

# STREETS OF Paradise *volunteers*

## **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

We are thrilled that you have chosen to volunteer with Streets of Paradise. Volunteers are the core strength of SOP and without your dedication and commitment the organization would not be capable of providing the services we do. The following information about our organization, the roles and responsibilities of our volunteers, and the protocols governing how we expect you to conduct yourself whilst representing SOP must be reviewed and agreed to prior to your activation. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Director of Outreach, Greg Cruz at 941-704-3511 or at [greg@streetsofparadise.org](mailto:greg@streetsofparadise.org)

Once again welcome and thank you!

### **Details about Streets of Paradise**

Streets of Paradise is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization co-founded by commercial photographer Allan Mestel and community organizer Greg Cruz.

We are an outreach and awareness initiative dedicated to providing comfort to the homeless and at-risk communities through no-cost street access to basic necessities of life, and facilitating access to rapid rehousing and other social services through our membership in the Continuum of Care for Sarasota and Manatee counties.

Additionally, we strive to raise public awareness of the reality of life for the homeless and working-poor communities in our region through respectful photographic portraiture of our brothers and sisters on the street.

## **Volunteer Opportunities**

We need volunteer assistance in any of the following areas

- Foodshares (food preparation and serving)
- Street Outreach (engaging with our brothers and sisters on the street and assessing their needs on an individual basis)
- Awareness (Assisting Art Director Allan Mestel in his photography and marketing projects as needed)
- Warehouse Help (Assisting in organizing, stocking, cleaning and maintaining our warehouse space)
- Donation Assistance (Both identifying and contacting potential donors of good and furniture and assisting in pickup and transport)
- Event Help ( Assisting in the preparation and facilitation of special events)
- Administration ( Assistance with grant writing, paperwork, any other administrative functions)
- Move-In Assistance (Providing help on the days we transport goods from the warehouse to the client's new residence)
- Seeds of Paradise (Assisting in our community garden project)

Please review and contact Director of Outreach Greg Cruz if you feel you have the aptitude and skillsets to assist in the above areas

## **Volunteer Protocols**

The following protocols apply to the conduct of any and all SOP Volunteers

1. In order to identify yourself as an official Streets of Paradise Volunteer you must first receive approval from Director of Outreach Greg Cruz.
2. You must have completed the online application and agreed to abide by the terms of service outlined here.
3. When engaging in foodshare service, please wear supplied latex gloves for hygiene purposes.
4. It is highly recommended that foodshare volunteers become smartserve certified.
5. When representing SOP you must conduct yourself in a manner that will reflect favorably on the organization.
6. Our brothers and sisters on the street are valued and respected members of our community. They must always be treated with deference and respect. Our job is to lift them up, not reinforce societal perceptions of them as valueless.
7. SOP outreach T-shirts are available for purchase. We encourage you to wear them when representing SOP.
8. The only individuals entitled to speak for the organization are those individuals specified by the board of directors. This is critical as we need to present ourselves to the media, the public and members of the CoC (Continuum of Care) in a consistent and prepared manner. If approached about SOP by anyone outside of the organization, please refer them to a designated spokesperson.
9. Please treat ALL OTHER VOLUNTEERS with respect and kindness. We are a small family, and whilst disputes may arise between individuals, they must be resolved as expeditiously as possible. We cannot afford to have pervasive negativity infect the family dynamic.

Any volunteer determined to have a personality incompatible with the majority of the core volunteers will be asked to resign from the organization.

10. You may bring others to help informally with foodshares, events etc, but if those individuals wish to become permanent members of the volunteer corps, they must complete the process outlined here.

We hope you understand the necessity to have a process and a set of guidelines governing the volunteer engagement process. It is for the protection of the organization and the members that comprise the SOP family.

**Thank You and WELCOME ABOARD!**