

February Volunteer Staff Q&A

We had a lot of fun answering your questions and look forward to doing this again! For identification purposes, MK are Michael's answers, CS are Cory's answers and PR are Parker's answers.

Question 1: All three of you are Eagles fans like me, was that a requirement on getting hired? If so, it must be good luck!

- **MK** – Yes, I think that's the only reason I was even hired to be honest.
- **CS** – We promise not to trade Michael to the Texans.
- **PR** – Birds are love. Birds are life.

Question 2: Christkindlmarkt-offer more Steel Stacks, Yuengling, and Peeps stuff and less Bethlehem Steel stuff; only old people are interested in Steel stuff.

- **MK** – I will pass this along to our retail department! Who doesn't love a variety of clothing options?!

Question 3: Do you have any Pets?

- **MK** – I have a little Dachshund named Willow. She's a former multi-time participant in the Oktoberfest Weiner dog races and has also appeared on WFMZ to promote the event. She probably has done more for ArtsQuest than I have...
- **CS** – Two cats, Wasabi and Crispy. One is a sweetheart and one is a felon—they take turns deciding which is which.
- **PR** – Matilda is my daughter.



Left to right: Willow, Wasabi & Crispy, Matilda

Question 4: For each of you, who's your go-to musical artist when you just need to escape to your happy place? Not necessarily your favorite artist overall.

- **CS** – Thankfully one of my favorite artists is who I turn to when I need to ground myself anyway—Hozier. His soulful Irish folk sound with funky undertones brings some energy to the gravity of his lyrics. Beyond that, I actually really dig 80's music. I'll roll up the white sleeves of my blazer and wear sunglasses at night.
- **MK** – I never grew out of the mid 2000's emo phase. Proving that it was *never a phase*, and in fact, a lifestyle.
- **PR** – Country is typically my go to genre, so Garth Brooks, Reba McEntyre, Brad Paisley.

Question 5: Go Birds.

- **MK** – GO BIRDS
- **CS** – E. A. G. L. E. S. Eagles!
- **PR** – Caw!

Question 6: How long have Cory, Parker and Michael worked for ArtsQuest?

- **MK** – A little over 2 and a half years. I started on the event staff and transferred to the Volunteer dept. in October! I couldn't be happier and no I swear they didn't force me to write this.
- **CS** – I've been here since November 2018. 6 years! Time flies when you're half-dead and trying to find an open parking spot on Connestoga Street.
- **PR** – 2 years this month! Cory lost the key to my shackles, so I'm stuck here.

Question 7: Do you ever turn down the "corporate volunteers"?

- **PR** – We haven't turned down a group since I started in 2023, but this is because most of our groups are returning year over year. There have been 1 or 2 groups where volunteering with us hasn't worked out, but that is typically for some mutual reason (e.g. The shift lengths don't work, looking for a different experience, etc) and I wouldn't consider that turning them down.

Question 8: N/A

- **MK** – NA as in sodium?
- **CS** – Everything is applicable with the right mindset.
- **PR** – Good point. I think it all started when I was 6...

Question 9: It would be interesting to have a short bio of each of the staff.

- **MK** – Excuse the laziness, but we recently all submitted short bio's for the ArtsQuest Staff page so I'll "repurpose" those

Cory's Bio

Started at ArtsQuest: 2018
Hometown: Northampton, PA
School: Northampton Area High School, Shippensburg University
Favorite Musikfest performance(s) you've seen: GGOOLDD, Ceramic Animals, St. Lenox, Bren, Rogue Diplomats, Counting Crows, Dan+Shay
Favorite ArtsQuest event/program that isn't called 'Musikfest': Christkindlmarkt and Spring BeerFest!
Favorite Artist(s): Hozier, Noah Kahan, Glass Animals, Florence and the Machine, James Blunt
Favorite Film(s): Bedknobs and Broomsticks
Favorite Quote: "Disce Aut Discede (Learn or Leave)" –Latin phrase
What are you most proud of? I'm proud of the stability my team has inspired in the volunteer program through unprecedented challenges like Covid.



