

# The Big Event Expansion Packet





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Howdy!

On behalf of The Association of Former Students and the student leadership team of The Big Event of Bryan-College Station, we would like to thank you for considering bringing The Big Event to your community. Over the past 21 years, The Big Event has transformed from a small group of Aggies giving back to the Bryan-College Station community into the largest single-day student-run service project in the nation. As a result, this project may seem to be a daunting task, but the processes behind this event make it possible for The Big Event to happen anywhere – all it takes is the Aggie Spirit of giving back.

The attached information packet provides you with all the basic information needed to expand the Big Event into your community, including suggestions for leadership structure, ways to partner with the on-campus event and The Association of Former Students, and a calendar of events. Please feel free to adjust these structures in whatever way would best work for your club and your community, and if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Always remember: whether you have 20 volunteers or 20,000, this event will be a success as long as the goal of your event is to share the Aggie Spirit and our core value of "Selfless Service" with your community. The Big Event is a powerful way to show what being an Aggie is all about and to demonstrate the strength of our Aggie Family.

You are the ambassadors of Aggieland, and we appreciate all that you do to represent Texas A&M.

Thanks and Gig 'em!

Scott Jarvis '00

Coordinator of Club Programs  
The Association of Former Students

## **Introduction to The Big Event**

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### **The History**

Mr. Joe Nussbaum '84, then Vice President of the Student Government Association at Texas A&M, began The Big Event in 1982 as a way to say “thank You” to the surrounding community of Bryan-College Station. Mr. Nussbaum envisioned a one-day service project where students of Texas A&M University could show their appreciation of local residents by completing various tasks at their homes. He thought that after years of loyal support from the community, the very least college students could do is give back for one day.

### **Mission Statement**

Through service-oriented activities, The Big Event promotes campus and community unity as students come together for one day to express their gratitude for the support from the surrounding community.

### **What The Big Event has Become**

The Big Event has seen tremendous growth over the past 30 years. Participation has grown to over 16,000 students completing more than 1500 jobs in the communities of Bryan and College Station. Presently, over 70 Big Events occur at other universities across the nation. Although The Big Event has become the largest one-day, student-run service project in the nation, our message still remains the same: simply saying “thank You.”

### **Aggies Serving Others**

To continue and expand on the legacy initiated on campus, we would like to see this treasured Aggie tradition spread beyond the Brazos County via Texas A&M Clubs worldwide. Although other colleges and universities have copied the model of Texas A&M University, this event is, at the heart, an expression and manifestation of the Aggie Spirit. A Big Event in local communities outside of Bryan-College Station hosted by our former students and their friends and families will serve as an opportunity to interact with other Aggies and spread the Aggie tradition of service.

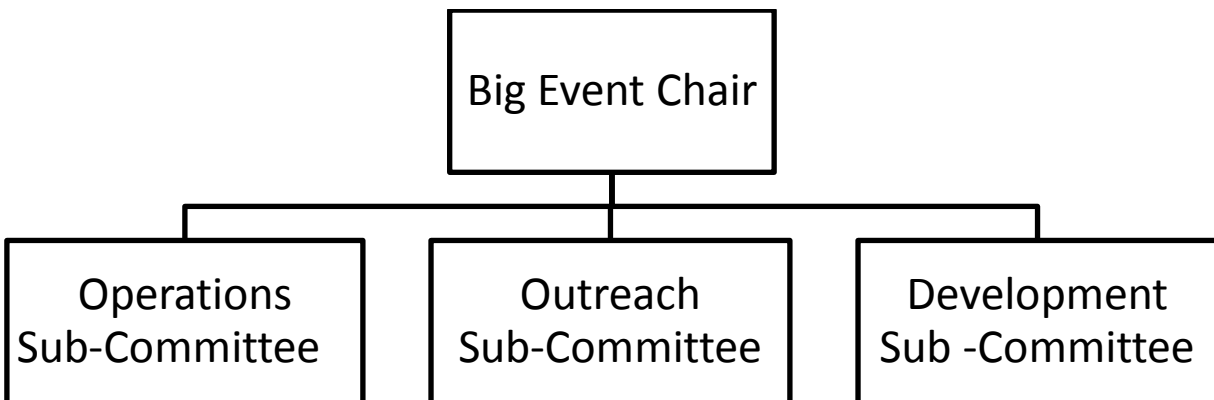
## Committee Structure

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There are several components that go into organizing a Big Event, they are primarily:

