

**In This Issue  
We Are All World Citizens**

This first issue of Volume XXVI of *The International Journal of Volunteer Administration* focuses upon “Volunteerism Around the Globe: New Ideas, New Insights.” While this theme may not seem necessarily original or overly dynamic, I would argue that it is very appropriate and even more poignant as the theme of our first issue of 2009. After all, while *The IJOVA* may be published in the United States, it is not solely an “American journal.” Since its inception in 2006, *The IJOVA*’s mission has been to “connect practitioners, academicians, and consultants in greater service to the global volunteer community.” *The IJOVA* is guided by an Editorial Board with diverse members representing four different countries, and served by volunteer Editorial Reviewers representing five countries.

With military conflicts currently raging in at least four regions of the globe, a looming worldwide economic crisis and/or recession, and accusations of past and contemporary genocides still permeating the public consciousness worldwide, there has been no more critical time in recent memory when we could each benefit from re-focusing upon volunteerism as a means for building understanding and respect among diverse people and ideas around the world. While we are each unique individuals proud of our respective ethnic and/or cultural heritages, we are all also citizens of the world. As such, we must never lose faith and confidence in the ability of volunteerism to heal, alleviate, support, advocate, and create.

The issue opens with four excellent *Features* by authors representing as many different countries. Lesley Hustinx and Femida Handy explore the “think globally – act locally” phenomenon as applied to the Belgium Red Cross. The authors conclude that “holistic community development among volunteers for the Red Cross is a goal more easily attained at the cognitive level than at the affective level.” Timothy Koehnen and Tiago Santos used a case study approach to assess the potential for volunteerism to initiate personal and community development in rural northern Portugal. Their findings strongly suggest that “volunteer-based organizations can serve as a community-learning forum for increasing individual empowerment and social capital in scattered rural communities.” Lucas Meijs, Mary Tschirhart, Esther Ten Hoorn, and Jaffrey Brudney discuss their concept of “volunteerability” within corporate volunteer programs in The Netherlands and United States. “In general, the more legitimate and expected volunteering through a corporate volunteer program appears to be, the greater the willingness of individuals to engage in this type of volunteering.” Finally, Beth Morgan, Heidi Hunter, Samantha Anstey, Anne O’Riordan, Margo Patterson, and Debbie Docherty describe their qualitative research investigating volunteerism among community members with disabilities involved in educating occupational therapy students in Canada. According to the authors, “Four major themes emerged from the volunteers’ narratives: personal development, advocacy, education and dynamic relationship.”

We are honored to include two *Commentaries* written by recognized leaders in global volunteerism and civic engagement. South Africans Karen Cronin and Helene Perold challenge us to revisit important connections between volunteerism and social activism. Based upon a larger, earlier collaborative publication by CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation, the International Association of Volunteer Effort (IAVE,) and United Nations Volunteers

(UNV), the authors conclude that both volunteering and social activism are important strategies for fostering people's participation in social change and human development and have the potential to help foster the scale and diversity of participation needed to confront major development challenges. In the second *Commentary*, Ruth MacKenzie emphasizes volunteers and volunteerism as critical foundations for the democratic process. As president of Volunteer Canada, a national non-profit organization leading the advancement of volunteerism across the country, she is in an ideal position to reflect upon how "volunteers protect and build upon the democratic principles that many other countries have yet to grasp."

*Tools of the Trade* includes a description of an excellent on-line tool available to volunteer resource managers worldwide. As another recognized leader in international volunteer development, Joanna Stuart from the Institute for Volunteering Research in the United Kingdom introduces us to the Volunteering Impact Assessment Toolkit, developed in 2004 to help organizations undertake their own research to assess the impacts of volunteering. In *Ideas that Work*, author Tim Burns shares both challenges and successes of the national organization for which he serves as executive director, Volunteering New Zealand, in developing national formalised health and safety guidelines for employee volunteering programmes protecting employers, their employee volunteers, and host community volunteer organisations. The practical ideas and insights he shares are highly applicable to any corporate/community volunteer partnership, regardless of nationality.

*From the JOVA Annals* closes the issue with four previously published articles from the former *Journal of Volunteer Administration (JOVA)*: "Altruism or Self-Actualisation? Disabled Volunteers' Perceptions of the Benefits of Volunteering" by Jane Andrews and originally published in Volume XXIII, 2005; "Volunteering in Cultural Institutions: A Comparison Between the United States and Germany" by Gesa Birnkraut, first published in Volume XX, 2004; "What Coordinators of Palliative Care Volunteers in New Brunswick, Canada Have to Say about their Programs, Themselves, and their Program Management Practices" published in Volume XXIII, 2005 and co-authored by Stephen Claxton-Oldfield and Jane Claxton-Oldfield; and, "Younger Volunteers in Sweden" by Richard Sundeen and Sally Raskoff, first published in Volume XX, 2004.

As an American, and a *proud* American at that, I would be the first to attest that in today's global community, the United States does not own the contemporary concept of "volunteerism," nor do my fellow volunteer resource managers and I have all the correct answers, or know all the best practices in our global profession. This is why I am simultaneously proud and humbled to present this stellar issue focused upon new ideas and new insights in ethical and effective leadership for volunteerism around the world.

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