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# INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERISM:

## THE IMPACT OF SERVICE INITIATIVES IN SELECTED TEXAS STATE AGENCIES

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Texans care about each other. Through their volunteer participation in state agencies, benefits are delivered, children and seniors are safe and cared for, parks are clean and inviting, historic sites are preserved, our cultural heritage is celebrated, and needed services are rendered. *Investing in Volunteerism* is an analysis of the volunteer service and community engagement efforts of eighteen selected state agencies and organizations. Funded in part by a grant received by the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service from the Corporation for National and Community Service, this study was undertaken by the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service, a component of the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin.

- Volunteer participation is big business in Texas State Government agencies. Significantly more than 200,000 Texans serve this state through structured service opportunities providing contributions in time, in-kind contributions, and donations valued in excess of \$35 million.
- Four organizational models facilitate the delivery of volunteer service. Centralized models appear to be most effective in leveraging broad large-scale citizen participation initiatives. These models require dedicated staff at the central office and

regional levels supporting volunteerism. Decentralized models operate on a project or program specific level. Generally focused on outcome or project goals, these relatively smaller efforts address specific needs. Regional outreach is variable. Community-based models of service rely heavily on the work of independent nonprofit organizations formed to assist the state in meeting significant social problems. Hybrid models represent a combination of these systems.

- More than 100 different service opportunities and volunteer projects were identified by the participating agencies. Key challenges to greater volunteer involvement include staff availability to supervise and support volunteers and staff understanding of the roles and functions volunteers can perform.
- People of all ages serve as volunteers. Fewer opportunities exist for youth service. Senior adults were frequently lauded for their volunteer activities.

Volunteers are not free. They do however significantly expand the reach of state government, leverage scarce financial resources, and actively engage citizens in the work of a democracy. Their involvement generates social capital and builds caring communities.

## CHAPTER ONE

# INTRODUCTION

The contribution of volunteers to our nation's history is not new. Describing us in 1831 as a "nation of joiners," Alexis de Tocqueville famously observed:

In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used or applied to a greater multitude of objects than in America. Besides the permanent associations which are established by law under the names of townships, cities, and counties, a vast number of others are formed and maintained by the agency of private individuals.<sup>1</sup>

Tocqueville's insight into the nation's group participation applies still. The Independent Sector, a Washington, D.C. based nonprofit support organization, charts the participation and giving behaviors of Americans. Its 2001 survey indicates that 44% of adults, 83.9 million Americans, formally volunteer for groups and organizations. With women slightly more likely than men to volunteer (46% of women volunteer while 42% of men volunteer), the average volunteer contributes 24 hours of service per month. This workforce is equivalent to more than nine million full-time employees.<sup>2</sup> Utilizing a figure of \$15.40 per hour of service rendered,<sup>3</sup> in 2001, the total value of time volunteers contributed exceeded \$239 billion.

It is widely accepted that volunteers are the backbone of the nonprofit sector. Less well known is the fact that "25 to 30% of all volunteer labor is directed to government."<sup>4</sup> While city and county governments receive much of this effort, state governments also benefit from volunteers. One recent nationwide survey estimated that a third or more of all state agencies engage volunteers in the delivery of needed services. The study revealed that larger state

agencies, that is, those with greater numbers of staff and larger budgets, benefit most from volunteers and that volunteers tend to concentrate their efforts in the areas of "environmental protection, health, hospitals, natural resources, parks and recreation, and public welfare."<sup>5</sup>

There are several common justifications for deploying volunteers in the public sector:<sup>6</sup>

- Volunteers provide clear economic savings and they enhance organizational productivity.
- Volunteers augment the quality and capacity of service delivery, enabling government to do more with its allocated resources. Citizen volunteers offer a renewed energy, additional person-power, and a unique set of skills, all of which enable government organizations to provide services that are otherwise unavailable to the public, particularly during peak workloads and in times of crisis.
- Trained and experienced volunteers are an attractive pool from which to recruit people for salaried positions. Conversely, persons frequently volunteer to acquire new or enhance existing job skills. Increasingly, volunteering is used to build skills among the unemployed.
- Volunteers personalize and enhance the quality of government services. They often find contact with clients rewarding and can devote to the situation more time than can paid staff with heavy workloads and multiple responsibilities. Volunteers often provide support "behind the scenes" as well, researching problems, tracking down needed information or disseminating data.
- Volunteers build a bridge to the community. Engaging volunteers in the work of the public sector enables citizens to perceive the constraints on government and the structural pressures associated with service delivery. An effective program of citizen engagement through volunteerism can greatly improve community relationships.

1. Ellis, Susan J. "What De Tocqueville Really Said," *E-volunteerism*, Vol. 1, no.2 (2001). Available: <http://www.e-volunteerism.com>, cited from Phillips Bradley, ed., *Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America*, Vol. 1 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945) p. 198.

2. Independent Sector. Value of Volunteer Time. Online. Available: [http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer\\_time.html](http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_time.html). Accessed August 16, 2002.

3. \$15.40 represents the average hourly wage for nonagricultural workers, as published in *The Economic Report of the President* (2001 Edition) increased by 12% to estimate fringe benefits.

4. Jeffrey L. Brudney, and Edward Kellough, "Volunteers in State Government: Involvement, Management, and Benefits." *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, vol.29, no. 1 (March 2000), citing Hodgkinson, V.A. et.al. *Nonprofit Almanac, 1996-1997, Dimensions of the Independent Sector*, p. 112.

5. Ibid, 125.

6. Jeffrey L. Brudney, "Preparing the Organization for Volunteers," in *The Volunteer Management Handbook*, ed. Tracy D. Connors (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1995), pp 36-60. See also, Susan Ellis, *From the Top Down: The Executive Role in Volunteer Program Success*, (Philadelphia: Energize Inc., 1996).

- Volunteers can often perform services, such as fund development and advocacy, outside the purview of government employees or public agencies.

Given these and other benefits associated with volunteer initiatives, it is crucial to issue two strong caveats.

Although the potential savings associated with volunteer utilization receives great attention, particularly in times of state budget deficits and fiscal shortfalls, it is an absolute fallacy that volunteers are “free” workers. Well-designed and professionally administered programs are truly indispensable for any organization striving to leverage volunteer resources and to boost its service quality. The other caveat addresses the issue of volunteer/staff relationship concerns. Employees within the system often fear having their operations exposed to citizens who may not understand the underlying issues associated with delivering government services. Perhaps volunteers will think employees are not doing a good job, or perhaps the volunteer will want an employee’s job.

