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**“Volunteerism in the 21st Century: The First Decade”**

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**Key Words:** evaluation, impact, volunteers, Cooperative Extension, accountability

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**Key Words:** volunteers, psychological contracts, labor relations

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*Volunteer administrators recognize that development of volunteers is both an art and a science. This paper outlines a seven-step approach that was successfully applied when planning and implementing a professional development program for volunteers who serve in leadership roles with a grassroots, nonprofit organization in the USA. The steps are based upon principles of adult learning, known in the education field as “andragogy.” Accordingly, the steps draw connections to the Andragogy in Practice Model, outlining the process from the point of needs assessment through program evaluation. The implementation of the program was based on the theory that adult learning improves when the learners are engaged in all aspects of the planning and implementation of their learning experiences.*

**Key Words:** andragogy, grassroots, education, program, planning

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*Expectations for volunteers in youth development organizations have grown to include an emphasis on accountability. In recent years, the field of youth development has begun to investigate out-of-school time settings by measuring the quality of learning environments at the point of service- the places where youth and adults interact. The current study investigated 4-H volunteers’ experiences in building quality youth development settings. Ten 4-H clubs were randomly divided into either an experimental or control group. Clubs in the experimental group received three hours of training on topics related to quality. Results demonstrate that experimental clubs saw improvements in measures of supportive environments. In addition, interview data revealed three themes important for implementing quality initiatives in volunteer settings: emphasis on engagement, special considerations in working with volunteers, and importance of a system-wide approach. Implications and future directions are discussed.*

**Key Words:** quality, training, improvement, youth development

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LaJuana J. Hector, M.S.S.W., & Regina T. P. Aguirre, Ph.D., L.M.S.W.- A.P.

*A qualitative study was conducted to ascertain volunteer motivations for selecting a crisis hotline. Typically, crisis hotline volunteers commit to intensive training and a contract to volunteer for a certain length of time. Crisis hotline volunteers handle calls on difficult topics including mental illness and suicide. Crisis hotlines often struggle to recruit volunteers because of the considerable time commitment and taxing work. Researching crisis hotline volunteers’ motivations may lead to improved recruitment and retention efforts. Researchers found that altruism, finding the work challenging, personal experience with crisis and suicide, and having time to volunteer were motivations to select a crisis hotline over other opportunities.*

**Key Words:** crisis, hotline, motivation, recruitment, retention

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Maria J. D’Agostino, Ph.D.

*Practitioners and academics have expressed concern about the deteriorating morale and effectiveness of the public-sector workforce, citing its aging employees and competition for human capital from the private sector. Recruiting qualified public servants is complicated by*

*negative perceptions of government, due in part to the rhetoric of politicians from all sides. Therefore, finding new ways to recruit and retain the best-qualified young graduates has become critical. This commentary examines an untapped resource—volunteers—an underutilized supply of well-qualified future public servants that also have the potential to transform the negative image of government among youth.*

**Key Words:** volunteers, public service, government

## IDEAS THAT WORK

### **Using the Web to Effectively Attract Volunteers to Non-profit Organizations** ..... 55

Adrian Goh, B.S., Joseph Allen, M.A., Steven Rogelberg, Ph.D., & Anna Currie, M.B.A.

*Non-profit organizations often rely on volunteers to help staff and sustain organizational services, functions, and programs. The web is a critical vehicle for attracting these needed volunteers. We searched the available literature and reviewed close to 100 non-profit organizational websites to identify practices of note. Fourteen best practices in web site design are forwarded and discussed.*

**Key Words:** web presence, web site practices, volunteer management, recruitment, non-profit organizations

### **Head, Heart, Hands, Health . . . Hunger** ..... 66

Holly Nevarez, Ph.D., C.H.E.S., M.P.H.

*In today's economically challenged times, hunger is increasing and food banks and soup kitchens are struggling to feed more people with fewer donations. To help stock local food reserves, California State University students created a food drive based on the defining components of 4-H and recruited, trained, and worked side-by-side with 4-H member volunteers from kindergarten through sixth grades. This cross-age volunteer effort resulted in 20,000 cans of donated food which translates to five months of meals or 48,000 servings for the local food bank. In return for their efforts, the college students and 4-H members changed the negative stereotypes they had held toward the homeless (Head); developed feelings of compassion and a value for sharing (Heart); engaged in an active, quantifiable service experience (Hands); and provided one of the most basic biological needs to those who are hungry and living in poverty (Health). A food drive can be an effective method of teaching the value of volunteerism and community service to people of all ages. This article outlines the steps for meshing service and learning together.*

**Key Words:** food drive, food bank, schools, 4-H, volunteerism, service learning

## TOOLS OF THE TRADE

### **The International Volunteer Impacts Survey** ..... 71

Benjamin J. Lough, Amanda Moore McBride, Ph.D., & Margaret S. Sherraden, Ph.D.

*The field of international volunteer service (IVS) is growing worldwide, yet there is little systematic evidence of outcomes for volunteers. Current scholarship about IVS is largely descriptive and lacks consistent measures and comparative designs that permit claims of impact. This lack of reliable information limits what researchers, program administrators, and policy*

*makers can claim about program effects. This paper reports on a publically-available “tool of the trade”, the International Volunteers Impacts Survey (IVIS), which measures impacts of IVS on volunteers. The 90-item IVIS survey -- which can be administered by program staff, evaluators, and researchers – has undergone rigorous factor analysis procedures to assess the conceptual basis and reliability of a range of international volunteer outcomes. These outcomes include international contacts, open-mindedness, international understanding, intercultural relations, global identity, social skills, life plans, civic activism, community engagement, media attentiveness, and financial contributions. This paper discusses the importance and use of this survey for assessing IVS volunteer outcomes and building the knowledge base on IVS.*

**Key Words:** international, volunteering, research, evaluation, survey

## FROM THE JOVA ANNALS

### **The Volunteer Movement in the United States .....76**

Bernard M. Kapell

*The author describes the historical development of volunteerism in the United States as well as the current status of volunteerism in the country as of 1968.*

**Key Words:** volunteerism, United States, history

### **Transition Strategies for the Volunteer World .....82**

Eva Schindler-Rainman, D.S.W.

*The author discusses the changing roles of professional volunteer managers in the 1980's as organized around seven transitions: changing volunteer participants, changing roles and systems, changing organization structures, pushes to collaboration, changing values, and the increased need for planning. Specific management strategies are described for each transition.*

**Key Words:** change, transition, management, strategies

### **Volunteering: Continuing Expansion of the Definition and a Practical Application of Altruistic Motivation ..... 87**

Richard S. Shure, Ph.D.

*Whenever we think about volunteering, we do so mostly from only one perspective, that of the volunteer. There are at least two others to consider: the perspective of the recipient of the voluntary act and the perspective of the society in which the voluntary action takes place. To limit ourselves only to the perspective of the volunteer will limit research into voluntary action. Altruism as a motivator of voluntary action is explored from several perspectives and suggestions on how to make this information operational are presented.*

**Key Words:** volunteer, altruism, motivation

### **Research Needs in Volunteer Activity .....94**

John Tringo

*The author discusses eight areas in which he perceives needed research related to volunteerism in 1967: 1. need for volunteers, 2. usefulness of volunteers, 3. characteristics of volunteers, 4. utilization of volunteers, 5. motivation of volunteers, 6. role of volunteers, 7, qualifications of volunteers, and 8. prediction.*

**Key Words:** volunteerism, research

**In This Issue**  
**“Volunteerism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The First Decade”**

**Looking back . . . Looking Ahead**

I recently presented at an academic conference in Italy and was able to spend a couple days in Rome as a tourist. One of the more fascinating temple ruins I saw were those of the temple dedicated to Janus, the Roman God of gates, doors, doorways, beginnings and endings. His most prominent remnants in modern culture are his namesake, the month of January, which begins the new year. He is most often depicted as having two faces or heads, facing in opposite directions.

As the close of the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century fast approaches, this third and final issue of Volume XXVI of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration* seeks to both look behind us in the past nine years as well as forward into the decade ahead. Similar to the Romans’ concept of Janus, however, it looks at volunteers as doorways to a stronger human condition, and volunteer resource managers as gatekeepers connecting dedicated individuals to volunteer opportunities.

The issue contains five excellent original *Feature Articles*. Nancy Franz opens the issue by discussing the emerging (and critical) role of volunteers in helping volunteer resource managers document impact and accountability for the use of funds and delivery of services. Next, Joy Turnheim Smith and Matthew Liao-Troth discuss psychological concepts held by volunteers and why they will be increasingly important to effective, efficient, and sustained volunteer engagement. Leadership development for volunteers from an adult education perspective is addressed by Eric K. Kaufman, Hannah S. Carter, Rick D. Rudd, and Donna Moore; Samantha Grant and Eric Vogel explore how volunteers have helped build quality programmatic experiences for 4-H youth in Minnesota. Finally, LaJuana J. Hector and Regina T.P. Aguirre discuss volunteers’ motivations with a crisis helpline.

Maria J. D’Agostino offers a thought-provoking *Commentary* that examines an untapped resource – volunteers – as an underutilized source of well-qualified public servants. In *Ideas That Work*, Adrain Goh, Joseph Allen, Steven Rogelberg, and Anna Currie offer specific suggestions as to how volunteer resource managers may use the web effectively to attract volunteers, and Holly Nevarez describes a cross-age volunteer effort targeting the serious social issue of hunger. A *Tools of the Trade* by Benjamin J. Lough, Amanda Moore McBride, and Margaret S. Sherraden describes an exciting new resource available to volunteer resource managers – the International Volunteer Impacts Survey.

In *From the Annals*, we are also pleased to reprint four articles published previously in *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*: “The Volunteer Movement in the United States (first published in 1968); “Transition Strategies for the Volunteer World” (published in 1984); “Volunteering: Continuing Expansion of the Definition and a Practical Application of Altruistic Motivations” (published in 1991); and “Research Needs in Volunteer Activity” (published originally in 1967).

I join the entire Editorial Board and Reviewers of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration* in sharing this issue so that managers of volunteer resources may better don the mask of Janus and both look at the years behind us and (more importantly) the years ahead.

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Editor-In-Chief

## **Promoting Organizational Sustainability: Engaging Volunteers to Tell the Program Impact Story**

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### **Abstract**

*As pressure builds for volunteer resource managers to show impact and accountability for the use of funds and delivery of services, volunteers should be more fully engaged in helping with this process. This article provides a four step process used with volunteers in Virginia Cooperative Extension to conduct program evaluations and document impact, including (1) mapping the intended program, (2) determining what impact will be measured, (3) collecting and analyzing data, and (4) telling the impact story. Lessons learned in this process are shared to help volunteer resource managers benefit from this pilot program.*

### **Key Words:**

evaluation, impact, volunteers, Cooperative Extension, accountability

### **Introduction**

In the last decade, many organizations have been subjected to heightened accountability that requires showing the impact of their work (Anderson & Zimmerer, 2003; Jackson & Smith, 1999). Many volunteer resource managers embrace these accountability mandates to ensure organizational sustainability. In fact, some organizations with large volunteers programs are required by federal law to report specific program accountability efforts (Carmen, Fredericks, & Introcaso, 2008; Agricultural Research, Extension, and Extension Education Reform Act, 1998). Organizations can improve their response and results related to this accountability movement and show the true depth and scope of program impact by training and engaging volunteers in planning,

implementing, and reporting program evaluation and related impacts.

### **Background**

The vast majority of entities that fund organizations expect a higher level of accountability than ever before. In fact, some funders tie funding to the level of organizational impact attained (United States Office of Management and Budget, 2009). Many funders focus specifically on economic, environmental, and social impacts that lead to changing major conditions rather than just the activities carried out to reach that impact (Hendricks, Plants, & Pritchard, 2008).

As the call for increased accountability becomes pervasive in organizations, so does the reality that many of these organizations are operating with fewer paid staff and these staff often have

increasing administrative responsibilities or a larger scope of work. Also, many paid staff do not have formal training or interest in program evaluation and related impact reporting. Therefore, volunteers must be enlisted to help organizations plan, implement, and report program evaluation and impacts. For many organizations, this may simply be an extension of the current roles carried out by volunteers. In other organizations, it may require building a corps of volunteers to address this work (Whitmore, 1998).

Sadly, the program development, program evaluation, and volunteer literature and practice do not reflect this need to train and support volunteers in specifically and systematically assisting with program evaluation and reporting. The literature provides discoveries, tools, and results about evaluation of volunteer programs and volunteers (Murphy, 2002; Rabiner et al., 2003; Safrit & Merrill, 1998; Safrit, Schmiesing, King, Villard, & Wells, 2003; Stuart, 2009) but not about volunteers

serving as program evaluators and impact reporters. To address this dearth in practice, select volunteer groups and paid staff with Virginia Cooperative Extension engaged in a pilot effort to determine how best to train and work with volunteers to improve organizational program accountability.

### Engaging Volunteers in Program Evaluation and Impact Reporting

In 2007, the Virginia Cooperative Extension Program Development Unit piloted a program to build the evaluation capacities of volunteers and the paid staff who work with them to improve organizational accountability (Figure 1). A number of four-hour workshops on program evaluation and impact reporting were conducted with Master Gardeners, 4-H leaders and members, and paid Extension agents. An abbreviated version was conducted for Master Naturalists, and state Extension Leadership Council members (Table 1).

*Figure 1.* Conceptual representation of a pilot program to build the evaluation capacities of volunteers, and paid staff who work with them, to improve organizational accountability.

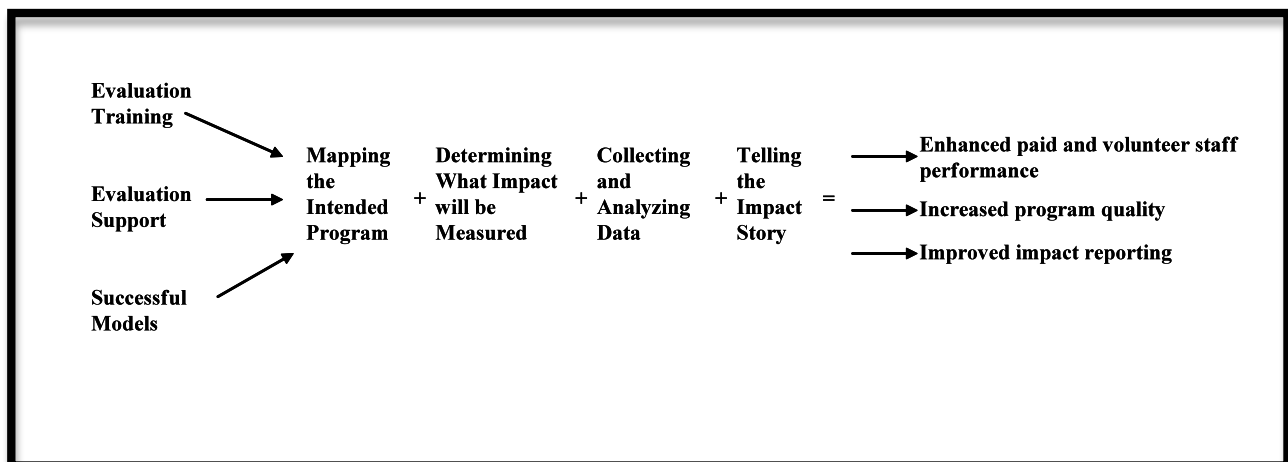




Table 1  
*Virginia Cooperative Extension Evaluation Program Participants*

<b>Type of Participant</b>	<b>Organizational Role</b>	<b>Background</b>
Master Gardeners	Youth and adult volunteers provide horticultural knowledge and encourage best practices through community-based youth and adult education	Master volunteers usually receive in-depth training of at least 40 hours and in turn give at least 40 hours of educational public service
4-H Leaders	Adult volunteers help youth develop life and subject matter skills	These volunteers also build and maintain a local, county, or state-wide educational 4-H program infrastructure
4-H Members	Teen members serve in volunteer leadership roles and also engage in developing life and subject matter skills	These volunteers work in partnership with adults at the local, county, and/or state levels
Extension Agents	Paid staff who facilitate volunteer and program development	These staff are usually employees of the land grant college in each state and may be faculty in an academic department
Master Naturalists	Youth and adult volunteers provide natural resource knowledge and encourage best practices through community-based youth and adult	Master volunteers usually receive in-depth training of at least 40 hours and in turn give at least 40 hours of educational public service
State Extension Leadership Council	Adult volunteers from across the state provide advocacy and local linkages for the state Cooperative Extension system	These volunteers often advocate for the value of Extension with elected officials who help fund staff and programs

These workshops guided volunteers and their paid staff through four steps to improving program evaluation and impact reporting: 1) mapping the intended program, 2) determining what impact will be measured, 3) collecting and analyzing data, and 4) telling the impact story. After participation in the workshops, local paid staff were urged to continue providing support to volunteers to keep evaluation projects progressing. The organization's program development specialist, program evaluation specialist, and district program leaders continued to provide project-by-project support for paid staff to assist volunteers. This support included additional training, technical assistance, and sharing practical models and advice.

#### *Mapping the Intended Program*

This preliminary step asks paid and volunteer staff to discuss and record the theory or intent behind a program. In other words, why a program needs to take place, resources needed to conduct it, how it will be carried out, and what it is intended to accomplish. A logic model is often used as a tool to document program theory or intent (Corbin, Kiernan, Loble, Watson, & Jackson, 2004). The logic model or map helps determine which parts of the program will be the focus of the evaluation and helps explore factors and assumptions that may impact the work. For example in Virginia, 4-H teen volunteer leaders created a logic model on the expected youth development outcomes of 4-H summer camp and how they planned to reach those outcomes.

#### *Determining What Impact will be Measured*

Using the logic model or other methods to map the theory or intent of the intended work, paid and volunteer staff next determine what impacts they want to measure and what questions they will try to answer related to those impacts. This may

include what program participants have learned, how the participants' attitudes have changed as a result of the program, or how the participants' changed behavior could lead to larger economic, social, or environmental change. For example, a group of Virginia Master Gardener volunteers created a logic model of their "Gardens for Critters" program they conducted at a local zoo. By reviewing the intended outcomes for the program, they decided to measure the increase in knowledge of zoo visitors about the connections between zoo animal and human nutrition after visiting the animal nutrition garden they had created.

#### *Collecting and Analyzing Data*

In this step, paid staff and volunteers select methods to gather data that best fit the impacts they want to measure. Most common methods for this work include interviews, questionnaires, direct observation, secondary data, and case studies (NOAA Coastal Services Center, 2004). After the data is collected, paid and volunteer staff jointly analyze and interpret the data often in small work groups. For example, Virginia 4-H teen camp counselors, adult volunteers, and paid 4-H agents decided to use focus groups to determine the impact of the camp program on camper development of leadership skills. The focus groups were held as part of the daily cabin conversations conducted between counselors and campers in their cabin each night before bedtime. The counselors, adult volunteers, and agents analyzed the focus group data in their camp program debriefing meeting and used the data to improve future camp programs. For those who train volunteer and paid staff in collecting and analyzing data, there are several issues that are important to address. First of all, analyzing data together allows paid and volunteer staff to bring both perspectives on a program to the table.

Second, it is important to train paid and volunteer staff to be objective in their data collection and analysis to avoid as much bias as possible. This is especially true if the paid and volunteer staff are personally strongly invested in the program being reviewed. Sometimes it may be best to ask individuals from outside the organization to assist with this process if bias cannot be overcome. Third, it is important to keep track of and discuss negative and unintended findings in the data analysis process. These findings can sometimes be the most instructive for improving program quality. Finally, it is important to address respondent confidentiality in data collection and analysis with paid and volunteer staff. This is especially true if a small number of respondents are providing data or the staff have close relationships with the respondents.

#### *Telling the Impact Story*

Finally, paid and volunteer staff determine which stories they want to tell about program impact. They also determine which audiences need to hear the stories and how they will reach them. In this accountability step, public success stories or impact reports are commonly the preferred format for government funded engaged scholarship (Virginia Tech College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 2008). For example in Virginia, Master Naturalists gathered data from current volunteers in the program to determine what they liked best about their volunteer work and what projects volunteers had completed in their time with the program. The local chapter coordinators used this data to submit impact reports to the state paid coordinator. The coordinator in turn compiled this data from around the state to send to the programs funders to illustrate the impact and value of their investment.

#### **Lessons Learned**

Cooperative Extension is a complex organization that makes program evaluation capacity building especially dynamic (Franz & Townson, 2008). Therefore, piloting a new program and recording lessons learned is important determining how best to implement or not implement aspects of the program on a larger level. Even though this program was piloted for two years, nine clearly-identified lessons emerged to improve the program and strengthen it as a model for deeper adoption by Virginia Cooperative Extension and by other organizations.

#### *Building Joint Capacity*

It is important to build program evaluation capacity jointly between paid and volunteer staff who work with each other. Where training was conducted only with paid staff or only with volunteer staff, follow-up action was minimal. In some instances, volunteers were highly motivated to conduct program evaluation and report results but the paid staff were not comfortable with sharing those tasks with volunteers. Some paid staff were not comfortable with their own evaluation and reporting skill levels so failed to support volunteers attempting to conduct this work. On the other hand, some paid staff were also very gung ho but had a hard time motivating volunteers who had not attended training.

#### *Support is Critical*

A second lesson is that strong support is needed to sustain volunteer-led program evaluation, similar to other volunteer development efforts. Some volunteers need to be exposed to previous successful models to use as a guide; others need a strong set of parameters to work within to keep their efforts focused. The paid staff members and volunteers need to take enough time to lay a strong foundation

and commitment to each other to engage in this important work. Problems can arise if paid and volunteer staff take on evaluation and impact reporting work without calculating the risks and benefits of that effort. For example, negative results about a program may create community backlash against those who conducted the evaluation. Paid and volunteer staff who are new to an organization or new to program evaluation and impact reporting often need extra support up front until the work becomes comfortable or internalized by the individuals and the organization.

#### *Volunteers are Excellent Evaluators*

Volunteers can conduct program evaluation and report impact very well and often better than paid staff. Volunteers often enhance the depth and scope of program evaluation. Therefore, a wider variety and deeper level of impact reports can result. Volunteers often get more authentic data about programs and program impact due to their place in the organization. Sometimes they are closer to the program operations and the impact than the paid staff. For example, 4-H camp teen volunteer counselors were much more successful at gathering program evaluation data from younger 4-H campers than were the paid 4-H agents who had more social distance from the campers.

#### *Following University Protocol*

A fourth lesson learned is that in academic and/or university environments, if program evaluation data will be shared in papers or at conferences, permission to conduct the evaluation is needed from the Institutional Review Board at any college or university that receives federal funding. This process is completely foreign to volunteers and many paid staff so individual instruction on this process is helpful and actually should be mandatory. Volunteer resource managers

need to ensure protection of human subject through training offered by the university's Institutional Review Board for paid and volunteer staff who will be engaging in program evaluation and reporting work. Clear examples by Review Board trainers of what requires Board approval and what does not is highly valued by paid staff to help them understand Board requirements.

#### *Tracking Challenges*

It can be difficult to track volunteer efforts on program evaluation and impact reporting. This is especially true if volunteers are geographically dispersed from paid staff, their participation is episodic or volunteer evaluation and reporting efforts are new for the organization. Paid staff must provide systematic ways to collect progress updates from volunteers on their evaluation and reporting work. Online databases that volunteers can access through home computers are becoming increasingly popular to capture this information.

#### *Communicate Proactively*

Paid staff need to discuss among themselves and with volunteers who "owns" the evaluation and reporting process and products. Control and legal issues around participant confidentiality, data collection, formal reports, and who gets credit tend to develop. Policies and guidelines on these issues need to be communicated up front with all paid staff and volunteers. For example, when a paid staff member submits a written program evaluation report to a funder, will the volunteers who helped collect the evaluation data be credited in the report?

