



**Metropolitan Volunteer Program  
Fiscal Year 2025**

**Student Fees Advisory Committee  
Program Questionnaire**

1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, how you accomplish your unit's mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of benefits for students.

**Mission:**

The mission of the University of Houston Metropolitan Volunteer Program is to create and provide service opportunities for students by collaborating with campus and community partners. Through this, we aim to develop responsible citizens with a lifelong commitment to service while creating sustainable change in our campus and community.

**Accomplishing Our Mission:**

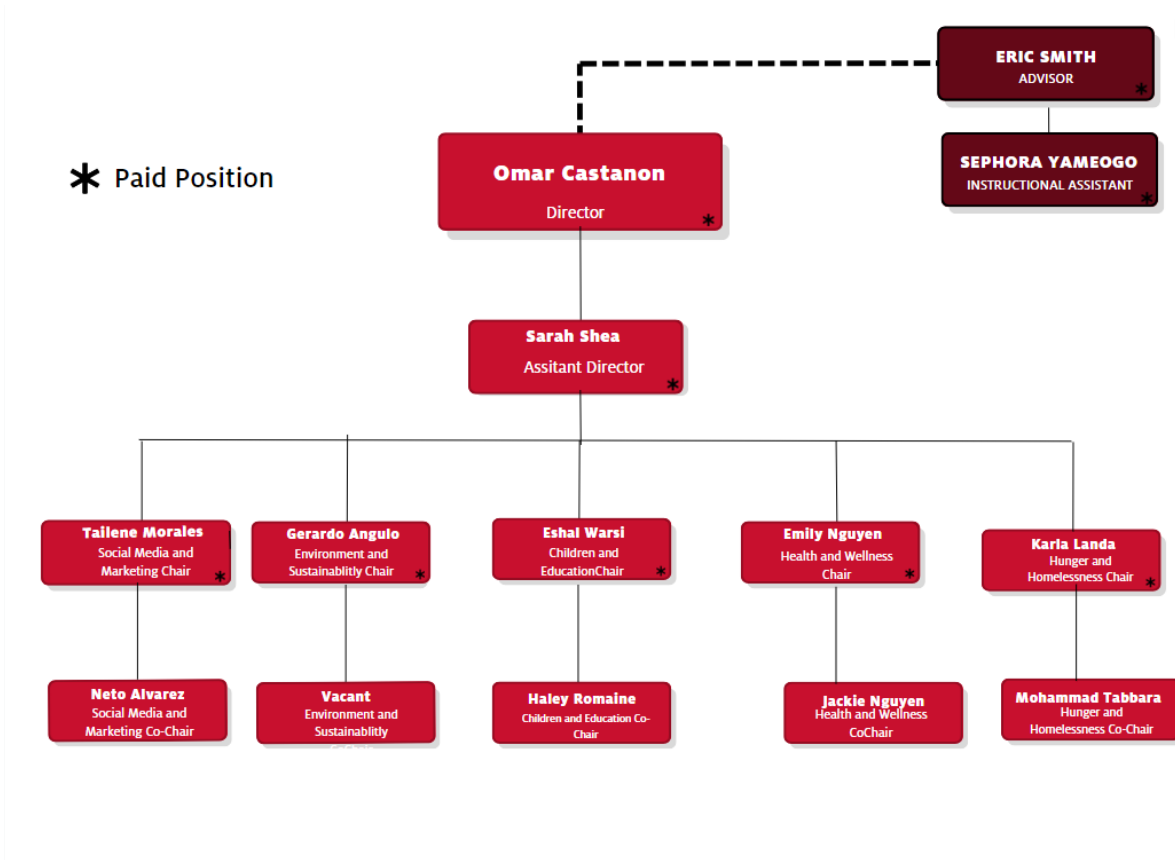
The Metropolitan Volunteer Program (MVP) accomplishes our mission by providing the diverse student body of the University of Houston with unique, flexibly scheduled and accessible service and awareness opportunities that fall under the following social issue areas: Children & Education, Environment & Sustainability, Health & Wellness, and Hunger & Homelessness. A more specific description of each of the committees can be found under the current structure in section 2 of this report.

