

Celebrating PDX Volunteers During National Volunteer Week

portside.portofportland.online/2022/04/celebrating-pdx-volunteers-during-national-volunteer-week-2

April 15, 2022



April 18-24 marks **National Volunteer Week**, a time to recognize the impact of service and the power of volunteers to tackle society’s greatest challenges. Portland International Airport is home to four volunteer programs: the volunteer information program, PDX music program, USO Northwest and PDX dog therapy program. By spotlighting these offerings, we’re sharing our sincere appreciation for volunteer contributions to our airport and our community.

Volunteer Information Program

When the Volunteer Information Program (VIP) launched in 1993, it had just 13 members – now there are 102 volunteers. Over the last 12 years, our VIPs provided a total of 236,248 hours of service. Beyond the numbers, volunteers are a big part of how PDX creates a welcoming environment for travelers – greeting you with a smile as you come down the escalator or pass through the rotating doors. From staffing our information booth to assisting passengers with directions and welcoming international travelers, PDX VIPs provide a friendly face and helpful resources for travelers from all over the world.



USO Northwest Center

The USO Northwest Center opened at PDX on June 1, 2014. Now located at the south end of baggage claim, the USO provides a warm and comforting place where service members can connect to loved ones via internet or phone, play a video game, catch a movie, have a snack or just put their feet up and relax. The office is supported by 56 active volunteers who provided more than 5,000 hours of service in 2021. In the last two years, the USO Northwest Center assisted with multiple National Guard vaccination sites, holiday meal distribution and firefighting efforts.



PDX Music Program



The PDX music program was founded in 2002 in the wake of 9/11, with the intent to use music as a way to create a calming atmosphere for passengers. Today, the program provides an opportunity for talented musicians who wish to volunteer their time and share their talents with thousands of people. The 20 musicians involved in the program play a variety of instruments, including piano, guitar, ukulele, pan flute, marimba and accordion. Travelers can hear more than 80 hours of live music each week, across four different locations at the airport.

PDX Dog Therapy Program

Travel can be stressful for many – that’s where the PDX dog therapy program steps in to fetch a little peace and comfort for visitors at the airport. Overseen by our partners at DoveLewis, the program brings more than 20 highly trained canine therapy teams to a variety of airport locations. Along with their handlers, these dogs roam the terminal with grey DoveLewis vests and wagging tails. They are on the lookout for pets, cuddles, someone they can greet with a wet nose, and comfortable places for a little rest next to PDX travelers.

Join us in thanking our volunteers this week (and every day) as we celebrate the guidance and kindness of the PDX VIPs, the respite of the USO center, the relaxing melodies offered by our volunteer musicians and the stress-reducing talents of the therapy dog teams.

