

Get involved at Edmonton's Timeraiser

Volunteering, a silent art auction and a fun night on the town sounds like an odd mix, but for the folks bringing Timeraiser to Edmonton on October 17, it's a winning formula for success.

The event, now in its seventh year, is designed to help young professionals in their 20s and 30s find meaningful volunteer opportunities in the community.

Theresa Wetzel, the program manager for the Edmonton, Calgary and Toronto Timeraisers, likens the event to "speed dating for volunteerism."

THE PERFECT MATCH

"Throughout the evening, you meet with different agencies and match your skills to their needs. Once you've made your

matches, you're eligible to bid on artwork," she says.

"The big twist is that rather than bidding money, you bid volunteer hours. If you have the winning bid, you have 12 months to complete your pledge before bringing the artwork home as a

NOT YOUR AVERAGE VOLUNTEER FAIR

reminder of your good will."

Cool stuff.

Timeraiser's appeal and popularity among its target demographic is due to the fact that it helps making getting involved so easy.

During the evening, young professionals have the opportunity to talk to charity representatives and learn about the kinds of fun and unique volunteer opportunities that are available.



Edmonton's Timeraiser will feature 22 charitable agencies.

Volunteer opportunities range from teaching workshops and sitting on boards to developing multimedia projects and fundraising. The minimum bid is set at 20 hours and the

maximum bid is 150 hours.

"I had been one of those fence sitters—someone who loves the idea of volunteering but always let my busy schedule get in the way of actually volunteering," says Anh Chu, a communications specialist and freelance writer and editor from Calgary.

She was among one of the many people who made a winning bid at the recent Calgary Timeraiser in June, and chose to donate her volunteer hours to four different agencies.

"I chose these agencies because I can tap into areas – the environment, culture, mentorship – that I've always wanted to explore more deeply.

"Now I get the opportunity to do so without making any more excuses," Chu explains, adding the flexibility that participants have in choosing where to volunteer is a huge benefit.

It's these kinds of benefits that have made the event successful for everyone else involved as well, according to Wetzel.

Artists receive support, increased exposure and money for their work, agencies gain talented volunteers, and corporate sponsors are part of an event that helps get their employees involved in the community.

"Even if you don't end up with a winning bid for artwork, the event is a good primer to find out more about non-profit agencies in your community," Chu recommends.

'ALL WHILE HAVING FUN'

"Volunteering itself is a fantastic way to expand on existing skills, explore hidden talents, meet new people, build networks and make a meaningful contribution – all while having fun."

Edmonton's Timeraiser happens Oct. 17 at the TransAlta Arts Barns. Doors open at 7 pm. To purchase a ticket or to learn more about Timeraiser, visit www.timeraiser.ca.

For more information or suggestions for story ideas, please contact Evelyn Pham, communications co-ordinator, at epham@volunteeredmonton.com, call 780-732-6655 or check out our website at www.volunteeredmonton.com.

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Theresa Wetzel

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