MVP is made up of four committees, each led by a Chair and focused on one of the specific service areas mentioned above. Through the work of the committees, our volunteers are able to connect with these 4 different social issues and others, enabling them to engage with the issues that matter most to them. With the Chair's passion and expertise in the service area, meaningful and intentional dialogues are created through our service events. For example, if a student is studying education we can directly connect them with tutoring or other education-related opportunities. Similarly, when groups request our assistance for volunteer/service events, we have a wide range of partnerships for specific service areas that we can connect them to. MVP continues to hold service as a core value of the organization and we aim to ensure that students have access to opportunities that make a tangible and sustainable impact within the UH campus and local community.

**Justification:**

MVP offers a large variety of service opportunities to UH students, faculty, and staff to participate in both the fall and spring semesters. MVP scheduled a total of 117 volunteer events during the 2022-2023 school year, a significant increase due to removal of COVID-19 restrictions and its effect on our community partners to provide in-person volunteering.

2. Provide an organization chart of your unit. Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for each program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position (e.g. counselor, advisor, etc.), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.



3. If your unit falls under the Division of Student Affairs, list your unit's strategic initiatives and action steps identified for the 2022 – 2023 academic year and cite the specific Division of Student Affairs (DSA) Strategic Initiatives and University of Houston Strategic Goals to which they can relate (links below). If your unit does not fall under the division of student affairs, explain, in detail, the strategic plan your unit operated under. Please comment on your success in achieving these strategic initiatives/action steps. If a strategic initiative/ action step changes during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new strategic initiatives/action steps, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these items.

DSA: [uh.edu/dsa/about/strategic-planning/2019-2023/](https://uh.edu/dsa/about/strategic-planning/2019-2023/)

UH Goals: [uh.edu/about/mission](https://uh.edu/about/mission)

### **Strategic Initiative 1:**

Improve the Metropolitan Volunteer Program's interactions and communication with community partners..=

**Action Step 1:** Develop and distribute an assessment to community partners to identify areas of improvement for MVP (communication, scheduling, etc.).

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP was able to establish better relationships with community partners by having chairs establish new means of communication by setting up in person one on ones as well as having conversions via zoom to provide feedback on how MVP can improve for future events as well as what to equip volunteers with prior to events such as trainings or any additional information students may need.**

**Action Step 2:** Identify new community partners to engage in service projects with each committee.

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP achieved this accomplishment by partnering with ten new community partners, notably expanding its reach into four locations within Third Ward. This expansion allowed the organization to broaden its service offerings in ways it had not done before. Specifically, MVP ventured into Third Ward to provide tutoring support for students preparing for the S.T.A.A.R. exam on weekends. Moreover, the organization distributed test prep kits to students in lower-income districts, addressing the need for essential supplies like pencils, snacks, and highlighters that some students were unable to purchase. Through these innovative approaches and partnerships, MVP not only explored new geographical and social areas of need but also demonstrated its commitment to addressing these needs through non-traditional means, ultimately making a positive impact in the community.**

**Action Step 3:** Evaluate the effectiveness of the community partner newsletter.

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP was able to send multiple Newsletters throughout the year to the community to engage in meaningful conversations about upcoming MVP events that community partners could participate in such as Volunteer fair with over twenty five partners wanting to participate. Through monthly newsletters MVP was able to learn and receive new information about upcoming events that community partners were hosting.**

*UH Goal: Student Success: UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.*

*DSA Resources 1: Evaluate resources to identify opportunities for efficiency, improvement, and transformation.*

*DSA Partnerships 3: Create opportunities for our students by developing initiatives that support our neighboring communities.*

**Strategic Initiative 2:**

Enhance volunteer experience and increase retention.

**Action Step 1:** Evaluate existing signature programs (i.e. Volunteer Fair) and establish new signature programs to better meet the needs of students.

