians might press charges or bring about a legal suit.
- The use of corporal punishment against children served by this corporation is a clear violation of the policies of Gifted Hands. Further, the use of corporal punishment against children served by Gifted Hands will result in an automatic termination of employment or volunteer status. The use of corporal punishment against children who are cared for or served by this corporation will not be tolerated.

I, _____, have read and understand the above statements regarding child protection and I agree to abide by the policies and procedures of Gifted Hands.

Signature of Employee/Volunteer

Date