



Volunteer Plan

The 12th step reads that ‘we try to carry the message to others.’ One of the greatest opportunities we have is to engage our alumni is by providing several different opportunities where alumni can be of service to both our patients and their community. By offering your time to get in service, you can help strengthen your individual recovery, the ties you have with the site where you received treatment and help enrich the recovery of others. The Alumni Association and all its volunteer opportunities are open to anyone – **all are welcome.**

Alumni H&I Meetings

The purpose of an Alumni H&I Meeting is to carry the message of AA and NA to addicts that would not otherwise have access to traditional NA or AA meetings. Alumni H&I meetings are intended to introduce the basics of a 12-step fellowship to the patients at our facilities.

There are many different meeting formats for an Alumni H&I Meeting that a chair may choose:

- **Speaker:** One or more alumni will share their experience strength and hope with patients, which helps bring to light some of the basic symptoms and characteristics of the disease of addiction and shows how working a program has brought about sustainable recovery. The sharing of feelings, doubts, emotions and turning points helps carry powerful message of recovery and assists in driving home the point that the disease of addiction is powerful, progressive, and even fatal.
- **Panel Presentation/Topic Discussion:** A panel presentation is much like a speaker meeting, but each alumnus (member of the panel) will share their experience, strength, and hope on the same selected topic. By selecting a panel presentation/topic discussion, patients can hear from alumni what this topic means to them and their recovery.
- **Step Study:** Alumni will select a step that they have previously studied and done work on with their sponsor to share their experience with this step with patients. Breaking down steps can help ease patients minds when it comes to beginning step work as it can be intimidating for many.
- **Literature Discussion:** The alumnus will select a chapter from the *Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous* or other conference approved literature such as *As Bill Sees It*, *The Basic Text*, or 12-step pamphlets in which each patient and participants will take turns reading followed by a discussion of the reading. Choosing a step study can be an easy way to bolster patient participation.

Requirements to volunteer:

60 days to chair, must be working a program of recovery

In Person Alumni Meetings

In Person Alumni Meetings are 12-step based meetings hosted at our facilities. Prior to the pandemic, these meetings included both alumni and patients. At this point in time, In Person Alumni Meetings are only offered to alumni and individuals in the recovery community. The purpose of these meetings is for our alumni to get together and foster the connections made in treatment, as well as create new connections with fellow alumni and strengthen the relationship between you and the treatment center you visited.

The volunteer opportunities at In Person Alumni Meetings is for our alumni to be of service to others by speaking and carrying the message of recovery from the disease of addiction through the 12 steps and 12 traditions. As an alumnus, you can volunteer to chair the In Person Alumni Meetings at your site or get involved by volunteering to greet visitors, hand

out material, or help set up and break down each meeting. By getting in service at an In Person Alumni Meeting, you can gain the experience to confidently attend and chair other outside meetings.

Requirements to volunteer:

- 60 days to chair, 60 days to speak. Must be working a program of recovery.
- 30 days to greet fellow alumni, help set up and break down meeting room, or hand out material.

Chats with Patients (Inpatient & Outpatient)

Chatting with patients in person looks different at every site – the point is, we *need* you and your fellow alumni on site to establish a presence and set the tone for patients who are looking to achieve long term recovery. These chats can vary from joining patients at lunch or dinner, serving food, spending time at the Bookstore at Devon, or joining patients in the treatment neighborhood you once were a part of while you were in treatment. Another opportunity is to utilize the video conferencing platform, Webex to speak with both patients engaging in inpatient and outpatient treatment.

The opportunity is for our alumni to find common ground with our current patients, share how the Alumni Association has been vital to their journey, lead by example, and spread the message of experience, strength, and hope. In essence, your role, should you choose to volunteer your time by speaking with patients is to show them that long term recovery is possible, and that the Alumni Association is the other side of the door.

Requirements to volunteer:

60 days, must be working a program of recovery

Virtual Meetings

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the virtual community is growing, and your Alumni Association has adjusted accordingly. The Alumni Association hosts several virtual meetings each day, which provides our alumni with plenty of opportunities to get involved and gain experience by chairing virtual meetings.

If you are not physically located near one of our treatment centers or do not have in-person meetings local to you, chairing a virtual meeting may be the service opportunity for you! Chairing a virtual meeting is quite similar to an in-person meeting, but you can do it from anywhere. With a thriving virtual community of supportive alumni, getting in service by chairing a virtual meeting will surely help foster the relationships built in treatment, while growing new, strong, supportive friendships with your peers.

Requirements to volunteer:

60 days to chair, must regularly attend Home Group Business Meeting

Community Volunteering

To better establish a presence within the communities we serve, the Alumni Association provides our alumni with plenty of community-based volunteer opportunities. These opportunities vary based upon the treatment center, so if you are interested in being of service to your local area, please touch base with your site's Alumni Coordinator. Our Alumni Coordinators are hard at work establishing partnerships with the community to share plenty of great opportunities to give back. These volunteer experiences can include but are not limited to the following:

- Clothing/Food/Toy Drives
- Volunteering at local homeless shelters or food banks
- Site Cleanups such as parks, beaches, etc.
- Agricultural experiences

On behalf of the Alumni Team at Recovery Centers of America, we would like to sincerely thank you for your interest in volunteering with the Alumni Association. It is with your help, participation, and service that we can support both our patients and your peers in recovery. This is a 'we' program, and we cannot do this without you, so if you see a volunteer opportunity that peaks your interest, please visit, www.RecoveryCentersofAmerica/alumni-team, where you can learn how to get in touch with your site's Alumni Coordinator who will happily work with you to establish a commitment that is meaningful and is in line with your recovery.