DEVELOP YOUR OWN RED KETTLE CLUB
In the Beginning

Creating the first Red Kettle Club

The first Red Kettle Club in America was formed by Katie Wilkinson when she was a junior at Corona del Sol High School in Tempe, Arizona. But in reality, the seeds were sown long before that first club meeting on September 22, 2011.

Katie’s family began supporting the Salvation Army decades earlier when her grandfather, a television journalist in Phoenix, covered a devastating earthquake in Guatemala in 1976 and witnessed, first-hand, the work of The Salvation Army. Ten years later, as a TV station manager, he would give the green light, and offer the full station resources of KTVK 3TV, to support and sponsor the Army’s 1986 launch of “Secret Santa,” a holiday program to collect new toys, later renamed “Christmas Angel.”

Volunteering was a way of life for the entire family. Katie was taught by example the importance of helping others. In 2007, as a seventh grader, she began volunteering at The Salvation Army Christmas Center. This became a holiday tradition for the Wilkinson family.
In 2010, a long-time family friend and member of the Army’s National and Phoenix Advisory Boards asked Katie’s mother, Cherie, if she could “adopt” a kettle location for one day that holiday season. Cherie was able to organize a half-day of volunteers. Katie sang and rang and, along with other family members and friends, helped increase the half-day kettle donation total from $25.61 the previous year to more than $500 at the same location.

Six months later, during the summer before her junior year, Katie decided to apply for the National Honor Society. Only then did she learn of the requirement to have served a role in volunteer leadership in order to be considered for the prestigious club.

Though Katie had volunteered for the Army, Hospices and other organizations, she had never served in a leadership capacity. So, she thought, maybe it was time to be founder and president of a new club on campus. And there wasn’t an organization any closer to her heart than The Salvation Army. She and her mother called their Army friend to share the idea.

Katie gathered a small group of classmates and invited their support, each being assigned an officer position. She invited Deborah Gile, one of her favorite teachers, to serve as club sponsor. Together, they received approval from principal Brent Brown. They posted a notice and 25 students attended the first meeting. Salvation Army corps officer Major Robyn Bridgeo and their advisory board member friend also attended, offering personal perspectives on the work of The Salvation Army on a local, national and international level. The students were amazed, intrigued and eager to become involved.

The first Red Kettle Club in America was born.
WHY SUPPORT THE FORMATION OF A CLUB?

A Red Kettle Club is not for every school. But when a student emerges with a commitment, drive to support the less fortunate of their community and a desire to engage others to be involved in a big way, a Red Kettle Club can become a very viable option.

Administrators who see beyond the fact that the Salvation Army is a church, recognizing the organization for the invaluable service provided for the less fortunate, will complement the desires of the student leader and those classmates who wish to follow.

- Students in a Red Kettle Club represent an all-important, new generation of Army supporters. Many have never even heard of The Salvation Army and certainly have no idea of the programs and services offered locally, nationally and internationally.
- As students learn more about the work of the Army, their families and other friends learn as well.
- Most, if not all, high schools require community service by their students. A Red Kettle Club is a great way to earn those hours.
- Volunteer hours with The Salvation Army, beyond bell-ringing, will be looked upon very favorably by colleges and universities.
- Students and families alike appreciate that all the money raised by the club stays within their community.
- Hours served also help the less fortunate of their immediate community.
- The Salvation Army has fun and rewarding opportunities for young people.
TIME TO GET STARTED

THERE IS A WINNING EQUATION FOR THE SUCCESS OF A RED KETTLE CLUB:

1. STUDENT
2. PARENT
3. SPONSOR
4. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR
5. CORPS OFFICER(S)
6. ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

GOALS OF A RED KETTLE CLUB

1) Be involved in a minimum two volunteer service projects per year
2) Hold a planning meeting with the corps officer at the beginning of each semester
3) Hold club meetings throughout the year (monthly is advised)
4) Require each member to volunteer at least 10 hours per semester
5) Pay nominal dues for membership (optional)

