QDEP Volunteer Opportunities

Hotline Intake

- **Position description:** Answer the QDEP hotline and screen folks in the community or in immigration detention for assistance, connection to legal representation, post-release planning, and more. This may entail speaking with family members or attorneys for those in detention.

- This volunteer task is completed one day per week at QDEP’s office (505 8th Ave., #1212, New York, NY, 10018). Hours can vary depending on volunteer’s schedule (our office is open from 10am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. Hotline shift is 5 hours long).

- **Desired Character Traits:** Caring, dedicated, compassionate, and patient. To be able to understand that some of our folks are incredibly overwhelmed and stressed out, so working to deescalate and provide support is the most important part of this job. Bilingual English/Spanish speakers will be highly appreciated.

Client Accompaniment

- **Position description:** The volunteer will be assigned to a client to work with for the duration of their immigration case. The volunteer will work hands-on with client(s), will accompany clients to appointments and to legal hearings to offer emotional support (before and after the appointments) and to assist in advocacy. You will not provide legal advice or be allowed to speak in court. The volunteer will also assist in the transition into the U.S/ New York City culture (navigating the subway system, geography of different neighborhoods, LGBTQ places etc.).

- **Desired Character Traits:** Caring, dedicated, compassionate, non-judgmental and patient. Accompaniment volunteers also show respect, are able to relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural, racial etc.), are able to conceptualize cultural sensitivity, and in engage in it with clients.

- **Special Skills Required:** Communicate effectively orally, willing to speak slowly and patiently when needed, transport self and potentially assist in transporting a client (will
provide public transportation) to court and to other services in the New York City/ New
Jersey. Bilingual English/Spanish speakers will be highly appreciated.

**Member Meeting Workshops**

- **Position description:** A volunteer who has a particular area of experience can plan and facilitate a workshop for one of our Tuesday night member meetings, 6pm- 8pm (dinner provided to the volunteer). Topics depend on you, and could have a focus that is educational, legal, therapeutic, or simply fun.

- **Desired Character Traits:** Personable, enthusiastic, and comfortable in a leadership position, willing to collaborate with our members and to create an environment of shared learning.

**Translators**

- **Position description:** Many of the clients who are released from detention do not speak English, or English is their second or third language. This makes providing them quality services very difficult. Our organization is in need of translation volunteers (especially Spanish speakers!) who are interested in providing quality interpretation and/or translation for Limited English Proficient (LEP) clients. Volunteer facilitators help immigrant New Yorkers practice English by attending initial interviews at detention centers prior to release to assist in the interviewing process of the client. The volunteer will also attend meetings with the client and QDEP Case Manager, to assist in translation while working on the client’s case. Responsibilities could also include translating during legal appointments depending on need. Scheduling is flexible based on the translator’s availability.

- **Special Skills Required:** Communicate effectively orally and with patience, in one of the following languages: Spanish, French, Arabic, Farsi, Urdu, Russian; if other languages spoken, please still apply.

**Detention Center Visitors**

- **Position description:** The volunteer will visit immigration detention centers or, potentially via the internet in the office, in New Jersey to befriend immigrants from around the world, who have no local friends or family for support. Not only will the volunteer assist in easing the time of the client while in detention until release, the
volunteer will also assist the client in the transition post-detention into the U.S.

- **Desired character traits:** Caring, dedicated, compassionate, non-judgmental and patient. Detention Center visitors also show respect, are able to relate to people from various backgrounds (economic, cultural, racial etc.), are able to conceptualize **cultural and racial sensitivity**, and engage in it with clients.

- **Special skills required:** Communicate effectively orally, transport self to the detention centers (but will provide public transportation via reimbursement) or via internet (will provide reimbursement). Bilingual English/Spanish speakers will be highly appreciated.

Typically, there will be a meet-up, and from there, the group will transport to the centers.

**Host Homes Program**

- **Very needed.** We work to find short term housing for folks that are just arriving post-detention in NYC. These individuals have faced persecution in their home countries, harsh detention facilities, and abuse in the US. They now need transitional housing as they utilize QDEP services, attain employment, and rebuild their lives. The U.S. shelter system is a detrimental environment for survivors of persecution or abuse and we are seeking volunteers to provide a more welcoming environment.

- **You can help by:**
  - Being a part of the host homes recruiting program.
  - Providing temporary housing in your home; host homes are needed for short-term as 1-3 nights or long-term as 1-3 months.
  - If you can’t host our client at our home, you can also provide a financial contribution from $50 (one night in a hostel), $600 (for a month of housing) to $1800 (for 3 months). With this fund we will be able to provide them with the safe place to stay (short term or long term).

**Pen Pal Program**

- **Position description:** The volunteer will correspond with an individual in detention through letters. Our members describe regular contact from a pen pal as an enormous and meaningful means of support during their isolation in detention. Letters are posted
from and returned to the QDEP offices, and we can either forward them to your home address, or you are welcome to come by the offices anytime.

- **Desired Character Traits:** Personable, warm, and caring communication, and a willingness to commit small amounts of time over a longer period of time, to provide someone in detention with consistent contact.

**Fundraising Volunteers**

- **Position description:** The goal of the fundraising volunteers is to assist in raising money for our client’s incidentals along the way (for clients in detention: money for bonds and commissary; for our released clients: train cards, food, clothes, toiletries, house ware set-ups, etc.) as well as to keeping the organization running (overhead, administrative costs, etc.). This is a huge and incredibly important way to be able to support our clients.

- **Desired Character Traits:** Caring, dedicated, compassionate, motivated, and patient. To be able to understand and rationalize that without funds, the project cannot function and operate. Fundraising is FUN!

**Donations**

- Certain donations are always welcome, and very much appreciated. Any generous donation can be mailed or delivered directly to our office at 505 8th Ave., #1212. These include:
  - Cash for case management services (We can link you to an online donation platform as well)
  - Clothing (especially warm winter coats/gloves/hats)
  - Backpacks and bags
  - Toiletries
  - Cosmetics
  - Used phones

**Questions?**  
Contact Ian, member advocate, for more information [ian@qdep.org](mailto:ian@qdep.org), or visit [www.samerainbow.com](http://www.samerainbow.com) to sign up for QDEP’s volunteer opportunities or to donate.