Parker's Bio

Started at ArtsQuest: 2023
Hometown: Nazareth, PA
Favorite Musikfest performance(s) you've seen: AJR
Favorite ArtsQuest event/program that isn't called 'Musikfest': Christkindlmarkt
Favorite Artist(s): The Mountain Goats, Paul & Storm, Old Dominion, Sabrina Carpenter
Favorite Film(s): (500) Days of Summer, Across the Universe, Lisa Frankenstein, The Truman Show
Favorite Quote: Don't let perfect be the enemy of good.
What are you most proud of? Any show I direct in the theatre.



Michael's Bio

Started at ArtsQuest: 2022
Hometown: Whitehall, PA
School: Temple
Favorite Musikfest performance(s) you've seen: Start Making Sense on Levitt Pavilion during my first Musikfest in 2022. Amazing live performers, highly recommend checking them out.
Favorite ArtsQuest event/program that isn't called 'Musikfest': Christkindlmarkt. Such a fun, festive atmosphere.
Favorite Artist(s): My Chemical Romance, Bring me the Horizon, Mid 2000's emo will never leave my playlist
Favorite Film(s): I'm more a TV person. It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia, The Last of Us, Trailer Park Boys, South Park
Favorite Quote: "Hungry dogs run faster!" Go birds.
What are you most proud of? My own personal growth. I'm happy to be in a position where I actively enjoy my job and feel like I can make a difference for the community.



Question 10: Keep up the great job you guys are doing.

- **MK** – We do a good job pretending we do a good job. (Just kidding)
- **CS** – Thank you! We try, we try.
- **PR** – Thanks! Cory does all the work to be honest 😊

Question 11: There are no issues that I can think of that should be addressed. I think you and your team are doing a great job and it's nice to see you all floating around throughout the festivals and interacting with and thanking the volunteers.

- **MK** – I definitely enjoy being out there at the events and seeing things for myself. In my opinion being out at events and seeing the processes helps me to hopefully be able to make adjustments to make things easier for the volunteers
- **CS** – Thank you for the kind words! Truthfully, walking around and seeing how everyone is doing is the best part of working these events. The prep work and lead-up to a huge event like Musikfest or Christkindlmarkt is so daunting and time consuming, but once we're all in the thick of it—it's magic. Things can get solved right away and it's just a mad dash to get through the shift. It's great to see everyone coming back and to meet new friends.

Question 12: Question for all three. What are your favorite hobbies/interests/pastimes when you are not working at ArtsQuest? That is if you have any free time at all. Thank you for all that you do!

- **MK** – I enjoy winding down (For some of them this isn't exactly a relaxing activity) and watching my sports teams. 4/4 Philly teams if you were wondering. I also love motor sports of any kind. I've been hooked since I was young. Some of my favorite memories were as little kid at Nazareth Speedway (RIP) with my dad. Very excited for the Formula 1 season to be getting underway as well! Aside from that I enjoy video games, and love to get out and Disc Golf with my friends
- **CS** – I love to read books, play video games, and cheer on the Eagles. I enjoy playing board games with family and friends, especially Dungeons & Dragons when I can get everyone together at the same time. When I have the time, I like to write—nothing published yet, but it is definitely for lack of trying. I'm also a bit of an amateur mixologist and spend more time than I probably should learning how to mix drinks together and figuring out which spirits I like best. Walks through a forest trail and time on a lake or around a fire always refresh my spirit.
- **PR** – Going to mimic some of the answers from above: Dungeons & Dragons takes up some time, watching the Eagles and Chicago Cubs, and video games. Also do A LOT of theatre, I'm on the board at the PA Playhouse, direct a few shows a year, and any odd jobs folks need done (lighting for shows, fill in for an actor, etc).

