

## Virtual Volunteers

*Are you interested in donating your time and using your talents to help make the world a better place?*

Now you can help others without leaving the comfort of your home! Virtual volunteers provide cyber service to those in need via the Internet. While it may sound like something out of a science fiction thriller, virtual volunteering is simply providing your time and expertise online to non-profit organizations, schools, or other groups that rely on volunteers. Of course, many of these online organizations will help you find opportunities to help off line, too. If you're looking for a new way to interact with the outside world after retiring, some volunteer work may be just the ticket. You could:

**Become a mentor for a teenager.** Would you have ended up in a different place if you'd had a mentor during high school? Or was it a mentor who helped you to achieve all that you have? No matter why you choose mentoring, [icouldbe.org](http://icouldbe.org) offers mentoring for the next generation. This award-winning, non-profit organization helps teens understand the career opportunities available to them and relies on mentors to guide teens toward better futures. You could help young people define their goals, or research college and career choices—without ever leaving your house ([www.icouldbe.org](http://www.icouldbe.org)).

**Help a community halfway around the world.** Are you interested in making a difference for people in less developed parts of the world? At [nabuur.com](http://nabuur.com), you'll find virtual villages where representatives of communities within developing countries ask for help with issues, and volunteers help find solutions. You don't need special expertise. Once an issue has been identified, you can help by searching the internet, tapping your network of friends and associates, and offering creativity and energy. Volunteers for [nabuur.com](http://nabuur.com) are helping to build an Internet center in Ecuador, set up a children's library in Morocco, establish new businesses in India, and much more ([www.nabuur.com](http://www.nabuur.com)).

**Provide warmth and comfort to people in need.** Do you enjoy knitting and crocheting? Would you like to learn how? Warm Up America relies on volunteers to make blankets, clothing and other items for people who have lost their homes, left abusive relationships, or are being cared for in hospices, shelters, hospitals, and nursing homes. Just knit or crochet one (or more) seven inch by nine inch square that can be included in an afghan. It's an opportunity to work with grandchildren, friends, or someone else to create something that has lasting value for you and for others. ([www.warmupamerica.org](http://www.warmupamerica.org))

Whether you love using a computer, or just know how to surf the web, there are lots of volunteer opportunities available. You may want to start by visiting [www.volunteermatch.org](http://www.volunteermatch.org). All you have to do is enter your zip code and the site will provide a list of volunteer opportunities in your area.