It is valuable to have the club originate with a student. Without the passion and buy-in at that level, it cannot survive. Starting a club is an achievement a student must embrace and work hard to accomplish.
STEPS FOR STUDENT TO FOLLOW:

1) Make a commitment to start a Red Kettle Club, identify potential club officers

2) Select a faculty member to serve as the sponsor

3) Download the charter application found on the national web site (redkettleclub.org)
   - Charter name will be name of school + Red Kettle Club
   - Get principal's approval and signature on form
   - Submit to the Army's National Headquarters (or local corps officer/advisory board member, if student or parent know these contacts)

4) Once approved, sponsor will receive charter certificate and local Army officer contact information (if not already available)

5) Sponsor will receive approval to use Army logo for shirts, fliers, other collateral

6) Students meet with corps officer(s) to develop list of activities for semester

7) Be sure to have lower-level classmates involved to begin grooming future leadership

8) Students start a Facebook page; Twitter account (optional)

9) Assign a photographer (or ask parent, sponsor, advisory board member) to take photos of everything and submit regularly to National Headquarters for inclusion on redkettleclub.org. Submit releases to the media for coverage of events. Have photos as historical documents of club activities.
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Not all schools have the same requirements in the way clubs should operate. These suggested assignments are offered as guidelines for needs to be covered.

STUDENTS: Typically, a club movement begins with a student. It is important that the student leader:
- Be fully committed to spearhead the efforts of member recruitment and execution of club projects throughout the year.
- Identify officers.
- Identify a faculty member to serve as a club sponsor.
- Be prepared at meetings, have fun, engage the membership.

PARENT: There is no limit to the number of parents who might be involved but it is important that one take a lead. The parental role can be as broadly defined as one might have the time and resources to spare. This may be the parent of the club president.
- Serve as a liaison with the club sponsor, Army corps officer and advisory board member (optional).
- Assume responsibility for providing snacks for club meetings (optional).
- Assist in special areas of need (i.e., promoting events, seeking media support, taking photos). These tasks may also be delegated to others.

SPONSOR: This faculty member assists the club members by:
- Attending club meetings and providing direction, as needed, to the club leadership.
- At the beginning of each semester, set a planning meeting with the club and corps officers to determine activities and dates.
- Advise corps officers of any special needs (i.e., financial assistance for t-shirts, snacks).
- Schools typically require a sponsor be present for all club activities. Consider a second sponsor, or school representative, to help share the load/events to encourage more students to take advantage of service opportunities (especially during the holidays).
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR: The club president and faculty sponsor discuss the club formation with a top administrator, typically the principal. The principal and sponsor must give their signature approval on the charter application.

CORPS OFFICER(S): Salvation Army officers should consider Red Kettle Club members as priority volunteers. The role of the corps officer is critical to the success of a club.

- Stay in touch with the club sponsor and respond promptly when contacted.
- Be aware if clubs have need for financial assistance (i.e., t-shirts, snacks).
- Keep advisory board informed of RKC activities; engage a single board member to act as liaison with club. Invite RKC officers to attend a board meeting.
- Encourage a planning session with students and sponsor at the beginning of each semester to determine service projects and dates; have an ongoing to-do list in case students make additional requests to help during the semester.
- At least one officer should attend RKC meetings and be prepared to share a story of a personal situation when s/he has experienced the goodness of the Army changing a life.