Question 13: To have a live Horse Show for Spring Events

- **MK** – I'm not sure the Levitt Lawn would ever recover from an equestrian competition

- **CS** – Wouldn't mind seeing some jousting during Oktoberfest. Not sure why that comes to mind—Renaissance Faire-style stuff just feels like Fall.
- **PR** – Neighhhh

Question 14: What are the top 3 qualities you want in a volunteer?

- **MK** – I feel like most every volunteer fits these categories, but I'd say a passion for the arts, a want to help their community, and just overall a friendly human being
- **CS** – Kindness, to best work with guests and fellow volunteers. Flexibility, to roll with the punches and help wherever help is needed. And finally: love for the community and what we're trying to do. If a volunteer doesn't like what they're doing outside of whatever personal benefit might be there, it's hard to keep them coming back.
- **PR** – Community-oriented, self-driven, and flexible.

Question 15: What are your favorite ArtsQuest Events? (Popular submission)

- **MK** – Something about CKM always will put me in a good mood. Along those lines a warm summer night on the Levitt Lawn is always a great vibe. Cold bev in hand of course.
- **CS** – Musikfest is always going to be special, even though it's also the most stressful time of the year. Seeing the town transform into a totally different world and getting to live in that world with you all is unlike anything else. Christkindlmarkt has an undeniable charm and magic that helps make the holiday season come alive. And recently Spring BeerFest has become a favorite, because—well—beer!
- **PR** – Christkindlmarkt is my favorite event that we put on for sure. I've been going since I was younger and would come home for the holidays early when I lived elsewhere just to go. Shoutout to Peepsfest though. My partner and I try and go every year so we can say we celebrated the new year but go to bed at a reasonable time.

Question 16: What interested you in obtaining a job in the volunteer arena?

- **MK** – When I first joined ArtsQuest, I'll admit that I was very unaware of how involved the volunteer community was here. I quickly gained an appreciation for the dedication and sacrifices made to put on all the events we do here and when an opportunity to join the volunteer staff popped up it felt like such a great opportunity to stay with an organization I had grown to love and be able to take on a larger role in doing so. It feels great to come to work every day feeling like you have a sense of purpose and are actively contributing to a larger goal.
- **CS** – I grew up loving Musikfest, Christkindlmarkt, and Levitt. I got in the habit of periodically checking the ArtsQuest for open positions, and when I saw a spot for

Volunteer and Internship Coordinator, I knew I would be a good fit. I was a leader with many extracurricular groups during high school and college, which was all about getting my peers to work on shared projects in their free time. It seemed like a good fit and I'm grateful Courtney and Coryna thought so too.

- **PR** – I needed a change of pace after working at Starbucks throughout the pandemic. I've enjoyed ArtsQuest events in the past, and applied as I saw the position was open and thought it would be a good fit for both my personality and the type of theatre work I do.

Question 17: What is the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow?

- **CS** – Ni!
- **PR** – 24 mph
- **MK** – I apologize, I didn't initially get the reference. My dad would be disappointed

Question 18: What movie or tv series would you like to have a marathon viewing (6-8 hours) at the ArtsQuest Alehouse Cinema and why?

- **MK** – The Last of Us. The 2nd season is coming out very soon and I couldn't recommend it enough, so this would be a perfect time to catch up!
- **CS** – Any excuse to have a marathon of the Lord of the Rings (extended editions) is good for me, but we're talking about 12-14 hours there. For my 30th birthday, my family very kindly set up a screening of Bedknobs and Broomsticks (my favorite movie) at the Cinema. It was incredible to see something so nostalgic up on the big screen.
- **PR** – I would love to watch Avengers: Infinity War and Avengers: Endgame again with a full theatre. It was one of the most electric theatre going experiences of my life and I would love to try and recreate that.

Question 19: What was your favorite food as a kid growing up?