#### *Negotiating Needs*

Involving volunteers in program evaluation can increase ownership of the process and the programs similar to other

participatory action processes (Piercy & Thomas, 1998). However, it can be difficult to balance the needs of paid staff and volunteer staff when needs differ. It is important to make everyone's needs known and negotiate how best to meet as many of these needs as possible. Some compromise may be necessary to stay within the organization's mission or to reach a consensus if groups or teams are conducting the program evaluation. For example, a volunteer may be very excited about collecting program evaluation data on an environmental education program near his/her home but instead the paid staff would prefer to collect the data across a larger geographic area. It may be best to have this particular volunteer pilot the data collection process at his/her favored location and to find other volunteers to conduct evaluations later in other locations.

#### *Maintaining Evaluation Rigor*

Some people believe that program evaluation data collected by volunteers compromises validity and reliability. If this is a concern, paid and volunteer staff need to understand these two critical concepts and how their program evaluation practices and methods can affect them. For example, volunteers (and paid staff for that matter) need to be trained on how to conduct interviews without injecting personal opinions or bias into the process.

#### *The Need for Flexibility*

Paid staff need to be flexible in their program evaluation and impact reporting work with volunteers. Unintended and important outcomes can arise by helping volunteers address their interests rather than only the interests of the paid staff. Everyone in the program evaluation partnership needs to be open to changing plans and processes as the context around them changes. For example, recent focus groups conducted

with farmers examined how they prefer to learn. If the focus group facilitator had stuck just to those questions and not allowed the farmers to add their own perspectives, she would have missed important information on what motivates farmers to learn in the first place.

#### **Conclusions**

Now that the effort to engage volunteers in program evaluation and impact reporting has been piloted in Virginia Cooperative Extension and lessons have been learned and examined, the program needs to expand to more sites and with more programs. This will help paid staff understand how best to implement the program with a wider group of volunteers. Members of the organization who train paid staff also need to integrate this effort more fully into volunteer and paid staff orientation and training. Most importantly, issues arising from engaging volunteers in program evaluation, impact, and accountability (e.g. ownership of the process and products, validity and reliability, etc.) need to be discussed more fully by the organization to set parameters and guidelines for future success across the system.

On a different level, success stories of volunteers engaged in program evaluation and impact reporting need to be collected and shared widely. This will hopefully promote the development of regional, state, and national networks of paid and volunteer staff willing to help this movement, and themselves grow personally.

As pressure increases for volunteer resource managers to document impact and accountability for the use of funds and delivery of services, volunteers should be more fully engaged in helping with this process. Even though this program was piloted with volunteer and paid staff with Virginia Cooperative Extension, there are implications for most volunteer-based

organizations. All organizations are feeling understaffed and stretched. Engaging volunteers in program evaluation and reporting has the potential to help extend the capacity of paid staff. The process of engaging volunteers in this work can also enhance volunteer recruitment and retention. New volunteers may be attracted to an organization because new skills such as data collection and analysis are needed. Volunteers who engage in program evaluation and impact reporting may feel a heightened sense of ownership and success and may deepen their commitment to the organization. Finally, involving volunteers in program evaluation work may be a way to help volunteer and paid staff get a fresh and affirming look at their work and prevent burn out.

A common phrase heard in program evaluation and impact reporting circles is that if you measure what you value, then others will value what you measure. This is also true for engaging volunteers in program evaluation. If volunteers measure what they value, they will get others to value what they measure and they themselves may become more committed to the organizations they serve. These are all important keys for enhancing organizational accountability and sustainability in these tough economic times.

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## **The Psychological Contracts of Volunteers: What We Do and Do Not Yet Know**

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### **Abstract**

Psychological contracts are interpretations by individuals and organizations about what each will do for and get from each other. Understanding the psychological contracts held by volunteers is important to a nonprofit organization because those contracts govern both the way individuals interpret their job tasks and how those tasks are carried out. Therefore, understanding what leads to the formation of a psychological contract, and the content of that psychological contract, is critical to the success of the sector. The authors map the current state of knowledge of psychological contracts within the nonprofit sector. They discuss why understanding the psychological contract helps in managing the behavior of volunteers in the nonprofit sector, present how the psychological contract works, review what we know about the psychological contract, and present implications for volunteer resource managers. They conclude with identifying areas for further investigation and implications for these issues as well.

### **Key Words:**

volunteers, psychological contracts, labor relations

### **Why Do the Psychological Contracts of Volunteers Matter?**

Promises made by the nonprofit organization to the volunteer, combined with the implicit (Harrison, 1995) and explicit promises made by the volunteer to the nonprofit, create a psychological contract that pertains to that specific volunteer relationship (Farmer & Fedor, 1999). For example, an organization may promise that volunteering to help build a house for charity will provide a sense of accomplishment and the opportunity to use or learn construction skills. Another

volunteer may believe the personal use of a boat at a camp throughout the summer is promised by the organization for a job well done. Examples of the types of promises made (terms) are listed in Figure 1.

A fulfilled psychological contract can lead to improved performance by the volunteer towards organizational goals. Breach or violation of the psychological contract can impact the motivation to volunteer, an important consideration as it leads to decreased performance or decreased activity with the nonprofit (Starnes, 2007a)



Figure 1. Terms describing psychological contracts of volunteers.

Volunteer Terms (Smith, 2004)	Organization Terms (Smith, 2004)	Terms (Starnes, 2007a)
Willing to try new things	Fairness in assigning jobs	Help others
Loyal to the organization	Give volunteers sufficient	Use skills and knowledge
Positive attitude	power to accomplish their	Gain learning experiences
Take an active role in finding	work	Obtain work experience
a niche within the	Give volunteers the	Career enhancement
organization	opportunity to ask questions	Socialize
Make responsible decisions	and seek task clarification	Feel useful
Make a contribution to the	Be flexible in the scheduling of	Public recognition
organization	volunteers	Employer requirements to
Make work with the	Respect the needs of	volunteer
organization a priority	volunteers	Practice religious beliefs
		Return good fortune
		Work for a prestigious
		organization

### Psychological Contract

A psychological contract is based on what the individual and the organization each bring to the relationship. Typically individuals bring motivation, personality, attitudes and beliefs, and cognitive biases, while the organization brings resources, existing contracts, and organizational needs (Liao-Troth, 1999). The parties interact with both official representatives of the organizations and colleagues within it, shaping the initial psychological contract (Liao-Troth & Drumm, 2004). The psychological contract forged then evolves as both parties adapt their understanding of these mutual promises (deVos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2003). Volunteer resource managers can help to shape the terms of the psychological contract by being cognizant of the interactions taking place and their impact on the respective expectations of the parties.

### What Do We Know About the Psychological Contract of Volunteers?

Initially the psychological contracts of volunteers were compared to those of employees. Pearce (1978) examined the

differences between employees and volunteers performing similar roles in similar organizations, noting that volunteer psychological contracts contain ambiguity that leads volunteers to be more likely to exhibit absenteeism or withdraw from the organization. Pearce (1993) noted that volunteers were unreliable only on their peripheral tasks, not on the tasks they perceived to be core tasks, although they didn't always agree with the organization on which tasks were core tasks. Thus volunteer managers need to recognize that volunteers don't always understand and interpret the psychological contract in the same way that the nonprofits do, and they need to add clarity to the process to help harmonize those understandings.

### *Different Types of Psychological Contracts Exist*

While early research in the field identifies two types of psychological contracts—the relational contract focused on maintaining the relationship and the transactional contract focused on delivering the work product—the terms in Table 1 are

not shaped by the type of contract. This indicates that the promises themselves are usually more important than the category of the contract (Lambert, Edwards, & Cable, 2003).

The importance of the terms themselves has spawned several studies. Using terms derived from psychological contracts in employment relationships, Liao-Troth (2001) studied volunteer and paid nurses' assistants, finding that the terms of their psychological contracts were consistent within the same organization. Turnheim (1999), in a study of volunteers and volunteer resource managers, derived terms specific to volunteers' psychological contracts that suggested that the promises of the volunteers were viewed in terms of attitudes and behaviors, while the expectations of the managers were characterized by distributive and procedural justice (Smith, 2004). Starnes (2007a) connected these volunteer behaviors to the motivations underlying the psychological contract (see Table 1). Thus knowing more about the potential types of terms of the psychological contract held by the volunteer can help the nonprofit understand and shape the contracts held by the volunteers.

#### *Misunderstanding a Psychological Contract Leads to Problems*

Differences in understandings could result from the volunteer and the volunteer resource manager holding different views of where the volunteer falls within the organizational hierarchy and what the priorities placed on individual versus organizational goals should be (Smith, 2002), a finding supported across multiple studies (Smith, 2004). For the volunteer resource manager, this suggests that finding out whether a volunteer is more focused on his or her own goals or on the goals of the group, and identifying where the volunteer believes he or she falls within the

organizational hierarchy, will help identify potential sources of miscommunication in the psychological contract. For example, a volunteer who believes that they have come on board to "run the fundraiser" may believe that they have the authority to sign contracts relevant to the fundraiser on behalf of the organization, while the nonprofit believes that the volunteer is simply providing information about options for the nonprofit to choose between. Similarly, a volunteer who has promised to write a grant proposal may believe it acceptable to leave for vacation with the proposal incomplete, while the nonprofit might expect the proposal to be completed on time without regard to whether the volunteer had planned a vacation.

Farmer and Fedor (1999) studied the connection between volunteers' expectations of the psychological contract and their performance for the organization, finding that volunteers with met expectations were more likely to increase volunteer activities than those with unmet expectations. Likewise, volunteers who perceived more organizational support were also more likely to participate in volunteer activities, although greater organizational support was not significantly related to having expectations met. In a subsequent study, Liao-Troth (2005) surveyed firefighters and student volunteers, finding that when volunteers have the opportunity to practice the skill that they joined the organization to practice, they derive intrinsic satisfaction from performing that task and believe that the organization has treated them with good faith and has dealt with them fairly. For the manager, meeting volunteer expectations is one way to ensure that volunteers feel that the organization has treated them well, continue to be engaged with the nonprofit, and feel encouraged to increase their involvement.

### *Breach and Violation Must Be Actively Managed*

Breach exists when the organization (Rousseau, 1995) or the individual (Turnheim, 2002) fails to follow through on promises made to the other party, whether as a result of inability or unwillingness. Violation is the feeling of outright betrayal beyond mere impersonal actions by an organization, and results in negative consequences for the individual and potentially also for the organization (Elangovan & Shapiro, 1998).

A majority of employees have experienced breach by the organization (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000). In a meta-analysis of 51 studies, Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, and Bravo (2007) found that breach led to: violation; mistrust; reduced job satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors, and job performance; and increased turnover intentions (but not actual turnover). We also know that supervisors withdraw mentoring when employees breach the psychological contract (Chen, Tsui, & Zhong, 2008). For nonprofits, this suggests that this is a widespread problem, and that staff members may be less willing to work with volunteers who they perceive to have breached their psychological contract.

It follows that, as Starnes (2007a) found, the volunteer will experience lower levels of organizational support as it is withdrawn by the staff members, leading in turn to decreased volunteer participation. While Starnes (2007b) found that breach is not related to organizational commitment or trust for volunteers, she also found that a correlation exists between psychological contract breach and decreased satisfaction with the volunteer experience. After breach, volunteers may change their behavior by decreasing the number of hours worked (Starnes, 2007a), as Harrison (1995) found for implied contracts. For nonprofits, the

message is clear: volunteers whose psychological contracts are not fulfilled become potential morale problems for everyone within the organization as they may voice their dissatisfaction or perform work at a less-than-desired level.

Volunteers reporting a breach evaluate the quality of their work more highly than those who do not report a breach in the psychological contract (Starnes, 2007a), although the perceptual change may be adjusted based on information received about the behavior of others with whom they interact (Adams, 1965). For example, a volunteer may overvalue the work done for the organization, while the organization may take a more critical view and withhold elements of the expected exchange because it feels that the individual did not uphold his or her end of the deal, thus causing the volunteer to experience breach. Therefore, volunteer resource managers would do well to ensure that volunteers receive regular and accurate feedback.

### **What Do We Not Know?**

While theoretical articles about psychological contracts started with Rousseau in 1989, empirical work on the application to volunteers started a decade later (Farmer & Fedor, 1999; Liao-Troth, 1999). Ten more years later, we can see where the study of volunteers has gone and evaluate where the distinctive features of volunteers are not being addressed in the broader literature. For volunteer resource managers, understanding more about the areas that have not yet been researched in the nonprofit sector will assist in gaining a fuller understanding of the psychological contracts held by the volunteers.

### *How Personality Affects Psychological Contract Formation*

Personality plays a role in the type of psychological contract created, albeit one

that is not yet clear. Raja, Johns, and Ntalianis (2004) found that paid employees who are nervous, anxious, and depressed focus more on the transactional, while those who are more conscientious focus on relational contracts. Volunteers who are agreeable and who are emotionally stable tend to form relational contracts, while those who are conscientious tend to focus on transactional contracts (Liao-Troth, 2005). The difference in the type of contract formed by conscientious individuals shows the importance of replicating findings from the for-profit sector in the nonprofit sector.

#### *How Fulfillment Leads to Desirable Behavior*

Research has recognized that both fulfillment and breach of a psychological contract can have performance effects. This fulfillment is now conceptualized as a continuum rather than a binary choice between *fulfilled* and *breached* contracts. Two major works have found positive effects for the fulfillment of the psychological contracts of workers. Turnley, Bolino, Lester, and Bloodgood (2003) found that the fulfillment of a psychological contract led to individuals performing better and going the extra mile for the organization more often. In addition, Raja, Johns, and Ntalianis (2004) found that when individuals' psychological contracts focused on the relationship with the organization, the individuals liked the organization more and were more satisfied with their jobs. They were also less likely to quit the organization. The opposite was true when the psychological contract was more focused on the exchange than on the relationship, making the relational contract preferable for the organization. If this applies to volunteers, it suggests that volunteer resource managers should focus on relationship building rather than on discrete exchanges with volunteers.

#### *How Breach and Violation Affect Volunteer Behavior*

The source of breach may differ depending on the role within the organization. Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, and Bolino (2002) found that lower-level paid employees attribute breach to the organization's internal disregard for the commitments made to them, while supervisors tend to attribute breach to situations beyond the organization's control. The volunteer may view the volunteer resource manager as the source of the problem rather than associate the problem with the way in which the nonprofit operationalizes its mission (see Thompson & Bunderson, 2003). Meta-analytical support for this idea suggests that favorable feelings toward the organization limit the effect of breach on work attitudes and individual effectiveness (Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007). If this occurs, the volunteer would perceive the supervisor to be in error, but would not perceive the psychological contract with the organization violated. This may translate into a weaker reaction to the breach and a lesser decrease in effectiveness for a volunteer who feels positively toward the organization. An example of this would be the donors who supported the United Way after it distanced itself from former president William Aramony for his perceived abuses of the organization (Glaser, 1994).

Finally, positive employee job attitudes, such as perceived support by the organization and a perceived relationship with an organizational leader, can reduce the impact of breach (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008). In a broader sense, we do not know if managing the psychological contract is a substitute for leadership or if it is an aspect of leadership. While volunteers may not share the organization's view of who the leaders are, this also suggests that any member of the

nonprofit that the volunteer views as a leader may trigger this response, whether that individual is an official member of the nonprofit staff or not.

#### *How to Measure the Psychological Contract*

Liao-Troth (2001) and Raja, Johns, and Ntalianis (2004) developed instruments based on the categories of psychological contract from Rousseau (1995). Subsequent research created a measure of the psychological contract using behaviors expected of each party rather than categorizing the contract (Turnheim, 1999; Turnheim, 2002; Smith, 2004). Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, and Bravo (2007) found that the categories used to measure breach (following from Lambert, Edwards, & Cable, 2003) affected the degree that breach led to violation, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. This further led to Starnes' (2007a) use of motivational reasons to categorize the psychological contract. Tekleab and Taylor's (2003) research suggests that volunteer psychological contracts do become more like those of the employees over time. Volunteer resource managers should also keep in mind that despite this harmonization of contracts, the fundamental differences in the motivation to join the organization, the motivation to remain, and the set of expected behaviors continue to exist between nonprofit volunteers and staff members.

#### **Implications for Volunteer Resource Managers**

No two volunteers will necessarily have the same psychological contract, even if they started volunteering for the same organization at the same time. Variations in personalities and experience mean that the volunteer resource manager must regularly seek out individual expectations for the relationship between the organization and

the volunteer. The volunteer resource manager must make explicit what are the central tasks and what are the peripheral tasks of the volunteer work and constantly verify that the volunteer understands these in the same way that the organization expects these to be understood.

The volunteer resource manager can use the terms and categories that have been identified to classify similar volunteer expectations but constant and proactive monitoring, communication, and feedback are the most important part of preventing a perceived violation of a psychological contract. The manager must also manage the perceptions between volunteers and paid staff, to make sure that no one feels that psychological contracts are not being honored.

It appears nurturing a relational contract will lead to longer-term commitments, and a stronger bond that mitigates the effects of a minor breach. Long term volunteers will have psychological contracts more similar to long term employees, but for newer volunteers, a lot of time needs to be spent managing expectations and making sure that the volunteer does not perceive that a promise from the organization has been breached or violated.

#### **Conclusion**

Psychological contract research presents a variety of viewpoints that are relevant for nonprofits and volunteer resource managers. A clear understanding of the nuances of the psychological contract and the sources of its terms can help the organization better manage volunteers. Research continues into the impact that personality and other individual traits have on the formation of the contract. Fulfillment and breach are also areas that are being further addressed. Key questions exist regarding the link between fulfillment and

desired behaviors and the impact of breach and violation on behaviors. In both areas, research in the for-profit sector suggests that volunteers who feel organizational support may repay that support with continued involvement, and that volunteers who experience breach act on their perceived disenfranchisement. Finally, nonprofit organizations need to be familiar with the different ways in which the terms of psychological contracts are evaluated. No common measure exists, but different researchers have focused on the nature of the relationship, the elements of behavior, and the elements of motivation as key types of terms to characterize the relationship. Volunteer resource managers would be wise to attend to these topics so as to improve the volunteer experience and the outcomes created by those volunteers.

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**Leadership Development for Local Volunteers:  
A Case Study of Andragogy in Practice**

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**Abstract**

*Volunteer administrators recognize that development of volunteers is both an art and a science. This paper outlines a seven-step approach that was successfully applied when planning and implementing a professional development program for volunteers who serve in leadership roles with a grassroots, nonprofit organization in the USA. The steps are based upon principles of adult learning, known in the education field as "andragogy." Accordingly, the steps draw connections to the Andragogy in Practice Model, outlining the process from the point of needs assessment through program evaluation. The implementation of the program was based on the theory that adult learning improves when the learners are engaged in all aspects of the planning and implementation of their learning experiences.*

**Key Words:**

andragogy, grassroots, education, program, planning

**Introduction**

As organizations face continued economic challenges, many are forced to

rely more heavily on volunteers, not only in traditional, service roles but also in leadership roles. Accordingly,

administrators and managers of volunteers face an increasing need to develop the leadership capacity of the volunteer base (Brennan, 2007; Edwards, 2008). The challenge of developing volunteers as leaders is that it is both an art and a science (W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2000). The capacity building can take the shape of a professional development program, but it must be designed and implemented with a triple focus: personal change: helping the volunteers develop necessary skills for leadership; organizational change: affecting the organizations within and through which the volunteers lead and serve; and issue or community change: addressing the civic goals and values that drive the volunteer forward (W. K. Kellogg Foundation).

What makes this triple focus of volunteer leadership development so powerful is that “it puts learning in the context of the leaders and assists them in advancing their community change goals” (W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2000, p. 19). Participants need to be able to connect program activities to a felt need, and they need to feel engaged in the learning process. Otherwise, these leaders may withdraw their support and no longer volunteer their time (Bradner, 1999). In contrast, when volunteers are transformed by the learning process, they “often provide deeper and more meaningful service than simply those accomplishing tasks” (Franz, 2008, p. 3). For this reason, careful attention to adult learning principles is all the more critical in professional development programming for volunteers.

Adult learning theory emphasizes the importance of engaging learners in all aspects of the planning and implementation of their learning experiences (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005). This has been a founding principle of adult education since its establishment in the United States in the 1920’s (Lindeman, 1989). Unfortunately,

while the principle of learner participation in educational program development has continued, little scholarly work has been conducted to examine the influence of participation on the learners and the educational programs in which they participate. As Sork and Buskey (1986) noted in their review of the adult and continuing education program planning literature, “most of the literature fails to recognize that groups or teams will be involved in the design and planning of programs and fails to explore the relevant roles of various actors in the planning process” (p. 93). This absence of documented learner participation suggests that additional work needs to be done to document and examine learner participation in educational program planning.

The purpose of this exploratory case study was to examine the conceptual model that guided a leadership development program for volunteers. The following discussion highlights a framework for developing volunteer leadership programming that incorporates adult learning theory and the contextual needs of a grassroots, nonprofit organization.

### **Program Planning: Andragogy in Practice**

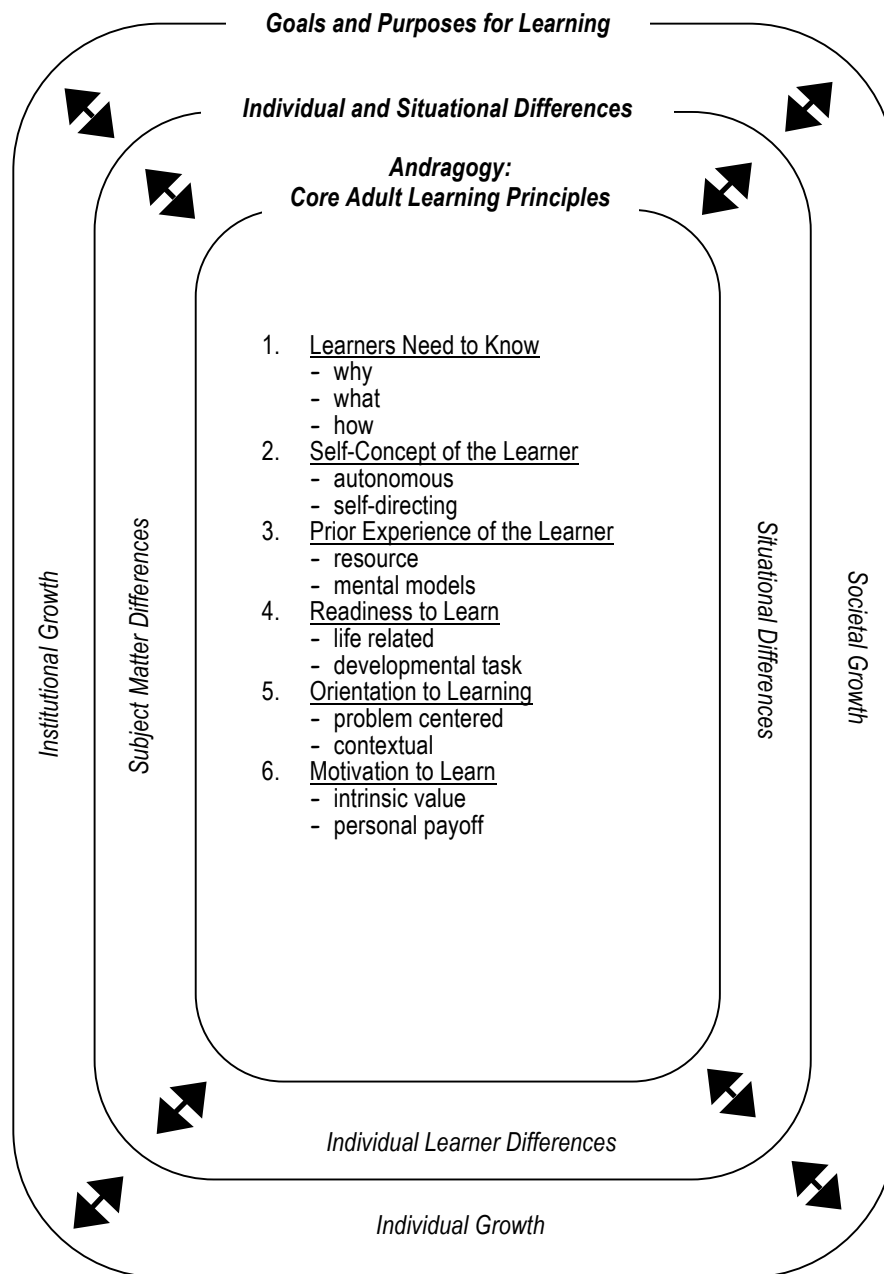
Over time, scholars in adult and continuing education have promoted a number of models for program planning. All of the models reflect Tyler’s (1949) core principles of planning work in curriculum development: identification of the program purposes, development of learning experiences to support the program purposes, organization of the learning experiences, and evaluation of the educational program. Modern planning models also emphasize the need for planners to recognize the context in which planning takes place as well as the various stakeholders who engage in aspects of the

planning work. These considerations are captured visually in the Andragogy in Practice Model (Figure 1).

