



**VIRGINIA  
FILM FESTIVAL**  
A PROGRAM OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

# Volunteer Manual

The 30th Annual  
Virginia Film Festival  
November 9-12, 2017

**Volunteer Kick-Off and Training**

Monday, November 6, 2017

Location + Time TBA

**Post-Festival Volunteer Thank You Party**

Date + Location + Time TBA

This manual is prepared as a guide to the function, policies, and procedures for Virginia Film Festival Volunteers. It is expected that all volunteers familiarize themselves thoroughly with the contents of this manual.

## **THE ROLE OF A FILM FESTIVAL VOLUNTEER**

There are three basic roles that all Virginia Film Festival volunteers are expected to fulfill.

### **1. To Serve the Public**

We are here to serve our patrons! As an usher, house manager, or event volunteer, you are considered the public face of the VFF. Your job is to greet, welcome, and help our patrons enjoy our events.

There are three things a patron experiences when they choose to attend our events: the box office staff, the front of house staff, and the event itself. There should never be any reason why any patron is dissatisfied with either the box office or the front of house staff. If they did not like the film or did not enjoy our event, that is out of our control. But a patron should utter a negative word concerning their treatment by the box office staff or the front of house staff.

### **2. To Represent the Festival**

As a VFF volunteer, you represent the good name of the producing organizations- both the VFF and the University of Virginia. In your work for the VFF, you project an image to the public with your demeanor and attitude while on the job. The image that we ask you to project is one of professionalism, with small-town friendliness while having consideration for our patrons. Treat others than way you would want to be treated.

### **3. To Enforce the Policies of the Festival**

As a volunteer, you are required to enforce the policies of the Festival with regard to monitoring entry into our events. The enforcement of policies should always be done in a professional and friendly manner.

## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

The following policies are expected to be observed by all volunteers.

### **1. Dress Code**

**For all volunteer shifts, please wear your 2017 Virginia Film Festival Volunteer t-shirt with your Volunteer Badge.** This will make you recognizable to patrons. T-shirts and badges will be distributed in-person at the Volunteer Training and Kick-Off. Please note exceptions: if you are working during **the Opening Night Gala**. Your Party Manager will inform you of specific dress codes for these events.

### **2. Conduct Code**

All volunteers are expected to treat patrons and fellow workers with courtesy and respect. We expect you to use proper language at all times. The answer to a patron's questions should never be "I don't know." If you do not know the answer, find a manager or staff member who can answer the question. If no staff or manager is present, take the patron's contact information so that we can follow up with the patron later.

### **3. Tardiness**

**Please report 15 minutes before your shift** to your house manager. Transition between shifts can get a little tricky if there's a lot going on at that moment, so please welcome new volunteers reporting to work and help them get settled until the manager can greet them.

#### 4. Commentary Code

All volunteers are expected to refrain from openly criticizing our events, films, staff, and guests in public. To this end, you are encouraged to review our Program so that you can speak knowledgeably when answering patrons' questions.

### WHERE TO PARK FOR YOUR SHIFTS

**Parking for downtown volunteer shifts** is available at the Water Street Parking Garage. The Festival has set up an account at the Water Street Garage. Please show your Volunteer badge to the attendant to charge your parking fees to the Virginia Film Festival account.

**Parking for Culbreth shifts** is available for free at the Culbreth Road Garage across from the Culbreth Theatre.


**Parking for Newcomb Hall Theater shifts** is available for free at the Culbreth Road Garage across from the Culbreth Theatre and a short walk to Newcomb Hall. If for any reason you cannot make the walk from Culbreth Road to Newcomb, please park in the Central Grounds Garage and see your house manager for a parking voucher, which will charge your parking fees directly to the VFF.

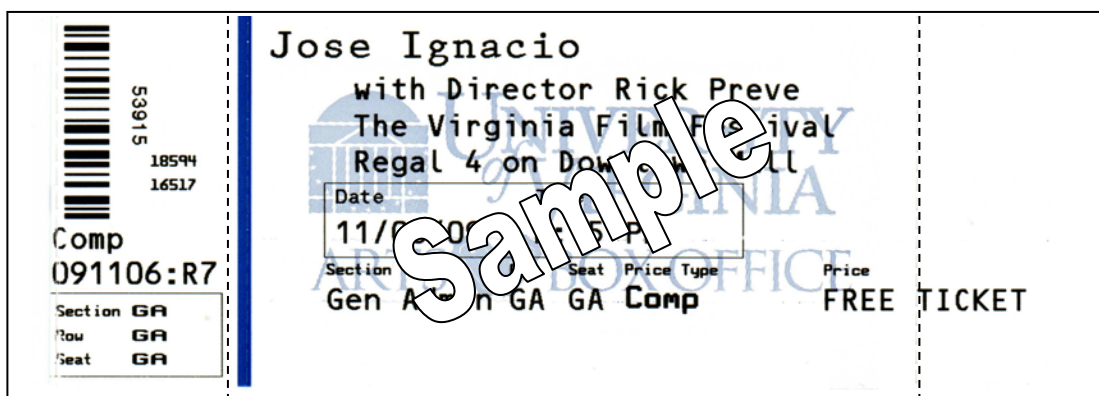
**Ample parking for PVCC shifts** is available for free in PVCC lots.

