



# Investing in Your **Community**



## Participant Guide

# 10



L.I.N.K.S.  
Lifestyle. Insights. Networking. Knowledge. Skills.



This book belongs to:

# Contents

Module Objectives .....	3
Your Community .....	4
Benefits of Investing .....	5
Volunteer for a Career .....	7
Breaking Through.....	8
Finding Your Volunteer Opportunity .....	9
Volunteer Opportunities.....	10
Virtual Volunteering.....	11
Non-Traditional Volunteering .....	12
Invested and Involved: Outside the Box!.....	13
Closing Activity.....	14
Glossary of Key Terms.....	15
Notes .....	16
Let's Connect! .....	17

# Module Objectives

Investing in the local community both inside and outside a Marine Corps Installation is very important to all members of the family. This module stresses the importance and benefits of becoming involved in the community and encourages participants to discover the opportunities available every time they move. Each Marine Corps Spouse brings something special and unique to this community; our community. Volunteering and connecting with a mentor, whether it is formal or informal, can be a key part of furthering personal success.



At the end of this module the participants will be prepared to:

- understand the value of investing in their Marine Corps community,
- identify who to contact for on and off base volunteer opportunities,
- name three ways to overcome roadblocks that may limit volunteering,
- list new volunteer opportunities in the community, and
- identify non-traditional ways to get involved in the community.



# Your Community

Use the space below to reflect on the *Making Connections* activity. Did you build new connections? Did this surprise you? How can you connect in a new way within your community?



You are an important part of this community, with talents and knowledge to share as well as skills and friendships to grow!



Investing in your community can look like many things, from the small act of welcoming a neighbor to becoming a lead volunteer in your chosen focus. It doesn't have to be a grand gesture, but something small that matters to you. Investing in your community is another way of saying, "bloom where you are planted!" You may not see full blooms from the seeds you planted while you are in a community, but many who follow will reap the benefits.

# Benefits of Investing

## **Being invested in the community helps you find your group or your 'family.'**

The great thing about being truly invested and connected to your community is that it is mutually beneficial. You build up the community and the community builds you up. Learn about your community by reading the local newspapers, attending community functions and your Marine's command functions, and visiting interesting places in your area. Introduce yourself to others. You could even start a hospitality committee in your neighborhood or with your Command.

**Directions:** Follow along and fill in the blanks as the presenter discusses ways to invest in your community.



**Sometimes the best way to get started is with a \_\_\_\_\_.**

A mentor is an experienced and trusted advisor. In the professional world, a mentor is usually a more experienced professional who may or may not be someone who is in your field or has life experience and can offer you guidance, advice, and assistance from a real world point-of-view.



**L.I.N.K.S. allows you to \_\_\_\_\_ with new people and help them find the information they need to thrive in this lifestyle.**

The support of other military spouses who can relate to what you are experiencing can truly help.



**Good feelings and a sense of \_\_\_\_\_ occur when you can help and give back to your community.**

Learning something new not only broadens  
our horizons, but broadens our  
\_\_\_\_\_ too!

When you are invested, you help  
\_\_\_\_\_.

It could take years to see the help or it could  
be immediate. From fostering a kitten to  
taking the time to help someone find their  
way around a new installation,

\_\_\_\_\_ have the power  
to make a difference.



Sometimes when we connect, network, or volunteer, it could help you find your  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Volunteering at a children's program might guide you into social work. Connecting to an organization could  
show you that you have a passion for non-profits. Sometimes by giving our time and energy in this military life  
we are given opportunities we never had before.

**Share a time when you helped others and felt those positive effects.**





**For those that are looking for professional growth, being invested is an excellent way to assist with that.**

This could be networking at events, volunteering, or gaining a pulse on what jobs are needed in your location.

**Volunteering lets you get your foot into an industry you may be passionate about.**

The skills, time, and responsibilities you hold when you volunteer are items that build your resume for future job opportunities! If you are unsure on how to incorporate that information into your resume, be sure to reach out the Family Member Employment Assistance Program (FMEAP)! You can always schedule a one-on-one or attend a class to properly highlight all your hard work!



