Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer at the Tomah VA Medical Center. As a VA volunteer, you not only help the Veterans and staff at the Tomah VA, but you’ll enjoy many benefits yourself:

- **Making a difference** – no matter what your assignment, you’ll be making a difference in the lives of others.
- **Service/Honor** – our Veterans bravely served our country; now you can “Serve those who served.”
- **Health benefits for YOU** – research shows that volunteering is actually good for your health! It keeps you active, intellectually stimulated and involved!
- **Recognition** – the VA has a well-established system of recognizing our valued volunteers!

### CURRENT NEEDS

- **Patient Visitors**: Veterans are at the Tomah VA “24/7” and always appreciate someone who can spend some one-on-one time with them. Volunteers also take patients to the recreation center, the Canteen store and cafeteria, the library, the pond, bowling alley, etc.

- **Kiosk Proctors** - Waiting rooms are equipped with kiosks where outpatients check themselves in when they arrive for appointments. The check in process will alert the staff that the Veteran is there, update any contact information. Volunteers are needed to assist Veterans with this new process. Kiosks will be in waiting rooms; ideally, volunteers will be scheduled in all waiting rooms, Monday through Friday, from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m.

- **Loving Spoonfuls** - Many Veterans need assistance at mealtime, either in preparing items to eat (opening milk carton, silverware, buttering bread, etc.) or in eating. Volunteers in the Loving Spoonfuls program receive additional training so they can assist at mealtimes and provide special one-on-one attention to a while he enjoys his meal.

- **Volunteer Drivers** – Drivers in the Disabled American s (DAV) Transportation Network drive donated vans and take outpatients to their VA appointments. There are vans at the following locations: Tomah, La Crosse, Stevens Point, Wausau, Marshfield, and Medford. Volunteer drivers are required to have a VA-provided physical.

- **Guest Services** – Do you like to get exercise while serving an important need? Guest Services might be for you! Volunteers daily visit all the waiting rooms in the facility, checking to make sure magazines and other printed materials are up to date, straightening magazine racks, posting new fliers, etc.
Escort for Routine Recreation Activities and hospital-wide Special Events: the Tomah VA has many long-term care Veterans who live at our facility. Our team of recreation therapy professionals plan a vast array of activities for the Veterans. Many Veterans require the assistance of a volunteer to get from their room to the activity. Bingo, Night at the Races, movies, dances, concerts – the list goes on and on. Once on board as a Tomah VA volunteer, a monthly newsletter will alert you to the current needs.

Volunteers In-Home Visitation Program – this is a new program where carefully selected volunteers will be placed in the homes of Veterans in the community. Volunteers will be placed according to the need of the Veteran – either a Veteran who lives alone and needs socialization and companionship, or to provide a break for the Veteran’s caregiver.

Gymnasium Attendant – (Tuesday & Wednesday 5:30-8:30pm, Sunday 9:30-11:30) Open and close building (15), ensure Veterans sign in daily and acquire Veteran Participation expectation form. Set up equipment/take down equipment (volleyball net), enforce equal play and adhere to gymnasium rules. Disinfect equipment daily; following infection control policies.

Bowling Alley Attendant – (Wednesdays 1:30-8:00pm) Provide customer service and assistance to Veterans as needed (i.e. adaptive equipment, ramps, shoes), inputting name in electronic scoring system, turn lanes on/off at end of shift. Miner maintenance – oil lanes, sweep lanes, etc. Contact Recreation Staff with major issues.

On-going volunteer assignments:

No Veteran Dies Alone: The Tomah VA offers special end of life care, including two “hospice suites” for Veterans and their spouses/family. Volunteers are needed to provide extended one-on-one care and attention to the Veteran during their final days. Volunteers’ names are kept on an “on call” list and will be called when needed; we try to provide volunteer coverage around-the-clock. Training is provided.

Dining Room/Deck Guest Services: Volunteers are needed in the main dining room to assist Veterans with their trays as they go outside to dine on the deck. Volunteers would also then carry trays back inside when the Veterans are done eating.

Center Courtyard Garden: A new flower bed was added in June 2014 in the Center Courtyard. Gardeners willing to help with maintenance of plants in the Center Courtyard would be appreciated.

Pharmacy: Assistance is requested to help mail out medications to outpatients.

Special Projects: Can’t commit to a specific assignment or schedule? We’d be happy to place your name on a “Special Projects” list – we’ll call you as special needs arise. Examples include: large mailings, special events, projects that require additional helpers. If you can make it, GREAT! If you can’t, we understand and we’ll call you the next time.

Recreation on the Neighborhoods and Green Houses - Playing cards, especially Cribbage and Sheep head; playing any number of Wii Games; take vets to the Canteen-store or restaurant; karaoke a few times a month or weekly. All of the equipment is here, ready for a volunteer to help a Veteran!

Office Work: Various offices request the assistance of volunteers to answer phones, make copies, file, help with mailings, compile folders, etc. Computer experience is not always necessary.
**Tax Preparers:** Since 2005, the Tomah VA’s Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program has assisted Veterans, staff, volunteers, and community members with preparing income tax forms. We are looking for tax preparers to help with the upcoming tax season. Training will be provided by the IRS and the group of volunteers, starting in December.

**Tax Program Scheduler:** the VITA program could use help in retrieving messages off the phone and scheduling appointments.

**Telephone Visitor:** Many Veterans live alone and are somewhat isolated – few family or friends around. A volunteer can make a phone call to inquire as to how the Veteran is doing, make chit-chat and get to know the Veteran a little. Some Veterans are referred by the provider for this kind of social service.

**Veterans History Project:** The Library of Congress has created the Veterans History Project to encourage Veterans of all wars to share their personal stories of service to our country. Volunteers interview Veterans and record the interviews, which are then forwarded to the Library of Congress. Visit [http://www.loc.gov/vets/](http://www.loc.gov/vets/) for more information, including sample interview questions.

**Don’t see what you’re interested in?**

Please don’t let that stop you! We take great pride in finding assignments to fit the interests of the volunteers.

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