

Volunteer Guidelines

What a Volunteer Needs

Big Smile and a Great Attitude! Also remember to bring sunscreen, insect repellent, rainwear, comfortable closed-toed shoes, warm clothing for cool nights, and flashlight (if on a night shift).

Volunteer Kickoff Training

The volunteer Kickoff Party/Training will be held at 6pm under the Dance Tent on Wednesday night prior to opening day. This is not required but highly recommended.

Volunteer Responsibilities

- Be on time for shift check-in and work assignments. Plan enough time for transportation to and from campus.
- Check in at **three locations in this order:** (1) Volunteer Check-in, (2) Flattop's Getaway, and (3) at your assigned area with the team leader (for regular volunteers) or stage manager (for stage crew volunteers). Check in at Flattop's Getaway at least 30 minutes prior to your shift starting time. **Failure to do so may result in a no-show status at your assigned area.**
- Work your entire shift. If released by the team leader or stage manager, check in with the volunteer team leader at Flattop's Getaway for reassignment during your shift.
- Notify the volunteer team leader/Flattop's Getaway immediately if there are any changes in your availability to work your assigned shift once the festival begins.
- Be familiar with volunteer job descriptions and guidelines. See below.
- Attend the volunteer kickoff/training session on Wednesday night prior to the festival (not required but highly recommended). Location will be under the Dance Tent on festival grounds at 6:00 p.m.
- Make arrangements for childcare prior to arriving on duty. **Children are not allowed to accompany their parents while working their volunteer shifts.**
- **Hospitality volunteers must wear hat, hairnet, or hair restraint if handling food. No tank tops or sleeveless shirts are allowed. No sandals or open-toed shoes. If requirements are not met, the volunteer assignment will be changed.**
- **Stage crew volunteers** must wear MerleFest volunteer stage crew t-shirt while on duty. Only one shirt will be provided, so please wear the shirt only during scheduled hours. **Stage crew volunteers must wear closed-toed shoes, no sandals. Stage crew relief volunteers are also required to wear closed-toed shoes.**

Volunteer Benefits

- All volunteers who work one shift will receive a one-day volunteer wristband for that day. MerleFest volunteers can enjoy the festival before and after working assigned shifts.
- Free volunteer parking and shuttle. Parking is located at Lot D (Ithaca Drive, Wilkesboro) or Lot V (Executive Drive, Wilkesboro).
- CAMPING - 10% discount for camping at River's Edge Campground. Having a schedule does not reserve you a spot at the campground. **You must make reservations. Please call the campground at 336-838-3991 for more information and prices.**
- Volunteers receive a commemorative pin at the end of their assigned shifts.
- Light snacks and water will be available at Flattop's Getaway (Volunteer Headquarters) on the day you volunteer.
- Volunteers for MerleFest are invited to the annual volunteer reception held at the Walker Center in March.

CANCELLATION POLICY

If you cancel after April 15 you will lose your security deposit. Neither returning volunteers nor first-time volunteers who cancel after April 15 will be considered for volunteering the following MerleFest. Please contact the MerleFest Volunteer Coordinator for additional information.

Emergency Contact Phone Number During the Festival

In case of emergencies, volunteers may be contacted by calling the Visitors Center at 336-838-6199.

Festival Rules

MerleFest is held rain or shine – we recommend bringing clothes for all seasons! For your safety and the consideration of all guests and our campus, the following are prohibited: alcohol/drugs, tobacco products, firearms, pets/animals (unless certified as medically necessary), unauthorized video or audio recording, or glass containers.

All coolers/backpacks will be checked.

- Personal tents or canopies cannot be set up on festival grounds. Only tents installed by the festival tent supplier will be allowed. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by Festival Management. Small infant dome tents are allowed provided they do not obstruct the view of others.
- Large umbrellas including beach or patio umbrellas are not allowed. Normal size golf umbrellas and small personal umbrellas are allowed if they do not obstruct the view of others or dump water onto a neighbor during a rain event.
- Folding chairs are allowed at the festival at all outdoor stages provided they do not obstruct the view of others. Tall canopy chairs do not meet these requirements and will not be allowed.
- Personal grills, charcoal, or gas, are not allowed on festival grounds at any time. Only approved food vendors will be allowed to operate grills.

Location of Services

- **Volunteer Check-in** is located at the main entrance.
- **Flattop's Getaway (Volunteer Headquarters)** located in front of Hayes Hall across from the fountain. You will see large red and white tent.
- **Handicapped parking** is available off campus at Shuttle Stop H (Executive Drive, Wilkesboro, NC).
- **Handicapped seating** accommodations are available with two weeks advanced notification by calling 336-838-6185.
- **Information** is available in The Shoppes at MerleFest and the Visitors Center in Thompson Hall.
- **First Aid tent** is located near the entrance, close to the duck pond. The Wilkes Rescue Squad is there to assist you.
- **Restrooms** are located throughout the festival grounds and in college buildings.
- **Portable toilets** are available at locations around campus.
- **Audience Information** is located near the center of the Watson Stage audience area.