# Breaking Through

You may want to get invested in your community, volunteer, or help a friend, but sometimes there are obstacles or roadblocks that get in the way. With a positive attitude, a small contribution to your community will make a difference in the life of others, as well as yours! Let's explore how you may overcome these obstacles using the organizer below.

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**Obstacle****Ways to Overcome the Obstacle**

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**Time**

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**Intimidation**

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**Apathy**

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# Finding Your Volunteer Opportunity



When you begin your volunteering search, a Volunteer Coordinator can assist you. They have a pulse of the local area's on- and off-base volunteering opportunities. They are happy to sit down with you and discuss your volunteering goals and limitations to find the most fulfilling experience for you!

**Directions:** Fill in the contact information for Volunteer Coordinator, DRC/URC, and FRA/FRCTA below.

Who is my  
Volunteer Coordinator?

Who is my  
DRC/URC?

Who is my  
FRA/FRCTA?

Getting involved can sometimes be intimidating. Think about asking a friend to join you when you visit the volunteer coordinator or suggest a volunteer opportunity to your Deployment/ Uniformed Readiness Coordinator, Family Readiness Assistant, or Family Readiness Command Team Advisor.

Remember your role as a volunteer is entirely up to you; be creative, follow your passion, and have fun with it!

# Volunteer Opportunities

Each installation and location has its own vast array of volunteer opportunities. Volunteer opportunities can be found for most every interest. Please see disclaimer on page 15.

<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>POSSIBLE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES/SKILLS</b>
<b>MCFTB/MCCS</b>	Admin Assistant; L.I.N.K.S. Mentor (in front of the group or behind the scenes)
<b>YOUR UNIT</b>	Family Readiness Command Team Advisor; Family Readiness Assistant; administrative help; single day volunteer for events with set up, take down, planning, cooking, outreach
<b>EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM</b>	Admin Assistant; event assistance
<b>CHILDREN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS</b>	Coaching youth sports; admin Assistant; event assistance
<b>NAVY MARINE CORPS RELIEF SOCIETY</b>	Financial assistance; admin assistant; event assistance; crafting/knitting/crocheting
<b>RED CROSS</b>	First Aid; admin assistant; event assistance; outreach; youth and teen leadership; blood drives; emergency support
<b>USO</b>	Admin assistant; event assistance; outreach; coordination
<b>YMCA</b>	Admin assistant; event assistance; outreach; coaching
<b>ANIMAL SHELTERS</b>	Admin assistant; adoption event assistance; outreach; fostering animals; caring for animals at the shelter; cleaning
<b>RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS</b>	Admin assistant; event assistance; outreach; teaching both kids and adults; food drives
<b>MUSEUMS</b>	Admin assistant; event assistance; outreach; docents; tours guides
<b>ARTS ORGANIZATION</b>	Artists; musicians; admin assistant; event assistance; outreach
<b>HOSPITALS</b>	Visiting the sick; bringing therapy dogs; admin assistant; event assistance; outreach



# Virtual Volunteering

So, how do you make a difference from the comfort of your own home? We've got a few ideas to help you decide. No matter your passion, you're sure to find something that piques your interest. Please see disclaimer on page 15.

## Smithsonian Institute

<http://www.si.edu>

- The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest museum complex. Virtual volunteers are used on two main projects; updating Wikipedia pages and transcribing historical documents.

## Red Cross

<http://www.redcross.org>

- Red Cross utilizes volunteers to monitor online discussions to find people and areas that need assistance or share updates on social media.

## United Nations

<http://www.unfoundation.org>

- The UN connects volunteers with organizations worldwide that need assistance with editing, translation, technology services, research, and advocacy.

## Amnesty Decoders

<https://decoders.amnesty.org>

- A global network of volunteers that help by researching and exposing human rights violations.

## Catchafire

<https://www.catchafire.org>

- Catchafire makes it easy to "give what you're good at". It allows talented professionals to give their skill to mission driven organizations in need.

## Translators without Borders

<https://translatorswithoutborders.org>

- Translators from around the world offer language and translation support for humanitarian and development agencies and non-profit organizations globally.

## Be My Eyes

<https://www.bemyeyes.com>

- Through an app, volunteers are connected with blind and low-vision people to provide visual assistance.