**Ample parking for STAB shifts** is available for free in the St. Anne's-Belfield lots.

### SCREENING VENUE USHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. You may be stationed at the door of the theatre to **tear tickets**. Check the correct performance and date before you tear the ticket. Tickets are perforated on both ends. Tear off the end with the bar code and keep it. You are responsible for managing the entry doors during events. **One ticket must be taken for each patron entering the theater.** This is a Fire Code regulation at all venues. Exceptions are only made for staff, members of the press who are actively reporting on the screening, and any discussants or guests speaking at a specific event. At the start of your shift, the theater manager will fill you in on ticketing and seating procedure for that site.

Tear off this end 



2. Please know that a **badge is not a ticket** and does not allow a patron access to a screening or event. Please direct any badge holder to the box office to get their ticket.

3. Many of our films are eligible for our Audience Award and your manager will have **ballots for you to pass out as patrons** enter the theater and to collect as they exit. Ushers should never use the term “survey” when referring to the ballots with patrons. Rather, “please remember to vote!” should be the standard line when handing out ballots. When collecting ballots “may I have your ballot?” is the preferred language to use.
4. You may be stationed inside the theatre to **greet patrons**. Our screenings are general admission, so it is not necessary to direct patrons to specific seats. If an event includes reserved seats for VIPs or filmmakers and guests, make sure that other patrons do not claim them so that they can remain available. You should also keep an eye on empty seats. In the event that a screening is packed, help late arriving patrons find empty seats. Make sure nobody sits or stands in the aisles or rear of the theater, as this is a fire hazard.
5. You may be asked to **manage crowd control**. Be friendly and assertive, not timid; try to handle problems tactfully and with a smile. If you run into problems, ask the Venue Manager for help. During sold out shows, make sure coats and purses are not filling up empty seats.
6. **Be alert** for people who may need extra assistance—people on crutches or in wheelchairs, elderly patrons—and help them.
7. **Food and Drink:** At Violet Crown, Vinegar Hill, STAB, Newcomb, PVCC, and Paramount, food is allowed in the theater. However, food and drink (except water) are NOT allowed inside the Culbreth Theatre. If patrons are unwilling to follow venue rules, report them to the house manager.
8. **Ask the house manager** if he/she needs help with anything before entering the theater to watch the screening. During your shift, you are considered to be on-call, and the house manager may have to pull you out of a screening if the need arises.
9. **Answer Questions:** Patrons will ask you many questions (“Don’t I get the other half of the ticket back?” “I just bought this coffee...can’t I take it inside?” “Where’s the bathroom?”) Again, the answer to questions, should never be ‘I don’t know’. If you do not know the answer to a question you are asked, refer the patron to the house manager. It is important to be friendly and helpful when dealing with patrons.
10. **You may be asked to act as backstage/audience crew** for pre- and post-film discussions. The house manager may require assistance moving chairs and microphones onto the stage prior to or immediately following the screening. In addition, during post-film discussions, two ushers may be required to carry hand-held microphones through the audience to catch audience questions.
11. **Clean up** the house between shows. This involves picking up papers and trash. It is important that all aisles are clear before every show. If someone has spilled a beverage, please contact the venue’s staff for cleaning support or supplies.
12. **Remember:** Especially when you are inside the house watching the film, you are still very much on duty. If a problem should arise (sound, picture, audience problem, etc.), it is your responsibility to either do something about it or quickly get the manager. The manager will alert you to the specific procedure in each theater. Watch for problems like hairs in the picture, picture out of frame, subtitles too low, the sound or picture going off. If patrons enter the theater in the dark after the screening has begun, be sure to assist them in finding seats. Never be afraid to tell the house manager about problems that arise, even if it seems like you are bugging her/him too much.
13. **It is very important that we treat our Industry guests with respect and consideration.** In essence, we are part of the protective wall between them and those who might crowd them, hound them, or start waving screenplays. It is not appropriate for Festival volunteers to engage in behavior even closely resembling harassment.
14. **If there are any problems with the facilities** (i.e. toilet overflow, paper towels need to be restocked), please contact a theater representative or your house manager immediately.