In fact neither of these fears is substantiated. Brudney states quite clearly, “The exposure of citizens to the public sector through volunteering appears to breed respect and approbation rather than contempt or ridicule. No evidence exists that volunteers are motivated by a desire to cut government budgets (or staff); on the contrary, they are much more likely to press for increases in the policy domains where they have chosen to give their time and talents.”<sup>7</sup> Relative to the job concern, it should be noted that on average, volunteers are gainfully employed individuals who contribute 3.6 hours of service per week. These are persons motivated by the desire to “make a difference by helping-out and serve because they were asked, not because they aspire to capture someone else’s position.”<sup>8</sup>

New York State, recognizing the value of volunteers in attending to the needs of the frail elderly, to the growing homeless population, to the tragic victims of child abuse and domestic violence, and to sufferers of substance abuse and illiteracy, created the “Governor’s Empire State Volunteer Manual.” This manual notes that “government should be a pacesetter in establishing policies that encourage, support and recognize citizens who donate their time and talents to their communities.” It continues: “Volunteers bring a fresh perspective to the tasks at hand, help enrich the programs in which they serve and offer support to paid staff who may already be overworked.”<sup>9</sup>

Like New York, Texas has a long, rich history of volunteer collaboration with state agencies. Among the more notable volunteer milestones is the story of the “original thirteen”—a group of Terrell Texas women who, in 1951, asked to enter a training program in order to become volunteers at Terrell State Hospital. These ladies became “the first corps of organized volunteers to serve in a state mental institution with Texas.” This involvement grew more formal when, in 1958, the members founded the Volunteer

Services State Council (VSSC), “a volunteer based, tax exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization, which partners with the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation to improve the quality and efficiency of the department’s programs and services.” Today, 22 chapters support the VSSC as it continues to champion the cause of mental health and mental retardation, providing education and training to volunteers and raising funds to support MHMR programs and operations. In recent decades, other agencies have mimicked MHMR’s volunteer organization. Patterned after the VSSC, the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) receives support through an organized network of volunteer councils dedicated to the needs of the youths it serves.

The Texas Adopt-A-Highway program was initiated in 1987 and was replicated in 47 other states. Inspired by the acclaim this program was accorded, the Senate Research Center undertook an investigation into the contribution volunteers were making to state government. Prepared by Dru Smith Fuller, the report analyzed the work volunteers contributed to 25 different public sector groups and organizations in fiscal year 1992.<sup>10</sup> The report divided the information into four sections, according to the type of contribution the volunteer initiatives produced. Collectively, this report documented more than 12.5 million hours of volunteer service valued at \$102.9 million.

Paralleling the story of volunteerism in Texas is the history of federal legislation in support of service initiatives. ACTION, created by the Domestic Volunteer Service Act of 1973, was the original, federal home for Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) and for the three programs of the Senior Corps—the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions. In 1990, President George H. W. Bush signed the National and Community Service Act, which established the Points of Light Foundation, a nonprofit charitable organization, and the Commission on National and Community Service. The Commission supported service-learning programs for school-aged youth, related service-learning projects within higher education and the community, the emerging youth corps, and demonstration models of national service. With the authorization of the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, President William J. Clinton, in collaboration with a bipartisan group of senators, created the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), a new federal organization which eventually became the home for the ACTION-based programs and the AmeriCorps initiatives.

It should be noted that National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), the demonstration project enacted during the first Bush administration, is a residential service program modeled on the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps. In fact, Texas’ first state

7. Jeffrey L. Brudney, “Volunteers in Delivery of Public Services: Magnitude, Scope, and Management,” in *The Handbook of Public Personnel Administration*, eds. Jack Rabin, Thomas Vocino, W. Bartley Hildreth, and Gerald J. Miller (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1995), p. 668.

8. Independent Sector. *Value of Volunteer Time*. (Online.)

9. Governor’s Office for Voluntary Service, *Governor’s Empire State Volunteer Manual*, Report prepared by Joyce M. Black, New York, N.Y. Sept. 11, 1990. p. v.

10. Senate Research Center, *Texas Gets A Hand: Volunteerism and Other Contributions to Selected State Agencies in Fiscal Year 1992* (Austin, TX, Sept., 1993). Texas General Land Office; Texas Historical Commission, Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife; State Preservation Board; State Preservation Capital Fund Drive; Texas Department of Transportation; Keep Texas Beautiful, Inc.; School for the Blind and Visually Impaired; Central Education Agency; Austin Adopt-A-School; Regional Foundation Library; Texas State Library and Archives; Literacy Council, Texas Department of Commerce; Department on Aging; Texas Commission for the Blind; Children’s Trust Fund of Texas; Texas Department of Health; Funding Information Center, Department of Health; Texas Department of Human Services; Texas/Mental Health and Mental Retardation; Office of the Attorney General; State Bar of Texas; Office of Court Administration; Texas Department of Criminal Justice; Texas Youth Commission.

parks were constructed in 1933 by the Civilian Conservation Corps.<sup>11</sup> Today NCCC is an initiative within the AmeriCorps family of programs.

In his January 2002 State of the Union address, President George W. Bush further expanded the work of the Commission for National and Community Service. He called on all Americans to serve their country for 4000 hours, or the equivalent of two years of service over a lifetime, with the creation of the USA Freedom Corps. In addition, he proposed expanding opportunities for service through the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps.<sup>12</sup>

With the passage of the 1993 National and Community Service Trust Act, each state willing to form a state-level commission became eligible for formula-based, as well as competitive AmeriCorps funding. Texas Governor Ann Richards issued the executive order establishing the Texas Commission on February 23, 1994. In her order, "she described an institutional 'need for a comprehensive and coordinated effort to maximize available resources and foster the best volunteer service opportunities from which all Texans will benefit.'"<sup>13</sup>

House Bill 1863, passed by the Texas Legislature in 1995, placed the Commission under the authority of the Texas Workforce Commission. Governor Bush re-authorized the Commission by Executive Order in 1996 renaming the body the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (TxCVCS) emphasizing the Commission's expanded role of fostering volunteerism in addition to national service.<sup>14</sup> As such, the Commission administers over \$23 million annually in AmeriCorps funding and sponsors the Governor's Volunteer Leadership Conference, the Governor's Volunteer Awards and the Governor's Mentoring Initiative.

Like TxCVCS, volunteer programs in state agencies are authorized by legislative acts. Consequently, throughout this report there are references to specific legislation, legal cases, courts, and, especially, collaborations among public and private organizations. Volunteers are not free. And from a legal standpoint they are certainly not easy. Unlike private philanthropic and volunteer groups, state agencies' rules, budgets, procedures and purposes are all set forth by specific statutes and regulations. The diversity of agencies creates a unique and complicated legal environment for volunteer programs, raising issues in areas such as: real and personal property, taxation, insurance, personal injury, workers compensation, ethics, civil rights, and other realms of law covering countless issues.

Given these complexities, for state agencies to leverage volunteer time and energy efficiently, legislatures must pass laws that authorize and enable them to do so. Chapter 2109 of the Texas Government Code provides: "A governmental entity that provides human services shall use volunteers, if feasible, to assist in providing

human services of a high quality."<sup>15</sup> In announcing the requirements for these programs, the Code continues:

- (a) A volunteer program must include:
  - (1) an effective training program for paid staff and prospective volunteers;
  - (2) the use of paid staff to plan and implement the volunteer program;
  - (3) an evaluation mechanism to assess:
    - (A) the performance of the volunteers;
    - (B) the cooperation of paid staff with the volunteers; and
    - (C) the volunteer program; and
  - (4) follow-up studies to ensure the effectiveness of the volunteer program.
- (b) A volunteer program may:
  - (1) establish a program to reimburse volunteers for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of volunteer services;
  - (2) establish an insurance program to protect volunteers in the performance of volunteer services;
  - (3) cooperate with private organizations that provide services similar to those provided by the governmental entity; and
  - (4) purchase engraved certificates, plaques, pins, or awards of a similar nature, with a value that does not exceed \$75 for each volunteer, to recognize special achievement and outstanding services of volunteers.<sup>16</sup>

The Texas Government establishes programmatic obligations and options, including salaried volunteer administrators, assessments, feasibility studies, shared planning, project recommendations, and basic management expectations. These requirements are of great benefit to the present study and facilitate program development.