- Planning of the event
- Fundraising for the organization
- Execution of the logistics that go into the event

To efficiently and effectively achieve these goals, it is best to appoint a 'Big Event Chair' who can either serve as the sole coordinator of The Big Event, or supervise each of the event's sub-committees to ensure that goals and objectives are met in a timely manner. Based on the main mechanisms involved in the organization of The Big Event, for larger organizations it would be beneficial to create the following sub-committees, as volunteer leadership permits:



**Obviously, the number of volunteers and the resources of your club will determine the structure that works best for your organization, but this basic structure has proven successful for other groups initiating their first Big Event.**

## **Committee Expectations and Responsibilities**

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### **The Big Event Chair**

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The Big Event Chair is ultimately responsible for the execution of the event and the sub-committees. Through meetings and telephone conference the Event Chair is responsible for delegating important tasks and getting feedback regarding the operations for the event.

Responsibilities for The Big Event Chair:

- Oversee all procedures for the event
- Run all committee meetings and delegate responsibilities to the sub-committees
- Oversee the finances of the event
- Communicate with The Association or The Big Event Staff on campus for any support that the A&M Club may require

### **The Operations Sub-Committee**

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The operations sub-committee will be in charge of all logistic operations up to and including the day of The Big Event and they will serve as site coordinators on behalf of the committee. The operations committee will need to tell volunteers what sites to report to, what time to get there and what they will be working on. In addition they are also responsible to make sure the group has all required tools/supplies needed for their project.

Responsibilities for the Operations Sub Committee:

- Interface with both Development and Outreach to serve as liaisons for the volunteers and the service projects
- Transport all tools and supplies to the sites of The Big Event project or a central location where the committee decides to meet on The Big Event day.
- Plan a social either prior to the event or at the conclusion of the event
- Responsible for e-mail correspondence to all volunteers informing them on the plan for the day of The Big Event
- Coordinate with the community service project officials regarding The Big Event day plan

## **The Outreach Sub-Committee**

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The primary job for the outreach committee is to find community service projects that can be done on the day of The Big Event. The two primary goals of the committee are to find projects of interest to the Club within the community, and to reach out to the community for volunteers to make this event successful.

Responsibilities for Outreach:

- Advertise the event in the community to find community service projects and recruit volunteers
- Collaborate with other A&M organizations in the area such as the local Texas A&M University Mothers' Club to solicit their participation
- Use social media to spread the message about the event for both recruiting volunteers and receiving ideas for projects
- Collaborate with the local Chamber of Commerce and/or media outlets to spread the message of the event.

## **The Development Sub-Committee**

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The Development sub-committee's main focus will be to raise funds, gather donations for the event and to ensure that the club has the necessary supplies for their projects. The Outreach sub-committee will also be responsible for any fundraising events that are held by The Big Event.

Responsibilities for Development:

- Decide and coordinate fundraising events
- Contact local businesses for monetary/material donations
- Oversee inventory of tools and supplies needed for the projects

**The number of community service projects that your Club can undertake will be determined by the number of volunteers and the resources of your club, but coordinating more than one project per Big Event is neither required nor necessary.**



## **Interface with The Big Event on Campus**

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Initiating an event like The Big Event can certainly seem to be a time consuming and challenging task for A&M Clubs as you are dealing with limited resources and other events throughout the year. To make the job of the committee easier, it is encouraged to use the assistance of The Big Event student group on campus and The Association of Former Students. Following are examples of areas where resources are available:

- Registration forms, Job Request Forms, Newsletters
- Standard correspondence such as press releases and letters written to local groups such as the Chamber of Commerce
- Tax exempt certificates (where applicable), liability waivers or any other legal documents necessary
- The student-run organization has several loyal sponsors who may be willing to assist local groups in areas where they do business
- The Big Event on campus may also be willing to provide/sell at a small fee items such as hats, t-shirts, bracelets, etc.
- The Association can provide A&M Clubs with a list of Aggies in your area who you can contact to volunteer, or can e-mail those Aggies on behalf of your Club
- Any other questions/concerns you may have can possibly be answered by The Big Event on campus or The Association

## General Yearly Outline of Activities

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This section is written to show you the basic activities and steps to be taken throughout the summer, fall, and spring to organize The Big Event. This schedule is designed to fit an event to be held during the spring; if your event is held during a different part of the year, the activities should be rearranged to fit your needs.