15. If you are going to be **unable to work** your shift, be sure to contact our **Volunteer Coordinator** at [vaffvolunteercoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:vaffvolunteercoordinator@gmail.com). Please give her enough notice so that she will have enough time to find a replacement. Please do not cancel your shift unless it is an emergency. We depend on you!
16. In the case of a **fire or other emergency**, the house manager will inform you of your duties. Remember, the patrons will be looking to you for help so be sure to remain calm.

## **PARTY CREW RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Opening Night Gala**

Thursday, November 9

Jefferson Theater

Event starts at 9:30PM

(open to the public, 21 and over event, tickets \$75)

Dress is all black for the opening night party. No drinking during shifts. Please be on time, and if you cannot make your shift or will be late, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator ASAP. Duties may include checking ids, setting up, decorating, cleaning up, checking coats, checking tickets, providing directions, or anything the party planner, host/hostess, or caterer asks you to do. Positions will be distributed more thoroughly on the night of the event.

### **Late Night Wrap Party**

Saturday, November 11

**Location TBD**

Event starts at 10:00 PM

(open to the public, 21 and over event, tickets \$45)

Dress is your volunteer t-shirt for the Wrap Party. No drinking during shifts. Please be on time, and if you cannot make your shift or will be late, please contact Volunteer Coordinator ASAP. Duties may include checking ids, setting up, decorating, cleaning up, checking coats, checking tickets, providing directions, or anything the party planner, host/hostess, or caterer asks you to do. Positions will be distributed more thoroughly on the night of the event.

## **FAMILY DAY & YOUNG FILMMAKERS ACADEMY**

Each year on Family Day there is a free screening of a family-friendly major motion picture. In addition there are a number of activities and workshops, from the Charlottesville symphony “petting zoo”, to film-related activities, and film-related crafts (for details: <http://virginiafilmfestival.org/familyday/>). There is also the much-anticipated and very popular Young Filmmakers Academy, in which school-aged children’s films are screened for the students and their families. We rely heavily upon volunteers to help staff our Family Day events. The specific volunteer positions are described below:

**Interactive Arts Festival Managers** work outside to oversee a team of volunteers that help set up and run interactive craft stations for attending children and families, count attendance every 30 minutes, and disassemble stations at the end. Interest in actively interacting with families is important!

**Interactive Arts Festival Craft Tables (outdoors)** volunteers work outside to set up and run interactive craft stations for attending children and families, count attendance every 30 minutes, and disassemble stations at the end. Interest in actively interacting with families is important!

**Arts Grounds Greeters (outside)** work outside to welcome attendees to Arts Grounds, distribute maps and stickers, direct attendees to venues, and engage attendees in the activities of Family Day. These volunteers are the first to greet attendees and establish an energetic and enthusiastic atmosphere at Family Day.

**Arts Workshop Check-In Table** volunteers work inside the UVA Drama Building to check-in and check-out children and families who have pre-registered for the Arts Workshops held throughout Family Day. They will also distribute relevant information to participating families and children when necessary.

**YFA Greeters (outside)** work outside to welcome and congratulate participants, direct attendees to the correct room, answer questions about YFA schedules, and encourage and engage guests to enjoy other Family Day activities. Celebratory spirit and enthusiasm needed!

**YFA Auditorium Greeters** work inside to welcome and congratulate screening participants and their families, distribute programs, and count and record attendance. This role is akin to welcoming a guest to your home!

**YFA Red Carpet Photographers** (paparazzi!) engage youth and families to encourage them to strike Hollywood poses at the step and repeat banner, take photos of participants, and provide select photos to VFF for our photo archive. Photographers should bring their own camera or arrange in advance for VFF to provide one.

**The screenings and events on Family Day and at our YFA Screening have very specific needs that can change each year. Please check in with Erica Barnes and our Family Day Volunteer Manager at the Volunteer Kick-Off and Training to receive additional instructions specific to your assigned role.**

## **VIRTUAL REALITY LAB**

Now in its second year, the Virtual Reality (VR) Lab gives visitors an interactive experience with the newest technology in virtual reality filmmaking. Guests will have the opportunity to choose from a selection of short VR film experiences to view using head-mounted, wearable displays. The Lab is outfitted with OSVR, an open-source software platform that drives innovation and diversity by allowing different brands of VR hardware to connect with each other. The VR Lab is free, open to the public, and located in the library/lobby of Light House Studio's Vinegar Hill Theatre.

We need volunteers to help us set up and breakdown the lab (consisting of individual VR stations with computers and headsets) as well as run the lab alongside professional VR-trained staff. Volunteers should be comfortable with using a laptop running Windows operating system, or be willing to use it. They should also be comfortable when interacting with and helping people don the HMD (Head-Mounted Display).