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP was able to evaluate on how to better engage and provide community partners with the opportunity to attend Volunteer Fair to talk with students about what they do. MVP was also able to provide students the opportunity to receive free merchandise if they engaged with over half of the community partners at the event. MVP has successfully launched a new signature biweekly event known as "Impact Hours." These events are held in person at the MVP office for one hour, during which participants come together to complete small projects intended for donation to community partners. The projects have included items such as mugs for SEARCH and flashcards for the Nehemiah Center. This initiative actively engages students in meaningful volunteer work, making a positive impact on the community while allowing students to complete a task during their busy school schedules. MVP has successfully addressed the challenges of accommodating student schedules and overcoming transportation barriers by introducing a unique initiative. Twice a week, students have the opportunity to visit the MVP office and participate in meaningful projects that benefit our local community partners.**

**Action Step 2:** Develop a membership plan to incentivize volunteers to attend multiple events.

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP was able to incentivize volunteers by fostering close relationships with volunteers at events as well as informing volunteers about upcoming events that we believed they would also enjoy. MVP was also able to provide consistent volunteers with merch after having completed 8 hours students were eligible to receive MVP merch for their consistent work.**

*UH Goal: Student Success: UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.*

*DSA Student Success 2: Expand diverse experiences on exploration and education while identifying and meeting the needs of our student population through supportive, inclusive environments.*

**Strategic Initiative 3:**

Enhance the brand of the Metropolitan Volunteer Program.

**Action Step 1:** Create initiatives that make board members more relatable for volunteers (i.e. IGTV episodes highlighting life with MVP).

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP introduced "Impact Hours," a bi-weekly schedule where volunteers could interact with specific board members while working on tasks. This initiative successfully facilitated meaningful connections between volunteers and board members. Consequently, MVP experienced a notable surge in co-chair applications, as volunteers were more motivated to join the board due to the increased visibility and relatability of its members. This surge in interest led to the inception of a new program, we will be launching MVP Ambassadors in FY24, likely comprising individuals who represent MVP and its values to the broader community. Collaborative efforts with CCA to showcase the dynamic nature of the MVP board on social media also played a pivotal role in making board members more relatable and engaging. In summary, Action Step 1 had a positive and transformative effect on MVP, strengthening its volunteer base and expanding its reach through the development of the MVP Ambassadors program while leveraging engaging social media content**

**Action Step 2:** Create content on the website to “live” track the impact of the organization (number of volunteers, number of volunteer hours, etc.).

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP successfully implemented this initiative by actively engaging with students and volunteers, providing them with insights into the direct impact of their efforts. During events like service nights, participants were informed about the destinations of their projects, such as the donation of care packages to Texas Children's Hospital or the provision of hygiene kits to a local school in the third ward serving underprivileged students. This transparency created a more profound sense of purpose among volunteers as they could witness the tangible results of their contributions. Moreover, the initiative led to around 25 students receiving the prestigious President's Volunteer Service Award, highlighting the organization's commitment to recognizing and rewarding exceptional volunteerism. By "living tracking" the organization's impact through its website, MVP effectively communicated the value and significance of volunteer participation, enhancing its overall effectiveness and engagement with its community.**

**Action Step 3:** Develop and implement a marketing plan promoting MVP (i.e. tabling, digital presence, outreach to RSOs, etc.).

**Status: Accomplished**

**MVP's implementation of this initiative had a significant impact on engaging with students and raising awareness about the organization. By actively participating in multiple tabling events, MVP continued to foster connections with students, as well as effectively promoting its upcoming activities. The tabling efforts served as an essential platform for providing students with comprehensive information about MVP's mission, activities, and goals. It also facilitated direct interaction, allowing volunteers to ask any questions and address concerns that students may have had about upcoming events. This strategic approach not only heightened MVP's visibility but also ensured that potential volunteers were well-informed and enthusiastic about participating in the organization's initiatives.**

**This year, MVP successfully engaged in collaboration with various RSOs to promote philanthropic initiatives. Notable collaborations included participation in homecoming events such as "Canstruction" and "Rock the Campus," which allowed MVP to work hand in hand with RSOs to address specific philanthropic issues. Furthermore, MVP and RSOs jointly organized a blood drive, providing a platform for students to contribute to a life-saving cause.**