The Andragogy in Practice Model was developed in 1998 “as an enhanced

conceptual framework to more systematically apply andragogy across multiple domains of adult learning practice” (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005, p. 148).

*Figure 1. Andragogy in Practice Model. (From “The Adult Learner,” by M. S. Knowles, E. F. Holton, and R. A. Swanson, 2005, p. 149. Copyright 2005 by Elsevier. Reprinted with permission.)*



According to Knowles and his colleagues, andragogy includes core principles of adult learning that in turn enable those designing and conducting adult learning to build more effective learning processes for adults. In the Andragogy in Practice Model, goals for adult learning are conceptualized as an outside ring and are identified as goals for individual, institutional, or societal growth. The next dimension of the model, displayed as a middle ring, highlights contextual factors, including subject-matter differences, situational differences, and individual learner differences. The core of the model focuses on six andragogical principles: (1) learners need to know, (2) self-concept of the learner, (3) prior experience of the learner, (4) readiness to learn, (5) orientation to learning, (6) motivation to learn (Holton, Swanson, & Naquin, 2001; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005).

The Andragogy in Practice Model has the benefit of application to a vast number of adult learning situations. Practitioners can begin with learning goals for the situation and follow the model inward, or they can begin with the andragogical principles and move outward to the specific learning goals. According to the model developers (Holton, Swanson, & Naquin; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2005), the process of andragogy involves eight elements: preparing the learner, establishing a climate conducive to learning, creating a mechanism for mutual planning, diagnosing the needs for learning, formulating program objectives (which is content) that will satisfy these needs, designing a pattern of learning experiences, conducting these learning experiences with suitable techniques and materials, and evaluating the learning outcomes and re-diagnosing learning needs.

### **An Adapted Process Model**

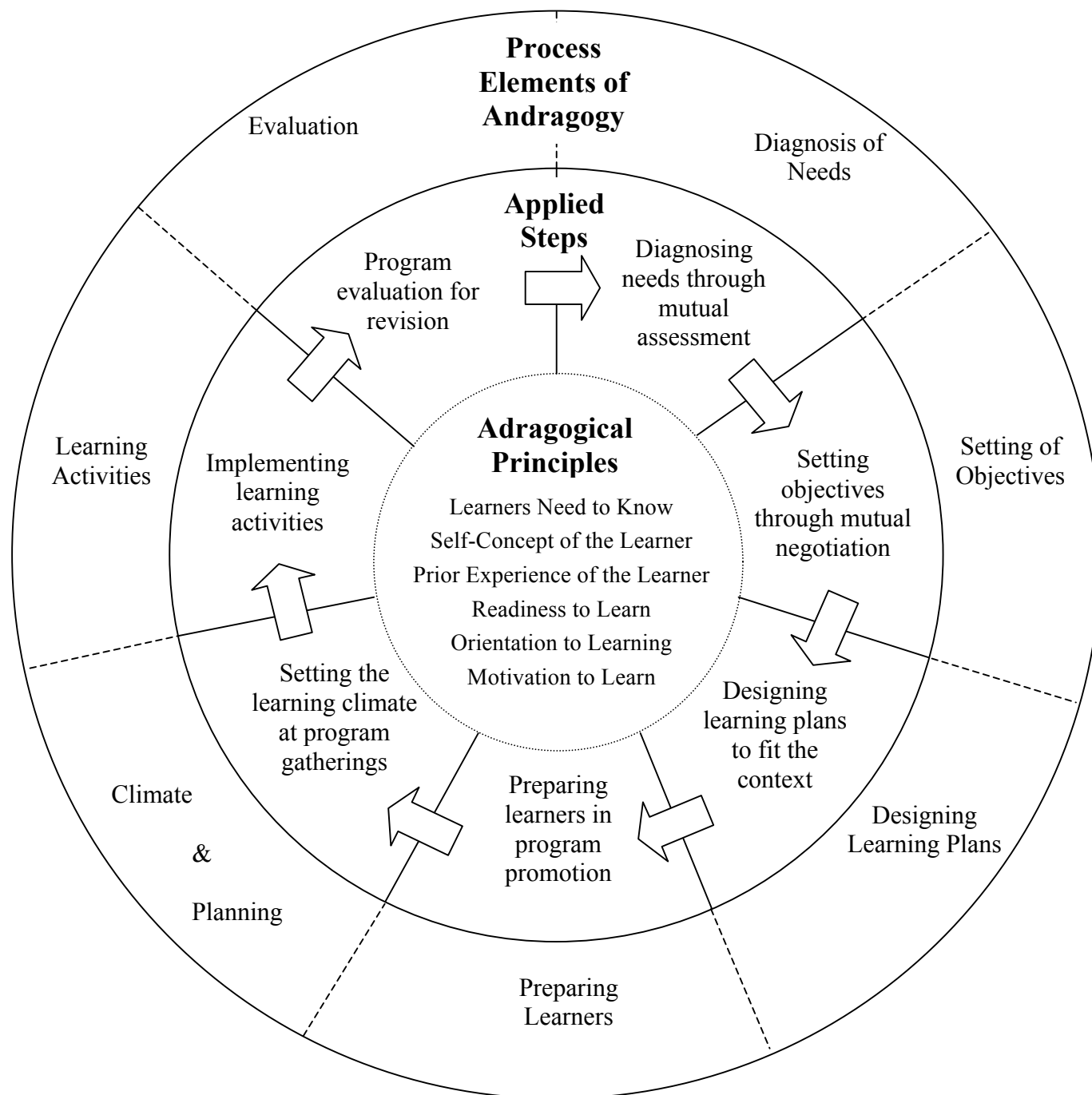
The Andragogy in Practice Model provides a helpful starting point for adult program planning. Even still, practitioners may find it helpful to reorganize some of the concepts into a process that provides a road map to follow. A successful approach to professional development programming with volunteers might include these seven steps: 1. Diagnosing needs through mutual assessment, 2. Setting objectives through mutual negotiation, 3. Designing learning plans to fit the context, 4. Preparing learners in program promotion, 5. Setting the learning climate at program gatherings, 6. Implementing learning activities, and 7. Program evaluation and revision.

This seven step process incorporates the elements and concepts from the Andragogy in Practice Model (Figure 2). The process steps were implemented with a large grassroots organization, and both the organization and the program participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction. A discussion of the program planning process with that organization follows.

### **The Process Model in Practice**

Farm Bureau is a nonprofit organization that employs paid staff members but prides itself in maintaining a grassroots focus. To that end, Farm Bureau empowers volunteers in leadership roles at all levels of the organization. At least one state Farm Bureau has identified the leadership of local Farm Bureau board members (volunteers) as pivotal to organizational success (Carter, 2004). Accordingly, they have invested in a process for further developing local leaders among the volunteer base. The process followed can serve as a helpful example to other groups that wish to engage in capacity building with volunteers who serve in leadership roles.

Figure 2. Applied andragogical process model



### *Diagnosing Needs Through Mutual Assessment*

The development of the Farm Bureau grassroots leadership program began when the state Farm Bureau organization partnered with researchers at a land-grant university to identify leadership needs. Based on interviews with Farm Bureau state leaders, Carter (2004) organizational aspects that are important for an effective grassroots process: leadership, political process, effective boards, and knowledge of Farm Bureau. When evaluating these areas with local members, Carter found significant differences between members' perceived importance and proficiency in the areas of leadership, political process, and knowledge of Farm Bureau. These findings suggested that leadership training in these topic areas would be appropriate for local Farm Bureau board members. Kaufman and Rudd (2006) then conducted a qualitative study to further determine and/or confirm the leadership expectations, needs, and interests of local Farm Bureau board members. Local board members throughout the state were interviewed, focusing on identification of common leadership-related challenges and perceived development needs of the local Farm Bureau board. The theme areas described by Carter were well-represented in the interviews. In addition, the findings seemed to further support the need for and interest in professional development programming for Farm Bureau's local leaders (volunteers). The research with both state leaders and local members provided a mutual assessment of learning needs that offered a solid foundation for program planning. Based on the findings, Farm Bureau chose to invest in the development of an educational program focused on Farm Bureau's local leaders (Kaufman & Rudd).

### *Setting Objectives Through Mutual Negotiation*

Nonprofit scholars have cautioned against the use of a "one best way" approach to management and board practices for all organizations. Instead, "every organization must discover and continually seek to improve its practices, consistent with its values, mission, and stakeholders' expectations" (Herman & Renz, 2004, p. 702). Accordingly, the program objectives identified for Farm Bureau's grassroots leadership program were based on the prior research with Farm Bureau's state and local leaders (Carter, 2004; Kaufman & Rudd, 2006) and were further refined with a project advisory committee. In this way, the outside dimension of the Andragogy in Practice Model, "goals and purposes for learning," was incorporated through mutual negotiation that maintained a focus on the needs assessments that were conducted prior to program development. The Farm Bureau program, titled "Strengthening the Voice" (STV), was designed to include five topic area components: 1. effective meetings; 2. political advocacy and public relations; 3. member recruitment, development, and involvement; 4. enhancing organizational interactions; and 5. Farm Bureau foundations. Farm Bureau contracted with a land-grant university's department of agricultural education to develop curricula for half-day workshops in each of these areas.

### *Designing Learning Plans to Fit the Context*

The development process was guided by a program advisory committee consisting of Farm Bureau staff and university representatives. The Farm Bureau staff brought extensive knowledge of the organization and experience with the local Farm Bureau board members. Throughout the program planning process, the curriculum writers consulted regularly with

the program advisory committee and other Farm Bureau representatives to ensure that the end product would meet the needs of the organization and the intended audience. Although the materials were written by university representatives, they were presented to Farm Bureau in a train-the-trainer format, so that the program could be delivered locally by Farm Bureau field staff members who were knowledgeable of the individual and situational differences of the target population. Farm Bureau leaders believed this approach would be well received by program participants, because the local board members would already have a well-established relationship with the program presenters. In addition, opportunities would be available for program presenters to incorporate local examples of the concepts being presented. Although four-hour, face-to-face workshops were the primary events associated with the program, the complete program included follow-up learning opportunities. Workshop participant manuals were designed to allow program participants to take home a summary of the key points from the program. Participants also received follow-up mailings in the months following the workshops. These mailings included professional newsletters that reviewed the key points from the program.

#### *Preparing Learners in Program Promotion*

As Farm Bureau staff marketed the program, they highlighted aspects of the program that suggested it would be different from any passive participation that members might expect from an educational program. Program participants would be expected to actively engage in learning activities and contribute to discussion throughout the program. A promotional brochure noted that the program was an investment by the organization into the professional development of its members and local

leaders. More importantly, the promotional materials pointed out that the topics and key points offered in the program were based on the felt needs of Farm Bureau members and leaders. These points were organized into best practices, making use of participants' familiarity with the concept of "best management practices" that are recommended for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of business and land-use activities. The most effective method for preparing learners for the program may have been the informal conversations that Farm Bureau staff had in recruiting program participants. Because the Farm Bureau staff members were familiar with the program, they were able to guide potential participants into knowing what to expect and to prepare them for an enhanced learning experience.

#### *Setting the Learning Climate at Program Gatherings*

The workshops for the program began by taking 10 to 15 minutes to develop (or reinforce) a felt need to learn and to engender confidence in the program. This was accomplished indirectly through the previously established credibility of the presenters (Farm Bureau staff members) and more directly through group discussion of the learning objectives. In addition to personal examples (which may vary from one presentation to another), consistent program examples were provided in the form of video segments in which Farm Bureau members and leaders discussed the practical value of the topics about to be addressed in the program. The program presenters shared that the program success was dependent upon participant engagement. Although the workshops offered some structured progression through pre-identified topics, presenters noted that the engagement in the learning activities and the reflection upon each activity would be essential to the learning process. Program

participants were invited to ask and assist in answering any questions relevant to the program's focus.

### *Implementing Learning Activities*

Throughout the program, learner motivation was reinforced by involving learners in activities and discussion. One important concept emphasized through the learning activities was Dale's (1969) "Cone of Experience" which suggests that people generally remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% of what they see, 50% of what they see and hear, 70% of what they discuss with others, 80% of what they experience personally, and 95% of what they teach someone else. Although workshop participants may have had little opportunity to teach concepts, the activities did provide some opportunity to experience the concepts being learned and certainly opportunities to discuss what was being learned. Presenters were urged to keep activities moving, while also being sure to take time to allow the group to process what was being learned. In addition, learning reinforcement was offered through the follow-up mailings to participants in the months following initial participation. As participants applied concepts from the program in "real-life" situations, they received informal feedback from their experience. As this occurred, Farm Bureau staff encouraged them to continue application of the concepts.

### *Program Evaluation and Revision*

The first program component, "Farm Bureau Foundations", was applauded by both participants (volunteers) and presenters (paid staff). At the end of each Farm Bureau Foundations workshop, participants were encouraged to complete evaluation forms. The collected evaluations indicated that over 98% of participants were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the workshop. When

asked to what extent they could use the ideas and skills learned in the workshop, all participants indicated that they expected to apply program concepts, with 59% expecting to apply the skills and ideas "to a great extent" and 37% "to a moderate extent." One participant wrote, "I've been wanting/needing this info for years." Additional evaluation research was conducted six months after the program was initiated. This follow-up evaluation involved a mailed questionnaire to program participants and non-participants. It also included interviews with program presenters. Although program participants and presenters continued to express satisfaction with the program, evaluation findings did offer insights into opportunities for improving the program. These recommendations provided guidance for changes to program implementation that will further improve program efforts.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

Like many adult learning situations, personal development for volunteers is often an extra commitment. As a result, it requires input and buy-in throughout the program planning process. The Andragogy in Practice Model can be a helpful guide for ensuring the learners are engaged in the process, and the case of Farm Bureau's STV program provides a practical example. The process elements are not necessarily linear, yet Farm Bureau's steps may serve as a helpful guide for others to ensure that essential principles of adult learning are not overlooked. The seven steps include: 1. Diagnosing needs through mutual assessment, 2. Setting objectives through mutual negotiation, 3. Designing learning plans to fit the context, 4. Preparing learners in program promotion, 5. Setting the learning climate at program gatherings, 6. Implementing learning activities, and 7. Program evaluation and revision.



This program planning process is effective for many reasons. The two most important characteristics are the long-term planning and the direct involvement of participants throughout the process. The planning process was a comprehensive approach that stretched across years of research and program development. During that time, the involvement of stakeholders over and over again helped to ensure that the program was on-target, and it allowed for increased willingness to commit to involvement in an intensive program.

Although learner participation was highlighted as a success in this program planning project, more can and should be done. The program advisory committee that was instrumental in designing learning plans included curriculum developers and organizational staff members, but it failed to include volunteers for which the program was targeted. The justification for this absence was partially related to volunteer availability. While the absence of the learners in advisory committee meetings did not appear to be a limiting factor in this case, the participation of at least a few of the targeted learners may have improved the function and effectiveness of the advisory committee. The learners' immediate reactions to program ideas may have been insightful as to curriculum pieces that should be reconsidered. In addition, the learners are best positioned to ensure that learner needs are interpreted appropriately and kept at the forefront. Program planners who follow the model presented in this case study should take extra effort to include targeted learners as members of the program advisory committee.

Farm Bureau is still implementing the "Strengthening the Voice" program through added modules. As time passes, program benefits continue to surface. In addition to the direct program benefits for program participants, Farm Bureau state

staff members have praised the program for the professional growth that occurred for the staff members involved in the development and delivery of the program. Staff members have improved their facilitation skills; and perhaps more importantly, the professional development model has shaped their thinking on the best way to guide, influence, and develop grassroots leadership.

After early success of Farm Bureau's grassroots leadership development program, other groups have expressed interest in developing similar professional development programs for their volunteers in leadership roles. The process outlined in this paper may provide a helpful guide for program planners. The process is based on sound principles of learning, offered by the Andragogy in Practice Model (Holton, Swanson, & Naquin, 2001; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998, 2005). Even still, further research is needed to confirm its success with other organizations and contexts. In addition, researchers and practitioners should continually seek out ways to maximize the value of educational programming for volunteers. Individuals and organizations designing professional development programming for volunteers should apply the steps outlined in this paper and share any helpful adaptations with other practitioners.

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## 4-H Program Quality Assessment: Can Volunteers Improve Quality?

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### Abstract

*Expectations for volunteers in youth development organizations have grown to include an emphasis on accountability. In recent years, the field of youth development has begun to investigate out-of-school time settings by measuring the quality of learning environments at the point of service- the places where youth and adults interact. The current study investigated 4-H volunteers' experiences in building quality youth development settings. Ten 4-H clubs were randomly divided into either an experimental or control group. Clubs in the experimental group received three hours of training on topics related to quality. Results demonstrated that experimental clubs saw improvements in measures of supportive environments. In addition, interview data revealed three themes important for implementing quality initiatives in volunteer settings: emphasis on engagement, special considerations in working with volunteers, and importance of a system-wide approach. Implications and future directions are discussed.*

### Key Words:

quality, training, improvement, youth development

Youth serving organizations and professionals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are confronted with the task of keeping pace with current research findings and the movement of the youth development profession. Volunteers play a pivotal role in the delivery of key messages. In recent years, the field of youth development has begun to investigate learning environments by measuring quality at the point of service, i.e. the places where youth and adults interact. Multiple definitions exist for the concept of quality, but according to Smith, Akiva, and Henry (2006), "A high quality program provides youth with access to key experiences that advance adaptive, developmental and learning outcomes"

(p. 2). 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers around the nation have welcomed quality research and some states have mandated quality assessment, as researchers have noted that focusing on quality rather than outcomes can be a key strategy for improving youth programming (Pianta, 2003). When looking at emphasizing quality in youth settings, it is important to know and understand the perspective of volunteers. Minnesota 4-H has begun to investigate the promises made to 4-H members by the organization and the level of delivering on these promises. One key promise is a quality learning environment. This research was a pilot investigation of volunteers' experiences in building quality systems that

gives Minnesota 4-H direction as it develops a plan for system-wide quality enhancement.

### **Why Quality Youth Development?**

The field of youth development has learned much about what constitutes strong programs for youth. Research suggests that successful programs are those that are safe, active, focused, and explicit (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007). Eccles and Gootman (2002) described eight research-based features of quality positive developmental settings. Observation tools that measure features of program quality have been created in recent years in response to applied research. A report by the Forum for Youth Investment highlighted the current tools available to measure quality in youth development settings (Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2009), and by comparing these tools, more has been learned about central tenets of quality. The quality of interaction that youth have with adults is vitally important as youth experiences with interactive and engaging programs are linked to the outcomes of youth interest, a sense of growth, and reports of skill development (Smith, Akiva, & Henry, 2006).

Increasing attention on quality can also be attributed to programs that have not met standards. Belle (1999) argued that quality matters, noting that youth in poor quality programs are worse off than some youth in self care. A meta-analysis of youth programs demonstrated that about one-half of evaluated youth programs did not have an impact on youth (Durlak & Weissberg, 2007). Clearly, youth organizations need to invest resources in improving quality in order to achieve desired impacts on youth. Now that the youth development field is acknowledging the importance of quality as a way to build strong programs and advance long-term youth outcomes, it is crucial to

implement system-wide change targeting volunteers and leadership staff. Research on quality supports the involvement of whole systems in order to create lasting change (Tseng & Seidman, 2007; Yohalem, Granger, Pittman, 2009). In a volunteer led system, such as 4-H, involvement of volunteers is crucial for progress; however, much of the research that has been conducted on quality in youth development settings has focused on programs led by trained, paid staff. It was of interest to look deeper into the experiences of volunteers in building quality programs, as research suggests that staff are key in driving quality accountability systems because they are the direct link with youth (Smith, Devaney, Akiva, & Sugar, 2009). If volunteers come to an organization without the necessary skill sets, how do professional staff train them to create quality programs? In order to understand this question, we explored the experience of volunteer leaders through a multi-year observation of 4-H clubs. The purpose of our research was threefold: (1) to investigate quality in the volunteer-led 4-H system; (2) to test if a training, focused on quality concepts, created change in 4-H clubs; and (3) to document qualitative changes seen by volunteers through a follow-up interview. These goals frame a volunteer's experience in improving the quality of youth development programs and served to educate youth development staff in identifying prime strategies to implement change throughout a volunteer system.

### **Methods**

#### *Participants*

Ten 4-H clubs in Southeast Minnesota were randomly selected to participate in the study. One club from each county became part of the control group and one the experimental group. 4-H clubs were based in both suburban and rural cities.

### *Procedures*

All ten clubs were assessed in the spring of 2007 by a trained, reliable observer who had completed a two-part observation training offered through High Scope. 4-H clubs were assessed using the High Scope Educational Research Foundation's Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) Form A. This observation tool has undergone rigorous reliability and validity testing (Smith & Hohmann, 2005; Yohalem & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2009). The tool focuses on four large areas of point of service quality: safe environment, supportive environment, interaction, and engagement. Figure 1 provides further descriptions of the dimensions of each subscale.

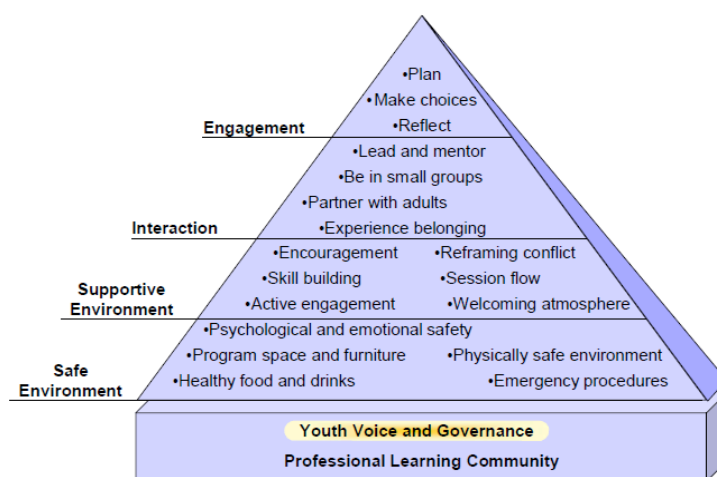
After the first assessment, the clubs were randomly split into control and experimental groups. The experimental group was asked to participate in a series of trainings. At least two adult and two youth leaders participated from each 4-H club. The control group was only observed and received no training. In the fall of 2008, clubs were revisited by the same trained observers using the same

instrument. Following this assessment, clubs were sent a score report from both observations.

### *Training Design*

The training for the volunteer teams consisted of two, one and one-half hour sessions: Session One: Foundational to any effort to build quality is a background in youth development; therefore, a section of the training was devoted to positive youth development in the context of 4-H club settings. The remainder of session one covered an introduction of youth program quality based around High Scope's quality dimensions. Clubs also received their scores from the first round of observations; and Session Two: Since 4-H clubs tend to score lowest on youth engagement, almost half of the second session was devoted to exploring engagement subscale items (see Figure 1) as they related to typical situations in 4-H clubs. The second half of the training allowed each club team to develop an action plan to address quality.

*Figure 1. The High Scope Pyramid of Program Quality.*



### *Follow-up Interview*

Approximately eight months following the training, follow-up interviews were conducted. Volunteers in the experimental group took part in an eight-question interview to learn more about their experience and what could be done in future efforts to promote quality development in clubs. Five adult club volunteers and one youth leader were interviewed, reflecting experiences from all clubs that participated in training.

