



Volunteer Handbook



Lake Hopatcong Foundation
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Welcome Aboard!

We are excited that you have chosen to volunteer with the Lake Hopatcong Foundation! The Foundation dedicates itself to protecting the lake environment, and enhancing the lake experience, bringing together public and private resource to encourage a culture of sustainability and stewardship on and around New Jersey's largest lake, for this and future generations. While the Foundation has a dedicated and amazing staff, we would not be able to accomplish all that we do without the dedicated support of volunteers just like you.



Volunteers are a vital part of achieving our mission of protecting the lake environment and enhancing the lake experience, and integral to all parts of our operations, from our floating classroom to invasive species monitoring, to fundraising and outreach events.

We hope you find your volunteer experience with us to be rewarding and positive. This Volunteer Handbook will cover opportunities, policies, procedures, and our mutual responsibilities. Our goal is to provide all the tools and information you might need to best represent the Foundation and understand our values.

On behalf of the everyone here at the Lake Hopatcong Foundation, thank you for volunteering and helping us to foster a vibrant and healthy Lake Hopatcong and surrounding community! I look forward to seeing you out and around the Lake!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Richter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kyle Richter
Lake Hopatcong Foundation, Executive Director
kyle@lakehopatcongfoundation.org

Meet the Staff

Donna Macalle-Holly - Grants and Program Director

Donna manages our initiatives, including our Lake Stewards, Water Scouts, recreational trails, and clean-up events, and seeks out grants to help support those efforts.

donna@lakehopatcongfoundation.org



Holly Odgers - Communications Director

Holly oversees our LHF newsletter, press releases, media relations, website, and supports behind-the-scenes efforts with initiatives, programs, and events.

holly@lakehopatcongfoundation.org



Caitlin Doran - Development Director

Caitlin heads up our fundraising efforts. Her work is focused on growing our supporter base and bringing together the people and resources needed to accomplish our mission.

caitlin@lakehopatcongfoundation.org



Patrick Krudop – Education and Outreach Director

Patrick coordinates our educational programs, including our field trips for both grade schools and high schools, our public cruises in the summer, and our community programming throughout the year. patrick@lakehopatcongfoundation.org



Kari Constantine – Event Coordinator

Kari coordinates our three annual events: the Lake Hopatcong Block Party, Gala and Auction, and Lake Loop. She also organizes other gatherings, like our volunteer appreciation open house. kari@lakehopatcongfoundation.org



Board and Council

Trustees: Tom Donofrio, Ray Fernandez, Thomas Flinn, Cynthia Hamburger, Marty Kane (Chair), Leon Moreau IV (Secretary), Ben Terner (Treasurer), and Gary Whitman (Vice Chair) **Trustee**

Emeritus: Béla Szigethy

Advisory Council: David Glass, Cheryl Hall, Lisa Palanchi, Bob Parise, Kerry Pflugh, Tom Sellaro, Chad Thomas, Peter Vergano

Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision

Fostering a vibrant and healthy Lake Hopatcong and its surrounding community.



Mission

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation dedicates itself to protecting the lake environment and enhancing the lake experience, bringing together public and private resources to encourage a culture of sustainability and stewardship on and around New Jersey's largest lake, for this and future generations.

Values

Collaboration: We bring people together and foster equity, opportunity, vibrance, and wellness where all may flourish within the community.

Action: We are committed *to* our mission, moving quickly to take on projects that have an *impact* on and around the lake.

Sustainability: We are forward-thinking when making decisions, taking future generations into account when considering projects and initiatives.

Warmth: We are a friendly face to the community, showing the best of ourselves and bringing out the best in the people of Lake Hopatcong.

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Volunteer Opportunities

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation fosters a vibrant and healthy Lake Hopatcong and its surrounding community through a variety of programs and initiatives. Below are some volunteer opportunities that may be in need of assistance.

Water Scouts

Water Scouts help prevent the spread of invasive species on Lake Hopatcong by paddling the shoreline in self-assigned areas at least once during the early summer season and removing and reporting back on invasive aquatic species, particularly the water chestnut plant.

Educational Field Trips for Grade School Students

The Foundation provides full-day field trips for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders each spring at Hopatcong State Park. Students spend the day learning about watersheds and lake ecology. These field trips run Monday through Thursday from morning through early afternoon, and opportunities include assisting at educational stations or helping to guide student groups from station to station around the park (no teaching experience needed!).