**Additionally, MVP actively invited and worked with RSOs for signature events like "Adopt a Beach." These collaborations have strengthened the organization's ties with various student groups and expanded the scope of their philanthropic efforts. The partnership also extended to chair events, encompassing activities such as volunteering at the Cougar Cupboard and supporting Nora's Home.**

*UH Goal: Student Success: UH will have a student profile consistent with a nationally competitive public research university by creating an environment in which student success can be ensured.*

*DSA Student Success 1: Engage all students to intentionally develop leadership qualities, critical thinking and communication skills, diversity competencies, and personal growth.*



4. Please list your 2024-2025 strategic initiatives and action steps in priority order and if operating under the DSA, cite the specific Division of Student Affairs Values and University of Houston Strategies Goals to which they relate. If your unit does not operate under the DSA, reference the strategic plan your unit operates under. Larger units may wish to group responses by subprograms. Under each strategic initiative, please state the specific action steps (programs, activities, services, policies/procedures, etc.) that you intend to implement to accomplish your stated initiative.
- i. Articulate how KPIs are tracked and how/when your unit utilizes them to measure progress towards your goals. Are there any deficiencies in your ability to measure your KPIs? If so, explain why.
  - ii. Identify the milestones laid out on the path to achieving the long-term goals you have laid out. How do these milestones contribute to your unit's ability to hold itself accountable to the long-term goals?
  - iii. In your response, identify who (besides the department director) is responsible for each milestone in the plan and for measuring each KPI you have identified.

#### **Strategic Initiative 1:**

Optimize the Metropolitan Volunteer Program's outreach and engagement with stakeholders.

**Action Step 1:** Use social media platforms to highlight students at events, community successes, and upcoming events in a way that actively engages our online following.

**Action Step 2:** Distribute an MVP newsletter at regular intervals to better engage students in MVP programs.

*UH Value: Innovation*

*DSA Value: **Community** – We embrace our diversity and work to ensure the University of Houston is a place where everyone feels a sense of belonging and responsibility for the well-being of their fellow community members.*

#### **Strategic Initiative 2:**

Assess the volunteer experience in order to increase volunteer numbers throughout the year.

**Action Step 1:** Provide post-event surveys to identify any challenges in our process and find solutions to them.

**Action Step 2:** Diversify volunteering events to meet the needs of students and the Houston community.

*UH Value: Resilience*

*DSA Value: **Integrity** – We hold ourselves accountable for delivering exceptional programs, services, and facilities with care, honesty, and transparency about our processes and outcomes.*

**Strategic Initiative 3:**

Enhance relationships with community partners to increase student engagement in the local Third Ward community.

**Action Step 1:** Each committee of MVP will host at least two events to better build relationships with our local Third Ward Community.

*UH Goal: Collaboration*

*DSA Value: **Collaboration** – Our best work is realized through diverse perspectives, knowledge, and resources within the division, across the university, and with community partners.*

5. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the aforementioned strategic initiatives and/or action steps and their importance as compared to others that you might pursue. Where data exists, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and any assessment measures and/or learning outcomes used to evaluate program success. Please provide the method for collecting this data. If your unit holds events, please provide revenue sources breakdown of each revenue stream including but not limited to the number of:
  - i. Tickets sold/number of attendees recorded
  - ii. Merchandise
  - ii. Concessions sold/distributed
  - iii. Revenue generated from these sales