At the same time, the Texas legislature has also passed laws that make volunteering easier and more attractive. It has enacted legislation to provide charitable immunity to certain volunteers whose acts or omissions cause injuries during the course of good faith volunteer service.<sup>17</sup> It has given special coverage under the Workers' Compensation statute for volunteers working for the state during a declared disaster or those training to do so.<sup>18</sup> When agencies like the General Land Office or the Commission for the Arts sought to solicit charitable donations to supplant revenues received from Texas taxpayers, the legislature passed laws authorizing them to do so.<sup>19</sup>

Unlike private organizations, whose directors and officers can

11. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, *Park Host Program*. Austin, TX (brochure), p. 24.

12. Corporation for National and Community Service. *Legislative History*. Online. Available: [http://www.cns.gov/about/leg\\_history.html](http://www.cns.gov/about/leg_history.html).

13. Texas Commission for National and Community Service. *Paving the Way for Community Service: Comprehensive Three Year State Plan*. Austin, TX, 1994, p. 1.

14. Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service. *Empowering Texans to Serve: Annual Report 2000-2001*.

15. Texas Government Code, Chapter 2109, § 2109.002.

16. Id. §2109.004.

17. Texas Civil Practice and Remedies Code, Chapter 84, §84.004.

18. Texas Labor Code, Chapter 501, §501.026(b).

19. See Texas Government Code, Ch.444, Texas Commission on the Arts, §444.026, creating the Texas Cultural Endowment Fund, which, under §444.027, is authorized and required to deposit annually interest on its principal into the Texas Commission on the Arts Operating Fund, and the Natural Resources Code, Ch. 31, General Land Office, §31.065, authorizes the commissioner to accept gifts and bequests of real and personal property on behalf of the state of Texas.

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amend rules and by-laws with some freedom, agencies are subject to political currents swirling in the state legislature. They must be ever mindful of their diverse constituent bases when implementing volunteer programs. Although a comprehensive analysis of the law

of volunteering is beyond its scope, this report aims to open discussions about the utilizations of volunteers by state agencies and the role of the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service in sustaining and strengthening public sector volunteerism.

## CHAPTER TWO

# BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

*Investing in Volunteerism: The Impact of Service Initiatives in Selected Texas State Agencies* is funded in part from a grant awarded to the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (TxCVCS or the Commission) from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). The Commission entered into a contract with the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service, a component of the LBJ School of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin, to undertake several pieces of evaluative work. The initial phase of the evaluation, the *Environmental Scan of Volunteerism in Texas*,<sup>20</sup> assessed needs and issues pertaining to volunteerism, "in order to begin to measure the impact and effectiveness of various initiatives the Commission may undertake in the future and to target services more effectively."<sup>21</sup>

The Environmental Scan surveyed 64 state and regional coordinating organizations, representing a cross-section of the field of volunteerism and national service in Texas. Based on interviews with 49 different groups and organizations, the authors concluded that there was a consensus among respondents: Additional, comprehensive data about volunteerism would greatly enhance the profile of service in Texas. Moreover, the authors found that, among the many groups and organizations participating in the environmental scan, state agencies tended to collect and aggregate the most reliable data on volunteerism. Building upon the conclusions in the *Environmental Scan*, the purpose of this study is to learn more about volunteerism and volunteer program management in selected Texas state agencies. In addition to gathering up-to-date information about the size and scope of the current volunteer workforce in selected state agencies, *Investing in Volunteerism* analyzes and explores:

- Organizational structures and management practices associated with volunteer initiatives as well as the relationships state agencies forge with nonprofit organizations.
- Who is volunteering and the work volunteers perform.
- Next steps the Commission and others may take to support volunteerism and service in Texas.

20. Sarah Jane Rehnborg and Katy Fallon. *Environmental Scan of Volunteerism in Texas* (RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service, University of Texas at Austin, August 2001).

21. Letter from Christine Shakespeare, Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, Austin, TX, to Ben Frey, Corporation for National Service, Sept. 20, 2000.

## Methodology

To explore volunteer involvement in selected state agencies, a 46-question, 20-page survey instrument was mailed to the volunteer administrators or volunteerism contact persons at 22 Texas state agencies or organizations. The agencies selected to participate in the study were primarily those represented in the Senate Research Center study of 1992. The survey instrument itself was designed with assistance from Chris King, Ph.D., the Director of the Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources, and from Marc Musick, Ph.D., Research Associate at the University of Texas at Austin Population Research Center. Also assisting with the design and distribution of the survey was a group of state agency volunteer and community relations directors who meet regularly. These persons have served the project as an invaluable, albeit informal, advisory committee. Prior to distributing the survey, the authors contacted each agency to identify and establish a central point of contact for volunteer initiatives. Most agencies designated a single central contact person, others identified multiple program contacts, while still others requested multiple survey forms for distribution to each staff member responsible for distinct projects.

A total of 39 printed surveys reached 22 different state organizations. The survey mailing included a cover letter, instructions for completing the survey, the survey instrument, a copy of the agency's volunteer program description as it appeared in the Senate Research Center report, and a self-addressed stamped envelope. In addition to completing the survey instrument, respondents were asked to update their program description for inclusion in this report. Each contact person was also offered an electronic version of the survey. Two computer files were available: a form that could be completed electronically and returned via email, or a read-only document that could be printed and returned by facsimile. (See Appendix A: Respondents Completing Survey Forms.)

The authors took several measures to increase survey response. Due to the length and detail of the survey, the authors concluded that it would be prudent to make a follow-up phone call to each recipient approximately two weeks after receipt of the document. No respondent requested their assistance, however. Ten surveys were completed and returned to the authors by the initial deadline. A second round of reminder phone calls and emails from the authors resulted in the return of 68 more surveys for a total of 78 survey instruments, representing twenty of twenty-two participating agencies. For the purposes of this investigation, 91% of the participating agencies responded to the survey.