### **Results**

The first purpose of this research was to look at the status of quality in 4-H settings. Table 1 shows the average changes in scores from time one to time two. Overall, clubs saw an increase in the measures of safe environment, supportive environment, interaction, and engagement. Due to low sample sizes, increases in scores were not statistically significant. Clubs tended to score highest on measures of safe

environments and progressively lower on subsequent scales. This finding is consistent with trends in other youth serving organizations (Smith & Akiva, 2008).

The second purpose of this research was to investigate if clubs receiving extra training would increase their quality scores. Toward this aim, repeated measures ANOVAS were conducted in which group (experiment, control) was the between-subjects variable and time (t1, t2) was the within-subjects variable. Analyses were conducted separately for each subscale: safe environment, supportive environment, interaction, and engagement. A significant main effect of group was found on measures of supportive environments,  $F(1,8) = 13.82$ ,  $p < .01$ . Examination of cell means demonstrated that experimental group clubs had greater increases on measures of supportive environments from time one to time two ( $M = 3.83$ ,  $SD = .38$ ) as compared to control group clubs ( $M = 3.15$ ,  $SD = .33$ ).

Table 1  
*Descriptive Statistics for Quality Dimensions*

	Experimental Group			Control Group		
	Mean	SD	Range	Mean	SD	Range
<b>Time One</b>						
Safe Environment	4.06	.70	2.86-4.60	4.09	.31	3.72-4.56
Supportive Environment	3.83	.38	3.46-4.42	3.15	.33	2.80-3.55
Interaction	3.46	.50	2.70-4.10	2.64	.69	2.08-3.80
Engagement	2.47	.70	1.50-3.20	2.27	.55	1.5-3.0
<b>Time Two</b>						
Safe Environment	4.12	.79	2.86-4.90	4.28	.28	3.94-4.70
Supportive Environment	4.24	.51	3.56-4.83	3.68	.12	3.48-3.80
Interaction	3.39	.99	2.25-4.65	3.07	.35	2.68-3.55
Engagement	3.03	.83	2.17-4.17	2.39	.53	1.67-3.0

*N= 10, 5 experimental and 5 control*

Our final purpose was to receive qualitative feedback from volunteers on their experiences in building quality programs for youth. After analyzing interview manuscripts, boosting club efforts in engagement, acknowledging special considerations for volunteers, and approaching quality development systemically were identified as important themes for future attention and are discussed in the following section.

## Discussion

The authors wish to emphasize that while the results of this exploratory study may not be inferred to any larger population, several implications are of importance to volunteer resource managers. This research provided preliminary evidence of selected volunteers' experiences in implementing quality accountability systems. The experiences of the 4-H volunteers in this study mirrored findings in the youth development professional field, as overall scores were lower on interaction and engagement in comparison to safe and supportive environment (Smith & Akiva, 2008). Although all aspects of quality are important, the goal for youth development organizations is to build environments that are interactive and engaging. Researchers have suggested that building interactive and engaging programs is related to positive outcomes such as attendance, youth motivation and interest, social skills, and academic gains (Blazevski, Van Egeren, & Smith, 2007; Intercultural Center for Research in Education & National Institute on Out-of-School Time, 2005). From this data, we have a better idea of the areas that require more work and attention from a systems perspective.

Despite the small sample, our training demonstrated that the clubs in this study were capable of making changes in their club settings. Experimental clubs saw a

significant increase on scores of support from time one to time two. These preliminary findings presented an important first picture of how to approach training volunteers to increase the quality of their programs. Changes for clubs with a short-lived training intervention only begin to show the possibilities that could come from a long-term, system-wide emphasis on quality.

Three themes emerged from all phases of our data collection that should be addressed in future volunteer training efforts: (1) engagement is an important theme, but further assistance is needed to help adult volunteers achieve results; (2) there are special challenges in advancing quality in volunteer systems; and (3) quality development requires a system-wide approach.

### *Emphasis on Engagement*

Based on interview analysis, it was apparent that volunteers were indeed interested in making progress in the area of engagement in their clubs. This was encouraging as engagement was a key component of the training and an area that research shows is meaningful for youth (Hart, 1992; Shernoff & Vandell, 2008). Two volunteers discussed their efforts to engage youth in their 4-H clubs by reflecting:

*I think probably our largest focus we determined from going through that process was that we needed to be a little more youth centric, meaning, we wanted the young people to do more of the planning and implementing and deciding on things. It seemed like it's real easy to fall into giving those roles to the contact leaders or other parents.*



*We tried to get the youth more involved with the decision making process.*

Creating engaging environments is clearly a formidable task that requires focused attention and the investment of resources.

#### *Special Considerations for Volunteers*

Challenges emerged in working with revolving leadership, achieving a common definition of quality, and balancing necessary dosage with volunteer time.

Changing leadership. It is the habit of many 4-H clubs to rotate volunteer leadership on an annual basis; therefore, some volunteers that took part in the training and developed and implemented an action plan had been replaced a year later. The new leadership may or may not have supported the plan or even been familiar with youth quality concepts. Excerpts from two volunteer interviews echo this idea:

*The training happened and then elections were held and my term as adult leader was now over. The officers also all changed. There was some carry over, but the vision from one year to the next year was lost. . . . it's an ever changing beast because you don't have necessarily the consistency from year to year because of who's doing what, and how well are they doing it, it's a great experience for youth I wouldn't change anything of that. So, but I've struggled with how can we be consistent so that's it a good experience even though things are always changing.*

Accommodating changing staff is not an issue that is unique to the volunteer sector; rather, it is felt throughout youth

development systems (Yohalem, Granger, & Pittman, 2009). Staff changes are especially worrisome when building quality systems, as research has pointed to the fact that quality is more stable across program deliverers than program offerings (Smith & Akiva, 2008). It is imperative that steps be taken to build capacity among the leadership and membership of the organization in order to avoid regression during transitional periods.

Achieving a common vision of quality. Volunteers came to their work with a variety of goals. Some saw quality in increased membership without seeing that without quality, maintaining membership is difficult. Some saw quality as participation in events: the more youth participating in county fair equates to higher levels of quality. Quality development efforts need to gauge volunteer attitudes in this regard and prepare to move thinking to new levels. Some volunteers missed the true emphasis of the quality training. One leader pursued a preexisting personal agenda involving collaborative work with community organizations. Another club developed a plan around a membership drive, although in the training, clubs were told that membership itself was not a measure of quality. Future efforts should downplay the importance of membership drives in 4-H programs, as young people will take part in programs that are high quality.

Training design. All volunteer resource managers struggle with achieving the right balance of training while remaining sensitive to volunteer time commitments. Staff agreed that three hours of training was the most that could be expected of volunteers and their teams. The National Youth Program Quality Intervention study conducted research with staff receiving 30 hours of intensive training and technical assistance. That research demonstrated that point of service quality can be moved

forward with a concerted effort in training (Smith, 2009). Three hours is a minimal amount of training time but 30 hours would be an extreme expectation for volunteers. What then is the optimum amount of training that will give the best return?

Future training efforts will need to consider how to deliver a greater amount of training even though volunteers may never reach the training level typically done with professional staff. The organization must also develop tools besides training to enhance quality including coaching, addressing quality regularly at meetings, and utilizing alternative delivery methods including online resources. Staff must also consider ways to build quality with volunteers who have varying levels of understanding of quality and basic youth development concepts.

#### *Importance of a System-wide Approach*

A final theme that emerged from this research, further supported by a variety of researchers and practitioners in the field, is the importance of building a system-wide approach to improving quality. This means involving staff and volunteers- both youth and adult- in bringing about lasting change. In this research, only staff in three of the five counties were involved. Volunteers from counties who were not invested in the research were aware of the lack of support they received from their local staff. One volunteer reflected:

*I would have liked to have seen our local 4-H [staff] be a little bit more involved in this because I felt like they were totally out of the loop. When I would mention things to [her] she acted like she didn't know. She just kind of brushed it off.*

At the very least, future efforts should consider ways to regularly communicate

with local staff and should ideally include all levels of the system to support training and quality improvement planning. Research supports building a system-wide approach to addressing quality, as changes need to be made in the ways that entire organizations view the importance of quality. Yohalem, Granger, and Pittman (2009) emphasized the importance that leadership has in supporting a quality agenda in stating, "When supervisors consider strengthening point-of service-quality as one of their primary responsibilities (if not the primary responsibility), it has important implications for how they interact with staff..." (p. 137). Systems need to build strategies around training, coaching, continuous improvement and feedback that become part of the common language of the organization.

#### **Conclusions and Implications**

This exploratory research should be of interest to administrators and managers of volunteers wherever volunteers interact with youth in programs. It calls attention to the importance of quality within youth development programs and suggests new possibilities for evaluation. Even with its small sample, it should also highlight the importance of volunteer training to increase quality within those environments. Recommendations have been offered above in the discussion section. Following are three key recommendations to consider for further action and research:

- Quality improvement requires a shift in focus. Volunteer teams should be held accountable for continuous improvement process not for increased quality scores (Shinn & Yoshikawa, 2008).
- A balance in the dosage of training is critical. Three hours is minimal but 30 hours is too much to expect of volunteers.

- Results from this study may give insight for further work, but future research should include increased sample size.

Pilots are important in beginning the quality journey. Research suggests that pilot projects allow an organization to build trust, prepare the organization for larger changes, and align training (Smith, Devaney, Akiva, & Sugar, 2009). This pilot investigation provides future direction for a system-wide quality enhancement of the 4-H program driven largely by volunteers. An investment on all levels is important to move a quality agenda forward. The training of staff is certainly important to this effort but the development of volunteers to be the primary drivers of quality development is pivotal. It is also important to note that change will not happen with a short-lived investment. Change of quality requires time and commitment. This is a meaningful commitment if we truly care about the future development of our youth.

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## Why Do People Volunteer on Crisis Hotlines?

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### Abstract

*The authors conducted a qualitative study to investigate volunteers' motivations for volunteering on a crisis hotline. Typically, crisis hotline volunteers commit to intensive training and a contract to volunteer for a certain length of time. Crisis hotline volunteers handle calls on difficult topics including mental illness and suicide. Crisis hotline staff often struggle to recruit volunteers because of the considerable time commitment and taxing work. Researching crisis hotline volunteers' motivations may lead to improved recruitment and retention efforts. Researchers found that giving back to the community, altruism, finding the work challenging, personal experience with crisis and suicide, and having time to volunteer were major motivations for volunteering at a crisis hotline.*

### Key Words:

volunteering, crisis, hotline, motivation, recruitment, retention

### Introduction

Globally, crisis hotlines provide important relief serving as psychological first aid until long-term services are acquired. Within the U.S., there are approximately 140 crisis hotlines in 48 states (Lifeline News, 2009) staffed by volunteers answering approximately 47,500 calls monthly (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2009). Outside of the U.S., there are 1,200 crisis hotlines in 61 countries with over 100,000 trained volunteers (International Network: Volunteer Emotional Support Helplines, 2009). Recruitment and retention of these volunteers is difficult because it (1) requires an extensive time commitment; (2) requires an intensive initial investment; and (3) is emotionally taxing. Assisting crisis hotline

volunteer resource managers in recruitment and retention is important yet minimally discussed in current literature. This study's purpose was to investigate why people volunteer at a crisis hotline.

### Background

Crisis hotlines are typically housed in crisis centers. In the 1960's and 1970's, a rush of research emerged on crisis center volunteers who handle the majority of centers' operations (Seely, 1992). However, very little of this research focused on volunteers' motivations (Barz, 2001) and since the 1970's, published studies of crisis hotline volunteers are sparse.

Crisis hotline volunteers typically commit to at least 50 hours of training and an extensive volunteer commitment

(Lammers, 1991; Stegall, 1998). Their role is to assist with difficult topics, including sexual assault/abuse, mental illness, domestic violence, and suicide; this is emotionally taxing volunteer work often resulting in burnout (Cyr & Dowrick, 1991). Of concern to volunteer resource managers is return on investment of costly training (Graff, 2006) especially because episodic volunteering is the emerging trend (Hustinx, Haski-Leventhal, & Handy, 2008; Meijs & Brudney, 2007; Swinson, 2006). Volunteer retention is problematic due to the high rate of burnout (Cyr & Dowrick;).

To assist a particular crisis center's hotline with recruitment, the authors studied the hotline's volunteers to investigate their motivations for volunteering at a crisis hotline instead of other volunteer opportunities. The study was funded by The University of Texas-Arlington Office of Graduate Studies and is based on methodology developed by Praetorius and Machtmes (2005).

## Literature Review

Volunteer motivation has been studied extensively (Yoshioka, Brown, & Ashcraft, 2007) but only minimally related to crisis hotlines. The characteristics of crisis hotline volunteers are consistent with altruism (Barz, 2001; Clary & Orenstein, 1991; Engs & Kirk, 1974; Stegall, 1998; Tapp & Spanier, 1973) and egoism (Barz; Clary & Orenstein; Stegall). Altruism and egoism are identified as motivators in other volunteer roles as well regardless of volunteer characteristics (e.g., Clary et al., 1998; Yoshioka, Brown, & Ashcroft). As Safrit and Merrill (2000) noted, altruism and egoism are often concurrent motivators: "Volunteering focuses on the common good. Although reasons for volunteering may be individualized and perhaps even self-serving, the outcomes of volunteering are

focused beyond the individual towards a larger, common good" (§ 12).

The published literature suggests that altruism is an important motivational factor for a number of reasons. For example, older volunteers who are altruistically motivated are more satisfied (Finkelstein, 2007). Satisfaction often results in extended tenure (Davis, Hall, & Meyer, 2003; Finkelstein). Additionally, altruism may be related to having personal history with the agency or presenting issue (Nagchoudhuri, McBride, Thirupathy, Morrow-Howell, & Tang, 2007) as it was among crisis hotline volunteers (Stegall, 1998). Stürmer, Snyder, Kropp and Siem (2006) suggested that volunteering may be an unconscious attempt to help oneself, exemplifying the intermingling of altruism and egoism.

Solely egoistic motives are of concern, though. For example, egoistic motives do not contribute to satisfaction among older volunteers (Finkelstein, 2007). Volunteers' egoism may stem from efforts to fulfill human needs. Maslow (1943) conceptualized these in a hierarchy: physiological, safety, social (i.e., love, belongingness), esteem (i.e., self-esteem and esteem of others), and self-actualization needs (i.e., fulfilling one's purpose). Applying this to volunteers, one sees that they attempt to fulfill social and esteem needs.

Social relationships are created or strengthened during volunteering (Clary & Snyder, 1999); they found that "volunteer behaviors do not depend solely on the person or on the situation, but rather depend on the interaction of person-based dynamics and situational opportunities" (p. 159). Switzer, Switzer, Stukas, and Baker (1999) found this social need was the highest ranked function among male (but not female) volunteers. The community context of volunteering fulfills the social need for belongingness (Omoto & Snyder, 2002).

This context is not geographical or demographical (e.g., minority, gender) but rather “an inclusive sense of community and involves cognitive, affective, and behavioral components” (Omoto & Snyder, p. 863). Barlow and Hainsworth (2001) identified two motivations related to belongingness among older volunteers: “to feel a useful member of society by helping others, and to find a peer group” (p. 213).

Volunteers also seek to satisfy esteem needs. Clary and Snyder (1999) identified esteem enhancement and protection as functions of volunteering. Switzer, Switzer, Stukas, and Baker (1999) found esteem enhancement to be one of the more important motivators among females. It is also important among retired older volunteers (Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001). Esteem protection, i.e., using “volunteering to reduce negative feelings, such as guilt, or to address personal problems,” (Clary & Snyder, p. 157) is closely related to the idea that volunteers choose organizations helping those with a shared experience.

### Methodology

As a service-learning project for a doctoral social work qualitative research seminar, an exploratory, phenomenological study of crisis hotline volunteers’ motivations was conducted, because phenomenology focuses on the *lived experience*. The interview began with: “What motivated you to volunteer on the crisis hotline?” Typical of heuristic phenomenology, this question guided the inquiry; subsequent questions emerged depending on participants’ responses.

The crisis center’s volunteer resource manager contacted approximately 80 crisis hotline volunteers via email regarding the study. Those interested received an invitation letter and consent form to review. Seminar students interviewed 15 crisis hotline volunteers (an adequate size for a

qualitative study; Sandelowski, 1995), used an audio recorder to facilitate data collection and recording, and transcribed the interviews for data analysis. They used source, analyst, and theory triangulation to enhance the credibility of analysis (Patton, 2002). Denzin (1978) explained: “No single method ever adequately solves the problem of rival causal factors. Because each method reveals different aspects of empirical reality, multiple methods of observations must be employed. This is termed triangulation” (p. 28). Source triangulation is defined as “checking out the consistency of different data sources within the same method” (Patton, p. 556). The students interviewed 15 volunteers to provide multiple data sources. Then, they identified themes in their individual interviews. Next was analyst triangulation, i.e. “using multiple analysts to review findings” (Patton, p. 556). First, students met in groups to discuss each interview, providing one level of analyst triangulation. After these discussions, the students and the article authors convened and finalized themes, providing a second level. Finally, theory triangulation is defined as “using multiple perspectives or theories to interpret the data” (Patton, p. 556); this involved the faculty and students reviewing existing theories related to emergent themes. Theory triangulation, as it related to the findings, is presented in the results.

### Results

Over 75% of the crisis hotline volunteers were female. They were between the ages of 24 and 66+ with the median tied between the categories of 60 to 65 (n = 3) and over 66 (n = 3). The median volunteer tenure was tied between 1 to 5 years (n = 4) and 11 to 15 years (n = 4) with the majority (n = 9) having volunteered over five years with the crisis hotline. Education attainment ranged from some college to advanced degrees. The majority of the volunteers’



occupations were in social and public service; five were retirees. Twelve of the 15 noted they had a history of volunteering prior to their crisis hotline volunteer tenure.

The interviews provided insight into motivations to volunteer on the crisis hotline as opposed to other volunteer opportunities. These motivators included: (1) giving back to the community; (2) altruism; (3) finding the work challenging; (4) experience with crisis and suicide and (5) free time.

#### *Giving Back to the Community*

Eight of 15 participants described motivations in terms of giving back to their community. For them, the construct of giving back is an ongoing, active process of contributing to the community. Phrases that emerged: “knowing that you make a difference”; “made an impact;” “take part in the life of the community.”

#### *Altruism*

The construct of altruistic motivation emerged in relation to the concurrence of altruism and egoism (Safrit & Merrill, 2000). Eleven of 15 identified helping someone in need as a motivator. Two volunteers’ statements illustrate this clearly: “I think it is nice to hear someone say ‘thank you, you saved my life.’ When you help others, you are really helping yourself too;” and

*It’s very rewarding whenever you do get on the phone and you’d notice that change from when the person calls you they are all frantic, but by the end of the call, they are calmer and you can, you can hear it in their voice.*

#### *Finding Work Challenging*

Volunteering proves to be advantageous for both recipient and volunteer, specifically in its challenging nature (Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001;

Stegall, 1998). Similarly, five of 15 participants described their volunteer experience as challenging, e.g., “the work is very interesting and it challenges me” and “it does take up energy ... it actually takes a lot of work to listen and to, to be empathetic.”

#### *Experience with Crisis and Suicide*

Another motivation was personal experience with crisis and suicide. Having previous experiences with the agency or presenting issue has been noted as a motivator in crisis hotline volunteer and motivation literature (Nagchoudhuri, McBride, Thirupathy, Morrow-Howell, & Tang, 2007; Stegall, 1998; Strümer, Snyder, Kropp, & Siem, 2006). Nine of 15 volunteers reported motivation stemming from experience with crisis and suicide. As one volunteer illustrated: “I had a drug problem and without some people that very much cared about me and helped me through that time in my life, I wouldn’t be here today.” Another shared: “and it just happens that I have a family member with a history of suicide attempts.” And perhaps most clearly: “My volunteering for the suicide crisis center is because of the loss of my partner, to death by suicide.”

#### *Free Time*

There was one motivator that emerged from this study that was not identified in previous studies of crisis hotline volunteer: having spare time. One volunteer stated: “I have plenty of time available and I really do believe that uh, uh, structure is very important in people’s lives, for retirees especially.” Another noted: “I had free time to do some volunteer work where in the past I really hadn’t had any time” A third said: “my schedule can be very flexible so that I can volunteer to answer the volunteer crisis line” These volunteers desired to initiate or maintain

community ties through volunteerism because of a change in their daily schedule. Previous studies found that while some are willing to volunteer, reasons they do not include lack of time (Yoshioka, Brown, & Ashcraft, 2007).

### **Conclusions and Implications**

This exploratory qualitative study sought to identify volunteers' motivation to volunteer on a crisis hotline. As has been found in the literature on crisis hotline volunteers and volunteer motivation across organizations, the motivation of these 15 volunteers is multifaceted (Winniford, Carpenter, & Grider, 1997). Specific motivations were: (1) giving back to the community; (2) helping someone in need; (3) finding the work challenging; (4) having experience with crisis and suicide; and (5) free time.

The findings of this study are both confirmatory and surprising. Confirmatory findings are that motivations of these volunteers are closely related to altruism and egoism as has been found in the paucity of research on motivations of crisis hotline volunteers. Surprisingly, social relationships and the need for belongingness did not emerge as in previous research on volunteer motivations in other capacities (Barlow & Hainsworth, 2001; Clary & Snyder, 1999; Omoto & Snyder, 2002; Switzer, Switzer, Stukas, & Baker, 1999). This may be due to the nature of this particular volunteering experience. Some volunteers may build relationships during the extensive training period. However, once volunteering begins at the 24-hour hotline, shifts are staffed by one or two volunteers who are quite focused on answering crisis calls and completing related documentation. Time for building relationships is thusly limited. Another somewhat surprising finding was that free time was a motivator not previously identified in the research on crisis hotlines

though it does seem to be salient for older volunteers in other roles (Nagchoudhuri, McBride, Thirupathy, Morrow-Howell, & Tang, 2007). This motivator is surprising given that episodic volunteering is the emerging norm (Hustinx, Haski-Leventhal, & Handy, 2008; Meijs & Brudney, 2007; Swinson, 2006) but not surprising since the demands of answering crisis calls require a more traditional, long-term volunteer.

Since the motivations of volunteers are multifaceted, it is imperative for volunteer resource managers to understand and utilize those for recruitment and retention (Kovacs & Black, 1999). While it is not possible to generalize this study's findings to other crisis hotline volunteers or other volunteers in general, it is possible for extrapolation to be useful for volunteer resource managers of both crisis hotline volunteers and other types of volunteers. Patton (2002) defined extrapolation as: . . . modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations . . . [that are] logical, thoughtful, case derived, and problem oriented rather than statistical and probabilistic. Extrapolations can be particularly useful when based on information-rich samples and designs, that is, studies that produce relevant information carefully targeted to specific concerns about both the present and the future. (p. 584)

For example, many of the volunteers in this study had previous experience with suicide and crisis. Volunteer resource managers of various types of volunteer roles may find that former clients are excellent sources for volunteers. Another useful source may be local universities. Specific to crisis hotline resource managers, considering that suicide is the third leading cause of death for people ages 15 to 24 (McIntosh, 2009), many of these students may have personal experience with crisis and suicide. Not only was this identified as a motivator for volunteering on a crisis hotline

but also the current generation of college students is volunteering more than previous generations. However, volunteer resource managers are cautioned that different university cultures yield different motivations and attitudes toward volunteering (Burns et al., 2007). Also, college students may be more episodic, i.e., not willing or able to commit to a long contract. Finally, as baby boomers retire, volunteer resource managers needing a more traditional, long-term volunteer may turn to them since they may have the free time motivation noted in this study. Among this group, the best form of recruitment seems to be informal methods, such as word of mouth from existing agency clients and volunteers (Nagchoudhuri McBride, Thirupathy, Morrow-Howell, & Tang, 2007). Additionally, these retirees may perceive the organization, staff, and fellow volunteers as sources of peer support and develop new, valuable skills (Kovacs & Black, 1999).