- Seek (assistance with) media coverage for RKC involvement in events.
- Consider an RKC Leadership Seminar for students, parents, corps officers, sponsors at an Army facility. Also invite representatives from non-RKC schools to introduce them to the concept. Allow plenty of time for interaction and idea exchange. (The Southwest Division had all three RKC schools in attendance and representatives from five potential schools.)
- Consider an end-of-school year celebration and take refreshments to a club meeting. Present the club president, sponsor, parent, administrator with a plaque of appreciation. Invite advisory board members to contribute toward the costs.
- Always work through the sponsor, parent or advisory board member and not the students.
- Be sure that photos and activities about the Red Kettle Club are sent to National Headquarters (redkettleclub@usn.salvationarmy.org) in a timely fashion.
- Keep your Divisional Commander apprised of Red Kettle Club activities as he will report activities to your Territorial Commander. This information is shared with the National Commander, National Advisory Board and Army leaders across America. There is tremendous enthusiasm for the growth of Red Kettle Clubs.
ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER: Advisory board members may have the greatest advantage of all in identifying students who might wish to start a club. At a minimum, the role of an advisory board member should be one of support to the corps officers that work with the club and to serve as a liaison with the advisory board about club activities and areas of need where the board might offer assistance. Additional areas of consideration, as available and appropriate:

- Keep an eye out for student awards/scholarship opportunities for RKC leaders.
- Offer assistance with social media or other areas of technical expertise, if needed.
- Assist with media coverage of RKC-supported activities, if needed.
- Talk with corps officer about financial needs with clubs. Encourage board members to help support activities that require funding.
- As a board member becomes better acquainted with all involved, be aware of additional ways to lend support.
- Be thoughtful of people in their world who would make a great guest speaker.
- A board member should always take his/her lead from the corps officer, sponsor or parent.
PROJECT IDEAS

CHRISTMAS
- Assist in registering families for assistance
- Work in the malls at Christmas Angel trees (or similar programs)
- Work in the warehouse before and/or during distribution
- Ring bells at a kettle location for at least one day (sing, play instruments)
- Encourage others to adopt-a-kettle for a day
- Assist officers in other parts of Christmas programs
- Plan a special Christmas event involving school choir at local mall and have RKC members shop for Christmas Angels prior to concert
- Volunteer (or perform) at holiday dinners

DONATION DRIVES
- Collect donations at specified location on a Saturday; have Army truck available
- Garage sale (request ARC pick-up of leftover items)
- Clothing drive (socks, sweaters, coats)
- Water, protein, PB&J and other food drives
- Box food donated from throughout the community
- Paint a room or part of an Army facility
- Help set-up or work at an Army event (Easter egg hunt, Salvation Army Week activities)
- Have club members assist with Habitat for Humanity house
- Do something special for military troops (i.e., write letters)
- Prepare gift baskets (toiletries, etc) for seniors in low-income housing, nursing homes
- Help coach students in sports at an Army facility
- Assist with tutoring; plan a period of time to play with children in homeless shelter.
WHAT MAKES A SUCCESSFUL RED KETTLE CLUB

- A strong student leader and club officers
- A supportive sponsor
- Good communication with the Salvation Army officers
- Dedicated, organized and enthusiastic officers
- Activities that students see as fun rather than work (boxing food is fun!)
- Hands-on activities vs. only bringing in money, canned goods, etc.
- Refreshments at meetings
- A welcoming environment (not a club for cliques or just kids with top grades)
- Students who are excited about volunteering
- Guest speakers

CURRENT RED KETTLE CLUBS IN AMERICA

Apache Junction High School – Apache Junction, Arizona (Kandis Beyer, president)
Basha High School – Chandler, Arizona (Kennedy Parker, president) - pending
Corona del Sol High School – Tempe, Arizona (Braedon O’Meara, president)
Desert Vista High School – Tempe, Arizona (Hayden Boucher, president) - pending Haines City High School – Haines City, Florida (Delana Wilkinson, president)
Seton Catholic Preparatory Academy – Chandler, Arizona (Andrea Petersen, president)
The Westminster Schools – Atlanta, Georgia (Emma Tordella, Laurel Kazazian)
Brookfield Central High School – Brookfield, Wisconsin
Be sure to mention the Red Kettle Clubs at every event hosted by The Salvation Army. The parent or friend of your next club founder and president may be in the audience!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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