**Attendance:**

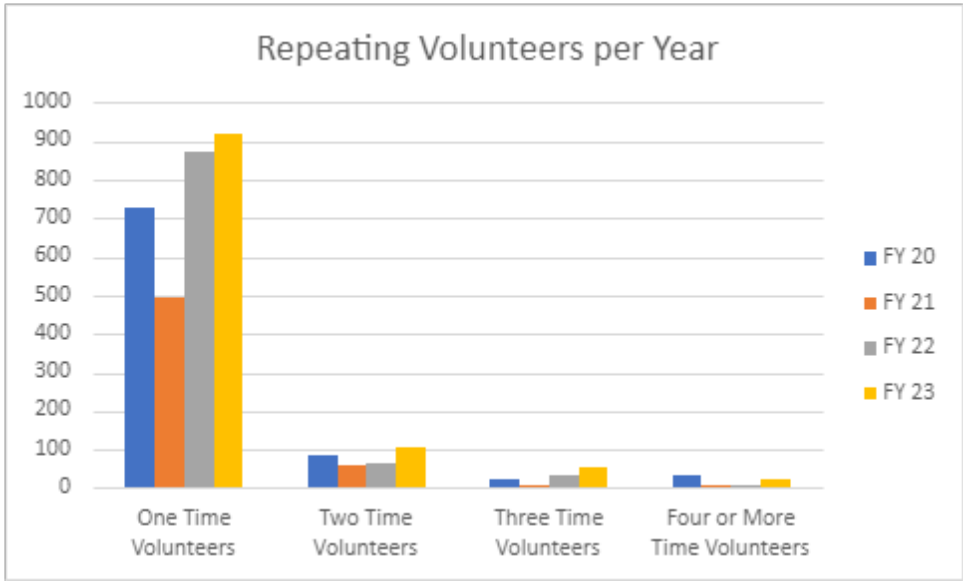
MVP's primary method of evaluating the success of our organization is by tracking attendance at general meetings, service events, workshops, awareness events, and other MVP events. Students must register for events in advance via the website, and then sign in or swipe into the event under the supervision of an officer. After every event, MVP records the information in a database that tracks the number of volunteers, individual service hours logged with MVP, the annual number of service hours, and a monthly/yearly participation count. Attendance is also recorded in Get Involved for each of our events.

Our tracking for events in 2022-2023 indicated that our 2,059 volunteers gave over 3000 hours volunteering through our events. We found that a high number of individuals have volunteered with MVP multiple times indicating that our retention is high. Our tracking showed our most popular events were Be the MVP, with 429 attendees and with both Volunteer Fairs totaling 633 attendees. We were enthusiastically able to continue to host many of our signature events in person including Volunteer Fair, Adopt-a-Beach and we continued our signature event: Be the MVP. Even as UH moved toward hosting more in-person events with safety precautions easing, many of our community partners were unable to host large volunteer groups, or had size restrictions on groups of volunteers, limiting our ability to take volunteers into the community. Our MVP Board adapted and responded by piloting new monthly on-campus volunteering opportunities such as preparing items for donation for The Center for Urban Transformation, Breakthrough Houston, and Impact Hours, which had successful attendance that matched our signature Service Nights, and were attractive to returning volunteers.

**Number of Returning Volunteers:**

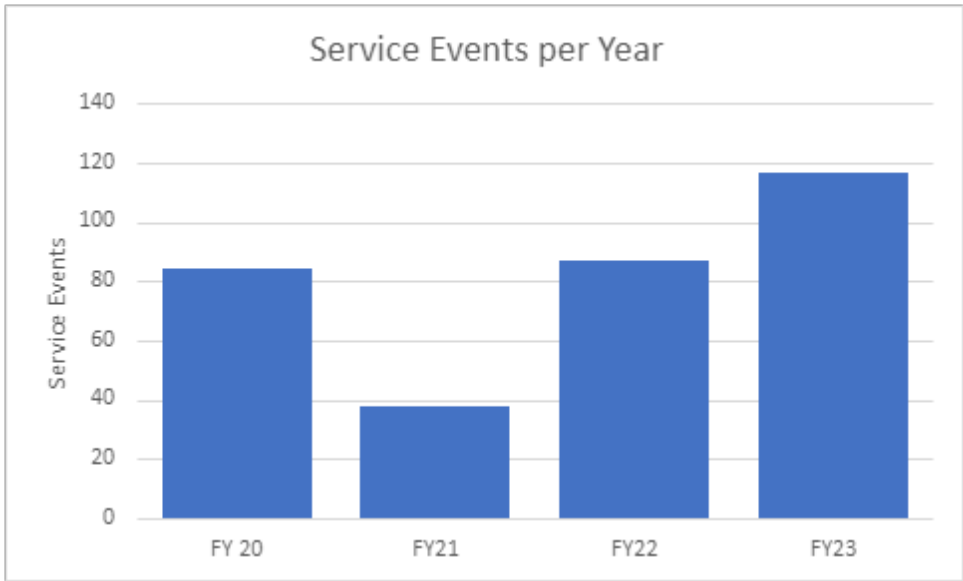
Another method that MVP utilizes to evaluate the success of volunteering events is by analyzing data about the number of returning volunteers. During FY23, we saw 922 one-time volunteers, 104 two-time volunteers, 54 three-time volunteers, 25 four-time or more. These numbers reflect the unique students who participated in our events. One of the