In developing recruitment and retention procedures, volunteer resource managers of both crisis centers and other volunteer-utilizing organizations may use the identified motivators of these 15 volunteers to ensure that volunteers' motivations are beneficial to their mission. With regards to recruitment, although volunteers may perceive their efforts as contributing positively to the community, certain aspects require discernment and self-awareness. For example, volunteers motivated by altruism, such as those identified in this study, may approach volunteering with a preconceived notion about the caller or situation, possibly leading to an inflated sense of self. The volunteer may become a "superperson" believing that s/he is of a higher caliber or character than the caller. The "motivation of the superperson is suspect since the question arises again about whose needs are being met, those of the superperson volunteer, or

those of the caller" (Seeley, 1995, p. 15). Indicators of this "superperson" motivation present risk for the volunteer, client, and agency.

Similarly, those who are motivated by a history with crisis and suicide may be a risk. It should be cautioned that due to the sensitive nature of services received, not all with this history would be suitable volunteers. During recruitment efforts, prescreening questions should be designed and asked in a manner that seeks information regarding the emotional and mental stability of the potential volunteer.

Retention practices might incorporate such steps as: (1) regular and ongoing training focused upon different aspects of the various roles of the volunteer; (2) the development of a progression for volunteers to have increasing levels of responsibilities to give the volunteers challenges and goals to strive toward; (3) the invitation for and implementation of feasible suggestions from volunteers for improvement of services; and (4) development of a system for rewarding the volunteers in the form of monthly social events, which would engender the sense of belonging and relationship-building.

In summary, it is important for agencies to be aware of why the volunteers are willing to contribute time to their agency's mission. This study shows that it is important for volunteer resource managers to ask potential volunteers to discuss: (1) why they chose the agency; (2) why they want to help these particular clients; (3) what they would find challenging; (4) related experiences; and (5) availability. Posing these questions to potential volunteers will help determine their motivations and help volunteer resource managers in the screening process to improve an agency's return on investment by increasing volunteer tenure.

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## **Volunteers: Beyond Government Partners**

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### **Abstract**

Practitioners and academics have expressed concern about the deteriorating morale and effectiveness of the public-sector workforce, citing its aging employees and competition for human capital from the private sector. Recruiting qualified public servants is complicated by negative perceptions of government, due in part to the rhetoric of politicians from all sides. Therefore, finding new ways to recruit and retain the best-qualified young graduates has become critical. This commentary examines an untapped resource—volunteers—an underutilized supply of well-qualified future public servants that also have the potential to transform the negative image of government among youth.

### **Key Words:**

volunteers, public service, government

### **Introduction**

Over the past several years, practitioners and academics have expressed concern about the deteriorating morale and effectiveness of the public service (Lewis & Frank, 2002), citing the aging workforce and competition for human capital from the private sector. President Obama's promise to make working for government cool again and his recent call to serve is significant given that recruiting qualified public servants is complicated by a negative perception of government. Attacks by politicians from all sides have perpetuated the image of bloated bureaucracies and lazy bureaucrats and created a negative stereotype of the American civil service (Stier, 2004). Consequently, this contributes to difficulty in recruiting qualified civil servants, because citizens "simply aren't aware of the many ways government workers touch their lives" (Steir, para. 5).

*Finding new ways to recruit and retain the best-qualified college graduates has become critical for all levels of*

*government. In order to address this issue, the federal government has developed programs, such as the Partnership for Public Service's Fed Experience and Call to Serve, that focus on recruiting government interns. However, these programs overlook volunteers as an underutilized resource in government programs that constitute a potential supply of well-qualified future public servants. How public-sector volunteers can contribute to recruitment and retention is of particular relevance to all levels of government, in particular local government, given that 80% of public-sector volunteers are found in local government. Moreover, given the recent signing of the landmark Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, we can expect an increase in government volunteers; thus, increasing the pool of potential recruits.*

### **The Federal Workforce**

According to a study entitled *Tapping America* (Partnership for Public Service [PPS], 2002), the federal

government needs to hire more than 250,000 employees within the next two years in order to replace workers who will be retiring, have been reassigned to the Department of Homeland Security, or have resigned. The study also reported that youth are unaware of the work that civil servants do, and that few are informed about available government work opportunities. Youth see government and the bureaucracy as incompatible with being young (DeSena, 2003), i.e., government is perceived as not providing challenging work to maximize their skills, as well as being unprofitable, lacking mobility, and discouraging creativity.

In addition, according to a 2001 Hart/Teeter poll commissioned by the Partnership for Public Service (2002) and the Council for Excellence in Government, 40% of students felt that the private sector offered interesting and challenging work, whereas only 9% felt the same about the public sector; 69% felt that the private sector allowed employees to take initiative, whereas only 3% felt the same about the public sector. Thus, two of the major obstacles to recruiting faced by federal agencies are a negative perception of government and competition from the private sector for the best-qualified young graduates.

### **Volunteers: Untapped Resources**

Unlike interns, who seek to obtain skills and experience to develop their future careers, today's youth volunteer because they have a can-do spirit and believe that service matters (Conant, 1989). Although participation in civic life is on the decline in America (Ellis, 1998) and most youth appear uninterested in government, many youth feel an increasing desire to serve, especially among college youth. Dote, Cramer, Dietz, and Grimm (2007) noted that a large percentage of college freshmen

maintain that it is "essential" or "very important" to help others who are in need. In 2005, approximately 30% of college students volunteered compared with 29% of the general population. Twenty-two percent more college students volunteered in 2005 than in 2002 (i.e., 3.3 million in 2005 compared with 2.7 million in 2002). Furthermore, college students were twice as likely to volunteer (30%) as their 16-to-24-year-old peers who were not enrolled in college (15%). Nearly 32% of college students volunteered with educational or youth service organizations; almost 23% of college student volunteers served with religious organizations.

College students' commitment to serve has even helped redefine spring break—from a reason to travel to sunny vacation destinations in Florida and Mexico to an opportunity to help others and make a difference. In March 2007, 36,000 students from 300 schools spent their spring break cleaning up debris and painting houses along the Gulf of Mexico or elsewhere in the world (Johnston, 2007). Six months after hurricane Katrina, more than 31,000 students took alternative spring breaks. The following year, because students had more time to plan, that number increased by 16%. "So many young people were sitting in school watching the horrible devastation and wondering what they could do about it.... Because they're students...they just can't write checks and feel like they did something. In order to contribute, they have to do it with their physical labor" (Johnston, 2007, p.15). This willingness and can-do spirit is as critical to our democracy today as it was at our nation's inception; it perpetuates the openness and optimism that make a democracy work (Friedman, 2007).

### **Conclusion**

As noted, there has been a surge in volunteering among youth, especially



college students. This interest in serving has been connected to a desire to make a difference. Some of these volunteers are already serving in government. What is being done so that they will continue to serve once they have graduated?

Volunteers are beyond government partners. Public-sector volunteers provide the catalytic framework to change the perception of government work as unchallenging and unsuitable as a career choice for qualified young college graduates. Volunteers are some of the best-qualified college students to recruit from because they not only have experience, but they are motivated to serve as well. There is ongoing difficulty attracting youth to public-sector jobs, yet many youth do contribute their time as volunteers in the public sector. The critical question is how to communicate positive images of volunteers in the public sector in order to overcome one of the major obstacles faced by government in its recruitment of employees.

Before college students can be actively recruited into public service, however, public administrators and managers need to better monitor these volunteers' contributions, and also look at the volunteer pool as a potential hiring resource. Although it is necessary to recruit interns and baby boomers, volunteers should not be overlooked. College-age, public-sector volunteers are motivated to serve and are just beginning their careers; they therefore have the potential to become lifelong career public servants.

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## Using the Web to Effectively Attract Volunteers to Non-profit Organizations

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### Abstract

*Non-profit organizations often rely on volunteers to help staff and sustain organizational services, functions, and programs. The web is a critical vehicle for attracting these needed volunteers. The authors searched the available literature and reviewed close to 100 non-profit organizational websites to identify best practices of note. Fourteen best practices in web site design are forwarded and discussed.*

### Key Words:

web presence, best practices, volunteer resource management, recruitment,  
non-profit organizations

### Introduction

An effective and robust web presence is seen as essential to for-profit organizational success (Waters, 2007). The need for a highly effective web site is not exclusive, however, to profit organizations; it is critical for non-profit organizations as well. The web site can be an effective medium for public relations, employee recruitment, informing the community of

events or news, fundraising, and of primary interest in this paper, recruiting volunteers (Cober, Brown, Levy, Cober, & Keeping, 2003).

Volunteers are a vital resource for many non-profit organizations (Safrit, Schmiesing, Gliem, & Gliem, 2005). Volunteer programs' web sites provide volunteer resource managers (VRMs) a method with which they can reach their

intended audience (potential volunteers) with few reservations about prohibitive costs or physical distance. By not connecting in an effective way with potential volunteers via the web, non-profit organizations run the risk of not attracting and signing-up the essential volunteer talent they need. Our goal was to uncover the best practices for constructing or designing volunteer program web sites for the purposes of attracting and recruiting volunteers. To determine best practices in volunteer program web site design, the authors conducted literature

searches on the topic, scanned close to 100 non-profit websites, and spoke with VRMs. From this search and examination, 14 key web practices of note were identified (Table 1).

**Suggested Volunteer Program Web Site Best Practices**

*Best Practice 1: The front page of the organization's web site provides a link to the volunteer program web page*

Table 1  
*Recommended Best Practices for Volunteer Program Web Sites*

Best Practice
1. The front page of organization's web site includes a link to volunteer program web page
2. The organization's web site includes the organization's mission statement
3. The volunteer program's web page provides the volunteer program mission statement Web site provides a description of the volunteer program
4. The volunteer program's web site provides a clear, detailed description of the volunteer program
5. The web site lists requirements for volunteering
6. The web site indicates minimum number of hours required of volunteers
7. The web site lists available volunteer positions
8. The web site provides a job description for each volunteer positions
9. The web site provides specific steps to volunteer (the process is outlined)
10. The web site indicates if volunteer orientation is available and provides information on the next orientation session
11. The web site allows visitors to apply online or download the application form
12. The web site allows visitors to register for more information
13. The web site provides contact information for the volunteer resource manager
14. The web site indicates the type of training volunteers will receive beyond orientation

Volunteer programs that are building a web site must first ensure that visitors can access it. A direct link from the organizational web site's front page to the volunteer program web page should be provided. This link should be in a prominent location so the potential volunteer is not searching. Accessibility is the first critical step to attracting volunteers.

*Best Practice 2: The organization's web site provides an organizational mission statement*

*Best Practice 3: The volunteer program's web site provides the volunteer program's mission statement*

Once visitors reach the volunteer section of the organization's web site, a mission statement for both the organization and the volunteer program should be presented. Mission statements signify the culture of an organization and communicate to the reader the purpose of the volunteer program (Vandijck, Desmidt, & Buelens, 2007). Most organizations develop a mission or vision statement early in the organization's existence. Non-profit organizations who recognize the vital importance of fostering a healthy volunteer program may consider developing a separate but related volunteer program mission statement. The volunteer program mission statement should support the overall organization's mission statement and provide an understanding of the kind of culture that the organization wants their volunteers to experience.

*Best Practice 4: The volunteer program's web site provides a clear, detailed description of the volunteer program*

To further attract volunteers to the organization, a descriptive statement with detailed and comprehensive information about the volunteer program should be

provided. This description may provide additional information about the program not apparent from the mission statement (e.g., potential positions for volunteers, targeted outcomes of volunteering, etc.). A detailed description gives the impression of a capable and focused volunteer program and reflects very well on the VRM.

*Best Practice 5: The web site provides requirements for volunteering*

*Best Practice 6: The web site indicates minimum number of hours required of volunteers*

*Best Practice 7: The web site lists available volunteer positions*

*Best Practice 8: The web site provides a "job description" for each volunteer position*

The website must be informative. The web site should give potential volunteers an understanding of their potential role through clear, detailed explanations of the different volunteer positions available. These descriptions should explain the requirements for volunteering as well as the minimum number of hours necessary to carry-out the position tasks. Additional information in this form acts as a realistic preview of the actual day-to-day duties of volunteering, presents the scope of work the visitor may be engaged in, and ensures that applicants have a good idea whether or not they will enjoy fulfilling their responsibilities.

*Best Practice 9: The web site provides specific steps to volunteer (the process is outlined)*

*Best Practice 10: The web site indicates if orientation is available and provides information on the next orientation session*

*Best Practice 11: The web site allows visitors to apply online or download the application form*

If a visitor to the web site decides that volunteering at the organization is right for them, they should be given a chance to act on this decision. According to McFarland (2005), volunteer programs can benefit from providing detailed, user-friendly guidelines for the application process. There are several ways to facilitate the application process. These include providing a short step-by-step instruction guide, providing specific information on volunteer orientation sessions, and enabling both web-based and mail-based applications.

*Best Practice 12: The web site allows visitors to register for more information*

*Best Practice 13: The web site provides contact information for the VRM*

The web site should have avenues for potential volunteers to obtain additional information and contact the VRM for specialized information/questions. By allowing potential volunteers to register for more information, VRMs can reduce the possibility of information overload and be strategic in the placement of information on the website. In addition, providing contact information for the VRM serves to involve the potential volunteer in the application process by giving them an avenue for getting answers to their specific questions. Fielding each potential volunteer's question allows the VRM more direct control over the recruitment process and incorporates a level of screening in the recruitment process that is otherwise not available.

*Best Practice 14: The web site indicates the type of training volunteers will receive beyond orientation.*

In addition to seeking the information necessary to make an informed

decision, visitors may also be looking to see what development opportunities (e.g. continuing education programs on organization specific topics such as software and administrative training, bedside manner, or animal care and handling) are available. The training of volunteers, beyond what is provided during orientation, is suggested to help volunteers perform their functions independently and competently (McFarland, 2005). The availability of training may help sway visitors who have decided to volunteer, but are considering positions at different organizations. Visitors to the web site may look to such additional training as a potential benefit of volunteering at a particular organization.

### **Implications for Volunteer Resource Managers**

As VRMs begin to harness the potential of their volunteer program web sites as recruitment tools, we advocate adoption of the best practices listed. While many benefits can be gained through the use of these practices, they should be carefully implemented, with care taken to adjust each practice to each particular volunteer program. An example of an organization and volunteer program that have several of these practices adapted for their use is shown in the San Francisco SPA's web site (Figures 1 and 2). First looking to Figure 1, note that there are two separate ways to access the volunteer program web site; one link ("Volunteer") in the box entitled "Make a Difference," and another (not pictured here) using the drop-down menu accessible by clicking the "Support" button. Following either of these links brings you to the volunteer program's front page (see Figure 2).

Figure 1. A sample of a volunteer-based animal welfare organization web site (i.e., the organization's front page).

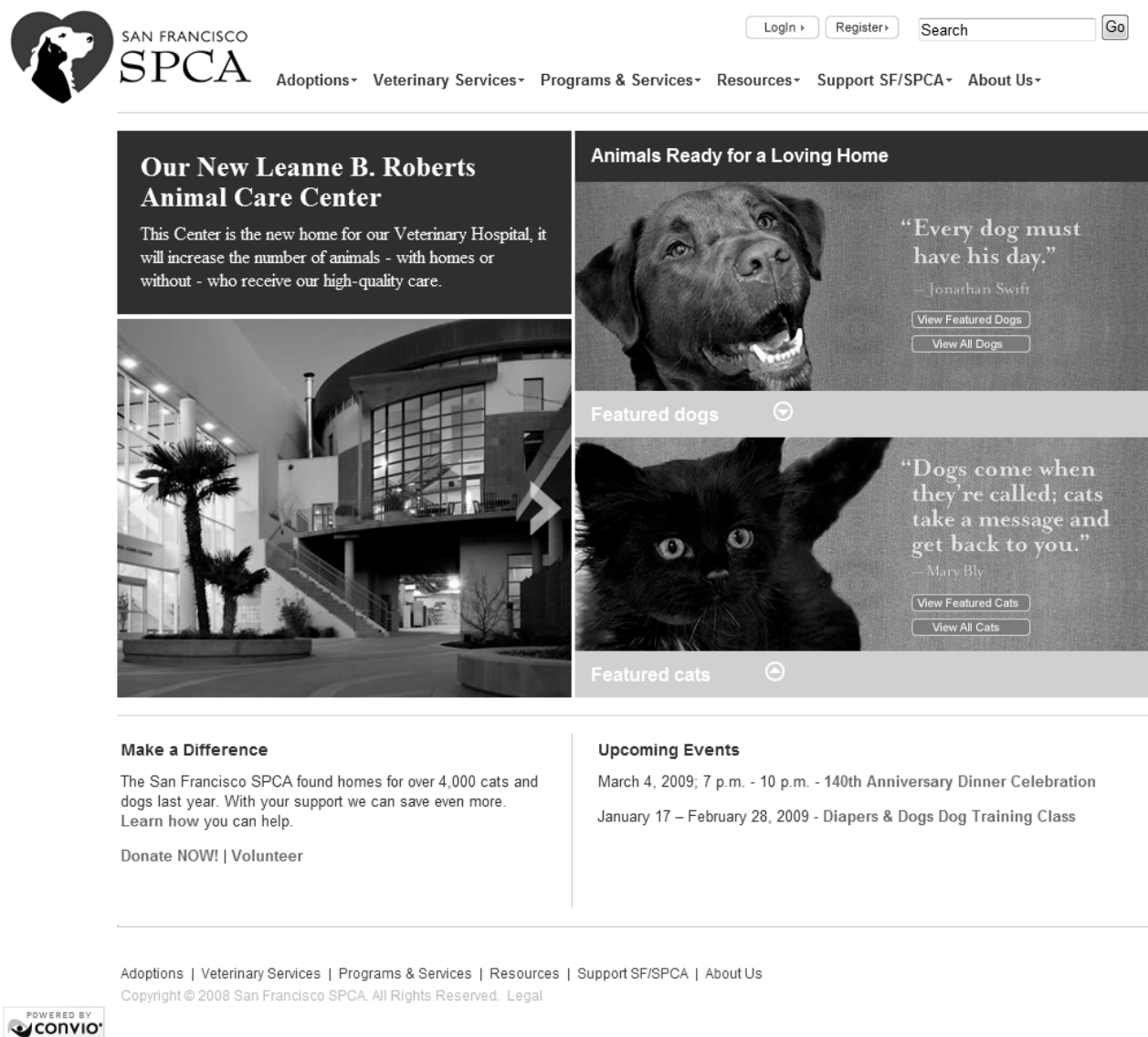
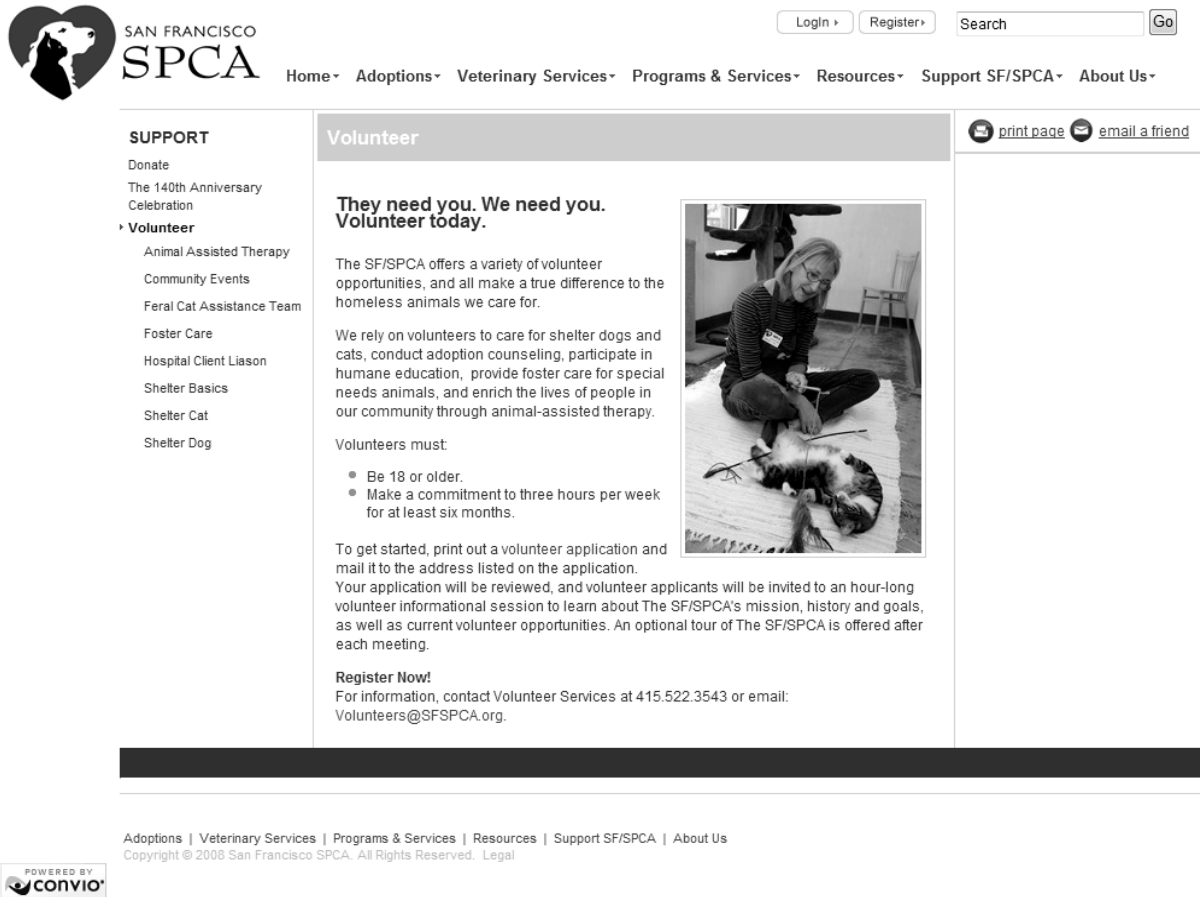


Figure 2. Sample volunteer program front page.



Note that the volunteer program front page incorporates several important pieces of information, including the volunteer program mission statement; requirements to volunteer; minimum number of hours required to volunteer; a description of the volunteer program; and contact information for visitors to attain additional information. This information allows the volunteer to assess their personal fit with the volunteer program's aims, determine if they are capable of fulfilling the minimum requirements, and ask for additional information if desired.

We include a second example web site, that of the American Cancer Society (Figures 3, 4, and 5), to illustrate another way in which the practices put forth in this

article may be utilized. Again, note the multiple links to the volunteer program web site from the organization's web site front page. Looking to the volunteer program web site (Figures 4 and 5), we see that the volunteer program vision statement is given prominent placement, emphasizing its importance. There is also a link to apply to volunteer available, as well as links to additional information on the various volunteer opportunities available. The information provided in each of those links is similar the information provided in the first example. The key difference between the two examples is that the layout of the web site itself was customized to incorporate the best practices differently.



Figure 3. A sample of a volunteer-based health organization web site (i.e., the organization's front page).

