Tip Sheet for Community Partners
Working with Millennials & Young Adults
Who are the “Millenials?”

In December 2000 Kenneth Judd wrote “Understand Millenial Generation to Manage them Successfully” in the article he describes the Millenials with the following definition: Also known as Generation-Y, the Millenials were born after 1979 and are just beginning to come on the employment stage. The Class of 2001 college graduates are generally regarded as the leading edge of the Millenials who will be entering the professional workforce.

More about the “Millenials”

- 85% of Millenials define themselves as loyal and hardworking when they see value in what they are doing.
- They tend to value "living in the moment" as important.
- They process information in narrative images, (i.e., think Nike ads).
- They consistently listed their parents as their "most admired" choices.
- Millenials trust their Grandparents the most, followed by parents; Gen-Xers are trusted the least.
- They are energetic and need continual stimulation and challenge.
- Millenials are comfortable juggling many things and will move on quickly if they get bored or dissatisfied.
- Their truth detectors are always on and they do not give second chances if deceived.
- A small majority (55%) of Millenials see themselves as no different than other generations.
- Nearly nine out of ten (88%) have established specific goals for the next five years.
- More than three-fourths (78%) believe they will achieve their life goals.
How to manage “Millenials”

What do today’s young employees (and students) want? If we’re designing recruiting programs and management systems based on their values and needs, how do we proceed? What kind of environments attract, retain, and motivate Millennial coworkers?

Here are their six most frequent requests:

1. **You be the leader**
   This generation has grown up with structure and supervision, with parents who were role models. The “You be the parent” TV commercials are right on. Millennials are looking for leaders with honesty and integrity. It’s not that they don’t want to be leaders themselves, they’d just like some great role models first.

2. **Challenge me**
   Millennials want learning opportunities. They want to be assigned to projects they can learn from. A recent Randstad employee survey found that “trying new things” was the most popular item. They’re looking for growth, development, a career path.

3. **Let me work with friends**
   Millennials say they want to work with people they click with. They like being friends with coworkers. Employers who provide for the social aspects of work (and service) will find those efforts well rewarded by this newest cohort. Some companies are even interviewing and hiring groups of friends.

4. **Let’s have fun**
   A little humor, a bit of silliness, even a little irreverence will make your work environment more attractive.

5. **Respect me**
   “Treat our ideas respectfully,” they ask, “even though we haven’t been around a long time.”

6. **Be flexible**
   The busiest generation ever isn’t going to give up its activities just because of jobs. A rigid schedule is a sure-fire way to lose your Millennial employees (and interns).
From “Managing Millennials” by Clair Raines, 2002

- 75% say that hard work is more important to achieving success than lucky breaks.
- 57% are willing to work more than 40 hours per week to reach their career goals.
- Only one third say that earning a high salary is an important part of their career.
- Only 26% think high job prestige to be very important.
- More than three-fourths do not agree that money buys happiness.
- Honesty and integrity are the attributes Millennials admire most about a person.
- 96% plan to get married, at the average age of 26, with 91% hoping to have children - 3 on the average.
- 92% of Millennials place “high value” on service to others.

Millenials say their top requirements at work are having idealistic and committed co-workers and doing work that helps others.

They expect to be asked for input regarding decisions; they grew up being asked for advice about buying computers and will expect the same deference at work.

According to a New York Times article in early 2000, 30% of college freshmen indicated they frequently felt overwhelmed by what they needed to do.

This is attributable to a variety of factors such as
- Over-programmed lives from a young age
- Competing with peers for a decreasing number of college slots and jobs
- Information overload from the internet and other sources
- Wireless technology and their inability to “escape”

Despite the stress in their lives for the most part Millenials have a positive attitude toward life and a desire to participate in service. A 1999 League of Women’s Voters study suggested that 51% of young people between the ages 18-30 want to become more involved in community and service activities.
“Engaging the Next Generation” identified 10 strategies for retaining young adults in ongoing service placements:

1. Rewarding, substantive work.
2. Life-enlarging experiences
3. A feeling of escape
4. A sense of affiliation with the organization
5. A clear understanding of the roles and organization wants them to play.
6. Appreciation for their schedules/ flexible scheduling.
7. Clear communications
8. Streamlined logistics
9. Reward and recognition
10. Belief that their input matters

Several studies of volunteering and service learning have also suggested that students are more engaged and learn from service when they participate in regular reflection. The most basic reflection model asks the participant the simple questions.

**What**
What activities did you engage in? What did you actually do?

**So What**
What was the significance of the activity? Why was it important?

**Now What**
What are you taking away from the experience? What are the next steps?
**Best Practices Supervising UC Berkeley Students**

Offer an orientation to your site, including:

- Share the vision, mission and values of the organization
- Share work rules and office policies and procedures including dress code if applicable
- Discuss and review position description and expectations
- Provide a detailed work plan for first month
- Discuss how tasks and projects will be identified and shared
- Set and discuss a schedule and standing meetings
- Tour the organization, including introducing your student to all other staff
- Identify a location where the student leader can store things

- Review risk management procedures and have the volunteer complete a waiver
- Complete and review an “individual learning agreement”
- Learn more about your student, their career aspirations and other personal goals and interests
- Establish SMART (Specific | Measurable | Actionable | Realistic | Time-sensitive) goals for semester
- Develop a training plan including meetings with key staff people, stakeholders or collaborators for any major duties or projects
- Share important dates of your organization
- Establish a system for signing timesheets (if applicable)
- Check in more frequently when student starts placement – as least weekly in person check-ins
- Share with your participants your story, your reason for doing the work that you do
Additional Resources

*Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation*

*Managing Millennials*
http://www.generationatwork.com/articles/millenials.htm#Where%20Employers%20Go%20Wrong%20with%20Millenials:

*Engaging the Next Generation: How Non-Profits Can Engage Young Adults*
http://www.adcouncil.org/research/engaging_next_gen/

*Misreading Millennials*
http://www.reason.com/0312/co.js.misreading.shtml

*Generation Overwhelmed*
http://prospect.org/article/generation-overwhelmed-0