Educational High School Field Trips

The Foundation also hosts full-day field trips for ninth through twelfth graders each fall at Hopatcong State Park. Through several interactive learning experiences, students learn about watersheds, water ecology, and the importance of our shared water resources. Running on various days throughout September and October, volunteers are needed to help run each station and activity (no teaching experience needed!).

Floating Classroom

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation hosts a series of Floating Classroom public eco cruises in July and August. Teachers, assistants, and deck hands are needed to assist guests and guide them through hands-on activities.

HAB Monitoring and Reporting

Volunteers are needed to monitor and report Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs) by submitting information and pictures through the NJDEP website, using a provided meter to measure phycocyanin, collecting water samples, and completing sampling surveys. Training is provided. Volunteers will pick up and return equipment to the Foundation office.

Road Salt Monitoring and Reporting

The Foundation participates in the New Jersey Salt Watch program. This project engages community scientists to assess the impacts of winter road salting on New Jersey freshwaters. Volunteers are provided chloride test strips to monitor assigned locations 3-5 times annually before April and enter data on the Clean Water Hub.



Trail Maintenance

Trail maintainers make sure the Lake Hopatcong Trail remains clear and accessible. Activities include pruning, clearing, and making sure the trail is clearly marked. Maintainers also notify the Foundation of any issues on their trail segment, such as downed trees or other obstructions. Trail volunteers receive a trail maintenance guide and complete trail maintenance forms twice a year (spring and fall recommended). A training session can be arranged for volunteers without trail maintenance experience.

Lake Hopatcong Block Party

The Lake Hopatcong Block Party celebrates all facets of Lake Hopatcong life by bringing visitors together with businesses, non-profit organizations, community groups, crafters, and food vendors for a community day like no other - featuring demonstrations, raffles, giveaways, a children's scavenger hunt and more. The event takes place at Hopatcong State Park and requires close to one hundred volunteers to make the day run smoothly.

LHF Gala

The Foundation's annual gala and auction is a social gathering and important fundraiser, traditionally held in July. A committee meets monthly to collect auction items, solicit sponsorships, and help ensure a great experience for guests. We also rely on volunteer the night of the event to check people in, sell raffle tickets, and distribute auction winnings.

Lake Loop

The Lake Loop is a day to celebrate recreation on Lake Hopatcong, in the form of biking, hiking, or paddling. Participants choose their activity and come together for a "finish line party" of food, music, and comradery at Hopatcong State Park, in early October. Volunteers are needed to assist with each activity, as well as with setup and registration.

Outdoor Work, Landscaping, Gardening

Volunteers are needed for assistance with seasonal clean-ups, plantings, weeding, general maintenance, and monitoring of plant growth on the LHF grounds and gardens and various other locations within the watershed in which we are engaged.

Administrative

Occasionally, volunteers are needed to assist with stuffing envelopes, assembling programs, or other administrative tasks. These opportunities frequently take place at our offices.



Rights and Responsibilities

At the Lake Hopatcong Foundation, we promote *two* golden rules for volunteerism. The first is treat others as you would like to be treated. The second is, when you are volunteering for the Foundation, you are acting as an ambassador for the organization, representing our values. These two rules ensure mutual respect and guide the following rights and responsibilities of both parties.

A volunteer has the right to:

- Do meaningful and satisfying work.
- Be carefully assigned to projects that meet your interests and needs.
- Be oriented to the Foundation – its mission, goals, staff, activities, and policies.
- Be trained appropriately for your work.
- Work in a safe and healthy environment.
- Be given a copy of the Foundation’s volunteer handbook and any other policies or procedures that affect your role.
- Have your confidential and personal information kept in an appropriate manner.

A volunteer has the responsibility to:

- Participate in volunteer service projects with enthusiasm and commitment.
- Be open and honest with the organization about your expectations and abilities.
- Carry out the specified task; ask for support when you need it.
- Wear Foundation-provided apparel, when requested.
- Agree to do only what you are qualified to competently handle and can realistically accomplish.
- Undertake training as required by the organization.
- Maintain confidentiality and privacy with organizational, supporter, and personnel information.
- Be reliable, fulfill time and task commitments. Let us know as early as possible if unable to do so.
- Provide timely and constructive feedback to the organization if necessary.
- Be comfortable saying “no” if necessary.
- Remember that you represent the LHF when volunteering.

The LHF has the right to:

- Make decisions about the appropriate placement of our volunteers.
- Review volunteer performance according to organizational policies and procedures.
- Set the parameters and guidelines of the volunteer work positions.
- Release a volunteer who is not appropriate for the volunteer work.