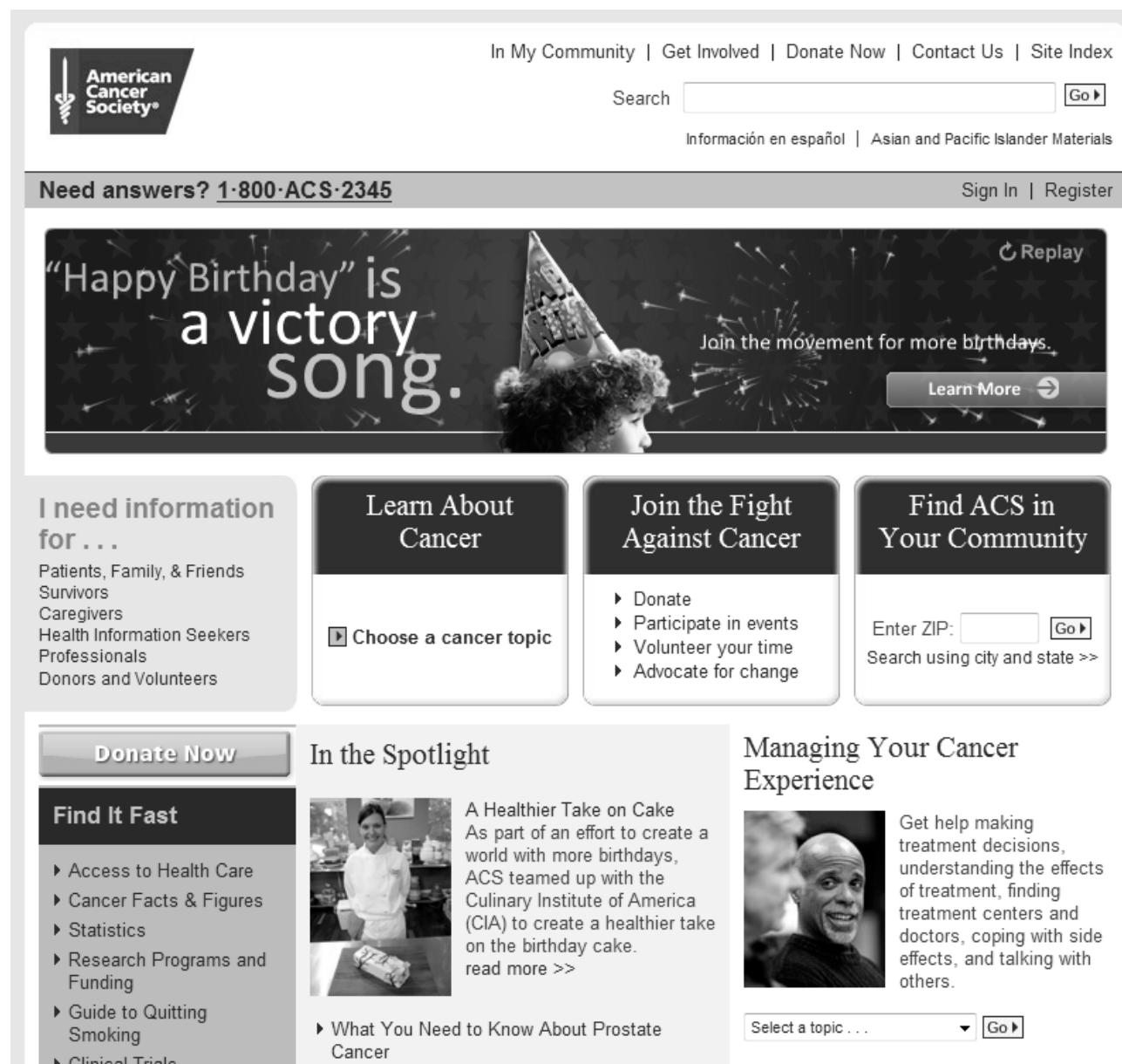



Figure 4. Sample volunteer program front page.




[My Planner](#)

▼ **Employment & Volunteer Opportunities**

[Careers](#)

[Volunteers](#)

It is the policy of the American Cancer Society not to discriminate against any employee or any applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status or veteran status. This policy shall include, but not be limited to, the following: recruitment and employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, compensation, training, layoff and termination.




## Volunteers

Save Lives. Fulfill Yours.

### Our Vision

We, the volunteers and staff members of the American Cancer Society, empower and mobilize communities to prevent cancer, save lives, and diminish suffering by distinguishing the Society as the organization of choice for meaningful volunteer engagement.



What's it really like to volunteer with the American Cancer Society? Today, there are over three million different answers to that question, because each of our valued volunteer partners has a unique story to tell. Your volunteer role could be as valuable and rewarding as theirs. To learn more about the experience of volunteering for the Society, check out Andrew Salner's story and [others like his](#), and hear how giving a little time is rewarding within itself.


**Search jobs now** [Go ▶](#)

**Sign up now to volunteer** [Go ▶](#)

**Save lives. Fulfill yours.™**

Being a member of the American Cancer Society team is a unique opportunity to put your special talents to work for the good of the world.

Figure 5. Sample volunteer program front page (cont'd).

<p>discriminate against any employee or any applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, age, disability, marital status or veteran status. This policy shall include, but not be limited to, the following: recruitment and employment, promotion, demotion, transfer, compensation, training, layoff and termination.</p>	<p>American Cancer Society, empower and mobilize communities to prevent cancer, save lives, and diminish suffering by distinguishing the Society as the organization of choice for meaningful volunteer engagement.</p> 	<p><b>volunteer</b></p>
<p><b>🔒 Your Privacy is Important</b> If you have concerns about sharing sensitive information, please read our policies on protecting your privacy <a href="#">more</a></p>	<p>What's it really like to volunteer with the American Cancer Society? Today, there are over three million different answers to that question, because each of our valued volunteer partners has a unique story to tell. Your volunteer role could be as valuable and rewarding as theirs. To learn more about the experience of volunteering for the Society, check out Andrew Salner's story and <a href="#">others like his</a>, and hear how giving a little time is rewarding within itself.</p> <p><b>Why volunteer?</b></p> <p>Volunteering for the American Cancer Society means you have an opportunity to save lives and fulfill your own. When you volunteer, you can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Make a meaningful difference in your community.</li> <li>■ Help cancer patients and their families.</li> <li>■ Have flexible options and opportunities that fit your schedule.</li> <li>■ Build relationships and networks that last a lifetime.</li> <li>■ Learn and grow personally and professionally.</li> <li>■ Involve your family and friends.</li> </ul> <p><b>Interested in volunteering?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Yes</b> I'm ready to volunteer. Let me tell you about myself and my preferences.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Maybe</b> I need to know more about the kinds of opportunities you have.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Not sure</b> Tell me more about why I should volunteer for the Society.</p>	<p><b>Save lives. Fulfill yours.™</b></p> <p>Being a member of the American Cancer Society team is a unique opportunity to put your special talents to work for the good of others, in an innovative and people-centered professional environment.</p> <p>Laura Reeves Chief Talent Officer <a href="#">Watch a video message from Laura Reeves</a></p>

Although these examples provide illustrations of several of the best practices outlined, there are many ways of accomplishing these best practices through web site development. If possible, Information Technology (IT) professionals who focus on web design can provide VRMs with numerous options that can be tailored to their specific program's needs. Articles such as those referenced for the best practices section can be used in consultation with the IT professional to ensure that the volunteer program web site is designed

effectively for each specific volunteer program.

VRMs should also consider looking to research and trade articles both within and outside the nonprofit sector for the latest information on new web practices to consider and which of those practices may be most effective at bolstering outcomes important to volunteer programs, such as volunteer retention, donations and volunteer satisfaction. Although we found very few of these studies, over time new knowledge will accumulate.

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Anna Currie is an incoming Ed.D. candidate in Adult and Community College Education at North Carolina State University and currently a Business Education Teacher in the public school setting. She is also the school's VRM and a "professional volunteer" herself. Her research interests include social responsibility via the Internet and the relationship between youth and media.

## **Head, Heart, Hands, Health ....Hunger**

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### **Abstract**

*In today's economically challenged times, hunger is increasing and food banks and soup kitchens are struggling to feed more people with fewer donations. To help stock local food reserves, California State University students created a food drive based on the defining components of 4-H and recruited, trained, and worked side-by-side with 4-H member volunteers from kindergarten through sixth grades. This cross-age volunteer effort resulted in 20,000 cans of donated food which translates to five months of meals or 48,000 servings for the local food bank. In return for their efforts, the college students and 4-H members changed the negative stereotypes they had held toward the homeless (Head); developed feelings of compassion and a value for sharing (Heart); engaged in an active, quantifiable service experience (Hands); and provided one of the most basic biological needs to those who are hungry and living in poverty (Health). A food drive can be an effective method of teaching the value of volunteerism and community service to people of all ages. This article outlines the steps for meshing service and learning together.*

### **Key Words:**

food drive, food bank, schools, 4-H, volunteerism, service learning

### **Introduction**

Collaboration among community groups to meet the needs of a target population is at the core of any successful community service program. Collaboration among groups with similar values and methods make a powerful team capable of greater accomplishment. This collaborative potential exists between 4-H programs and university programs in health education. Both 4-H and health education programs provide experiential learning experiences that teach skills and make a difference in the community (National 4-H Headquarters, n.d; National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Inc., 2000). The guiding principles, values, and methods of both groups are similar with the difference being that 4-H communicates the essential information without professional jargon.

The Health and Community Services Department (HCSV) at California State University, Chico has developed an extensive collaboration with 4-H members in area elementary schools which has enhanced the Department's professional preparation program, 4-H members' learning experiences, and the elementary schools' participation in service learning, all while serving the local community through volunteerism. This article describes one of HCSV's powerful collaborations with 4-H, the food drive, which is particularly pertinent in today's economic climate.

### **The Need**

In the United States today, there is an increased demand upon food banks. The 2007 unemployment rate in the U.S. was 4.6% (United States Department of Labor,

2009). For the same year, the poverty rate was 12.5% (United States Census Bureau, 2008). In addition, 11% of U.S. households (approximately 13 million people) were food insecure at some point during 2007 (United States Department of Agriculture, 2008). Poverty rate and food insecurity numbers are not yet available for 2008 or 2009, but it can be assumed there is a direct correlation between unemployment, poverty, and food insecurity. By 2009, the unemployment rate in the United States not only doubled from 2007, but reached a 20 year high of 9.4% (United States Dept of Labor, 2009). The local food bank/soup kitchen reported an increase in persons and families seeking meals and supplemental foods at the same time as donations from individuals and businesses decreased. With higher numbers of people seeking assistance from food banks, the volunteer force was stretched. The annual food drive implemented by the food bank/soup kitchen during November historically resulted in food stores for the holiday season but rarely beyond that time period. This situation provided an excellent service project for the university/4-H collaborative team.

### **Planning the Volunteer Effort Using the Four H's**

To get the most committed effort, volunteers need to care about the affected population and feel that they can make a difference. Organizing a comprehensive learning experience based on the 4-H's of Head, Heart, Hands, and Health can move volunteers from ignorance and indifference to knowledge and motivation to take action. The method used by the HCSV department trains college students first and then allows the college students to teach 4-H members. From there, both groups work together to serve the community.

### *The First H - Head (Thinking)*

The first step in any community service project is understanding the population in need. College students often hold negative stereotypes of homeless people. Implementing a word association activity starts the process of changing those stereotypes. For the word association, the instructor can write the word "homeless" on the board and ask the college students to call out words they associate with this word. In most cases the associated words will include smelly, dirty, mentally ill, alcoholic, etc. Then the instructor can ask the college students to imagine they were homeless and to call out words they associate with "college student." Typical responses would be rich, spoiled, privileged, etc. From this introductory activity the discussion can focus on both stereotypes and realities of those who are hungry and homeless.

In another session it is important to move beyond talking and make contact with the target population. By taking a tour the local food bank/soup kitchen, college students will be able to meet the staff and the clients. This goes a long way in developing understanding and compassion while giving the students a mental picture of who they are working for and where the impact will take place. With this enhanced knowledge of local needs the college students can then brainstorm ideas for communicating the need for a food drive to local elementary children who are 4-H members.

### *The Second H - Heart (Caring)*

For our food drive, teams of college students identified sharing and compassion as the educational focus for training 4-H members as volunteers. Interactive educational assemblies and classroom presentations were chosen as the means of conveying this message to the younger students. College student work groups

created age appropriate skits that dramatized the feelings and experiences of families who didn't have enough money for food, and asked the children in the audience to imagine what it would feel like to go without a meal on a regular basis. The skits focused on the importance of caring for others and sharing our abundance. The children were challenged to take part in showing compassion for those who had fallen into hard times. The skits were performed two weeks prior to the food collection to give the children time to collect the food.

#### *The Third H - Hands (Service)*

The skits were performed to approximately 2,740 elementary school children asking each and every one of them to join the volunteer effort. With all of these volunteers, there needed to be organization and management. A college student and 4-H child were assigned to a classroom and took responsibility for the food coming into the classroom. Each college student/4-H child pair counted, labeled, packed, and transported the food to the food bank/soup kitchen. The sheer weight of the food as it came in and the space it consumed in the classrooms motivated both the college students and the children. The food was tangible evidence of helping that didn't need explaining and repeated strategies for encouragement.

#### *The Fourth H - Health (Living)*

Food is essential for life. In addition to the messages of compassion and sharing, information about having food in the required quantity and of nutritious quality was part of the skits and reinforced as the food was collected. For example, in small groups based on age appropriateness, children were taught to read food advertisements, clip coupons, and/or shop for affordable meals for their families.

Calculations were done on how much it costs to feed a family of four with nutritious foods. All the foods chosen on the shopping trips were analyzed for nutritional content and children were challenged to find the most nutritious food for the least money. Children were asked to identify how much of the donated food had no nutritional content. Calculations were made to determine how much money was spent on foods that may be emotionally satisfying but were not helping their health status.

#### **Outcomes of the Food Drive**

The food drive has been conducted as a university/4-H collaborative for two years. In the first year, the college students and 4-H members collected approximately 15,000 cans. This was the largest food drive the local food bank/soup kitchen had ever seen. The shelves went from being almost bare to there being no space left on the shelves for the food. During the second year, the college students and 4-H members collected over 20,000 cans which translates to five months of meals or 48,000 servings for the local soup kitchen, again exceeding any previous food drive held by the food bank/soup kitchen and exceeding the goals set by the students. These achievements met the needs of the food bank/soup kitchen. However, meeting the needs of the food bank/soup kitchen was only half of the goal of this project.

Once the food drive was completed, members of the college/4-H team were asked to write a reflection paper about their experience that included reflections about each 4-H component. These papers demonstrated in the students' words how this project significantly shaped their attitudes about volunteerism.

For the "head" section of the reflections a student wrote, "My beliefs about the homeless have changed because of this project. I always harbored the thought



that the people who ended up homeless did it to themselves. Now I view it differently and understand that things just don't go smoothly for everyone". In addition to reflections about helping this underserved population, the college students wrote that they saw the value of this experience in relation to their professional skills. "I have learned some thing about myself which have helped me understand the community and my role as a health leader. This real life example has helped me, as a health educator, by giving me experience in what I will potentially do in my future."

In the "heart" category, both college students and the 4-H children were moved by the experience of helping and developed a desire to continue to serve others. A student wrote, "Participating in this event made me a more engaged and well rounded individual. I learned that there is more to being a citizen than just one's physical ties, but rather it is the emotional ties that one has within the community that truly makes them a 'good' citizen." Another student wrote, volunteer work gives you a totally amazing feeling of pride."

In the "hands" category, the students expressed awe in how relatively small actions of many can add up to a huge accomplishment and that it should be everyone's responsibility to participate. As one student wrote, "I never realized what it took behind the scenes to get the food to feed everyone at a shelter. If everyone would just commit a little time it would make a huge impact on the community. I have the power to help others that need help and I want to do more."

Food scarcity was a new concept for many college students and 4-H members. The writings in the "health" category of the reflections showed new awareness that food doesn't just appear on your table and not having food is a devastating situation. Some students realized their own vulnerability;

"Any one of us can lose our jobs and find ourselves in need of food and shelter". In addition, the emotional and social components of health were common reflections and the students expressed a more tolerant view of others. One student wrote, "Underneath the dirty clothes, broken bike, and dirty smell, they are regular people who want to be acknowledged as human."

### Summary

For the past two years the food drive has exceeded the hopes of the food bank. Beyond the food collected, the experiences of combining the 4-H members and college students resulted in high quality learning for both groups. The goals of developing a volunteer spirit, teamwork, compassion, and tolerance were evident in both groups. In addition, the college students demonstrated increased skill levels in the areas of planning, teaching, organizing, managing and leading. It is rewarding to see one's students make a contribution to the community and grow as responsible, committed citizens. Watching their real life efforts and then reading their reflections of that effort is much more meaningful than reading their conclusions after they research a paper. Volunteerism and citizenship are best taught through action, not lecture. This quote from a college student's reflection paper sums up the value of these service learning experiences: "I have taken away an experience I will remember and reflect upon throughout the rest of my life. Not only has the experience taught me the significance of helping others, but it has shown me that it takes a few to rally a community to take action and make a difference."

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## **The International Volunteer Impacts Survey**

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### **Abstract**

*The field of international volunteer service (IVS) is growing worldwide, yet there is little systematic evidence of outcomes for volunteers. Current scholarship about IVS is largely descriptive and lacks consistent measures and comparative designs that permit claims of impact. This lack of reliable information limits what researchers, program administrators, and policy makers can claim about program effects. This paper reports on a publically-available "tool of the trade", the International Volunteers Impacts Survey (IVIS), which measures impacts of IVS on volunteers. The 90-item IVIS survey -- which can be administered by program staff, evaluators, and researchers -- has undergone rigorous factor analysis procedures to assess the conceptual basis and reliability of a range of international volunteer outcomes. These outcomes include international contacts, open-mindedness, international understanding, intercultural relations, global identity, social skills, life plans, civic activism, community engagement, media attentiveness, and financial contributions. This paper discusses the importance and use of this survey for assessing IVS volunteer outcomes and building the knowledge base on IVS.*

### **Key Words:**

international, volunteering, research, evaluation, survey

### **Background**

The field of international volunteer service (IVS) is growing worldwide; in conjunction with this growth, more

individuals are crossing international borders to volunteer (McBride, Benítez, & Sherraden, 2003). Organizations in the non-profit, for-profit, and public sectors are

developing new and unique program models to accommodate growing needs (Allum, 2007). Journals in a range of disciplines are publishing more articles, and international associations sponsor more conference presentations on IVS. National and international policymakers and opinion leaders are discussing the relative benefits of IVS, including the role of IVS as a diplomatic tool (Clinton, 2009; Demopoulos, 2005). Despite global enthusiasm for IVS, there is conceptual and operational ambiguity on the nature and impacts of international volunteering. The proliferation of diverse IVS program models contributes significantly to this ambiguity (Allum, 2007; Sherraden, Stringham, Sow, & McBride, 2006).

Most existing research on IVS is descriptive and is based on case studies and cross-sectional surveys (Powell & Bratović, 2006; Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008). While extensive anecdotal evidence about the benefits of international service on volunteers is available, stakeholders increasingly require systematic evidence of impacts. Few quasi-experimental and experimental research projects utilize rigorous research designs and standardized instruments to examine IVS impacts (Powell & Bratović). Even with rigorous designs, the data may not be illustrative for the field without standardized instruments that accurately measure the range of intended IVS volunteer impacts across program models.

This article reports on the second requirement, a “tool of the trade” for the IVS field called the International Volunteer Impacts Survey (IVIS). This 90-item survey was developed using factor analysis procedures that assess the conceptual basis and reliability of a range of international volunteer outcomes. This survey is freely available to the field (Lough, McBride, & Sherraden, 2009). We anticipate that this

survey will be deemed useful by the field, and implemented across multiple programs to determine the relative effectiveness of differing program models, thus informing policy and program development.

### **The International Volunteer Impact Survey (IVIS)**

Development of this survey is part of a larger research project at the Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis, USA. The project examines IVS programs that differ across key characteristics, such as organization type, degree of internationality, eligibility requirements, length of service, and service activities. Through quantitative and qualitative methods, the study assesses outcomes for volunteers, organizations, and communities. The research design is longitudinal and quasi-experimental with matched comparison groups (McBride, Lough, & Sherraden, 2008).

To assess outcomes on the volunteers, researchers developed the IVIS survey. Questions are based on a comprehensive review of previous studies that summarize possible volunteer outcomes (Sherraden, Stringham, Sow, & McBride, 2006). These outcomes include international contacts, open-mindedness, international understanding, intercultural relations, global identity, social skills, life plans, civic activism, community engagement, media attentiveness, and financial contributions.

The IVIS underwent review by experts in the field, and was tested on respondents from diverse programs serving in different capacities. These respondents included those who had yet to serve (pre-test), those who had served (post-test), and those who had not served (comparison test). This design allows programs to measure differences between those who participate in IVS and those who do not. The survey underwent extensive analytical testing;

standardization of the survey occurred in three phases: (1) survey development, (2) survey pilot, and (3) survey validation. The details about this process, the factor analysis results, and the full survey are publically available at:

<http://csd.wustl.edu/Publications/Documents/WP09-31.pdf> (Lough, McBride, & Sherraden, 2009).

### Use and Implications of the IVIS

The IVIS responds to calls from the field regarding the need for standardized tools to assess the impact of international volunteering and service (Dingle, Sokolowski, Saxon-Harrold, Smith, & Leigh, 2001; IVR, 2004; Powell & Bratović, 2006). It contributes to the knowledge base of the forms, functions, and outcomes of IVS (Allum, 2007; McBride, Benítez, & Sherraden, 2003; McBride, Sherraden, Benítez, & Johnson, 2004; Randel, German, Cordiero, & Baker, 2004; Sherraden, Lough, & McBride, 2008; Sherraden, Stringham, Sow, & McBride, 2006). The survey is relatively easy to implement and was developed for online administration, which is comparatively cost-efficient. The survey takes approximately 20 minutes for respondents to complete. With these strengths in mind, several strategies are important for further adoption and use of the IVIS.

In order to assess impact accurately, the IVIS must be paired with a repeated measures research design that is implemented across IVS programs. Current research utilizing the IVIS is limited because it includes only a few programs, and the majority of respondents come from the United States. In order to build a knowledge base on the impacts of IVS that is applicable globally, replication with different programs in different parts of the world is essential. As programs use the IVIS, additional outcome categories can be added to make it

applicable to more programs in different contexts. In short, the tool itself is of little use beyond the present study if others do not implement it.

Over the long-term, as programs gather information on volunteer outcomes, potential differences in outcomes can be compared. As these outcomes are compared, they can inform empirically-based decisions on IVS policy and practice. Administrators in the field need this knowledge to understand the advantages and consequences of promoting differing program models that send volunteers overseas (Allum, 2007; Caprara, Quigley, & Rieffel, 2009). As a field, we must be open to considering which types of program models are most effective at achieving specific outcomes. This knowledge is necessary to evaluate program aims, to shape efficient policy, and to inform effective IVS practices.

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## **The Volunteer Movement in the United States**

Bernard M. Kapell

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### **(Editor-generated) Abstract**

*The author describes the historical development of volunteerism in the United States as well as the current status of volunteerism in the country as of 1968.*

### **(Editor-generated) Key Words:**

volunteerism, United States, history

The volunteer in the United States is a citizen by birth or naturalization, or a non-citizen; young or old, or at some in-between age; male or female. In short, a volunteer is anyone who joins an organization or a cause without financial remuneration for services rendered because he or she believes in it or chooses to become a member of that group. He thus extends the services of this group beyond that possible by the paid personnel of the organization. In some instances there may not be paid personnel; the organization's leadership and its program may be conducted entirely by volunteers.

A volunteer may possess a considerable degree of competence for the assignment he undertakes or may have little experience or skill. Regardless of his competence, the essential factor is that he functions without financial remuneration. This does not mean that the volunteer works outside of a 'reward system' - only that the reward is in a form other than money. For the volunteer the term 'reward' and 'money' are not synonymous. A study of the growth of the volunteer movement in this country is sufficient evidence of the meaningful and personal satisfactions the volunteer achieves through service.

It has been estimated that more than ten thousand national, regional, state, and

local voluntary health and health related agencies now exist in this country. Educated guesses have been made that over 51 million volunteers are serving the estimated ten thousand agencies. Of this number about 30 percent are men and women gainfully employed who serve during their free time. Students, both male and female, make up about 10 percent of the total. By and large women comprise the largest representation, with approximately 55 percent of their number in the category of housewives.

Many volunteers are concerned with church or church-related activity. This is a logical extension of the origins of the volunteer movement in the United States. William Penn (1644-1718) founder of Pennsylvania, is known to have appreciated the value of money, but he believed God gave men wealth to use rather than to hoard. His puritanical attitude reflected his conscience. He believed that if the money wasted on extravagance were put to public use the wants of the poor would be well satisfied. "The best recreation is to do good," was one of his frequently heard pieces of advice.

During the early years of our history Cotton Mather (1663-1728) stood above most men in the development of philanthropy. This grandson of two of the



founders of Massachusetts was an early and outstanding exponent of voluntarism. He proposed that men and women acting as individuals or as members of voluntary associations should engage in a "perpetual endeavor to do good in the world." His own charitable gifts were generous enough to make him virtually a one-man relief and aid society. He promoted many charitable activities, among which were associations for helping needy clergymen and for building churches. Furthermore, he showed a sincere and perceptive concern for the poor by urging extreme care in the bestowal of alms. He believed giving wisely was an obligation equal to giving generously. Cotton Mather's objectives were not new - but the proposed voluntary method was - and it was destined to characterize philanthropy in America even unto the present.