## Bookshare

<https://www.bookshare.org>

- Contribute skills and passions to help people with print disabilities read by scanning, proofreading, and describing images.

## Career Village

<https://www.careervillage.org>

- Provide personalized career advice and guidance to students and those just getting started in their career.

## Adopt a Nursing Home

- This can be done in your local community or with the help of the internet all over America. Reach out to the retirement home and plan virtual interactions. They would love to hear you sing, see you dance, play instruments, or just have a conversation. Not into performing? These communities also love cards and art. It makes for a great at home art class project.

# Non-Traditional Volunteering



Investing in your community is similar to using jumper cables to start a car. It allows you to share energy with others or give them a boost! Investing means many things and volunteering doesn't have to look how you may expect! In addition to volunteering, gestures of friendship are an excellent way to invest. Baking cookies for a new neighbor, inviting newcomers to dinner or dessert, taking a meal to a friend in need, babysitting for a friend, driving a friend to an event, or planning a neighborhood block party can increase your sense of community!



## **Check in with Neighbors and Friends**

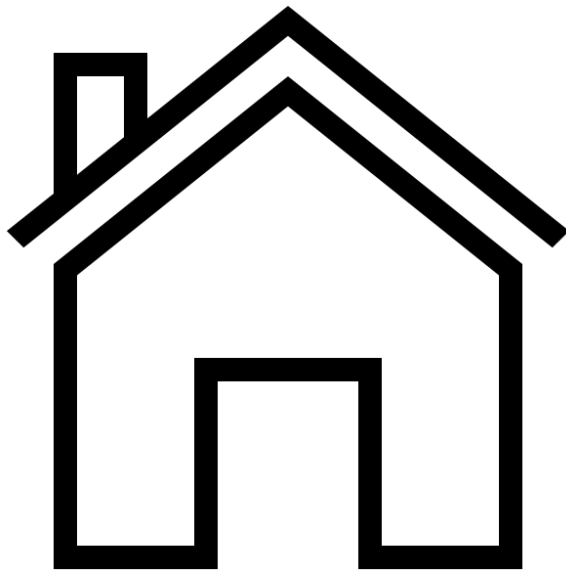
If you have new neighbors, you can be the welcome wagon with a tray of cookies. If you know your neighbors and you're making a run to the grocery store, check in to see if they need something. A parent with little ones will surely appreciate a bag of cereal and milk showing up on their doorstep rather than taking everyone out to the store.



## **Organize or Participate in a Bear Hunt**

Across the nation, front windows and porches are being decorated with stuffed animals. Families are using these small touches to spark conversations and increase interests as they walk for exercise through their communities. Do you have a bear hunt happening in your neighborhood? If not, contact your neighbors and let them know about the hunt.

# Invested and Involved: Outside the Box!



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Maybe you are looking for a way to get involved but you are not quite ready to volunteer. The Marine Corps Community offers resources that can support your individual interests and hobbies. Here are a few examples:

- **Movie Buff** - Libraries have free movies; discounted base theater
- **Yoga Master** - Base gyms with free access and the education center can help you learn about certification
- **Social Butterfly** - Base clubs with special events; engaging with installation entertainment
- **Car Connoisseur** - Base auto hobby shops; library virtual content; education center guidance on schools that teach automotive repair
- **Outdoor Explorer** - Outdoor Recreation centers; Marine Corps camp sites, Information Tours and Travel (ITT)

Being invested in your Marine Corps Community allows you to stay connected to all the things that could be fulfilling.

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Before we close out for the day let's share how you could start investing in your community today, this week, or this month!

# Glossary of Key Terms

<b>Mentor</b>	An experienced and trusted advisor.
<b>Volunteer</b>	An individual donating their time to a cause.
<b>Volunteer Coordinator</b>	The individual who has a pulse on all things volunteer related in and around your community

## Full Disclaimer-

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# Notes



# LET'S CONNECT!

Use this page to network with some of your fellow L.I.N.K.S. spouses.

Name:
Tel. No:
Email:

Name:
Tel. No:
Email:

Name:
Tel. No:
Email:

Name:
Tel. No:
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Name:
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Name:
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L . I . N . K . S .

Empowering Marines, Sailors, and their families,  
by providing the skills and resources necessary to navigate the military lifestyle.