The LHF has the responsibility to:

- Provide a clear outline of duties.
- Assign suitable tasks to volunteers which respect their training, experience, and personal interests.
- Provide orientation and necessary training.
- Provide a safe and healthy work environment.
- Provide supervision, support, and resources.
- Indicate clearly to volunteers what their schedule is and to whom they report.
- Inform volunteers about the organization’s policies and any other information of concern.
- Treat volunteers as valuable members of the organization.

Policies and Procedures

Orientation and Training

Because we are committed to ensuring that our volunteers have a rewarding experience with us, the Lake Hopatcong Foundation conducts an annual volunteer orientation. During our orientation we provide a brief overview of our organization, review the Volunteer Handbook, introduce you to our staff and other volunteers, and provide an overview of volunteer opportunities and sign-up procedures. In addition, training will be provided for specific positions or tasks, as needed.

Signup Procedures

Information on volunteer opportunities will be shared on [our website](#), in e-newsletters, and through direct email with our volunteer list. Registration for specific volunteer opportunities will be through SignUpGenius.

Confidential Information

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while serving as a volunteer. Volunteers must not share this information with anyone who does not have a professional right or need to know it.

Equal Opportunity/Nondiscrimination Policy

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation is dedicated to the principles of non-discrimination. This policy extends to volunteers as well as employees. The Foundation does not discriminate based on age, ethnicity, sex, religion, disability, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender expression, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state, or local law. For safety reasons, children under 14 may not volunteer with Lake Hopatcong Foundation without direct supervision of a parent or guardian.

Harassment Policy

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation is committed to ensuring that volunteers and employees work in an environment free from unwelcome or inappropriate speech or conduct and is committed to addressing complaints of harassment of any kind. The Lake Hopatcong Foundation prohibits any form of unlawful harassment based on race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status in accordance with applicable laws. With respect to sexual harassment, Lake Hopatcong Foundation strives to foster a work environment free of unlawful sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or retaliation. Any volunteer who believes they have been harassed should immediately notify their supervisor or the Executive Director. All complaints will receive a prompt and thorough investigation that ensures fair treatment for all parties. The Foundation will keep the investigation confidential to the maximum extent possible and will take the corrective action necessary, up to and including dismissal.

Communications Policy

Foundation Representation – Volunteers should not contact any media contact, government agency, other organization, or individual as a representative of the Lake Hopatcong Foundation without prior coordination with Foundation staff.

Ethical Communications – When communicating on behalf of the Lake Hopatcong Foundation, either through official Foundation communication channels or personal communication channels, volunteers are responsible for ensuring that they are doing so in an ethical and lawful manner. Examples include emailing fellow volunteers, coordinating committees, or reaching out to the greater public. The Lake Hopatcong Foundation prohibits any activity that involves sexually oriented, obscene, offensive, threatening, harassing, or intimidating material regardless of whether or not it violates federal or state law. It also prohibits using these channels to solicit or proselytize for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-job-related solicitations.

Social Media Policy

This social media policy applies to all social networking sites including but not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and other platforms designed for sharing information online; photo and video sharing websites such as Flickr or YouTube; blogs, including corporate blogs, media, and personal blogs; and forums or discussion boards such as Reddit, Yahoo! Groups, and Google Groups.

The Lake Hopatcong Foundation recognizes the value in social media to build relationships with community and appreciates the efforts of volunteers to spread the word through their online social networks. When posting about the Foundation on personal social media, good judgement and common sense are critical. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards involved.

Social Media Guidelines –

1. Speak in the first person – Do not speak for the Lake Hopatcong Foundation. Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for the Lake Hopatcong Foundation.
2. Be transparent - If the Lake Hopatcong Foundation is the subject of the content you are creating, be clear about your association with the Foundation.
3. Be respectful - Lake Hopatcong Foundation policies on harassment, ethics, and confidentiality extend to all forms of communication both inside and outside of the organization.

Media Release

When an individual accepts a volunteer role at the Lake Hopatcong Foundation, they understand and agree that the Lake Hopatcong Foundation may use their name, voice, photographic likeness, testimonials, demographic information, etc. for promotional purposes, including but not limited to articles, social media, press releases, posters, brochures, audio/video productions and any other medium that the Lake Hopatcong Foundation deems necessary for successful promotion, recognition, or appreciation.

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming volunteer opportunity!