In addition to soliciting written survey responses, the authors organized a focus group of eight persons, representing a cross-

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**Table 2.1  
Survey Results**

<b>Agencies &amp; Program Names</b>	<b>Surveys Sent in Original Mailing</b>	<b>Surveys Returned</b>	<b>Surveys Incorporated in Dataset</b>
Texas Department on Aging <i>Benefits Counselors</i> <i>Ombudsman</i>	2	1 1	1 1
Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse	1	1	No program
Texas Commission on the Arts	1	1	1
Office of the Attorney General –Child Support Division	2	1	1
State Bar of Texas	1	0	0
Texas Commission for the Blind Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center	1	1	1
Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates	1	1	1
Texas Department of Criminal Justice – Programs & Services Division	2	1 42	1
Texas Education Agency	1	1	No program
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (Formerly TNRCC) <i>Lake &amp; River Clean-Up</i> <i>Source Water Protection Program</i>	2	1 1	1 1
General Land Office <i>Adopt-A-Beach</i> <i>Adopt-A-Map</i>	2	1 1	1 1
Texas Department of Health <i>Summer Youth Program</i> <i>Volunteer Health Corps</i> <i>Volunteer Mailroom</i>	4	1 1 1	1 1 1
Texas Historical Commission <i>County Historical Commissions</i> <i>Texas Archeological Stewards Network</i> <i>Visionaries in Preservation</i>	4	1 1 1	1 1 1
Texas Department of Human Services <i>Adopt-A-Nursing Home</i> <i>Family Pathfinders</i> <i>Volunteer and Community Services</i>	2	1 1 1	1 1 1
Texas State Library & Archives Commission <i>Archives and Information Services</i> <i>Friends of the Library &amp; Archives</i> <i>Volunteer Recording Studio</i> <i>Talking Books Program</i>	2	1 1 1 1	1 1 1 1
Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation – Community Relations Division	1	1	1
Parks and Wildlife Department <i>State Park Volunteers</i> <i>Education Program Instructors</i>	2	1 1	1 1
State Preservation Board <i>Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum</i>	2	1	1
Department of Protective and Regulatory Services <i>Foster Friends</i> <i>Greater Texas Community Partners</i> <i>Project SAVE</i>	2	1 1 1 1	1 1 1 1
Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired	1	1	1
Texas Department of Transportation	2	0	0
Texas Youth Commission – Volunteer Services and Community Involvement Program	1	1	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>33</b>

section of the responding agencies. The purpose of the focus group was to facilitate an in-depth exploration of the challenges and obstacles that confront managers of state level volunteer initiatives. The authors videotaped this focus group and, subsequently, transcribed the recording. In addition to broad agency representation, the authors took care to balance focus group participation by gender, race and age. Meeting face to face with this diverse group of program leaders allowed the authors to hear specific experiences and anecdotes, and to benefit from the collective wisdom of dedicated, professional volunteer managers.

It must be noted that this survey is not an attempt to characterize volunteer utilization across all state agencies; time constraints and limited resources prevented such a broad-brush approach to the issue at hand. Instead, the goals of this project are:

- To analyze the general models of volunteer initiatives in state government agencies;
- To glean what might be done to enhance or support volunteer utilization within state agencies; and
- To present stories capturing the extent and diversity of volunteer initiatives in Texas state agencies.

## Findings

Table 2.1 lists the agencies and organizations involved in this analysis. The table reflects the number of instruments originally sent, received, and mailed. Only two agencies offered no response at all to the survey. It should be noted that the response rate was inflated by the unexpected receipt of survey instruments from facilities under private contract with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). These surveys were generated in addition to the one centralized survey response prepared by the central administrative headquarters of TDCJ. Although the authors are most appreciative of the additional effort this represents, for the purposes of this report, the single centralized TDCJ survey response is utilized in this analysis. An additional survey instrument generated by the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services was deemed redundant to the other three surveys completed by the

agency. Therefore, one of these surveys was dropped from the analysis. It should also be noted that the Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program is a charitable nonprofit organization. The group is included in this survey, however, because of its close relationship with the state's court system and because of the funding it receives from the Texas State Legislature.

In summary, 91% of the agencies queried completed a survey instrument. These state agencies generated 33 useable survey instruments describing the volunteer and community engagement initiatives in 18 of the 20 responding state agencies. Two state agencies, the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, operate no centralized system of volunteer engagement, nor do they track or monitor the volunteerism and community engagement initiatives of the groups and organizations they serve.

Table 2.1 lists the responding state agencies and the names of the volunteer initiatives by program and by agency. In some instances only the name of the state agency or commission is noted, reflecting that one instrument captures the work of all volunteer initiatives within the particular entity.

## Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the definition of the term *volunteer* is based on the Fair Labor Standards Act: "an individual who performs hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons, without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered, is considered a volunteer during such hours. Individuals performing hours of service for such a public agency will be considered volunteers for the time so spent . . ."<sup>22</sup> In addition, this study does not distinguish between categories of service rendered without compensation such as the service provided by an intern who is volunteering, all or in part, to meet a curriculum requirement, or an individual performing mandated service such as offenders expected to serve in lieu of court sentence, or any other form of required service. To the agency receiving the service, the individual is not compensated and is generally managed as part of the agency's community initiatives or volunteer department. Likewise, advisors, board members and others serving in positions of leadership, who are not compensated for their service, are considered volunteers within the scope of this analysis.

22. 29 C. F. R. §553.101.

## CHAPTER THREE

# ORGANIZATIONAL ANALYSIS AND REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In an examination of alternative delivery approaches within local government, Valente and Manchester<sup>23</sup> describe four organizational models of volunteer program design. The first model, the *ad hoc volunteer program*, involves the community in task force initiatives often focused on specific concerns. These *ad hoc* ventures may be sporadic in nature and, frequently, are designed to engage persons who may not be available to assist with on-going work or direct service delivery. The second approach, *outside agency recruitment, internal government management*, implies a partnership between the government entity and a local organization. This system involves a community organization such as a United Way or volunteer center as the recruiter of volunteers; however, placement and ongoing management of the volunteers is handled within the government entity. In the third approach, the *decentralized model*, each division or departmental unit designs and operates its own volunteer initiative independently from any other such initiative within the larger department or governmental unit. Although there is considerable variation in the management structures of decentralized programs, systems can be designed to meet the specific needs of the unit. The *centralized model*, the fourth approach described by Valente and Manchester, is a highly centralized, jurisdiction-wide volunteer system typically managed by one salaried staff person or a designed management committee. Often, the program leader is a part of the unit's management team and has fairly strong staff and fiscal program support.

The different programmatic models described by Valente and Manchester on a local government level parallel, to some extent, organizational systems on the state level. Borrowing from this work, four organizational models and one service category will be used to describe and analyze the programmatic information gleaned from the survey instruments. It should be noted, however, that each model represents a dynamic organizational structure and, as such, significant variation may exist within and between each model.

*The centralized model of volunteer engagement:* Similar to the local government system, the centralized model implies a jurisdiction-wide program managed by a central, management-level staff person(s), or a high level coordinating committee, and operates from the state agency's central office headquarters. Centralized programs enjoy significant system-wide administrative and fiscal support. In addition to central staff, the agency deploys staff at the regional or local level to facilitate volunteer involvement throughout

the state agency system. Generally there is some degree of a formalized relationship between the state-level and regional staff. These programs are generally governed by uniform policies and procedures and their existence may be codified by legislative mandate or agency rule.

*The hybrid model of volunteer engagement:* A cross between the centralized and decentralized models, the hybrid system mixes attributes of both. Frequently, in hybrid systems, staff positions exist on both the state and regional level; however, at either level, the amount of time these staff persons devote to volunteer and community engagement tasks may vary from minimal, part time responsibilities to full time work. Similar to the decentralized model, programs that depend on volunteers are often identified by specific names, each program receiving separate attention according to its unique needs and focus. In the hybrid model, relationships and systems may be less codified than in the centralized systems, but they may also enjoy more top-level management support than found in the decentralized programs.