- **MK** – Pizza. It's probably still my favorite food, maybe a **REAL** Philadelphia Cheesesteak is a close 2nd.
- **CS** – Stay with me on this—a favorite to this day is meatloaf. What's not to like about a giant meatball? But the thing I truly like about meatloaf is that no one makes it exactly the same. Even though it's the same core dish, everyone puts their own little twist on it, and I love that it's something familiar and new all at once.
- **PR** – Mashed potatoes all the way. Potatoes in general are a versatile food, but mashed potatoes are the best form. Cheesy mashed potatoes? Perfection. Mashed potatoes with beefs tips and gravy? Goated. Want baked mashed potato balls? Great texture. It's the LeBron of food. LePotato, if you will.

Question 20: What's involved in the Ambassador Program? What are the requirements to be an ambassador? What is expected of an ambassador?

- **CS** – The Ambassador Program is meant for folks who volunteer consistently and have shown a passion for the ArtsQuest mission or at the very least have proven themselves capable under pressure during the busiest shifts. The Program takes place between January-May and consists of bi-weekly evening trainings where you hear from ArtsQuest staff and other volunteers how ArtsQuest completes its mission. That includes presentations from Kassie Hilgert, our President and CEO, Patrick Brogan, our Chief Programming Officer, and many more as you learn about how we book shows at the Musikfest main stage, the finances of our nonprofit, and how we market the cool things we're doing. At the end of the program, you'll be better equipped to answer guest questions and assist your fellow volunteers during a shift. To be an ambassador, you should have been volunteering with us for at least a year, with a clear dedication to do more than just one or two events throughout the year. You should have great customer service skills and display clear passion for what we're trying to achieve with our events. Ambassadors are expected to volunteer once a month as able, consistently participate in a variety of events, and to always put their best foot forward while on shift. It is our hope that today's Ambassadors will eventually become tomorrow's Site Supervisors and House Managers.
- **PR** – What Cory said.
- **MK** – I have nothing to add other than to say I've enjoyed each session so far; they've been very informative to me being "new" to the department. It's also one of the first projects Cory has let me take the reins of so to speak, so there's a lot of pride I take in wanting it to be successful and worthwhile for this year's class and beyond. A special thank you to the current ambassadors who've been attending as well, your support means everything!

Question 21: What's your favorite part of working with the volunteers?

- **MK** – The different personalities. Everyone's different and has their own fun quirks. It's been a joy getting to meet everyone over the past few months
- **CS** – The thing that makes our programs so different and great is the community that helps put them on. You can't just take the concept of Musikfest out of Bethlehem and drop it into some other town and expect the same results. Working side by side with the people who built this town is a privilege. My favorite thing is getting to hear your stories and all the different things you've experienced. It's better prepared me to take on my own challenges as we set these events up.

- **PR** – There is a certain passion that you need to volunteer and give back to the community, so getting to experience that energy during all the events (especially Muskifest) is magnificent. It's also lovely to hear everyone talk about their various experiences volunteering and the stories that folks have.

Question 22: When the Cinema shifts were released yesterday, there were no longer 1:30-3:30 shifts on Fridays. Was this an intentional removal? Thanks, guys! You are the best!

- **MK** – I tried to make the shifts somewhat more balanced as that shift was only 2 hours and there was a 30-minute overlap with the next shift but I'm always open to suggestions and feedback.

Question 23: When will the Musikfest sign up schedule be out?

- **MK** – April 1st for volunteers who have been with us 20+ years, April 15th open for all

Question 24: What is your favorite thing about your job? What is something unexpected you learned while working with ArtsQuest?

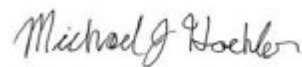
- **MK** – My favorite part of this job would probably be the pride I can take in being a part of something that is actively involved in the betterment of the community I grew up in. Something unexpected I've learned is how many volunteers it actually takes to keep this place running!
- **CS** – My favorite things? The people, the sense of contributing to community tradition. I didn't expect that after six years I would know how to change kegs, organize evacuations, or see what the kitchen at Lehigh Pizza looks like every summer—but those are things I know now!
- **PR** – I've really enjoyed spending time with and working with so many folks that think differently than I do. There is something about working towards the same goal with folks that makes you appreciate different approaches and ways of getting things done.



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