



community café

Everybody eats. Everybody gives. Everybody matters.

Big Big Table Community Café

JOB POSTING

Job Title: Guest Experience & Volunteer Coordinator	Current Location: 272 Hudson St Buffalo, NY
Reports To: Executive Director	Compensation: \$21hr (Employee Assistance Program available, plus complimentary lunch anytime we are open)
Type Of Position: Part time, 25 - 27 hrs/wk	Working Hours: Primarily Monday - Friday, 10am - 3:30p Occasional committee meetings, evenings, weekends and special events

Job Summary:

The Guest Experience Coordinator is responsible for creating a welcoming, inclusive, and engaging experience for everyone who enters Big Big Table while building and managing the volunteer community. The Guest Experience Coordinator will help guests to understand and follow our Community Guidelines. The Guest Experience Coordinator will have a regular and relational presence in our dining room, greeting guests, learning the names of returning guests, providing a compassionate and listening ear. The Guest Experience Coordinator will collaborate with community stakeholders and be able to steer guests toward outside community resources, when appropriate.

They will manage volunteer application and reviews with the Cafe Manager, and then take ownership of onboarding, training and the eventual retainment of volunteers, maintain volunteer systems and ensure appropriate coverage for daily cafe operations.

As the front line eyes and ears in the cafe, the Guest Experience Coordinator will be integral to risk mitigation, de-escalation, and initiating emergency protocol in the event of an emergency. While providing a warm and engaging presence in the cafe, this staff member will be ready to adapt / engage / respond in a tense situation or in the event of inappropriate guest behavior. They will also be a vital piece of the team in management of the cafe space's physical needs by ensuring maintenance of the space is up to BBT safety and health standards.

About You

The ideal candidate for this position is passionate about fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment, engaging a highly diverse community. You are a people person, and are comfortable

interacting with a wide variety of guests non-judgmentally, including people experiencing untreated mental illness, people without housing, people experiencing poverty, and people who use drugs. You are emotionally intelligent, someone who is resourceful, quick on your feet, and level headed in a crisis. You will have good judgement, and be comfortable enforcing guidelines and following response protocols in collaboration with fellow staff members. You will not be easily intimidated. The ideal candidate will be a highly adaptable, creative problem solver, with effective communication skills.

Qualifications:

- 1+ years of experience working with housing insecure and/or vulnerable populations
- Intermediate Microsoft Word, Excel, and Google Drive skills
- Educational or professional background in social work, psychology, counseling, or a related field
- Restaurant/food service experience preferred
- Excellent interpersonal, customer service, and verbal/written communication skills
- Excellent time management skills with a proven ability to meet deadlines
- Ability to establish relationships with guests, team members, and community service providers
- Experience in using trauma informed care, mental health first aid, and harm reduction approaches
- Ability to communicate with multiple stakeholders related to needs of the cafe and FOH space
- Commitment to uphold Big Big Table's mission and values
- Demonstrate personal integrity and responsibility
- Demonstrate an awareness of and sensitivity to the issues that vulnerable populations, people experiencing housing insecurity, and people who use drugs face, including health disparities that impact BIPOC communities at a disproportionate rate.
- Spanish language proficiency preferred

Key Responsibilities:**Guest & Volunteer Experience:**

- Ensure guests understand and follow our Community Guidelines
- Foster an inclusive and respectful dining space by engaging guests in conversation and community-building activities; Build rapport with guests and encourage social connection among guests, helping to create a welcoming environment where all feel comfortable
- Support guests in understanding our pay-as-you-can model and culture of contribution, and provide guidance in completing job board tasks in exchange for a meal.
- Offer informal counseling and emotional support to guests experiencing distress; lead and develop community partnerships who can provide additional resources and support outside of BBT.
- Coordinate volunteer recruitment and onboarding along with Cafe Manager; actively direct, train and coach volunteers in real time during cafe operations.
- Ensure volunteers understand their roles, are positioned where they are most needed, and have the support and guidance needed to provide a positive guest experience.
- Assign volunteers to specific roles and responsibilities at the start of each shift; serve as the primary on-the-floor leader and resource for volunteers during cafe service.
- Develop volunteers' confidence and ability to work independently over time.
- Participate directly in cafe operations, work alongside volunteers as needed.

Resource Navigation & Referrals:

- Assist guests in identifying and connecting with appropriate essential services, such as housing assistance, employment resources, and mental health support programs.
- Maintain an internal directory of community resources to streamline referrals
- Collaborate with local organizations and service providers to offer an unobtrusive presence and/or resource listings in the dining room
- Coordinate with the staff team on potential workshops, wellness events, and or other community building events hosted in our space outside of meal service times.
- Along with Cafe Manager, build and maintain relationships with community organizations, schools, businesses and service groups to build a robust pipeline of volunteers.

De-escalation & Conflict Resolution

- Implement harm reduction, mental health first aid, and restorative justice practices to mediate

- conflicts and maintain a safe communal space
- Provide de-escalation support during tense situations, working alongside café staff and volunteers to uphold a positive atmosphere
- Implement risk mitigation strategies and follow response protocols in the event of an emergency
- Assist in the development of policies and protocols for FOH needs and maintaining the upkeep of the document.

Program Development & Sustainability

- Participate in the agency's Front of House Committee
- Represent Big Big Table at off-site and community events
- Document and review guest feedback, suggestions, and concerns
- Track guest interactions and program impact to inform future funding opportunities
- Assist in developing a framework for a Dining Room Companion volunteer shifts, including potential transition into an MSW placement or structured volunteer program
- Participate in staff meetings and contribute to the ongoing improvement of Big Big Table's holistic service model
- Assist in management of cafe physical space needs

Physical Requirements:

- Ability to lift up to 50 pounds
- Ability to stand for long periods of time, bend, reach, go up and down steps
- Ability to work in extreme temperatures near hot ovens, stoves, and grills
- Ability to safely use sharp tools
- Ability to use hospitality and human services skills (i.e., trauma informed care approaches) towards deescalating any issues that arise with guests who dine at the café

About Big Big Table Community Café

Big Big Table Community Café (BBT) is a non-profit community café—a pay-as-you-can lunchtime restaurant, focused on addressing hunger, reducing food waste, and building community. Our motto is: “Everybody eats. Everybody gives. Everybody matters.” **Our mission is to provide a dignified response to hunger in our community, providing Buffalo with accessible and affordable nutritious meals, regardless of ability to pay.** With pay-as-you-can pricing and a significant volunteer component in day-to-day operations, everyone is given a chance to earn what they need by giving what they can.

Our culture is centered around inclusivity. As a donation-based café, we do not have set prices or menu items. Our menu is dynamic and changes daily. Our fresh and healthy offerings include daily salads, sandwiches, soups, sides, and desserts, based on available ingredients. Guests determine how they would like to participate in exchange for their meal, and everyone enjoys the same quality dining experience. Our menu is centered around in-season produce and food rescue to utilize excess and farm seconds from local farmers, restaurants, and suppliers. Modest staffing is supplemented with volunteer labor. Collaboration and partnerships are central to our operations.

Big Big Table opened to the public in October 2021. As a member of One World Everybody Eats (www.oneworldeverybodyeats.org), we brought a developed sustainable social enterprise model to Western New York. Nationally, these cafés do best where there is income diversity, operating at community crossroads, easily accessible to high-need communities while also attracting diners who can afford to pay market value or more for a meal.

Big Big Table Community Café values a diverse workplace and strongly encourages women, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, people with disabilities, members of ethnic minorities and veterans to apply.

Big Big Table Community Café is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, or age.