major ways we were able to focus on our retention this year was through providing weekly recurring events like Cougar Cupboard volunteering, Breakthrough Houston, Nora’s Home, Herman Park Conservancy along with providing opportunities for students to volunteer in our office. One challenge in getting returning volunteers was the off-campus events and being able to find transportation to the off-campus locations.



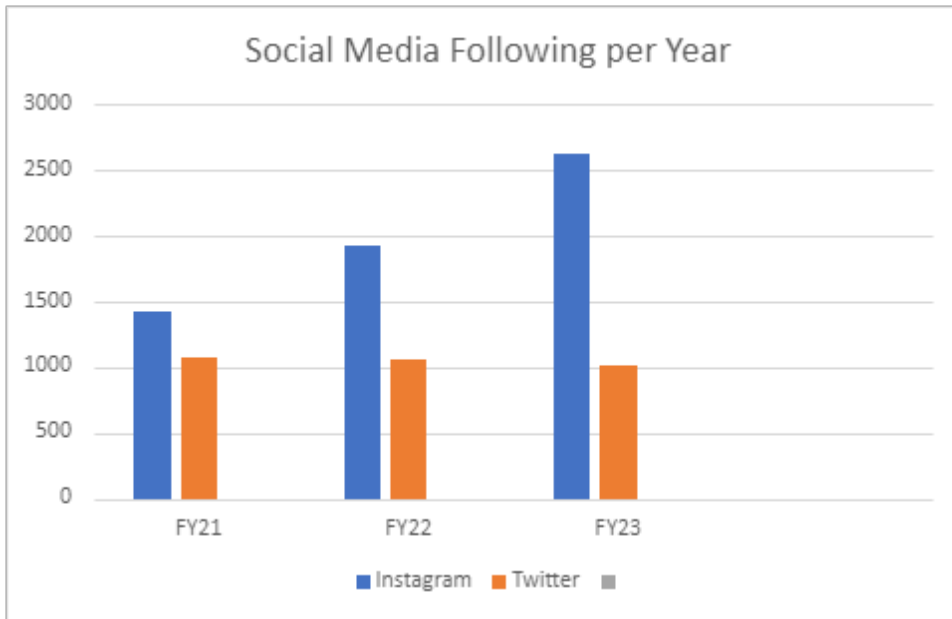
**Number and Variety of Volunteer/Service Events Provided:**

During FY23, MVP hosted 117 service events. We were ecstatic to return to pre-Pandemic numbers of events due to easing of COVID-19 restrictions and implementation of on-campus service opportunities with new community partners.



### **Growth of Social Media Pages:**

MVP is currently active on Instagram and saw an increase of 36% of followers from last year to this current school year. We monitor the growth of followers on these social media pages to gauge how effectively our organization is reaching new students and promoting our events. As shown in the charts, we have had a stable amount of followers these past years and a significant increase in our Instagram users. During the 2022-2023 year, we put emphasis on our social media and our usage through ensuring we had timely posts about events, We also used Instagram reels that showed off the personality of the board, and implementation of a Linktree in our instagram bio with relevant links. This year we plan to improve by giving spotlights to our various community partners, an MVV (Most Valuable Volunteer) post monthly with an outstanding student volunteer, and our weekly recaps, which show our impact in real time.



### **Survey Assessments & Reflection:**

Every service event hosted by MVP has a site lead, who is an MVP board member that is responsible for organizing and managing volunteers during the event and facilitating a reflection. The post-event reflection consists of addressing the social issues that the event was focused on, challenging student perspectives, and asking students what they learned through their volunteer experience. Each board member is trained in the reflection process prior to leading events.