*The decentralized model of volunteer engagement:* Departments or divisions within a state agency may design and operate several volunteer initiatives, each designed to meet either specific service objectives, or a goal or mission associated with the work of the agency itself. Generally, initiatives operate independently of each other and with neither the benefits nor the drawbacks of codified structures or policy guidelines. It is not uncommon in decentralized systems for programs to omit terminology associated with volunteerism in either the title of the project or in the job description of the staff person overseeing it. Given the absence of consistent terminology and titles associated with community engagement projects, finding these volunteer projects often requires good detective work!

*The community-based model of volunteer engagement:* Generally driven by a charitable organization external to the public agency, this model represents a collaborative approach to addressing a critical service need. In some situations, the charitable organization becomes a conduit for fund development and a mechanism through which volunteers are engaged in service. The extent of collaboration varies according to the problem itself, and is subject to the goals and objectives of the individual or group identifying the need. In some situations, the need is identified within the public sector entity, and a public servant, operating as a private citizen, creates the group to meet the need. In other situations, an individual or group from the community defines the need and initiates the creation of the charitable group. This type of community-based model may be the organizational structure that

23. Carl F. Valente and Lydia D. Manchester. *Rethinking Local Services: Examining Alternative Delivery Approaches* (Special Report, No. 12, International City Management Association, Washington, D.C. March 1984). pp 56-57.

defines the agency's entire, statewide volunteer initiative, or it may exist in collaboration with one of the models listed above. For example, a centralized volunteer program may enjoy the support of a charitable organization designed to augment or enhance the work of the agency's service initiative, in the same way that an auxiliary or "friends" association works to support the effort of the agency.

As the data was analyzed, it became apparent that a fifth programmatic category was necessary in order to describe another set of programs presented in the survey instruments. The fifth category is that of *institution specific programs*. Three public agencies responding to the survey shared information about volunteer initiatives that are designed to serve one specific institution or facility. While the organization may serve residents from all over Texas, each does so within a local facility based in a defined geographic area independent of any regional volunteer management structure.

### The Centralized Model

Four of the participating state agencies operate centralized models of volunteer program management. (See Appendix B.<sup>24</sup>) These agencies are:

- The Office of the Attorney General,
- The Texas Department of Criminal Justice,
- The Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, and
- The Texas Youth Commission.

The Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) houses the agency's Outreach and Volunteer Program. The goal of the program is to:

Develop and foster contact with the public to inform them of child support services and procedures, to recruit volunteers and interns to serve in [their] Child Support Field offices, and to build collaborations with other public and private service provider groups in order to accomplish the Agency's goals of establishing and enforcing child support.

Working with schools and universities, community volunteer organizations and social service agencies, the OAG recruits volunteers to work in the agency's 65 child support offices statewide. In fiscal year 2001, 652 volunteers provided 81,563 hours of support. Using a comparable work value scale, the office estimated that volunteers contributed \$1,079,662 worth of service to the agency. Fourteen regional information specialists complement the work of the central agency staff in achieving these community service objectives.

Operating under the aegis of the Division of Programs and Services, a 12 person Volunteer Coordination Committee oversees the work of volunteers at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ).

Designed to provide services for offenders confined in the multiple units and facilities operated by TDCJ, volunteers provide literacy and education services, life and job skills services, parent training, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, religious programs, mediation projects and a host of other programs. Not only is a uniform training program required of all volunteers, but staff who work at the facility receive an in-service educational program about the importance of volunteers and learn how to work effectively with volunteers. The volunteer programs are governed statewide by a uniform set of policies and procedures. In fiscal year 2001 nearly 25,000 persons contributed over 500,000 hours of service valued at nearly \$8 million.

With a long and rich legacy of civic participation, the Community Relations Division of the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation provides another example of a centralized volunteer program. A dedicated central office staff of two full time employees and two part time staff members is supported by 41 full time and 33 part time regional employees who assume responsibility for volunteer management, institutional community relations, and public information duties. Complementing the activities of these individuals is a network of 23 nonprofit Volunteer Services Councils. In addition to a uniform set of policies and procedures facilitating volunteer involvement, an administrative code (Community Relations Chapter 417, Subchapter G) guides the system-wide engagement of community resources. In fiscal year 2001, more than 2,865 volunteers contributed over 180,000 hours of service. In addition to this record of service, volunteers also raised \$1,641,031 in funds and solicited nearly \$2 million in in-kind goods and services.

The importance of community volunteers at the Texas Youth Commission was emphasized in 1984 when the federal courts settled the class action suit, *Morales vs. Truman*. The legal agreement states:

The Agency shall take steps to expand the use of volunteers in TYC institutions and facilities. Volunteers shall be utilized to expand students' opportunities for educational and recreational experiences, to provide students with increased social interactions and to assist students, as appropriate, in successfully completing the treatment program.<sup>25</sup>

One full time staff member in the central headquarters of TYC is supported by 18 full time and nine part time regional community relations personnel who assume responsibility for volunteer management and other community affairs duties. Twenty five (one state and 24 local) volunteer resource councils work to enhance the community relations initiatives at the Youth Commission facilities around the State of Texas. Over two thousand volunteers provided more than 120,000 hours of service in Fiscal Year 2001. Carefully trained volunteers mentor the youth within the system, staff the canteens, provide educational and recreational support and work behind the scenes providing clerical support and raising funds. Like each of the other centralized programs, a uniform set of policies and procedures guides system operations.

24. See Appendix B for more information about each agency described in this chapter.

25. Tammy Vega, Administrator of Community Relations, TYC, Economic Impact Survey of Volunteers, July 2002. See also *Morales v. Truman*, 569 F. Supp. 332; 1983 U.S. Dist. LEXIS 15935 (1983).

In each of these agencies, a clearly defined department, staff position, or centralized coordinating committee oversees the engagement of volunteers on a statewide basis. State-level, central office staff is complemented by regional personnel with the responsibility and authority to involve volunteers in local facilities. Volunteer policies, procedures, and training systems guide and support both staff and volunteers. Each of these agencies maintains its records on a fiscal year basis, and each has created systems for collecting and aggregating statewide data pertaining to volunteer involvement. As further evidence of a centralized system, each of these agencies submitted one report capturing, to the degree possible, the full extent of community engagement initiatives, for all of its programs, on a statewide basis.

The impact of a dedicated group of staff establishing standards and overseeing volunteer involvement is particularly apparent in the volunteer management practices of these agencies. In completing the survey instrument, each survey respondent identified the frequency with which program management staff performs tasks deemed essential to effective volunteer program management.<sup>26</sup> Table 3.1 identifies these essential tasks and displays the mean score associated with each task. Based on a five-point scale: Always (1), Often (2), Sometimes (3), Rarely (4), and Never (5), respondents identified the frequency with which their program management staff performs each of these tasks.

Although these four agencies have well-developed volunteer program structures, differences do exist among them. The Texas Youth Commission (TYC), the Office of the Attorney General (OAG), and the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) provide liability insurance coverage for their entire volunteer workforce. In contrast, volunteers serving the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) sign waivers acknowledging the absence of this coverage. Both MHMR and TYC augment their resources and capacities through the support of dedicated volunteer services councils (VSCs), 501(c)(3) charitable organizations organized under the auspices of the agency. These councils are largely responsible for the fund development activities of these programs. (See Section on Community-Based Models.)

