



# You've Got Talent, Yes You Do!

If you can whip up a tasty dinner, know your way around a spreadsheet, or play a mean guitar, you have a skill worth sharing. Follow the path below to discover where to use your powers for good.

BY KATE ROCKWOOD



THE KITCHEN'S NOT MY SCENE.

MY LAST ART PROJECT WAS A SUMMER-CAMP POT HOLDER.

I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW CESAR DOES IT.



START!

Fancy yourself a bit of a Julia Child?

Are you crafty?

Are you something of a dog whisperer?

NO

NO

NO

YES

YES

YES

## I LOVE TO SLICE AND DICE.

Tie on an apron and teach the basics of healthy cooking on a budget through **No Kid Hungry's Cooking Matters**, a program that offers hands-on instruction (at churches, grocery stores, and community centers) to low-income families. [cookingmatters.org](http://cookingmatters.org)

## I CAN WIELD A NEEDLE AND THREAD.

Surround a sick child with comfort and warmth by volunteering as a "blanketeer" for **Project Linus**. Knitters, quilters, and sewers have made nearly five million blankets, which are donated to children's hospitals, shelters, and service agencies. [projectlinus.org](http://projectlinus.org)

## I PRACTICALLY HAVE FOUR LEGS.

Stuff some treats in your pocket and visit an **animal shelter**. You could help train dogs in the basics of obedience. Or partner with your own pooch in an animal therapy program and bring some puppy love to schoolchildren and the elderly. [aspca.org/adopt/shelters](http://aspca.org/adopt/shelters)

IT'S ALL GEEK TO ME.

EVEN MY PLASTIC PLANTS ARE WILTING.

STRANGERS LEAVE ME TONGUE-TIED.

NO

NO

NO

How about computer skills?

Do you have a green thumb?

Got the gift of gab?

YES

YES

YES



## I KNOW MY BITS FROM MY BYTES.

Help your community by joining civic-minded techies in the **Code for America Brigade**. Local groups turn government data on education, crime, public transportation, city services, and spending into online tools for the public—for instance, an app that maps all public art in the area. [codeforamerica.org](http://codeforamerica.org)

## MY HOME LOOKS LIKE A NURSERY.

Cultivate community spaces and novice plant-lovers alike by joining the **American Horticultural Society's Master Gardener** program. After training, which typically takes place at a local university, volunteers can give horticulture tours and show other plant enthusiasts how to create more bountiful gardens. [ahs.org/gardening-resources/master-gardeners](http://ahs.org/gardening-resources/master-gardeners)

## I AM THE CHATTIEST CATHY.

**Meals on Wheels** sustains housebound seniors with not only home-cooked dinners but also regular check-in phone calls from volunteers who enjoy a good conversation. [mowaa.org](http://mowaa.org)







I ONLY SERENADE IN THE SHOWER.

NO

Can you carry a tune?

YES



Are you sporty?

YES

I DON'T EVEN OWN SNEAKERS.

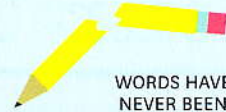
NO

Do you have writing chops?

YES

WORDS HAVE NEVER BEEN MY THING.

NO



### I'VE GOT THE MUSIC IN ME.

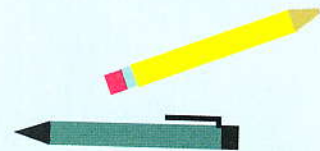
Share the song in your heart by belting out a ballad or playing an instrument at hospital patients' bedsides with **Musicians on Call**. Do you get stage fright? Volunteer to escort the artists on their rounds. [musiciansoncall.org](http://musiciansoncall.org)

### I ALWAYS HAVE MY GAME FACE ON.

Grab your whistle and head to the **YMCA**. Local branches rely on volunteers year-round to run low-cost youth sports programs, from T-ball for tots to basketball for teens. [ymca.net](http://ymca.net)

### ELOQUENT LANGUAGE IS MY FORTE.

Help kids and teens get beyond the grammar grind of *there*, *they're*, and *their*. Tutors with **826 National** chapters assist students with their writing, giving them new ways to express themselves and succeed in school. [826national.org](http://826national.org)



WHEN I CLOCK OUT, I LEAVE WORK BEHIND.

NO

Do you like to get down to business?

YES

I HAVE MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT MEDIA.

NO

Are you a PowerPoint guru?

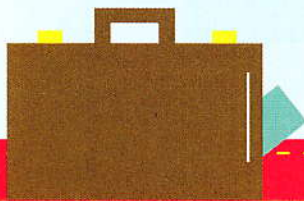
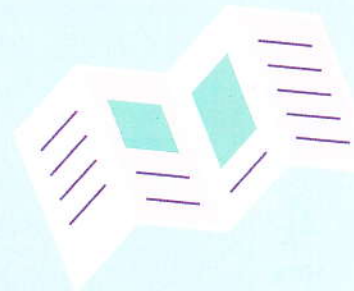
YES

### AND I LOVE SHARING WHAT I'VE LEARNED.

Work with a new small-business owner and put your wisdom to good use. **MicroMentor** has played matchmaker to more than 3,700 American entrepreneurs who need professional advice on building a successful company. Mentors offer guidance—online or in person—for three months or longer. [micromentor.org](http://micromentor.org)

### NO ONE EVER FALLS ASLEEP DURING MY PRESENTATIONS.

Help a not-for-profit make a powerful impression online and in print. The **Taproot Foundation** connects designers and marketing professionals (as well as experts in strategy, finance, and IT) with pro bono projects, such as launching a Web site for a teen shelter. [taprootfoundation.org](http://taprootfoundation.org)



Still stuck? Turn the page for 20 more ways to serve the greater good. (No special know-how required!)