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) of kite-flying fame was probably not aware of the Quaker influence on his character and career, but the evidence of his work bears witness to his close association with 'The Friends.' He has been quoted as saying that "Leisure is time for doing something useful." In keeping with his own advice he used his leisure to advance his own knowledge, and he worked just as earnestly for social improvement within the community.

At the age of 42 Franklin retired from active work in the business field and devoted his intelligence, his ingenuity, and his talents to service for the common good. He was instrumental in the formation of a club, "The Junto," dedicated to the mutual improvement of its members; out of this grew the first library, started in 1731 by the club. His contributions to better community living are exemplified by the diversity of his activities and service, all of which resulted in improved patterns of community living: he founded a volunteer fire company;

developed systems for paving, cleaning and lighting the streets of Philadelphia; sponsored a plan for policing the city; was instrumental in the establishment of the Pennsylvania Hospital and the Academy which later became the University of Pennsylvania; he founded the American Philosophical Society in 1743 for promoting research in the natural and social sciences; and because of his work and interest in establishing a postal system became known as the 'father' of the U. S. Mail.

Franklin suggested two major principles which were later recognized as good public policy and constructive philanthropy. He articulated the importance of preventing poverty, rather than relieving it; and he demonstrated that the principle of self-help so frequently prescribed for the individual man could be applied with equally beneficial results to society.

Another Philadelphian, Benjamin Rush (1746- 1813), soldier, teacher, statesman and writer, made his major contribution as a physician during the Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia in 1793. His treatment of the disease is now known to have been ineffective, but without doubt his faith in his cure and the confidence he inspired were key factors in allaying the panic in the early stages of the epidemic.

This emergency evoked a new type of community action. Mayor Matthew Clarkson and a small group of public spirited citizens remained in the plague-ridden city while others were fleeing; they organized themselves into a 'voluntary committee' and gradually involved many other citizens. In this manner they provided extra- ordinary services to the stricken community.

Stephen Girard was a hard-driving businessman who would not have made anyone's list as a likely candidate to become a leading volunteer. Born in France in 1750, he became a sailor and settled in

Philadelphia about 1775. He was a self-made man whose gospel was work, laissez-faire, and 'caveat emptor.' Girard became a volunteer because he was impatient with the interruption of business as a result of the Yellow Fever epidemic in Philadelphia. He undertook to organize things so that business could go on as usual. The duty he assumed for a few days stretched into two months. With the dedicated help of Peter Helm, another volunteer, and a French doctor, Jean Deveze, a makeshift pest-house at Bush Hill was transformed into a well functioning hospital. They were not able to effect miraculous cures, but with care the staff turned Bush Hill into a haven of mercy for the sick and dying.

Girard responded to specific needs rather than to general causes. Unlike Dr. Rush and others who had reformer impulses, Girard was not interested in preventing social disorder, nevertheless he was an example for acts of compassion and public usefulness.

The name Alexis de Tocqueville is known to all of you. Permit me to quote him once again:

*Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations....I have often admired the extreme skill with which the inhabitants of the United States succeed in proposing a common object to the exertions of a great many men and in inducing them voluntarily to pursue it As soon as several of the inhabitants of the United States have taken up an opinion or a feeling which they wish to promote in the world, they look out for mutual assistance; and as soon as they have found each other out, they combine. From that moment they are no longer isolated men, but a power seen from afar, whose actions serve*

*for an example, and whose language is listened to.*

De Tocqueville was a twenty-five year old French lawyer when he came to this country in the Spring of 1831. Ostensibly, his nine-month journey through the United States was to gather material for a report on American prison systems; his real interest was deeper. In his own words, he was interested in "all mechanisms of the vast American society which everyone talks of and nobody knows." He proved himself a perceptive student and recorded what he observed. He recognized that voluntarism, and the role of the volunteer, was already an integral element in the cultural and sociological pattern of the United States. Future historians and sociologists validated his observation that democracy, by reducing barriers of class and privilege, generated and stimulated a feeling of compassion for all of the human race.

The earlier role for volunteers had been concerned mainly with alleviating distress after it appeared. Eventually enlightened citizens recognized other social needs and worked to improve conditions which caused illness and dependency. The story merits telling, but the list of outstanding men and women is too long to detail here. Several names deserve brief mention.

Joseph Tuckerman (1778-1840) of Boston, and John Griscom (1774-1840) of New York, were two influential reformers who did not fear that helping the poor would inevitably pauperize them. They supported many reform movements and helped initiate a new series of important conceptual additions to our cultural pattern: the spread of savings banks, life insurance, and benefit societies among the poor.

Robert M. Hartley (1796-1881) was concerned with the material needs of the poor. In 1843 he founded the New York

Association for the Poor, and he directed its activities for the next thirty years. During this time he staunchly supported advances in the fields of housing, sanitation, and child welfare.

Dorothea Dix (1802-1887) was a trained teacher who became involved in improving conditions in insane asylums. For four decades this New England spinster maneuvered and cajoled public leaders and politicians, as well as the general public, into greater efforts to alleviate the shocking conditions under which the mentally ill lived.

By the second decade of the 1800's the volunteer in the United States was ready to accept international responsibilities. Money was raised for the cause of Greek independence. In the autumn of 1830 a shipload of food was sent to the starving inhabitants of the Cape Verde Islands. Irish-Americans demonstrated their sympathy for the sufferers in the Irish famine of 1846-47, but the generous response of all Americans transcended ethnic and religious boundaries. These were but a few of many similar demonstrations of volunteer compassion.

Up to this point the voluntary movement was dominated by the male sex. As the country developed economically after the Civil War the role of American women underwent a subtle and steady change. Little is known about the lives of the majority of American women in the 1800's, and almost nothing about those in the lower income groups. Poverty is a leveler of great force, and drabness is generally fairly uniform. Both are shrouded in a charitable cloak of anonymity. The customs and ideas of women of the middle and upper classes are better known because their patterns of living had greater visibility to those who could take notes. With increasing prosperity and decreasing time demands for household duties, these women began to discover personal interests to absorb their developing

leisure. Some gravitated into the business world; others found expression in serving the less fortunate. Inevitably the service role of the volunteer attracted increasing numbers of women.

One of the pioneers in helping other members of her sex find ways to express themselves and to develop their individuality was Sara Josepha Hale (1788-1879). Her vehicle was the first big women's periodical, *The Boston Ladies Magazine*, and she was its first editor. Mrs. Hale was a feminist and a persistent and effective reformer. She invidiously fostered discontent with women's lot and encouraged them to enter the labor market at lower wages, in competition with men. Later, as editor of *Godey's Ladies Book*, she popularized labor saving devices in the home and encouraged her readers to engage in other worthwhile activities outside the home, with the released time.

Other women may have taken more forthright action, but Mrs. Hale drove a wedge into the economic and cultural life of the American scene through which women marched thereafter in ever-increasing numbers.

Clara Barton (1821-1912) advanced the role of her sex and contributed a humanitarian and social concept to the ideals of many who followed her. This dedicated New Englander was a small woman - only a little over five feet in height - but she was a veritable tiger under her nurse's hood. She had a simple philosophy: "What is nobody's business is my business" - an effective guidepost for leadership in any public activity. At the age of fifty, following a chance meeting in Switzerland in 1870 with officials of the International Committee of The Red Cross, she decided to found an American Red Cross Society which would respond to public disasters by giving temporary help to victims of misfortune beyond their control. Her goal was to

systematize and centralize relief activities in public emergencies so that the unhappy victims could be helped to return to normal lives. Clara Barton met considerable resistance, but this lady with a 'whim of iron' fought the good fight and incorporated The American Red Cross Association in 1881. She was able to make sense to the American people as she showed what could and should be done for victims of natural disasters and catastrophes.

The 1880's also saw the beginning of a new type of volunteer. De Tocqueville's book, "Democracy in America", had pointed out the limited number of very rich men in this country in the year of its publication - 1835. Andrew Carnegie, born in Scotland in that same year, came to this country in 1848; by 1885 he was a striking example of the new 'millionaire' class. This group of men put new vigor into philanthropy and the role of the volunteer in carrying out the programs of their choice. They were not concerned with improving the morals of the poor or in reforming their characters. They preferred to make indirect contributions - to the community at large instead of to individuals. Libraries, parks, concert halls, and institutions such as Cooper Union and Pratt Institute were their tangible products.

Voluntaryism in those decades was dominated by the 'big givers' who, by the start of the 1890's, numbered 4047, according to an estimate made that year by the New York Tribune. These men did not necessarily concur with Carnegie that it 'was a disgrace to die rich,' but many distributed large portions of their surplus wealth during their lifetime.

In contrast to the wealthy, who used money as the vehicle for serving the public good, others stepped forward with less tangible but equally valuable gifts.

Louis Dembitz Brandeis (1856-1941) spent a quarter century after his graduation

from Harvard Law School in 1877 as an eminently successful practicing attorney. In the Supreme Court case of *Muller vs. Oregon* (1908) he presented cogent sociological, statistical, economic and psychological arguments in favor of limiting women's working hours, and thus established the precedent for subsequent social welfare legislation. This now famous 'Brandeis Brief' revolutionized the practice of law by introducing the elements of 'human values and needs' into what had otherwise been rigid legalistic patterns. From this point on he devoted himself almost exclusively to practicing law in the public interest. Among other things, he broke the transportation monopoly in New England, protected the consumer against unwarranted railroad rate increases, investigated insurance practices, and was instrumental in the establishment of the Massachusetts savings bank life insurance plan which became a model for other such plans throughout the country. Until his appointment to the Supreme Court of the United States he served without pay as attorney 'for the people' in their fight against many financial and industrial monopolies, and he advanced the cause of conservation of natural resources. What Louis Brandeis did in the field of law to shape a meaningful social philosophy was emulated by talented men in other fields. The National Tuberculosis Association, founded in 1904, was followed within the next twenty years by The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, The American Social Health Association, The National Association for Mental Health, The American Cancer Society, The National Society for Crippled Children and Adults, and The American Heart Association. The growth of these national voluntary health agencies, and others equally dedicated, was possible because the medical profession and para-medical individuals and groups all

contributed their specialized knowledge and skills to the social and educational processes required by the National Health and health-related agencies. The voluntary health movement presented a vehicle to leading men and women in these fields to work in the public interest - this time for the better health of all mankind.

So much for history. It has been said that history is prologue for today. Today is now - so let us look together at some significant factors which led to the expansion of the volunteer movement, a phenomenon of substantive impact peculiar to the United States:

- The increased recognition of social ills, and the assumption of responsibility for working toward their amelioration;
- Increased immigration and the sensitivity of foreign born and 'the new Americans' who eagerly accepted the folkways of this country and with this the opportunity to serve as volunteers;
- Expansion of the 'middle class' and increased leisure time available to its members;
- The successful institution of the 'membership concept,' which identified the volunteer specifically with the agency he served;
- Agency competence in imparting a sense of conviction for their mission;
- The growth of a professional staff who could break down agency programs to task-oriented work assignments.

The number of volunteers has multiplied, but so has the number of associations depending on volunteers. Each association must therefore cope with two

fundamental questions: "What motivates a volunteer to join?" And, more important, "What sustains his interest and keeps him a volunteer?"

We can assess these motivational drives in the light of a psychological theory first advanced by A. H. Maslow in his book, *Motivation and Personality*. This theory presents insight into the dynamics undergirding human behavior and is built on several principles:

- Man is a 'wanting' animal;
- Satisfied needs do not motivate behavior - unsatisfied needs influence what man does;
- Human needs and wants are arranged in a hierarchy. When needs at a lower or more elemental level are fulfilled the higher level needs emerge and demand satisfaction;
- Need levels are of relative - not absolute - importance, and several may obtain and overlap at any given time.

To complete this set of principles Professor Maslow presented a hierarchy of psychological human needs, and it is to this hierarchy that we can look to acquire a better understanding of what motivates a volunteer.

*The hierarchy does not concern itself with human behavior - only with the motivational needs which lead to behavior.* How a person acts after he is motivated is conditioned by the situational determinants. Motivation triggers the individual. He actualizes his behavior in relation to other people and to the circumstances that are created as a result of people reacting in an environment conditioned by the cultural determinants of society.

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#### **About the Author**

In 1968, Bernard M. Kapell was Training Director, American Heart Association, Inc., New York.

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## **Transition Strategies for the Volunteer World**

Eva Schindler-Rainman, D.S.W.  
(no contemporary contact information available)

### **(Editor-generated) Abstract**

*The author discusses the changing roles of professional volunteer managers in the 1980's as organized around seven transitions: changing volunteer participants, changing roles and systems, changing organization structures, pushes to collaboration, changing values, and the increased need for planning. Specific management strategies are described for each transition.*

### **(Editor-generated) Key Words:**

change, transition, management, strategies

This is the most exciting, challenging, vital, vibrant time to be alive and active in the Volunteer World. It is in transit. We are moving from the no longer to the not yet. Indeed, our arena might be characterized by these five Cs: Change, Challenge, Creativity, Choice, and Collaboration.

Nationally and internationally, the Volunteer World is in transition, it is moving from the past to the present, and from the present to the future. If we manage, indeed strategize, these transitions carefully we can impact the direction of change, and we can be proactive in directing the changes in ways we desire. The time between now and the changed situation is the "Transition State," and it is this state we must learn to manage. We must learn transition management skills and strategies.

I have selected seven transitions for this paper. I shall describe each one and suggest some of the Strategy Challenges we must meet as Transition Managers. The seven transitions are:

1. Changing volunteer participants
2. Changing money picture
3. Changing roles and systems
4. Changing organization structures
5. Pushes to Collaboration
6. Changing values
7. Increased need for planning

### **Transition No. 1**

The change is from limited participation to ever broader involvement of people and organizations. People range from: young to older; native born to newcomers; well-heeled to many economic levels; middle class to a variety of life styles; healthy to at-risk populations; white to more colorful and varied racial, ethnic, and religious groups.

Systems that are involved include: foundations; national coalitions; voluntary social agencies; government agencies; corporations; inter-system networks. Among the priorities these systems now have are emphases on volunteer person-power.

*Strategy Challenges: Transition Management*

It will be necessary to develop new and creative ways to involve and integrate new populations, and to become familiar and comfortable with organizations different from our own so that collaboration becomes easy and natural. We need to be clear about and proud of our strengths, skills, and knowledge, and know how to communicate these.

**Transition No. 2**

We are moving from a stance of plenty to one of doing more, better with less.

We have thought until recently that we have all the human and material resources available to us if we but knew how to tap them. We are now keenly aware that monies, materials, time, environmental and human resources are limited indeed, and that jobs are limited, the rate of unemployment is high, and it will probably remain so. Therefore we need to involve the unemployed populations.

*Strategy Challenges: Transition Management*

Our options include: to develop new and different funding patterns and sources; to barter for services, space, equipment usage; to find all the ways in which volunteers and professionals can extend and humanize our services; to learn to understand and utilize new technologies; to become more accountable and cost effective; to evaluate our services, to scrutinize our goal and mission statements and, if necessary, to reprioritize and re-order them or develop new ones; to utilize the corporate responsibility emphasis and commitment more than we have in the past.

**Transition No. 3**

The change is from limited, defined roles for volunteers to an expanded human resource development philosophy and practice. This includes the development of human service teams with different skills, knowledge, and resources—a combination of professional volunteers from a variety of backgrounds and disciplines. Volunteers will be working with caring, skillful, supportive professional persons in a variety of arenas, such as research, advocacy of all kinds, decision making, connecting disparate people and services, administrative assistance, fund finding, training of volunteers and staff, and giving direct services.

*Strategy Challenges: Transition Management*

- to develop flexible, realistic job descriptions for volunteers and staff
- to develop volunteer personnel policies
- to develop ways to communicate and work with Unions and professional associations
- to increase understanding and decrease conflict
- to develop new, creative ways to recognize the contributions of volunteers and staff
- to develop explicit career ladders for volunteers and staff
- to increase the possibility of equal opportunities to volunteer through creation of enabling funds for out-of-pocket expenses
- to open the system and its communication possibilities to give the best, most effective and humane service possible to the programs, clients, constituents, consumers, patients, patrons, members

#### **Transition No. 4**

There is a clear movement from hierarchial organization structures to flatter, more participative organization structures and communication patterns. This means participation in influencing the system at every level of the organization, including a change in leadership patterns and changes in meeting patterns to make meetings more participatory and productive. Open system and temporary system models will become a reality, placing responsibility and authority where action needs to be taken. Systems will need to be continuously open to change and experimentation, with personnel learning transition management strategies and skills.

##### *Strategy Challenges: Transition Management*

- to develop communication avenues between all parts of the system
- to offer leadership/management training opportunities in-house and outside
- to study organization structure and how services can be delivered most effectively
- to expose management persons to all of the alternatives of governance and management paradigms
- to see resistance to change as a natural phenomenon, and including resistant persons in all planning activities
- to change hours of service because 24 hour communities will demand different hours

#### **Transition No. 5**

From turfdom and territoriality we will move to collaboration and networking within and between systems and organizations. This is a key

transition which will make it possible to utilize each others' resources, ideas, knowledge, spaces and places. It will enrich all the participants and their client systems. It will be necessary to learn to accept differences of commitment on the part of different persons and groups. It will be important to communicate goals and purposes in clear, useful ways. Transition provides a beautiful opportunity to learn about and from others.

##### *Strategy Challenges: Transition Management*

- It will be useful and important to:
- develop skills and be willing to risk to initiate;
  - know what resources others have that you need;
  - be willing to share leadership and other resources;
  - document what you do so others can learn from it;
  - learn how to work productively with the corporate world and other systems.

#### **Transition No. 6**

We are moving from clear accepted norms and values to shifting and changing values. These include the following transitions: from rootedness to mobility; from commitment to temporariness; from respect for authority to questioning and confrontation of authority and expertness; from a definition of success meaning income and upward mobility to success meaning very different things to different people, i.e., visibility, making a difference, etc.; from accepted Judeo-Christian motivations to volunteer to a great variety of motivations, i.e., job explorations, cause orientation, meaningful retirement activities,



transition from one way of life to another.

*Strategy Challenges: Transition Management*

We shall need to: develop some temporary, short-term volunteer jobs offering choices/ alternatives to volunteers; initiate reciprocal evaluations and feedback (professionals and volunteers); consult rather than supervise; refer volunteers to other places and spaces; share staff and volunteer expertise across systems; develop new and different additional ways to recruit, place, and train both volunteers and staff through group interviews, computer hookups, telephone conferences, video cassettes, and portable, flexible, individualized training.

**Transition No. 7**

There is a push to move from little or no focus on the future toward more thinking about the future and how to plan to meet it. Included here should be: development of knowledge banks and literature about the character of the future, . and involvement of many to define preferred futures. Much knowledge is available about scenarios of the future, and many techniques have been developed to do realistic planning.

*Strategy Challenges: Transition Management*

Knowledge and skill must be developed: to utilize planning methods that focus on what can be, rather than only what we would like to have; to involve many people who will be affected by the plans in the planning or in influencing the planning; to analyze where we have come from, where we are, and where we are going and/ or

want to go; to know our "prouds" and "sorries"; to know our strengths and the things we need to change; to utilize left and right brain capabilities in thinking and planning; to take time to develop doable and realistic goals.

**Transition Challenges and Choices**

This leaves us with some challenges and choices:

To meet client and system needs in new and creative ways or deprive ourselves of much that is available and useful.

To involve and integrate additional populations or remain without the beauty of difference we so need to be creative and pro-active.

To involve all parts of the system in planning and change making or risk building or increasing the resistance to change.

To experiment or develop alternatives and choices or be a prisoner of the familiar.

To celebrate steps of movement and change or worry and be stressed by the gap between where we are and where we want to go.

To welcome today and look forward to tomorrow or prolong the problems and puzzlements of yesterday.

Lucky are we who live at a time of transition, for we have the opportunity to create, to change, to choose, to collaborate, and to celebrate that we are here as difference makers!!

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### **About the Author**

At the time this article was written, Eva Schindler-Rainman, D.S.W. was an internationally-known consultant and trainer in volunteerism and organizational management. She has authored or co-authored numerous books, including *The Volunteer Community*. She was the recipient of the 1983 Distinguished Member Service Award given by the Association for Volunteer Administration.

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## **Volunteering: Continuing Expansion of the Definition and A Practical Application of Altruistic Motivation**

Richard S. Shure, Ph.D.  
(no contemporary contact information available)

### **Abstract**

*Whenever we think about volunteering, we do so mostly from only one perspective, that of the volunteer. There are at least two others to consider: the perspective of the recipient of the voluntary act and the perspective of the society in which the voluntary action takes place. To limit ourselves only to the perspective of the volunteer will limit research into voluntary action. Altruism as a motivator of voluntary action is explored from several perspectives and suggestions on how to make this information operational are presented.*

**(Editor-generated) Key Words:**  
volunteer, altruism, motivation

### **Rashomon and Volunteering**

The library at Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota protected books in inclement weather by providing plastic bags imprinted in large capital letters with "The Limits of My Vocabulary are the Limits of My World." Today's definition of volunteering could be a limiting factor. We should be aware that the definition continues to be expanded and, as such, promotes additional research into volunteering. The concept of perspective should be considered when observing and describing a voluntary act.

Japanese author Akutagawa's character, Rashomon, in a 1915 story by the same name, tells of an incident involving a samurai, his wife; and a bandit. Before a court of inquiry, each describes the incident. Three different versions are heard before the court, the differences being perspectives driven by individual needs. The reader is left with the responsibility of deciding what actually happened. There is a parallel in

the act of volunteering.

The Independent Sector Update (April 1986) defines the act of volunteering as persons offering themselves for a service without obligation to do so, willingly, and without pay. This definition is limiting as it tends to focus primarily on the act of volunteering from the perspective of the volunteer. There are at least three components to each voluntary act: the volunteer (act initiator); the recipient of the act; and society, as defined by Durkheim (1973), an observer of the act, or anyone having knowledge of it. Every voluntary act may be viewed differently by each of these participants or components.

Community Service Orders (CSO) offer an operating example of differing component views of the same act. In the Chicago area there are presently over 500 persons convicted in federal courts of "white collar" crimes who, in addition to incarceration and/or paying a fine, are required to perform from two

hundred to several thousand hours of community service as part of their overall sentence (Foster, 1988). Their crimes are viewed as being out of their normal characters and they are not considered a threat to society. This is a form of limited discretionary volunteering (LDV). The Justice Department refers to these persons as "volunteers" consistent with current definitions. Let us look at the experience of one such "volunteer," Tony.

Tony was sentenced to ninety days in prison for failure to declare all of his income on his tax forms, paid a ten thousand dollar fine, and was expected to perform 1500 hours of community service. He is an excellent swimmer and now works with age ten and under minority, inner-city boys, teaching them how to swim. He must pick up the children at their housing project and drive them to and from the pool. For most of these children this is the only opportunity they will have to learn how to swim and, for many, to experience the warmth and caring of an adult male on a consistent, predictable basis. From Tony's perspective, he is paying down his sentence, yet he may feel that he is also making restitution to society for his crime. He feels good about what he is doing for the children but he does not feel that what he does is voluntary nor that he is a volunteer. Others performing community service orders who feel wrongly convicted of a crime they did not commit (as opposed to those, like Tony, who pleaded guilty) are more vocal about not being volunteers in the traditional sense.

Yet, from the perspective of the children being taught to swim, Tony and the others like him are volunteers in the traditional sense. The children receive a service without cost that they would not

normally have. Neither the service provided nor the benefits received are appreciably diminished or enhanced by the motivation of the giver.

Society could argue that both the opportunity to perform a restitutive act as well as having children learn a new skill are positive. Society could also benefit should another adult be motivated to do similar volunteer work after observing Tony and the children interact. Observers at the pool, not knowing Tony's background, would most likely describe what they see as a voluntary act: one act, with several perspectives and interpretations. To better understand a voluntary act, the components of the act need to be identified and the perspective of each understood. Knowing something of the perspectives that are operational leading up to a voluntary act may yield clues to the motivation for the act.