**Table 3.1**  
**Volunteer Management Practices in Centralized Programs**

Volunteers are interviewed and screened.	1.00
References are checked.	1.00
Criminal background checks are performed.	1.00
Personnel files are maintained on active volunteers.	1.00
Volunteers are oriented to the agency / program.	1.00
Volunteers are trained for the work they are asked to perform.	1.25
Volunteers' skills and interests are matched to available positions.	2.00
Volunteers are provided continuing education that is relevant to their assignment.	1.75
Volunteers are interviewed when they leave.	1.75
Volunteers receive feedback on their performance.	1.75
Volunteers are evaluated.	1.25
Volunteers are recognized for the work they perform.	1.75
The volunteer program itself is evaluated.	1.00

Another factor distinguishing these state agencies from one another is their approach to counting volunteer time and valuing service hours. No two agencies handle their data in quite the same manner. The Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) utilizes the average nonagricultural wage endorsed by the Independent Sector, adjusted 12% for fringe benefits, to ascribe a uniform value to the direct service duties its volunteers perform. MHMR utilizes the Independent Sector value assigned for the calendar year in which its fiscal year begins. Adding to the complexity of its system, MHMR does not track the hours its volunteers donate for fund development activities, although it does track and report the dollars they raise for institutional client support activities. Likewise, the category of *in-kind services* reflects the value of services donated by professionals and skilled technicians. In these cases, however, the donor establishes the value of the time donated to the agency. In addition to dollar valuation for services rendered by volunteers, MHMR tracks a variety of performance outcome measures associated with its volunteer efforts. Like the other "centralized agency model" programs, MHMR manages an electronic record-keeping system.

Although the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) has a volunteer system that parallels MHMR in many facets, it has not in the past tracked in-kind contributions solicited by volunteers. It does, however, count the hours that volunteers donate in fund development activities. In fiscal year 2002, for the first time, TYC will track the funds its volunteers raise. The number reflected in Table 3.2 is a FY 2002 projection. TYC does track clients served by its volunteers. In fiscal year 2001, TYC initiated an ongoing, long-term study to analyze the impact of volunteer mentoring on the recidivism rate of youthful offenders.

Also collecting and recording data on a fiscal year basis is the Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General. Data is collected from the eight Child Support Regions and from all 65 child support field offices via an automated system. Currently, a comparable work value figure is ascribed to the value of the volunteer contribution within the agency. The valuation ranges from \$10.39/hour to \$23.20/hour depending on the skill level of the volunteer. The OAG's office is switching to the uniform value ascribed by the Independent Sector for the coming fiscal year.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice tracks volunteer service data on a statewide basis via an automated tracking system designed to meet its specific needs. Like TYC and MHMR, the valuation of volunteer time is based on the Independent Sector rate. Although statistics are not kept on the number of clients served by volunteers, offender contacts handled by volunteers are monitored.

Table 3.2 captures the number of volunteers, the hours served, and the valuation of the volunteer time in the four state agencies operating centralized models of community engagement.

### The Hybrid Model

Four responding state agencies described volunteer management systems that represent a cross between centralized and decentralized organizational systems. The hybrid agencies include:

- The Texas Department of Health,
- The Texas Department of Human Services,

26. For a thorough review of the tasks associated with volunteer management, see Steve McCurley and Rick Lynch, *Volunteer Management: Mobilizing All the Resources of the Community* (IL: Heritage Arts Press, 1996).

**Table 3.2**  
**Key Statistics about Centralized Volunteer Programs**

	Reported Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Funds Raised	In-Kind Contributions	Total Outreach
<b>Office of the Attorney General</b>	672	81,563	\$1,079,662.00 <sup>2</sup>			\$1,097,662.00
FY01: <sup>1</sup> \$296,401,124						
FTEs: 3,660						
<b>Department of Criminal Justice</b>	24,682	513,744	\$7,906,520.16 <sup>3</sup>			\$7,906,520.16
FY01: \$2,281,486,725						
FTEs: 39,762						
<b>Mental Health/Mental Retardation</b>	2,685	184,818	\$2,740,855.00 <sup>4</sup>	\$1,641,031.00	\$1,915,092.00	\$6,296,978.00
FY01: \$1,739,524,743						
FTEs: 22,379						
<b>Texas Youth Commission</b>	2,037	120,500	\$2,282,841.00 <sup>3</sup>	\$200,000.00		\$2,482,841.00
FY01: \$247,806,006						
FTEs: 4,964						

<sup>1</sup> These figures represent the agencies' legislative appropriation and salaried staffing component. Source: *Guide to Texas State Agencies*, 11th ed. (Austin: LBJ School of Public Affairs, 2001)

<sup>2</sup> Using \$10.39 to \$23.20 / hr depending on skill level

<sup>3</sup> Using Independent Sector value of \$15.39

<sup>4</sup> Using IS value of \$14.83

- The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and
- The Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

Several features distinguish these "hybrid" agencies from those with centralized models of volunteer management.

- In each of the "hybrid" agencies, volunteer initiatives are organized by specific programmatic thrusts. A separate survey instrument was completed for each defined area of volunteer operation.
- Although one person or department is generally associated with volunteer initiatives in the agency, the management of each program may be ascribed to different individuals within the agency.
- In each of these agencies, staff at the regional level work in collaboration with volunteers to accomplish the work of the agency; however, the relationship between the central office staff and the regional staff is generally fluid and informal. Furthermore, many of the regional staff do not specifically list duties related to volunteer management in their job descriptions.
- Policies and procedures generally exist within each of these agencies; however, their application within individual programmatic areas varies considerably. Record-keeping systems and methods of accounting for and valuing the contributions made by volunteers are generally unique to each programmatic area and vary across the agency itself.

What is significant, however, is that the central office of each state agency knows about and supports the volunteer programming throughout the state.

Table 3.3 lists each of the state agencies operating a hybrid model of volunteer engagement. The second column identifies the name of

each programmatic thrust for which a survey was returned. The third column identifies the number of staff persons involved in completing the forms.

Volunteers staff several important projects at the Texas Department of Health (TDH). The agency's 536-member Volunteer Health Corps is in the process of re-aligning its priorities to address the new issues of bio-terrorism and public health preparedness. In 2001, the Health Corps contributed 59,377 hours of service, appraised at \$16.05/hour according to the Independent Sector. Another significant outreach program of TDH is the Volunteer Mailroom. A much smaller program confined to the central office, the mailroom engaged 188 persons, many of whom have some form of physical disability, in a therapeutic work experience preparing and processing mail. This program clocked nearly 6,000 hours of service in the last fiscal year. A third survey instrument described a small, relatively informal summer volunteer opportunity organized through the human resources office at the Department of Health.