### Identifying Leadership (11-12 Months Prior to Event)

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Seeing that you will likely not have an event already, if you have a group of friends or colleagues that would like to assist you in beginning The Big Event, then they should be your executive staff. Remember: The Big Event was started by a college student and his friends so do not feel that you must have a full staff to make this project get off the ground; interest from others will most certainly come with time.

#### ***For future years:***

After The Big Event has happened for the year, it is time to select the new leadership that will begin planning for the following year's event. This includes selecting a new Chair through a selections procedure that your committee has deemed appropriate; it is recommended that the Club prepare a written selections procedure to follow from year-to-year. Usually, the outgoing director selects the new director through a simple application and interview process.

## **Fall (or 6-8 Months Prior to Event)**

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### **Sub- Committee Head Selections (For Clubs with Sub-Committee Organizations)**

If there is enough interest in being a part of The Big Event committee, an application and interview selection process has worked best. Initially, it may be beneficial to accept any former student who wishes to help out and not focus on selections if your application numbers are low.

### **General Committee Meetings (4-6 Months Prior to Event for Clubs with Sub-Committees)**

Meetings should be held monthly, potentially before/after the A&M Club general meeting or at a time agreed upon by all committee members, to discuss and conduct the business of The Big Event. At each meeting, the Chair may give a general update about recent developments. Sub-committee heads will follow with deadline checks and setting goals to be completed by the next meeting, such as confirming a date and service locations for the event.

### **Summary**

These are the fall activities that should be done to get The Big Event started for your local A&M Club. Remember that these activities are going on in addition to all of the work being done within the individual sub-committees.

Constantly ask yourself questions while going through this process. For example, to have a fall inventory, you must have tools; to have tools you have to have money to buy them and a space to store them. This may not be something you can do for a while, which is okay! You may have to ask the community residents to provide supplies for their jobs or you may work only at community agencies that can provide supplies for the first few years while you build up your finances. These questions will orient you to figure out the best places to start and help you decide how best to run your committee.

## Spring

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### **Spring General Committee Meetings (For Clubs with Sub-Committees)**

Meetings should be held monthly to discuss and conduct the business of The Big Event. A general committee meeting is held first, followed by updates from individual sub-committee heads. Just as in the fall, any questions, concerns, and things impacting the whole committee are discussed. It may be useful to solicit club volunteers before or after the committee meeting with help in generating any necessary banners or fliers for the day of the event.

There are several options to use when locating service projects in the community. A majority of these options, however, involve establishing relationships with various community entities. This is why it is essential for the Outreach and Development sub-committees to begin making these relationships in the fall and to continually build them throughout the year.

During the spring, the Outreach Sub-Committee (or the Chair, if your A&M Club chooses to opt for a single coordinator) will solidify volunteers and locations for the day of The Big Event. Duties can include:

- Checking job sites (see what supplies are needed, how many former students should participate at each location, allocating an amount of time for each job)
- Matching participants to jobs
- Pick one name from each group to serve as the Individual Group Leader. (For example: John Smith will be the representative for Individual Group 2.)
  - You will inform the individual participants of their group number and selected representative by email sent out a few days before or on the morning of the event.
- Keep track of a database of participants and volunteer locations (you must have a master list of all organizations and the job sites to which they are assigned)
  - Record the name of the individuals and the number of participants assigned to the job in the database (if applicable)

## **Committee Matching Day (For Those Coordinating Multiple Volunteer Sites)**

Committee Matching Day is when the committee members prepare the information packet that is given to former student participants containing everything they need to know about the job they will be completing on the day of The Big Event. The Outreach Sub-Committee Head can seek help from the other committee members in compiling the packets. This can be done before or after a committee meeting or on another day agreed upon by committee members.

### **Preparation**

- You should have a manila folder for each job that will be done.
- You should have copies of all of the completed Job Information Forms. (They should have all of the job recipient's information, a job description, the participants assigned to the job, the number of alumni assigned to the job.)
- You should have the binder of all of the maps to the job sites.
- You should have copies of any supplemental materials you would like to include in the packet. This may include:
  - A list of numbers to call if there are problems at the job site. These can be the numbers of the committee members and each group leader)
  - A sheet of proper Big Event day guidelines, like parking, important times, etc.
  - If you have a big kickoff ceremony, you could have a flier advertising your speaker and/or band.