MVP sends each volunteer a thank you email and a link to a survey within 24 hours of each event, so we can measure their overall experience. The responses are evaluated by MVP and are discussed during our board meetings to help us continually improve the

student experience. From our survey, 100% of students responded that they had a “Good” or “Great” volunteering experience. Students also gave us feedback on which community partners they would like to see us work with in the future, and feedback on improving communication between site leaders and volunteers. This feedback helped guide us in event planning, and in how to improve the processes in how we communicate when organizing events.

6. If your unit concluded FY2023 with a Fund 3 addition to Fund Equity in excess of \$5,000, please describe the conditions which cause the addition and provide a line-item identification of the budgetary sources(s) of the addition (I.e., lapsed salary, conference travel, etc.).

MVP concluded FY23 with a Fund Equity of \$37,634. The student wage fund equity was due to multiple students volunteering for their role and various vacancies throughout the year. The remaining \$6,878 in the M&O line was due to cost savings on events throughout the year.

- Salary/Wage/Fringe: \$28,494
- Maintenance & Operations: \$9,186
  - Fund Transfer for Maintenance (\$2,308)
  - Remaining M&O \$6,878
- Administrative Charges: \$2,262

7. Recognizing that the potential to generate additional Student Service Fee income for FY2025 base funding is extremely limited and recognizing that it is likely that some units will not be allocated the new base budget and/or one-time funds requested. Please provide a narrative of how your unit would accommodate a reduction of 5.0% in your total FY2025 base Student Service Fee budget request and provide a line-item explanation of where budgetary cuts would be made.

Based on this potential reduction, MVP would be forced to make significant cuts to the Service Nights budget. Service Nights provide a monthly event allowing students to help create a variety of donations for the Houston Community. This is an important way MVP engages the UH student population and allows students the opportunity to remain active in the community while staying within UH campus as many students may have time restrictions or logistical barriers that prevent them from leaving campus for in-person volunteering. In the past, MVP has created DIY blankets to donate to community partners during colder months, created DIY animal care packages for the Houston Human Society, packed Hygiene Kits for The Center for Urban Transformation, and made Care Packs kits for the Texas Children Hospital. Our MVP Board has also expanded the mission of Service Nights of providing reliable, on-campus volunteering opportunities into our IMPACT Hours, which are one hour a week that students may come into our office and complete a mini-service project for one of our community partners, such as Craft Bags for the Kids Meal Bags, and mugs and key chains to be donated to SEARCH and earn a service hour between their classes, or in their downtime. We would also be forced to entirely eliminate our IMPACT Hours, which has seen great attendance as a weekly pilot event. Without these programs, our students would miss the opportunity to engage at a deeper, more meaningful level with one of our social issues and have an immediate, positive impact on the community.



8. Please discuss any budget or organizational changes experienced since your last year (FY2024) SFAC request, their impact on your programs, and your reason for implementing them. SFAC recognizes that some programs did not receive the funds that they requested, that some programs were impacted by additional expenses after the conclusion of the budget cycle, and that some programs may be ahead of or behind their self-generated income projections.

MVP did not have any budget or organizational changes during FY24.

9. What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them (e.g. grants, donations, etc.)? If you receive funds from other sources, please briefly describe the source, purpose, and duration of the funding and report the amounts received in the appropriate rows/columns on the SFAC spreadsheet.
  - i. If applicable, what can be done to increase donations, sponsorship sales, and other revenue streams? Please answer each separately.

MVP currently does not have any additional sources of funding available to the organization.

10. Does your unit generate revenue? (Please do not address donations in this question) If your unit does not generate revenue, respond “not applicable. If so:
- i. Provide your unit’s P&L statement for the current fiscal year and trailing five-years showing all revenue streams for your unit.
  - ii. Provide line-item data for each revenue stream.
  - iii. For each revenue stream, provide an explanation of the nature of the revenue and briefly articulate the successes and failures for each line item.