**Table 3.3**  
**Responses from Hybrid Agencies**

Name of Agency	Programs Reflected by Survey Instruments	Persons Completing Survey Forms
Department of Health	Volunteer Mailroom Texas Volunteer Health Corps Summer Youth Volunteer Program	1
Department of Human Services	Adopt-A-Nursing Home Family Pathfinders Volunteer and Community Services	1
Parks and Wildlife	State Parks Volunteers Education Program Instructors	2
Department of Protective and Regulatory Services	Foster Friends Greater Texas Community Partners Project SAVE	4

**Table 3.4  
Key Statistics about Hybrid Volunteer Programs**

	Reported Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Funds Raised	In-Kind Contributions	Total Outreach
<b>Department of Health</b>						
FY01: <sup>1</sup>	\$6,415,366,995					
FTEs:	5,576					
			2			
<i>Summer Youth Volunteer Program</i>	53					\$0.00
<i>Texas Volunteer Health Corps</i>	536	59,377	\$953,000.85	\$720.00		\$953,720.85
<i>Volunteer Mailroom</i>	188	5,951	\$95,507.13			\$95,507.13
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>65,328</b>	<b>\$1,048,507.98</b>	<b>\$720.00</b>		<b>\$1,049,227.98</b>
<b>Department of Human Services</b>						
FY01:	\$3,737,152,626					
FTEs:	14,335					
			3			
<i>Adopt-A-Nursing Home</i>	25,682	102,728				\$0.00
<i>Family Pathfinders</i>	1,118		\$455,790.00			\$455,790.00
<i>Volunteer and Community Services</i>	110,375	823,502	\$12,673,695.00	\$173,814.00	\$863,875.00	\$13,711,384.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>137,175</b>	<b>926,230</b>	<b>\$13,129,485.00</b>	<b>\$173,814.00</b>	<b>\$863,875.00</b>	<b>\$14,167,174.00</b>
<b>Parks and Wildlife</b>						
FY01:	\$194,454,130					
FTEs:	2,954					
			4			
<i>State Parks Volunteers</i>		451,560	\$5,069,256.00			\$5,069,256.00
<i>Education Program Instructors</i>	3,500	53,000	\$625,000.00	\$220,000.00		\$845,000.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>504,560</b>	<b>\$5,694,256.00</b>	<b>\$220,000.00</b>		<b>\$5,914,256.00</b>
<b>Protective and Regulatory Services</b>						
FY01:	\$677,151,090					
FTEs:	6,695					
			5			
<i>Foster Friends</i>	85	3,500				\$0.00
<i>Greater Texas Community Partners</i>	5,344	42,387	\$561,625.00	\$953,718.00	\$1,431,667.00	\$2,947,010.00
<i>SAVE: Student and Volunteer Efforts</i>	36	6,587		\$7,400.00	\$19,000.00	\$26,400.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>5,465</b>	<b>54,474</b>	<b>\$581,625.00</b>	<b>\$961,118.00</b>	<b>\$1,450,667.00</b>	<b>\$2,993,410.00</b>

<sup>1</sup>These figures represent the agencies' legislative appropriation and salaried staffing component. Source: Guide to Texas State Agencies, 11th ed. (Austin: LBJ School of Public Affairs, 2001)

<sup>2</sup>Using IS value of \$16.05

<sup>3</sup>Using Independent Sector value of \$15.39

<sup>4</sup>Using comparable job salaries, \$7.50 to \$14.85; \$12/hr

<sup>5</sup>Using \$16.09

**Table 3.5**  
**Volunteer Management Practices in Hybrid Programs**

Volunteers are interviewed and screened.	1.40
References are checked.	2.50
Criminal background checks are performed.	3.70
Personnel files are maintained on active volunteers.	1.80
Volunteers are oriented to the agency / program.	1.70
Volunteers are trained for the work they are asked to perform.	1.40
Volunteers' skills and interests are matched to available positions.	1.50
Volunteers are provided continuing education that is relevant to their assignment.	2.30
Volunteers are interviewed when they leave.	3.10
Volunteers receive feedback on their performance.	2.20
Volunteers are evaluated.	2.30
Volunteers are recognized for the work they perform.	1.60
The volunteer program itself is evaluated.	1.90

The Texas Department of Human Services (DHS) reported three distinct, comprehensive volunteer initiatives. Family Pathfinders is a program designed to provide group or individual support to welfare recipients, providing the recipient with a helping hand to move off the welfare roles. This program, which enjoys both central office as well as regional support, tracks the number of clients it serves. Using the 2001 Independent Sector valuation of \$15.39, the services provided to the 585 clients in fiscal year 2001 by volunteers are valued at \$455,790.

A signature initiative of DHS is the Adopt-A-Nursing Home program. Groups of three or more persons volunteer at least quarterly to enrich the lives of long-term care residents through any of a wide variety of activities. Groups, a great many of which are faith-based, may adopt one or more facilities. Maintaining accurate records for this community initiative is a complicated process. Each time that an organization adopts a nursing home, it is counted as a separate group, and volunteers may be members of more than one group. Although it is difficult to ascertain a true count of either groups or their members, DHS believes that the number of duplicated records is minimal. A dollar valuation is not ascribed to this program, even though the agency estimates that 3,830 groups, comprised of 25,682 volunteers, served 102,728 hours of service in fiscal year 2001. Operated with the assistance of 17 regional staff persons, the Volunteer and Community Services program of DHS engages over a hundred thousand volunteers in a wide variety of tasks and responsibilities. Fairly comprehensive records of this work are gathered from around the state.

The Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (DPRS) is a true hybrid configuration on many levels. In addition to regional staff working with volunteer initiatives statewide, the Department has forged a unique relationship with the Greater Texas Community Partners organization, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. The Greater Texas Community Partners collaboration in many ways resembles the "community-based model" of volunteer involvement. Through the work of the ninety or so Community Partner organizations operating across the state, groups and individuals "adopt" caseworkers and stock and maintain Rainbow Rooms. Rainbow Rooms are stores of first quality new items where investigative caseworkers may "shop" to acquire resources needed by the families in their caseload. Although data is gathered from the partner organizations, collection is inconsistent. SAVE,

Student and Volunteer Efforts, and Foster Friends are both examples of decentralized volunteer efforts within DPRS, managed in collaboration between the regional office staff and Community Partner groups. Data collection and valuation is handled separately and uniquely for each of these efforts.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department oversees two fairly distinct volunteer operations. The Education Program Instructors are the backbone of the State's hunter, boater and angler education programs. The department's 3,500 trained and certified volunteers provided 33,000 Texans with hunter education, another 10,000 with boater education programs, and 7,000 more with angler education. These volunteers provided 55,000 hours of service, uniformly valued at \$12.00/hour, the federally approved valuation rate for volunteer educators. Volunteers also provide an enormous service to the state parks of Texas. "Adopting" trails, helping in park offices, assisting with clean-up and construction work, and serving as park hosts are only a few of the jobs performed by the hundreds of individuals who donated over 450,000 hours of service in fiscal year 2001. Unlike the volunteer educators program, however, the work performed by state park volunteers is valued according to comparable work standards and ranges from \$7.50 to \$14.85 per hour. Although hours of service are carefully tracked across the state, less attention is given to counting the number of persons providing the services rendered.

Table 3.4 captures the nature of the data collected about volunteer utilization within each of the four state agencies operating hybrid models of community engagement.