### **Altruistic Motivation and Volunteering**

Everyone is a potential volunteer with singular talents capable of enhancing the lives of others. Some exhibit this facet of themselves early on, others later in life; some never do. The more that is known about volunteers and motivation for volunteering, the more likely it is that this volunteering component may be activated. A universal motivator able to trigger the volunteering component within each of us would be quite a find. Until that time, all likely motivators should be studied in the hope of discovering how each may trigger some of us to volunteer. Altruism is one such motivator, and understanding altruistic motivations may lead to increased volunteering.

Altruism expresses the principle or practice of unselfish concern for, or the

devotion to the welfare of others. Does it exist? Many argue that people act out of nothing more than enlightened self-interest while others would argue that it is natural and normal to foster and act solely out of concern for others. Plato, Helvetius, and Marx would be among the former and Durkheim among the latter (Oliner and Oliner, 1988.) According to Durkheim (1973), altruism exists as an integral part of society and is evidenced when people "abnegate their interests in favor of obedience for the sake of society—altruism is not merely an agreeable ornament to social life but its fundamental basis." There does not appear to be a lack of those who would argue at almost any point in-between. If the definition of volunteering is expanded to include perspective, the views all along the continuum will be useful in research to further understand volunteering motivation.

The literature on altruism appears to have diverged along two not always distinct paths: sociobiology along one path; psychoanalytic theory, cognitive development theory, social learning theory, and social psychological orientation theory along the other. The former attempts to explain altruism as one method of insuring gene propagation, the latter attempt to explain altruism as something learned or acquired in life through experience, reinforcement, modeling, or the interaction between personal, external social or situational factors (Oliner and Oliner, 1988).

Babcock's (1986) summary of altruism attributed to Darwinian concepts introduces three categories of altruism broad enough for parallels to be found in most other theories: kin altruism or inclusive fitness, reciprocal altruism, and induced or obligatory

altruism. *Kin altruism* describes a situation in which a sacrifice is made by one person on behalf of another, both of whom share the same genes. The altruistic act directly benefits the recipient of the act and indirectly benefits the actor as the reproductive success of the genes shared by both has been enhanced. Acts provided to members of one's extended family, accepted as natural and normal, may not be thought of as altruistic acts, while identical acts provided to non-relatives would be considered altruistic. Kin altruism has parallels in other disciplines attempting to explain any altruistic act provided to member of one's extended family.

*Reciprocal altruism* refers to a service provided or sacrifice made by one organism for another which will be balanced in the future by a service provided or sacrifice made to the original provider. Exchange theory is one parallel theory from another discipline.

*Induced altruism* is defined as an act that promotes the fitness of another without reciprocal benefit to itself or its genes present in the recipient. An example given by Babcock (1986) is the grouper fish which allows smaller fish, cleaner wrasses, to clean particles of food and debris from between the grouper's teeth and gills. This appears to be an example of reciprocal altruism as each benefits: the grouper's health is promoted as the wrasse finds nourishment at little cost or threat to its safety. There is, however, another small fish that looks similar to the wrasse. The grouper, thinking it is a wrasse, allows the fish to come close, and once close this fish will tear a piece of flesh from within the grouper's mouth. The grouper is not a willing volunteer, yet the act

itself from the perspective of the beneficiary appears to be a voluntary one. This is one example from the literature in which perspective of the actors must be taken into consideration in understanding the act. It has a direct parallel in the concept discussed previously: limited discretionary volunteering, community service orders.

From the perspective of the recipient, any volunteer action resulting from an altruistic motivator directly benefits the recipient. Theories on altruism give insights into what may initiate a voluntary act. With this knowledge we may attract more volunteers. Several theories are presented for illustration and discussion.

### **Practical Applications**

In their study of non-Jewish volunteers aiding in the rescue of Jews during World War II, Oliner and Oliner (1988) found that volunteers and non-volunteers alike were aware of what was happening to Jews, but the volunteers perceived the information in a personal way, precipitating action. These volunteers needed resources: jobs/money, family support, community/church support, and the support of others similarly involved. Volunteers needed a precipitating occasion, often nothing more than being asked to help. The volunteers expressed a closeness to their community and exhibited a strong sense of efficacy. They could affect events and had a responsibility to do so. They were considered extensive personalities described by terms such as involved, committed, caring, and responsible, rather than constrictive personalities described as detached, exclusive, and disassociated. Their parents stressed a universalistic outlook toward equity and

caring. Knowing this, in campaigns for volunteers the need should be stressed in a personal and meaningful way, appealing to their sense of efficacy, their need to be involved, to care, to make commitments and assume responsibility. The universal nature of the need should be stressed. Potential volunteers should be supplied with a list of community support groups available to them as volunteers.

Oliner and Oliner (1988) suggest that persons predisposed to altruistic behavior may require a "catalyst" to turn motivation into action. They suggest three in order of importance: the individual's norms or the norms of his or her reference group, his or her sense of empathy, and the universal principles to which he or she personally subscribes. When attempting to attract specific volunteer types, stress the obligations to their peer group or community norms; appeal to their compassion, sympathy, or pity; and appeal to their universal concepts of justice and caring.

Bar-Tal (1976), in his discussion of altruism and pro-social behavior, reviews the literature of experiments on altruism in non-emergency situations. Not all the experiments were conclusive nor were they all conducted in "real life" settings. Some of the preliminary findings, however, are worth consideration. The following may be very useful when presenting certain needs to perspective volunteers:

1. Needs should be presented in specific and unambiguous terms, as a situation perceived as ambiguous often does not convey the urgency of the need.
2. Persons with a high need for approval, fearing disapproval for poor performance, tend not to volunteer in novel or ambiguous situations.
3. Women, more than men, tend not to

volunteer in situations that are ambiguous or potentially embarrassing.

4. Some volunteer work is perceived as gender based. Gender preference should be made clear or care should be taken not to imply a preference if none exists.

5. Men more than women appear to be more aware of the social status of the recipient, helping those closer in status to themselves.

6. The race of the recipient may influence the race of the volunteer. If race may be an issue, the race of the recipient should be made clear to the prospective volunteer.

There have been experiments showing that people act differently alone than when others are present. With others present the need to act appears to diminish, as if the perceived need will be shouldered by the others. Rushton and Sorrentino (1981) and Bar-Tal (1976) indicate the probability of an individual helping in most situations decreases as the size of the observing group increases. When seeking volunteers, it may be more effective to approach them alone in a one-on-one situation rather than in groups. If that is not practical, the contact should be structured so that it appears directed solely toward each of them, so as to convey that in this specific instance, only they can make a difference.

Moods may affect altruistic behavior. The request for volunteer help should be timed to catch the prospective volunteer at the least stressful time of day, the most appropriate day of the week, or during a festive season. The presentation should be structured toward altering any negative or neutral moods into strongly positive ones before asking for volunteer action. Rushton and Sorrentino (1981) imply that positive moods are linked to increased altruism.

They point out, however, that the opposite is not always true. While feelings of "sadness, failure, or self-concern associated with negative moods may retard helping behavior, negative moods associated with feelings of guilt or shame may actually promote helping behavior."

People appear to be most likely to exhibit altruistic or helping behavior to those who look most like themselves. When the intended recipient of a voluntary act is presented to the potential volunteer, any characteristics they share in common should be highlighted.

Rushton and Sorrentino (1981), Bar-Tal (1976), Oliner and Oliner (1988), and Babcock (1986) all suggest that parental role modeling is important in promoting altruistic behavior. People tend to emulate the actions of their parents or attempt to recreate the warm feelings of reward given them previously by their parents or other significant adults when they behaved in an approved manner. Role modeling has been shown to be an important motivator of Big Brother volunteers. When asked what they expected their little brothers would get from participating in the program, the most frequent response was "someone to look up to/a role model/an authority figure/a steady influence in their lives." When asked what they expected to get from the program as a volunteer, the most frequent response was "satisfaction/gratification—a good feeling from helping someone." The next most frequent response was "a sense of helping a child develop/guide." In this instance the volunteers projected that the child expected an adult role model and they wanted to be that role model (Shure 1988). In attracting volunteers, images should be projected that may recall parental (adult) role modeling or those

special regards received for approved behavior.

### Conclusion

Looking at just one potential motivator for volunteering, altruism, has led to several suggestions that in selected circumstances may yield a more comprehensive and successful campaign for volunteers. All such motivators should be studied to see what suggestions they may yield. As the definition of volunteering expands, additional, perhaps non-traditional, motivators of volunteering will be identified and become the subject of future research.

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### About the Author

Richard S. Shure began his formal volunteer experience as a Big Brother volunteer fifteen years ago and at the time this article was written was a volunteer in a Big Brothers program under the direction of the Cook County Juvenile Court. In addition, he has been a panel member on the United Way of Chicago Health/Disability Needs Assessment Committee, panel member and present chairman of the Steering Committee for Chicago Operation ABLE's "hot line" volunteer component start-up, a referral resource for the Illinois Governor's Office of Voluntary Action, and a Policy Planning Committee member for Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Chicago.



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### **Research Needs in Volunteer Activity**

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#### **(Editor-generated) Abstract**

*The author discusses eight areas in which he perceives needed research related to volunteerism in 1967: 1. need for volunteers, 2. usefulness of volunteers, 3. characteristics of volunteers, 4. utilization of volunteers, 5. motivation of volunteers, 6. role of volunteers, 7. qualifications of volunteers, and 8. prediction.*

#### **(Editor-generated) Key Words:**

volunteerism, research

This country has a long history of volunteer activity. Initially, of course, there was no choice. Banding together for a common cause or volunteering to help others was more of a cooperative necessity than an altruistic gesture. Each volunteer could foresee the possibility, or even probability, that he might require the same services he was providing to others. As the country grew and diversified, this reciprocal and simple relationship ceased to exist. Many of the functions that were handled by volunteers were turned over to employees of local and state governments. The federal government at that time provided little in the way of social services and volunteer activity was generally directed at helping people who were "less fortunate". Volunteer groups were organized and directed by crusaders who became aroused by social conditions or the neglect and mistreatment of specific groups of people. Many of these groups prospered from public support, hired employees, developed as a profession, and lost many of their characteristics as a volunteer organization. At the same time, the federal government began to take an increasing role in the prevention and treatment of social problems - at least in part

due to the pressure brought by volunteer organizations. The result today is a proliferation of funds and professional services by both government and private agencies. Unfortunately, it is still not enough. More money is needed, but more important, more people are needed to do the work. There are not enough trained professionals to do the job I alone; it may be that there will never be enough. The use of volunteers to fill the gap appears to be an ideal solution. However, we can no longer afford a haphazard and poorly organized approach to volunteer activity. There is an almost complete lack of research in this area. Without an adequate background of research, it is extremely difficult to select and utilize volunteers for the 'maximum benefit of the client, the professional worker, and the volunteer himself.

The disciplines of psychology, sociology, and social psychology can be most fruitfully applied to research in volunteer activity. Sociology would be concerned with volunteers as a group, their characteristic structure and role in society, and their impact on the organizations with which they interact. Psychological research is more concerned with the Individual

characteristics and behavior of the members of a group. Social psychology, of course, has some attributes of both psychology and sociology. This paper describes some of the research that has been done and discusses areas where research is needed on volunteers. The approach is primarily psychological and social psychological. The sociological approach would suggest a different set of problems and methods and will not be dealt with in this paper.

The research needs are divided into eight categories, or problem areas. The categories are listed below and will be discussed separately in the following sections of this paper.

1. Survey of need for volunteers - A survey must be made to estimate the number of volunteers that could be used, the rate at which they could be trained and absorbed, and the types of Jobs they could do.
2. Usefulness of volunteers - People now serving as volunteers can be studied to determine how much they contribute to the organization they are serving. Possible detrimental effects of volunteers should also be investigated.
3. Characteristics of volunteers - Descriptive studies on volunteers and comparative studies with non-volunteers should provide data on intelligence, aptitude, and personality of volunteers.
4. Utilization of volunteers - Studies should be made to determine how volunteers are now being used. Experiments could be devised to investigate the optimal use of volunteers and program assessment techniques developed.
5. Motivation of volunteers - An intensive study of why people volunteer and how they became involved in volunteer activity should suggest where to look for volunteers and methods to increase the number Of volunteers.
6. Role of the Volunteer - The status of the volunteer in the community and in the

organization he serves should be studied together with the factors that Influence this relationship.

7. Qualifications of volunteers - An analysis of jobs available as well as those filled by volunteers should be undertaken to determine job levels and qualifications required of volunteers for each level.

8. Prediction - The background data gathered in the seven areas listed above can be combined to make predictions that can be experimentally verified. When this stage is reached, selection and utilization of volunteers can be made on a scientific basis.

### **Survey of Need for Volunteers**

The most basic research step is to determine the nature and extent of the problem. There is no question that a need for services exists; the question is whether this need can be met by volunteers. Volunteer activity can be divided into two distinct types: direct and indirect. Direct volunteer activity is concerned with a service performed for the patient or client and usually requires close interaction between the volunteer, the professional, and the patient. Examples of the direct type of volunteer are Gray Ladies and Candy-strippers. The indirect type of volunteer may never even see the people he is serving. This type of volunteer may be raising money or performing a service such as typing reports at home for a charitable organization. These two types of volunteer activity should be kept separate. The need for volunteers and the characteristics of volunteers required for direct activity differ greatly from those required for indirect activity. This last statement should be verified by comparisons of volunteers now engaged in each type of activity.

The general feeling that an overall need exists must be translated into specific needs for specific groups. A survey could be made of a number of representative

organizations and their volunteer needs categorized. This survey could be used as a basis for extrapolating the number and types of volunteers needed across the country. A second step would be to determine- the amount of training required for the various types of volunteers and the rate at which the organizations could train and absorb these volunteers.

Another aspect of this problem is the number of potential volunteers available in society. Just as no one can say what the total need for volunteers is, no one can predict the nature and number of available volunteers. The comparison of the demand for volunteers with the supply has many practical consequences. If the potential supply is plentiful, standards for volunteers could be high and organizations selective. If the demand exceeded the supply, organizations would tend to compete for volunteers and many volunteer jobs would have to be re-structured to permit the use of volunteers with marginal qualifications. If a survey showed a high demand and a low supply of volunteers at a specific level, research could describe the volunteer that has performed best at that level and indicate where that individual would most likely be found and the type of recruiting program likely to motivate him to volunteer. Three factors would suggest, however, that there is a plentiful supply of potential volunteers. The factors are automation, increased leisure time, and early retirement. Automation has resulted in less job satisfaction and frustrated personal needs for achievement which could be directed towards volunteer work. Increased leisure time and early retirement provide an opportunity to do useful and meaningful work that is therapeutic to the volunteer as well as to the patient. As Stein (1967) states, the volunteers are "overcoming feelings of emptiness and depression experienced in everyday living." This topic will be

discussed further under motivation of volunteers.

### **Usefulness of Volunteers**

The usefulness of volunteers, at least in some situations, is still an open question. Often there is some hostility expressed by members of the professional staff (Stein, 1967) towards volunteers. The professional or paid employee may feel that the volunteer is "interfering" in the treatment of the patient. At least part of this hostility may be traced to the ambiguous role of the volunteer in a highly structured setting such as a hospital. The employee knows where he and every other employee stands in the pecking order and he may resent the presence of the volunteer outside this structure. This is more a matter of communication and utilization of volunteers than their actual usefulness, but it can influence our evaluation of their usefulness if we rely entirely on assessments of volunteers by staff members. A more direct measure of usefulness would be the accomplishments of similar organizations with and without the aid of volunteers. The same organization could also be evaluated before and after the introduction of volunteers.

Three criteria that may be used to assess usefulness are:

1. Benefit to the patient or client - The patient's progress, recovery, and outlook may be compared with and without the direct aid of volunteers.
2. Benefit to the organization - The value of the volunteer to the organization may be measured in savings of time, money; or an increase in production.
3. Benefit to the volunteer - The physical and mental condition of the volunteer before, during, and after his volunteer service may be compared.

It is also necessary to determine the relative usefulness of volunteers in different types of organizations. The two primary

types of volunteer activity were mentioned earlier - direct and indirect. In addition, a distinction should be made between organizations that function independently and are completely made up of volunteers; and organizations that utilize volunteers in certain jobs within a regular structure of employees.

### **Characteristics of Volunteers**

Probably the most straight-forward studies can be done in the area of descriptive and comparative characteristics of volunteers and non-volunteers. There are literally hundreds of standardized psychological tests available that may be used for this purpose. It is surprising that so very few studies have been made in this area. There are several possible reasons for this. It may be that volunteers are considered to be no different than non-volunteers and merely represent a random sample of the population. This, in itself, would be an interesting and valuable finding, if true. However, available research seems to indicate that it is not true. L'Abate, (1967) in a study of volunteer housewives and candy-strippers, found a greater degree of intelligence, emotional stability, and cooperative functioning in these volunteers. MMPI results indicated "a lower degree of submissiveness and a higher degree of activity in volunteers than the controls." Several psychological studies concerned with people who volunteer for experiments seem to substantiate this finding of a difference between volunteers and non-volunteers. Maslow and Sakoda (1952) in a study on volunteer-error in, the Kinsey study found that volunteers for a sex study were high in levels of self-esteem. Riggs and Kaess (1953) found that students who volunteered for an experiment as subjects showed more introverted thinking and tended toward a moody cycloid emotionality. On projective tests, the volunteers scored higher on intrapunitive

measures and lower on extrapunitive measures. These findings may not be applicable to all types of volunteer activity, but they seem quite consistent with one another. The finding of high ability and self-esteem coupled with low-submissiveness indicate that volunteers may not be used to the full level of their ability and may also be a reason for some of the friction between volunteers and employees. A low extrapunitive score would be an asset for volunteers who deal directly with patients. These findings, however, may not hold up when we start tapping a larger segment of potential volunteers. There is a strong self-selection factor since there is little external pressure to volunteer and most volunteers are thus self-motivated. This will be discussed further in the section on motivation of volunteers. A finding of general superiority is not an unmixed blessing. There are many menial but necessary jobs that could be done better by volunteers with less ability. There are also many volunteer activities where empathy or interest is far more important than ability.

### **Utilization of Volunteers**

Volunteers have been used for everything from guinea pigs to professional workers. At either extreme, the utilization of the volunteer is not a problem. The volunteer for a short-term experiment is simply an anonymous, random, and interchangeable sample and is useable in whatever form he comes. The professionally-trained volunteer is used in his professional capacity. The problem lies in the great majority of volunteers who lie between these two extremes and come armed with only a willingness to work and a varied history of employment. These volunteers must be utilized effectively so they can make a maximum contribution to the organization and achieve a measure of self-satisfaction that will motivate them to stay on the job.

A study should first be made to determine how volunteers are now being used and to categorize the types of Jobs they fill. This can be compared with the survey of the need for volunteers that was mentioned earlier. The characteristics of these volunteers can be compared with the requirements for the job they are filling to determine if they are being fully utilized. Experiments could then be devised to determine the optimal volunteer characteristics for each job type.

The study of volunteer utilization should include program assessment and the evaluation of the volunteer training program. Program assessment is very difficult if the program is not composed entirely of volunteers since it amounts to an evaluation of the entire program and its professional staff. This portion of the study is not concerned with how well the volunteers are performing, but with how well they are being utilized in the overall program. The volunteer training program is probably a critical indicator in the utilization of volunteers. If a volunteer training program exists, then the job of the volunteer must be somewhat defined and some thought given to the skills and orientation required by the volunteer. Beyond this, the program may vary from a half-hour lecture to a condensed professional training course.

### **Motivation of Volunteers**

Volunteers, by definition, are motivated; but they are not all motivated alike. Indeed, motivation is so complex that a single volunteer has many motives -not all of them conscious and recognizable by himself or others. Nevertheless, there may be common motivational factors among volunteers. If these could be identified, the question of why people volunteer would be answered and could be used to influence more people to volunteer. Both depth psychology and surveys should be used to

investigate the motives of volunteers. The depth psychology study may be used to identify the unconscious motivation of volunteers while the survey will identify the verbalized motivation of the volunteers. The survey should also note the conditions under which the person volunteered. Only a person with extreme motivation or some need for self-actualization will volunteer on his own initiative. Most volunteers are probably recruited or respond to an appeal for volunteers. If this is true, more people would volunteer if more people were simply asked. While it may be true that the unconscious motives are stronger, they are also more difficult to reach and control. The law of parsimony would suggest that volunteers be reached through their claimed motivations unless that proves inadequate.

Bair and Gallagher (1960), in a study on volunteering for extra-hazardous duty by cadets, found that they could influence the amount of volunteering by manipulating conditions. Subjects were requested to volunteer under both public and private conditions. Blake et al (1956) also requested subjects to volunteer under public or private conditions and found a difference in favor of public conditions where the alternative to volunteering was less attractive than the requested action. Studies by Rosenbaum and Blake (1955) and Rosenbaum (1956) substantiate this effect of background factors which Rosenbaum relates to Helson's theory of adaptation level. In both experiments, more subjects volunteered after seeing other subjects accept an invitation to volunteer than did the control group. Less subjects volunteered after seeing others refuse an invitation.

These studies seem to suggest that either a marginal motivation level can be raised above threshold by external conditions; or that external conditions in itself can provide a force to motivate people to volunteer. These studies were done under

conditions where the subject was asked to volunteer for a short-term experiment. The results have not been confirmed for volunteers that are being asked to provide considerably more of their time and effort. Even if these people could be induced to volunteer, there is still a question of whether their motivation would be strong enough to carry them through a complete volunteer program. It doesn't do much good to just increase the number of drop-outs.

### **Roles of Volunteers**

Volunteers have a unique role, both in society and in the organizations they serve. They may be considered as unselfish and public-spirited by their neighbors and be accorded special status. The patient may see the volunteer as a friend, the nurse may see him as a pest, and the administrator may see him as an unpaid employee. The volunteer is an ambiguous figure - he does not have the means by which we usually assign status: salary, position, or power. He does have an amount of independence that the employee does not have and this increases the difficulty of assigning the volunteer a role by our ordinary standards. It may be this lack of a consistent role that generates some antagonism from other employees and discomfort for the volunteer. This problem is intensified since volunteers are most frequently found in rigid, hierarchical organizations such as a hospital. Research should undertake to determine what role is appropriate for volunteers in different situations and attempt to communicate an understanding of that role to other employees and the volunteer. Stein (1967) found that suggestions for improvements by both hospital personnel and volunteers centered on a clearer understanding of what was expected of volunteers and a clearer role- definition. In addition to improving communication and work-relationships in the organization, a clearer role-definition

may motivate more people to volunteer.

### **Qualifications of Volunteers**

Hassol (1967) describes a situation where six hundred applications were received, the volunteers were interviewed and tested, and twelve were selected and trained to take intake case histories. After one year on the job, these volunteers left to become fully trained as professionals. This is a perfect example of the misuse of volunteers. The qualifications of volunteers can be readily determined and screening should be intense only when the demands of the job are great. All jobs should be analyzed and, if necessary, broken down into components that can be handled by the majority of volunteers available. Whenever possible, jobs should be available at several levels of difficulty requiring different abilities and personality traits so the qualifications of available volunteers can be matched to the job requirements.

### **Prediction of Volunteer Success**

The ultimate goal of the seven areas listed and discussed above is to provide a scientific bases for further research and development in the field of volunteer activity. The division of research into the above areas is arbitrary- sometimes overlapping and sometimes contradictory. None of these areas provides an answer in itself, but gathering basic background data in a number of areas is a necessary start to more precise theories and experimentation on volunteer activity. When this stage is reached, accurate predictions can be made on any aspect of volunteer activity that will aid planning and assure steady and orderly growth.

### **Conclusion**

This paper has presented an overview of research needs in volunteer activity with some examples of preliminary studies that

are related to this area. Research on volunteers from a psychological frame of reference is practically non-existent. Research needs have been categorized into problem areas that are amenable to solution by standard psychological techniques. Sociological techniques could also be directed to the study of volunteer activity from a different frame of reference. It is suggested that a background of research is essential if volunteer activity is to increase and if volunteers are to be effectively utilized.

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