### **Completing the Packets**

- The Outreach Sub-Committee Head should get:
  - One manila folder per job assigned
    - Write the name of the group/individual assigned to the particular job and the job number on the tab
    - Place the Job Information Form copy, map, and any supplemental materials into the folder
  - The maps for each of the jobs they were assigned
  - Any supplemental materials you wish to be put in the packet
- After the packets are completed, the folder should be filed in a bin alphabetically by the last name of the group leader.

### **Group Leader Meeting (For Those Coordinating Multiple Event Sites)**

If you are coordinating multiple volunteer sites, Group Leader meetings are one of the most important things the committee does to prepare the participants for the day of The Big Event. The meeting should be held the Tuesday, Wednesday, and/or Thursday before your Big Event. A Group Leader email can easily be substituted for a meeting, when appropriate.

At the group leader meetings, the participants check in by their last name. At check-in, the participant is given their folder that was prepared during committee matching day. Only the group leader will receive the information packet. The group leader is expected to give their group a run-down of the highlights on the morning of The Big Event. Once everyone has checked in, the meeting can begin.

During the meeting various topics should be discussed:

- The contents of the folder should be explained
- Explanations of important information should be given to the representatives such as phone numbers to call, where to go if first aid is needed, where the closest hospital is, etc.
- Explanations about how the morning of The Big Event is going to run, how check-in tables will be set up, the schedule for speaker/bands
- Representatives are reminded about the times and locations of the welcoming ceremony.
- This all should be followed by a question and answer period.

## The Day of The Big Event

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### Kickoff and Participant Check-in

The Kickoff ceremony provides participating former students with a place to meet with the group they will be working with that day. If possible, your committee could arrange for small food items to be donated (such as donuts or orange juice) for the participants to be able to eat during the ceremony. This is the time when a local band can play and allow former students to get pumped up about the projects they are getting ready to complete. During the actual ceremony, there can be a variety of speakers and/or some other forms of entertainment.

What you need for Check-In:

- Master list of all participating former students organized alphabetically
  - NOTE: If you have multiple check-in tables, you need multiple copies of the master list!
- One three ring binder containing business card holding sheet protectors and a large stack of blank business cards (or the like)
  - NOTE: Committee members should write one job number on each card and place the cards in numerical order in the slots of the sheet protectors.
- Index card files
- Dot stickers and Sharpie markers
- Stamp and stamp pad

### Headquarters Solutions (For Those Coordinating Multiple Event Sites)

While former students are out doing jobs, the committee members remain at 'Headquarters Solutions,' where the contact and emergency cell phones are located. If you are running one central volunteer site, Headquarters Solutions will likely be on-site with volunteers. Participants who run into problems at their job site can call a number that goes to 'Headquarters Solutions' and one of the committee members can help find a resolution. It helps to have a master list of all jobs and all participants at headquarters solutions. It also helps to have the binders containing copies of each team's manila folder at headquarters solutions, as directions to each job site are written on these forms. This is to help participants who get lost on their way to the job site. 'Headquarters Solutions' is the crisis management center for the day of The Big Event.

## Sample Schedule of Events for the Day of The Big Event

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7:00 am	TBE Committee meets for breakfast
8:00 am	Committee head to Kickoff location
8:30 am	Check-in of former student participants begins Band begins playing (if applicable)
9:00 am	Kickoff begins
9:30 am	Before kickoff ends, committee members move to headquarters Kickoff ends
10:00 am	Former students head off to job sites to begin working <u>for about 3-4 hours</u> Kickoff area is cleaned
11:00 am	The Big Event committee members begin leaving to re-check their assigned jobs to make sure that there are no problems and that the recipient is happy with the work being done.
2:00 pm	The majority of former students begin returning from their completed jobs. Participants do not need to return to headquarters and are free to leave from the job site.
2:00-5:00 pm	All participants should have completed their jobs Clean-up of headquarters

### THE BIG EVENT IS OVER!!

**We know this may seem like a lot of work, but it can be done! The above-mentioned material is meant for you to use as a template, so you can adjust it to what will work best for your local A&M club and former student participants. Remember that this is not about statistics or recognition; it is all about saying “Thank You!”**



## Example Waiver Form for Participants



### Volunteer Agreement

PLEASE READ THIS PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT CAREFULLY. IT IS A LEGAL CONTRACT CONTAINING A RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY. IT AFFECTS ANY RIGHTS YOU MAY HAVE IF YOU OR YOUR CHILD IS INJURED OR OTHERWISE SUFFER DAMAGES WHILE PARTICIPATING IN THE ASSOCIATION OF FORMER STUDENTS VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES.