Not Applicable

11. Does your unit raises money from donors and sponsors? If your unit does not receive donations or sponsorships, respond “not applicable.” If so:
- i. Identify key staff members responsible for development and seeking sponsorships.
  - ii. Provide financials for the current fiscal year, as well as the trailing five fiscal years including:
    1. An analysis of your development activities. Include a breakdown of the nominal quantity of donors donating \$20m+, \$10m+, \$5m+ \$1m+, \$500k+, \$100k+, \$50k+, \$25k+, \$10k+, \$5k+, \$1k+, \$100+. Provide this both in terms of lifetime contributions and annual contributions.
    2. An analysis of your sponsorship activities. Include a breakdown of total sponsorship dollars and identify your top twenty-five (25) sponsorship deals.
  - iii. If applicable, provide a breakdown of each capital project or capital campaign in your unit. Explain how each capital project or campaign aligns with the goals and milestones laid out in your departments strategic plan.

Not applicable

12. Please describe any services that are similar to yours and or any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.

MVP distinguishes itself from other service offerings on campus by its inclusivity, comprehensive approach, and unique array of opportunities for students. While there may be some overlap with other units and organizations in providing service opportunities to students, MVP's approach stands out for several reasons. The Honors College offers the Bonners Honors Leadership Program, which only focuses on addressing poverty in the Houston community. This program is exclusively open to Honors College students. In contrast, MVP is open to all UH students, regardless of their college affiliation, ensuring a more inclusive approach to community engagement.

Additionally, there are Registered Student Organizations (RSOs) that provide service opportunities, but these often focus on specific aspects or causes. MVP, on the other hand, offers a diverse range of service activities, allowing students to engage with various social issues and causes, thus catering to a wider spectrum of interests and passions.

Moreover, MVP's opportunities extend both on and off campus, offering a well-rounded service experience. Furthermore, the program's provision of transportation to off-campus locations through carpools facilitates student participation and eliminates a potential barrier to involvement.

13. What percentage of department M&O is allocated to marketing?
- i. Please detail your comprehensive marketing strategy towards the student body including metrics used to measure the effectiveness of the marketing strategy.
  - ii. How much revenue is allocated towards the marketing strategy?

MVP allocated \$5,079.45, which accounts for 18.28% of the department's Maintenance and Operations (M&O) budget, towards marketing efforts. This allocation was made with the objective of increasing awareness on campus of MVP's mission and goals among students. The comprehensive marketing strategy included various initiatives to achieve this goal.

The marketing strategy involved purchasing A-Frames and yard signs for signature events to enhance awareness of upcoming MVP events on campus, thereby promoting student engagement. Additionally, MVP invested in promotional items such as notebooks and water bottles, which were distributed at tabling events and other coordinated activities. These items served as reminders of MVP and its mission, ensuring that students continued to engage with the organization even after events had concluded.

14. If any of your funding from the student service fee goes to your general operating fund, please detail where any student service fees you received went and what they were spent on as well as future intentions if granted. Otherwise please respond “not applicable”.

Not applicable

15. How does your unit contribute to campus culture and improve the student experience? How is the effectiveness of these contributions measured by your unit if at all? What else can your unit do going forward to continue to improve your contribution to the student experience?

i. Does your unit contribute to turning students into coogs for life?

MVP significantly contributes to campus culture and enhances the student experience in several ways. MVP actively engages students in service initiatives that address various social issues within the Houston community, fostering a sense of civic responsibility and community involvement. These initiatives not only provide practical solutions to social causes but also serve as experiential learning opportunities for students to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by their local community.

MVP's role extends beyond service provision; it actively promotes the growth of awareness for civic engagement and student-led projects. By connecting students from across the campus with opportunities to get involved in the Houston community, MVP facilitates hands-on experiences of social issues beyond the classroom. Furthermore, by collaborating with community partners, MVP ensures that students can make a meaningful and direct impact in Third Ward and the wider Houston community.

To further improve its contribution to the student experience, MVP can continue to expand its reach and impact by creating more diverse and inclusive opportunities for student engagement. This might involve collaborating with additional community partners, offering a broader range of service activities, and exploring innovative ways to address emerging social issues.

MVP plays a vital role in turning students into "Coogs for Life" by instilling a sense of commitment to the community they live in. By actively involving students in projects that create a positive impact in local surrounding areas and by allowing them to witness the direct effects of their contributions, MVP inspires a lifelong dedication to service, community engagement, and the values of the University of Houston.