MerleFest Volunteer Areas

Artist Restroom - Monitor access to Artist Restroom backstage on Watson Stage.

Food Vendor Trailer - Maintain security for food in trailer - no one to enter unless they represent the MerleFest food supplier or a designated MerleFest food vendor. **This job requires heavy lifting and may be in full sun.**

Front Gate Parking – Assist registered customers with appropriate parking tag in finding a parking space.

Greeters – Front Gate - Assist and welcome guests as they enter the festival. This job requires standing in full sun.

Hospitality (Food Service) – Assist with set up, serve, and maintain meals, snacks, and beverages. Volunteers must wear hat, hairnet, or hair restraint when handling food. No tank tops or sleeveless shirts are allowed. No sandals or open-toed shoes. Shorts are permitted if they are knee length. If requirements are not met, the volunteer will be reassigned.

Little Pickers (Children’s Area) – Assist with securing area around activities and games, assist with numerous sign-ups and other assignments as necessary. This job requires working with children and being in full sun.

Museum Attendant – Monitor museum during open hours.

Nancy’s Gate – Monitor gate to only allow those guests with appropriate wristbands access into the backstage area.

Perimeter Security – Provide various wristband checks and security in area presenting minor security risks, assist with traffic control, etc. This job may be in full sun. Requires standing for periods of time.

Photo Platform – Assist stage manager as needed daily with photographers and guests. This job may be in full sun and requires standing for periods of time.

Raffle – Sell MerleFest raffle tickets, work with the silent auction to ensure that all monies are accurate, and that tickets, funds, and items are always secure.

Relief (Flattop’s Friends) – This is a ‘work where needed’ position. If additional volunteers are needed on festival grounds you will be sent to that area. If you have not been called out to help on the festival grounds you will be released after 3 hours. You will be required to remain at Flattop’s getaway if not called to work on festival grounds. Bring a book or other means of passing the time. Locations may require working in full sun.

RV Campground – Assist RV Campground area manager with parking RVs, ensure vehicles are parked correctly and that vehicles that are temporarily brought in for transfer of items are moved within a reasonable period of time. Perform other duties as needed. This job may be in full sun.

School Day Check-in – Check in school children from the correct school list.

Stage Crew & Stage Crew Relief - Assist stage manager and audio engineers as needed with production including unloading and loading band gear on and off the stage. There will be lifting involved, volunteers should be able to lift 50 pounds. Volunteer stage crew may be scheduled for other duties in addition to stage work. Stage crew have been selected based on specific skills and experience, but schedule changes and evolving

general festival needs may make it necessary to change assignments to meet the needs of a successful festival. Stage crew volunteers must wear MerleFest volunteer stage crew t-shirt while on duty. Only one shirt will be provided, so it is suggested that the shirt be worn only during scheduled hours. **Volunteers must wear closed-toed shoes, No sandals. Stage crew relief are also required to wear closed-toed shoes.** Stage crew must check in with the stage manager at the assigned stage. Failure to do so will result in no-show status. This job may be in full sun for extended periods of time.

Surveys – Mingle with crowds and request a one-on-one survey. This job may be in full sun and requires walking and standing for periods of time.

Usher – Americana Stage – Assist stage manager as needed with straightening chairs, trash cleanup, keeping aisles clear and assisting guests. Requires standing for periods of time. These jobs may be in full sun.

Usher – Creekside Stage - Assist stage manager as needed with straightening chairs, trash cleanup, keeping aisles clear and assisting guests. Requires standing for periods of time. These jobs may be in full sun.

Usher – Dance Stage - Assist stage manager as needed with trash cleanup, keeping aisles clear and assisting guests. Assist with keeping aisles clear. Requires standing for periods of time. Keep Dance Stage floor clear of backpacks, strollers, sitting audience members, etc.

Usher – Hillside Stage - Assist stage manager as needed with straightening chairs, trash cleanup, keeping aisles clear and assisting guests. Requires standing for periods of time. Will require standing on uneven surfaces and in full sun.

Usher – Mayes Pit - Assist stage manager as needed to ensure that fire codes are followed, ensure that people do not block aisles or doorways, pick up trash. Requires standing for periods of time.

Usher – Plaza Stage - Assist stage manager as needed with straightening chairs, trash cleanup, assisting guests when needed and keeping aisles clear. Requires standing for periods of time. These jobs may be in full sun.

Usher – Traditional Stage - Assist stage manager as needed with straightening chairs, trash cleanup, assisting guests when needed and keeping aisles clear. Requires standing for periods of time.

Usher – Walker Center - Ensure that fire codes are followed by monitoring doorways. Access is limited once the room is filled. Ask people not to block aisles or doorways. Do not allow food or beverages into the auditorium. Provide general information to attendees. Monitor restrooms and call custodians as needed. Requires standing for periods of time.

Usher – Watson Stage - Answer questions and assist as necessary before 5:00 p.m. (the evening meal break). After the evening break ask those without reserved seating wristbands to move to general seating area to allow seating of those with reserved seating wristbands. Control access of entry after the evening break to only guests with reserved seating for the evening's performance. Requires standing for periods of time. This job may be in full sun.