

Volunteer Vibes

Volunteers play many crucial roles at the Preserve. They maintain trails, welcome visitors, conduct research, educate youth groups, support special events, beautify our gardens, capture breathtaking photography, and much more, contributing their time, talents, and thousands of volunteer hours annually. We will be regularly featuring our volunteers in Volunteer Vibes so that we can all learn who they are and why they do what they do for the Preserve. Let's meet our volunteers!

Lalita Malik

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in New Delhi, India. We spent summers hiking in the Himalayas. I moved to the US in 1971, spent two years in Canada, and a year in Vermont. I have been at my current home in Union Vale since 1978.

What is your volunteer role(s) here at Mohonk Preserve?

I started volunteering as a Hike Leader and switched to other roles when an injury kept me off the trails. I have volunteered for Healthy Ulster, Trailhead Ambassador, Special Events, Interpretive Guides, and Backcountry Patrol.



Photo: Lalita Malik

Why did you decide to volunteer your time and talents at Mohonk Preserve?

Mohonk Preserve is in my backyard, and I love hiking there. Volunteers keep non-profit organizations like Mohonk Preserve ticking, and it is my way to give back to an organization I like and that enriches my life. I love sharing my knowledge of the Preserve's trails with visitors and helping them enjoy their visits.

What is a volunteer accomplishment you are really proud of?

On my first Backcountry Patrol with Peter Boyle, the group's volunteer coordinator, I identified invasive plants that would eventually take over the area if not removed. I had learned about invasives from my volunteer work for other environmental organizations and it was satisfying to see knowledge gained from one role used in another role.

Where is your favorite place/trail on the Preserve and why is it your favorite?

In the winter, I like Undercliff and Overcliff. They are good for snowshoeing and skiing, are in the sun, and have splendid views. In other seasons, I like the Bonticou Crag, Table Rocks, and Millbrook Ridge with their rocky ledges and magnificent views.