#### Volunteer Agreement

By signing this Volunteer Participation Agreement, I agree:

1. To participate in the above Volunteer Activities through The Association of Former Students.
2. To accept guidance and decisions of The Association staff members.
3. To abide by all of the rules of conduct governing Association staff members.
4. To always wear a volunteer name badge when on duty.
5. To wear my organization shirt and jeans/khakis while volunteering or attire as directed by the event manager.
6. To display a positive, customer-focused attitude and treat all individuals with courtesy and respect.
7. To record all volunteer hours in the Volunteer Time Sheet Binder located at the Receptionist Desk.
8. To maintain confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information whether this information involves an individual, staff member, volunteer, patron or involves Association business.
9. To report on time as scheduled, check in with staff upon arrival and perform delegated tasks only.
10. To notify my supervisor if I am unable to keep my schedule, need to take an extended leave or if I decide to resign.
11. The Association is hereby granted permission to request and obtain data pertinent to my volunteering at The Association from individuals listed in the Volunteer Group Application.
12. To use work tools and materials safely and according to the instructions I receive.
13. To perform only those activities that I have been assigned, that I am comfortable doing, and that I feel I can accomplish safely.

#### Health Condition of the Participant

Participants must be able to safely participate in volunteer activities. By signing this Participation Agreement, I agree that:

1. I can participate safely in the specified activity.
2. I will participate in the specified activity within my ability and skill level.
3. I must supply my own health insurance and will bear all financial responsibility for any medical treatment arising from participating in Volunteer Activities at The Association of Former Students.

#### Permission-Use of Photographs

I grant full permission to The Association to use my name, any photographs for promotion/publicity purposes or for volunteer recognition without obligation or liability to me.

#### Transportation

I understand that personally owned automobiles used in conjunction with this volunteer activity are not insured by The Association of Former Students for liability or property damage. I also understand that if I use my personal vehicle, I am required to carry auto liability insurance as required by the State of Texas.

#### Participation of Minors

Individuals under that age of 18 must be approved by The Association of Former Students to volunteer and must be under direct supervision of a parent, guardian or approved Association staff supervisor at all times. The parent or legal guardian must sign the Minor Volunteer document.

**Release of Liability**

I acknowledge that I understand and that I do hereby, for myself, the members of my family and spouse if I am alive, and my heirs, assigns, and personal representatives if I am deceased, **RELEASE FROM LIABILITY, WAIVE, FOREVER DISCHARGE, AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE** The Association of Former Students and all of its officers, faculty, employees and volunteers (hereinafter referred to as "RELEASEES") from any and all claims, demands, actions, or causes of action on account of any injury to persons or property or on account of my or my child's death which may occur from participation as a Volunteer of The Association of Former Students. I do hereby expressly agree to refrain from bringing suit or proceedings at law or in equity or otherwise as provided by law against any of the RELEASEES on account of any and all such claims, demands, or causes of action.

**Indemnification**

I further **AGREE TO INDEMNIFY AND HOLD HARMLESS** the RELEASEES from any loss, liability, damage, or cost, including court costs and attorneys' fees that they may incur due to my participation as a Volunteer of The Association of Former Students.

**BY SIGNING THIS PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT I STATE THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ALL CONDITIONS SET FORTH WITHIN, AND THAT I SIGN THIS VOLUNTARILY.**

**Participant Information**

Participant's Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Signature of Agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you under the age of 18? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, Parent/Legal Guardian's Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS SECTION FOR SIGNATURE IF VOLUNTEER IS UNDER THE AGE OF 18 – (BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN OF INDIVIDUAL LISTED ABOVE):** By signing the Participation Agreement, I state that I have read and understand the conditions set forth in this Release and that I agree to all conditions set forth herein, and that I sign this voluntarily.

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Information for Each Participant:**

In case of emergency, please contact:

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

***Waiver Forms Available Upon Request***