



## The CVA Professional Credential

The “Certified in Volunteer Administration” (CVA) credential is offered for practitioners in volunteer resources management. Originally developed by the international Association for Volunteer Administration, the program is now sponsored by the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration (CCVA).

Unlike many “certificate” or certification programs being offered by colleges and universities, this professional credentialing program is performance-based. Intended for those with some experience, this self-study program measures an individual’s “knowledge-in-use”—the application of knowledge and skills by those with real-life experience in this role. This includes assessment of a candidate’s ability to structure tasks, process ideas, and solve problems.

The CVA Professional Credentialing Program:

- is voluntary
- is performance-based
- is grounded in core competencies and standards developed by colleagues and peers
- defines volunteer administration as a profession
- provides a vehicle for updating best practices
- is open to salaried and non-salaried individuals from all types of organizations

### **Core Competencies**

Individuals pursuing the CVA credential are expected to demonstrate successfully their knowledge and ability to apply skills required for competent volunteer management, based on their actual performance in the role. Five core competencies have been identified that serve as a foundation for this profession, regardless of the setting or type of organization where volunteers are engaged.

These five core competencies are:

- Ethics – The ability to act in accordance with professional principles.
- Organizational Management – The ability to design and implement policies, processes and structures to align volunteer involvement with the mission and vision of the organization.
- Human Resource Management – The ability to successfully engage, train and support volunteers in a systematic and intentional way.
- Accountability – The ability to collect relevant data and to engage in meaningful monitoring, evaluation and reporting to stakeholders.
- Leadership and Advocacy – The investment of personal integrity, skills and attitudes to advance individual, organizational and community goals through effective volunteer involvement.

### **The Value of the CVA Credential**

Benefits for the individual practitioner:

- clarifies and articulates personal values and professional ethics
- identifies areas of skill or knowledge you would like to strengthen
- assesses personal expertise against standards of performance
- enhances self-esteem through peer recognition
- increases confidence in problem-solving skills
- increases personal and professional credibility
- demonstrates the transferability of your knowledge, skills, and abilities
- reinforces your commitment to professional excellence
- may enhance your employability and/or your position in the organization

Benefits to organizations/agencies/employers:

- demonstrates a commitment to excellence in the management of volunteer resources
- improves credibility and community image
- increases organization's understanding of volunteer resources management
- assesses employee's application of core competencies
- identifies and documents leadership potential

“I loved the process of acquiring my CVA! I found it personally enriching and professionally valuable. I now have many more resources and abilities at my disposal.”

**Jason Frenzel-Wright, CVA**  
**Natural Area Preservation**  
**Ann Arbor, MI USA**

## **The Credentialing Process**

A two-part measurement methodology has been designed to demonstrate a candidate's knowledge and application of the core competencies.

### Part I: Portfolio

*Philosophy Statement – personal reflection on beliefs and values related to one's role as a leader and manager of volunteers (100-250 words)*

*Ethics Case Study – description of a work-related situation involving ethics, and how it relates to the profession's core values (100-250 words)*

*Management Narrative – description and analysis of a project or activities focused on the core competencies (1,500 -1750 words)*

Both pieces are written based on the candidate's experience in the field rather than on information from textbooks or classes. The Portfolio is read and scored using a peer review process.

### Part II: Multiple Choice Examination

The test is made up of 80 questions. It is a two-hour proctored examination, taken on-line in late May. Multiple choice questions and case studies are directly linked to CCVA's textbook, *Volunteer Administration: Professional Practice*.

## **Eligibility**

Individuals wishing to become credentialed must meet these requirements in order to register as a candidate:

- Minimum of the equivalent of three years of full-time experience related to volunteer administration. This experience can be a combination of several part-time positions, and can include both salaried and non-salaried roles.
- Minimum of 30 percent of current position related to volunteer administration.
- Two letters of professional recommendation from supervisors or colleagues, verifying the candidate's activity in the field and his/her appropriateness as a candidate for this credential.

## **Registration Fees - 2011**

Early Bird	Oct. 1 – Dec. 31	\$ 200 US
Regular	Jan. 1 – March 1	\$ 250 US

*Additional discounts available for members of the Points of Light Institute/HandsOn Network and the Association for Leaders in Volunteer Engagement (ALIVE). Visit [www.CVAcert.org](http://www.CVAcert.org) for details.*

## **CVA Renewal**

Renewal is required every five years in order to maintain the CVA credential. Individuals are expected to earn Professional Development Units (PDUs) through a variety of activities that demonstrate they are active in the field and continuing to learn and develop as a professional.

## **How to Begin**

CVA candidates have about one year to complete the process. Registration for the next annual cycle opens October 1. Once registered, CVA candidates may start the process with either the portfolio or the examination. To begin:

1. Obtain the CVA Candidate Handbook from the website, by phone or e-mail. There is no charge for the Handbook, which provides more details and the registration forms.
2. Submit the completed registration forms with fee payment and reference letters. Credit card payments are accepted on the CCVA website.

"I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am to have this credential! For me this was probably the single most important exercise that has helped me to really value what I do as a volunteer administrator and really commit to the profession."

**Anne Breakey Hart, CVA  
Toronto, ON Canada**

**For questions, or to request a  
Candidate Handbook, please contact:**

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