



inspiring a new generation of young volunteers

## **Volunteering provides school leavers with additional benefits to academic qualifications says v, the National Young Volunteers Service**

With 'A' Level results coming out tomorrow and many school leavers undecided about which path to take next, **v, the National Young Volunteers Service**, suggests volunteering is a constructive way for school leavers to build up their experience and their CV.

As well as those who don't get the grades, it is thought that thousands of other 'A' Level students will miss out on university places, this year, due to funding freezes and a surge in applications to universities. Combined with the weak job market, prospects for the UK's school leavers are looking gloomy.

However, v, the National Young Volunteers Service says today's school leavers can benefit from volunteering in a number of ways:

- **By building up your CV if you want to enter the job market straight from school; volunteering is great for developing skills and gaining valuable work experience.**
- **By giving your UCAS form the edge, whether you're reapplying, taking a gap year, or still doing 'A' Levels; volunteering shows you care about more than just academic results.**
- **By making the most of your spare time at university; volunteering shows prospective employers that you have initiative and drive which might help secure that first job.**
- **Or simply, by using your time constructively while working out future plans; volunteering is a great stop gap to try out new ideas, meet new people and broaden your horizons.**

**vinspired.com**, v's online portal, has thousands of different kinds of volunteering opportunities for young people to get relevant work experience, benefit their community and gain exposure to new industries. What's more young volunteers can work towards the **v50** and **vimpact** certificates, part of the **vinspired** award scheme that recognises volunteers for the great work they do and helps young job seekers get noticed by employers.

**Lisa Dryburgh**, an 18 year old volunteer from Warwickshire, said *'I've been volunteering for the past few years whilst studying 'A' Levels at college. I really think that it's helped me build my self-confidence. The time I've spent volunteering has helped me come out of my shell, meet new people and learn life skills. I am nervous about my results tomorrow, but I know that the volunteering I've done will be of real benefit in my future, whatever I get!'*

**v's Chief Executive Terry Ryall** said *'Volunteering can really help to open your eyes to new opportunities and allows you to gain valuable work experience and build up your CV whilst benefiting your community. If you haven't got the grades you wanted, or think you've chosen the wrong path, then volunteering is a fantastic way to build your skills and help you make decisions about your future. From marketing to finance and*

*fashion to music, there are thousands of different opportunities that can really help you to stand out from the crowd.'*

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## Notes to Editors: about v

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**v, The National Young Volunteers Service** aims to inspire a new generation of volunteers (aged 16-25) in England. It does this by funding voluntary organisations all over England to create inspiring, diverse opportunities and by helping to overcome barriers that stop people from taking action to improve lives, communities and the planet. **v's** aim is to create a culture where volunteering comes naturally and where the benefits of volunteering are understood and celebrated.

**v** is an independent charity launched in May 2006 as a result of the Russell Commission report, A National Framework for Youth Action and Engagement.

See [www.vinspired.com](http://www.vinspired.com) for more information (including full copies of our research)

### **[Young People Speak Out: Attitudes to and Perceptions of Volunteering :](#)**

June 2009: The first ever comprehensive research into young people's attitudes and perceptions of full-time volunteering. The evidence from the survey of 1,997 young people, discussion groups and case studies suggests full time volunteering should remain as one option of a flexible and diverse range of opportunities. The research highlights the importance of young people's freedom to choose the most appropriate placement and the continued need to raise awareness and challenge the perceptions of volunteering. The research looks at the specific needs of disabled young people and those not in education or employment (NEET) in relation to full time volunteering.

### **[Employer Survey: Attitudes to Volunteering and Career Progression:](#)**

January 2009: To coincide with the launch of the vinspired award scheme, v commissioned YouGov to undertake a survey of employers to further explore how much and why employers value the skills that can be obtained through volunteering experiences. The results help to feed into the debate about the benefits of volunteering for career progression.

### **[Discovering Talent - Developing Skills: the contribution of volunteering:](#)**

September 2008: This report brings together existing research with case-studies from v funded projects to illustrate the potential contribution that volunteering could make to the skills agenda. The report suggests that all young people could benefit from volunteering opportunities which help build their self-confidence and transferable skills. The case-studies also indicate that there is a strong link between volunteering and employability and that volunteering could be a particularly effective way of engaging young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).