

GIRAFFE FAQs

WHO ARE YOU?

The Giraffe Heroes Project is an international nonprofit organization, registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3), incorporated in New York, now headquartered on Whidbey Island north of Seattle, with eight affiliates overseas. We are well described on www.giraffe.org. You can find us at office@giraffe.org; PO Box 759 Langley WA 98260; 360 221 7989

WHY THE GIRAFFE IMAGE?

Because we call on people to “Stick your neck out” and the animal giraffe has the longest neck. Because the name makes people smile and look again; it’s a great way to sneak up on them with our serious call for more brave, active, citizens.

WHAT'S YOUR MISSION?

To move people to stick their necks out for the common good, and to give them tools to succeed.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

We find and honor “Giraffe Heroes” — men, women and young people sticking their necks out to help solve significant public problems, including poverty, injustice, corruption, gang violence, crimes against women, assaults on the environment and much more. We then tell the stories of these amazing people over both traditional and social media. Others see and hear these inspiring stories and are motivated to take action too.

Understanding that inspiration alone is rarely enough, we offer Giraffe speeches and workshops and write books, blogs and Op-Eds. We’ve developed an entire K-12 curricula for schools and youth organizations aimed at helping kids build lives as caring and courageous citizens. We now rely heavily on a robust website and on social media, including Heads-Up, our e-zine, and active accounts on Facebook, Twitter LinkedIn and Pinterest.

WHAT MORE CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT GIRAFFE HEROES?

Giraffe Heroes tend to be involved in long-term efforts they’ve initiated, rather than in-the-moment physical heroism or in volunteering in efforts started by others. People who are fulfilling their job descriptions don’t make it through the Giraffe choosing process—the person has to be going above and beyond. People who are just famous, talented or gorgeous don’t make the cut either. The full criteria are [here](#).

WHO DECIDES WHO IS A GIRAFFE HERO?

A volunteer jury that meets regularly online.

HOW MANY GIRAFFES ARE CHOSEN?

As many as meet the [Criteria of Giraffedom](#). If all the nominees qualify, all are commended; if none do, none are chosen. There are no quotas involved and each nominee is considered in relation to the criteria, not to each other. This is not a competition—there are no bigger or best Giraffes. You just are one or you aren't.

HOW MANY GIRAFFES ARE THERE?

About 1,400 and counting.

HOW'S THE WORK FUNDED?

By private philanthropists, foundation grants, individual donations, and earned income from products and services, which include workshops, and a kindergarten-through-high-school curriculum called The Giraffe Heroes Program. We also pick up a few bucks from “Giraffenalia”—T-shirts, buttons—the usual array of stuff but cool, because there are these red giraffes on everything.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

To spread Giraffe heroes' stories as a way of inspiring more people to become active citizens, thereby fostering the health of our democracy. We believe, with La Rochefoucauld, that “Nothing is so contagious as an example. We never do great good or great evil without bringing about more of the same on the part of others.”

Our publicity can literally be a shield for the whistle-blowers and other activists we honor. We've also seen how our dramatic and well-researched stories of Giraffe Heroes often help activists and their organizations challenge unfair and stereotypical media treatment of their issues.

Another delightful fallout of the process is finding how inspired the Giraffes themselves often are, telling us that being acknowledged has given them the boost they need to keep going. Because of their responses, we say that we are “EnCouraging Today's Heroes & Training Tomorrow's.”