## **DRIVING CREW RESPONSIBILITIES**

Drivers, please wear your volunteer T-shirt. Please carry your valid driver's license and show it to the dispatcher when you report for your shift. You will be dispatched from the VFF Drivers Suite, Omni Hotel **Suite # TBD**.

The Drivers Suite vehicles will be parked in the garage under the Omni. The dispatcher will assign you a car when you have a scheduled run and show you where to sign it out and back in when you return. It is important that you keep to the schedule given you by the dispatcher since your return will be factored in for subsequent dispatches.

The most frequent trips are driving VIPs to and from the airport, hotels, and theaters. Please be courteous but reserved with VIPs. If they have questions or requests you cannot answer, please take responsibility for passing them along as soon as you return to the VFF Drivers Suite. The dispatcher will report the request to the appropriate person.

Please respect the privacy of any guests you may drive. If you engage in conversation, please do not gossip about the people you drive with general patrons or the press.

Our Drivers Suite Dispatchers will give you more detailed instructions when you report for your shift.

**Remember, the phone number for the Omni Hotel Driver's Suite is **TBD**. Otherwise call the Omni switchboard on 434-971-5500 and ask for the VA Film Festival's Drivers Room Suite **# TBD**.**

## **BOX OFFICE HOURS AND POLICIES**

Please familiarize yourself with the box office hours and policies listed below. These appear in our Festival Program and on our website here: <http://virginiafilmfestival.org/tickets/>

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Many of our patrons may have questions concerning transportation while attending film festival events. Please refer them to following options available in the community.

**Yellow Cab of Charlottesville:** (434) 295-4131

### **FREE TROLLEY SERVICE**

The Free Trolley runs seven days a week every 15 minutes. There is no Sunday night bus service. Take the Trolley from the *Downtown Transit Center* stop to the *UVA Chapel* stop to travel to Newcomb Hall and Culbreth Theatre. Take the Trolley from the *UVA Chapel* stop to the *Downtown Transit Center* stop to get from UVA Grounds to Paramount and Regal.

Call 434.970.3649 for more information.

## **2017 SCREENING VENUES**

### **Culbreth Theatre**

**109 Culbreth Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22903**

Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/pCmaR8KJZPu>

The Culbreth Theatre is housed within UVA's Drama Building alongside two smaller theatres. The traditional proscenium theater is entered from the back of the audience through a set of two doors from the main lobby. The lobby also houses UVA's Arts Box Office.

Visit <http://drama.virginia.edu/> for more information.

### **Newcomb Hall Theatre**

**149 Newcomb Rd N  
Charlottesville, VA 22903**

Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/4888PbqHHb82>

Newcomb Theatre is located on the Lower Level of Newcomb Hall on UVA's Central Grounds. There is one main entrance into the back of the theatre from the small lobby space. The main entrance into Newcomb Hall is on an upstairs level and patrons will enter the lobby space by coming downstairs and filing into a line outside the theatre.

Visit <http://www.virginia.edu/deanofstudents/eventplanning/newcomb-hall-theatre/> for more information.

### **PVCC V. Earl Dickinson Building**

**501 College Drive  
Charlottesville, VA 22902**

Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/tgDZxTdTtUy>

The theatre located at PVCC's Dickinson Building is a large proscenium theater with an entrance on either side of the audience from the large curved lobby area. There is ample free parking in the lot outside the building.

Visit <http://www.pvcc.edu/fine-arts-and-performance> for more information.

### **St. Anne's-Belfield School**

**2132 Ivy Road  
Charlottesville, VA 22903**

Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/htY7QGWzHco>

The newly built theatre is located at St. Anne's-Belfield's upper school campus off Ivy Road. There is free available parking in the lots next to the theatre. Patrons will enter on the upper balcony level of the building but will be directed downstairs by ushers to the main floor to enter the theatre.

Visit <https://www.stab.org/> for more information.

### **Vinegar Hill Theatre**

**220 Market Street  
Charlottesville, VA 22902**

Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/pXeBbm3pWPD2>

The newly renovated historic Vinegar Hill Theatre is home to Light House Studio and situated on the Downtown Mall. The small lobby space has two audience entrances in the back of the theatre. Ushers will be asked to cue lines of entering patrons in the lobby and out onto the sidewalk outside. There is an entrance around the back of the building with wheelchair access for any patrons that need it.

Visit <http://www.lighthousestudio.org/> for more information.

### **Violet Crown Charlottesville**

**200 W Main Street  
Charlottesville, VA 22902**

Google Maps: <https://goo.gl/maps/AkuDAKHIFZ32>

The Violet Crown movie theater is two floors with the main entrance on the bottom floor. All VFF screenings will be in the upstairs theaters (Auditoriums 4 – 7). The VFF's main box office headquarters will be located on the bottom floor and patron traffic will be heavy at the entrance.

Visit <http://charlottesville.violetcrown.com/> for more information.