Just as record-keeping varies from one program to the next, so too does the attention given to management practices associated with volunteer programs. Table 3.5 provides an overview of how the details of basic volunteer management are handled, in aggregate, by each of the state agencies characterized as hybrid models of volunteer engagement. Each survey instrument asked the respondent to identify, on a five-point scale, the frequency with which each management task was performed by the program in question. Responses ranged from 1, indicating 'always', to a 5 indicating 'never.'

When asked about liability coverage for their volunteer initiatives, seven of the nine respondents answering the question indicated they provide coverage for their volunteers. Two respondents provide coverage in certain situations. Nine respondents also indicated that an established set of policies and procedures guide program operations.

### The Decentralized Model

Six of the responding agencies present a decentralized model of volunteer organization: the Texas Department on Aging, the Texas Commission on the Arts, the Texas Historical Commission, the Texas State Library & Archives Commission, the General Land Office and the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.<sup>27</sup>

In decentralized systems, departments or divisions within an agency design and operate volunteer initiatives to meet specific programmatic needs or service objectives. One agency may have several different volunteer-based initiatives, but each may operate independently of the other, with limited or no interaction between the initiatives. It is possible that the project that engages the

27. Formerly the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission.

**Table 3.6**  
**Responses from Decentralized Agencies**

Name of Agency	Programs Reflected by Survey Instruments	Persons Completing Survey Forms
Texas Department on Aging	Benefits Counselors Volunteer Ombudsmen	2
Texas Commission on the Arts		1
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality	Lake and River Clean-Up Source Water Protection Program	2
General Land Office	Adopt-A-Beach Adopt-A-Map	2
Texas Historical Commission	Texas Archeological Stewards Network County Historical Commissions Visionaries in Preservation	3
Texas State Library & Archives Commission	Talking Books Program Volunteer Recording Studio Archives and Information Services Volunteers Friends of the Libraries and Archives of Texas	4

members of the communities may not even regard itself as a volunteer program at all. Instead it may define itself by the goal or mission of the project (animal preservation) or the process used to achieve the goal (mentoring). In such situations, it is possible that the processes associated with effective volunteer management may be inadequately addressed and the role of the volunteers themselves may be minimized. Similarly, the job title and job description of the project's leader may make no mention of volunteers, or volunteer management. Consequently, while significant achievements may occur through the engagement of volunteers, many decentralized programs may go unnoticed or be difficult to identify. Likewise the achievement of volunteers may be uncelebrated by the group or organization. But, just as decentralized programs may lack central coordination or agency awareness of the initiative, their autonomy may also provide the project developer with significant opportunities for creativity. Table 3.6 identifies each of the state agencies operating a decentralized model of community engagement. The second column identifies the name of each programmatic thrust for which a survey was returned. The final column identifies the sum of staff persons involved in completing the forms.

The Source Water Protection Program and the Lake & River Clean-Up Project, both sponsored and directed by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ, formerly TNRCC), are excellent examples of decentralized volunteer initiatives within a state agency. The Source Water Protection program, designed to help participating communities protect the safety and integrity of their water supply, trains volunteers to inventory potential sources of contaminants. The project frequently engages local community volunteer groups, such as the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, to recruit others as volunteers to assist with the inventories. Because the program is clearly oriented towards its mission of source water protection, the data that is kept on the program focuses on project completion and not on the number of volunteers engaged or hours donated. To facilitate Lake & River Clean-Up events, TCEQ partners with the 328 affiliate chapters of Keep Texas Beautiful to organize events and educate citizens. The project does capture the number of volunteers involved, and augments data collection with the number of clean-ups conducted and the tonnage of debris collected by volunteers.

Similar to the projects of TCEQ are the General Land Office's (GLO) Adopt-A-Beach and Adopt-A-Map programs. The volunteer as a donor is the focus of Adopt-A-Map. Through partnership between the State of Texas and clubs, civic organizations and companies, GLO raises funds to preserve historic maps and other documents. Since the program's inception in December of 2000, 204 maps have been preserved. "None of this would have occurred without our volunteer donors,"<sup>28</sup> states the project's coordinator who notes that \$210,139 has been raised.

Adopt-A-Beach is a project coordinated by a central office staff person with assistance from four regional field offices. Volunteers clean miles of beaches collecting garbage and other accumulated debris. Since 1986, more than 283,000 volunteers have removed more than 5,200 tons of trash from the Texas coast line. The Texas Legislature views Adopt-A-Beach as a model program and authorized the Texas Historical Commission (THC) to use the same organizational structure to preserve Texas' historic cemeteries and Underground Railroad historical sites.<sup>29</sup>

The volunteer projects of the Texas Historical Commission and the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) follow a somewhat different pattern than those of TCEQ and the GLO. In both organizations volunteers participate in the direct work of the agencies. Submitting four surveys, TSLAC engages volunteers in its Talking Book Program, with the Volunteer Recording Studio, as members and supporters of the Friends of Libraries & Archives of Texas, and with the Archives and Services Division of the Library. The Friends organization is new, hoping over time to create a support system to augment the work of the Library through fundraising and outreach. Talking Books benefits from a diverse group of volunteers. The program engages work-study students from the Texas School for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and telecommunications retirees that make up the Telephone Pioneers. Six Pioneer groups serve by repairing cassette players on an ongoing

28. Elna Christoper, Director of Outreach Programs, GLO, Economic Impact Survey of Volunteers, June 2002.

29. Texas Government Code, Chapter 442, §442.017-018

**Table 3.7**  
**Volunteer Management Practices**  
**in Decentralized Programs**

Volunteers are interviewed and screened.	2.62
References are checked.	3.67
Criminal background checks are performed.	4.55
Personnel files are maintained on active volunteers.	2.75
Volunteers are oriented to the agency / program.	1.46
Volunteers are trained for the work they are asked to perform.	1.69
Volunteers' skills and interests are matched to available positions.	1.58
Volunteers are provided continuing education that is relevant to their assignment.	2.64
Volunteers are interviewed when they leave.	3.55
Volunteers receive feedback on their performance.	2.82
Volunteers are evaluated.	3.83
Volunteers are recognized for the work they perform.	1.64
The volunteer program itself is evaluated.	3.00

basis. Typical of decentralized systems, each program area has a unique system for organizing the work of volunteers, recording their service and managing the program.

The Texas Historical Commission (THC) submitted three survey forms reflecting three key areas of volunteer involvement: The Texas Archeological Stewardship Network, County Historical Commissions, and Visionaries in Preservation. A highly skilled and specialized group of volunteers, avocational archeologists devote thousands of hours to preserving the State's archeological heritage. Careful attention is devoted to supporting and managing this workforce on both a state and regional basis. County historical commissions are a vital link between the state Commission and the local communities. This network of committed volunteers at the local level provides education, reviews applications for historical markers, and preserves artifacts for the benefit of present and future generations. Visionaries in Preservation is the agency's newest program engaging the community. Entirely volunteer driven, it facilitates a strategic planning process to help communities determine "how they want their communities to be in the future by using their historical assets."<sup>30</sup> Although operated independently within THC, each program collects varying amounts of data about volunteer utilization and involvement. THC staff at both the state and regional level engage volunteers in the work of the Commission.

Just as no two agencies are alike, no two involve the community in exactly the same way. The Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) is quick to acknowledge that it handles community engagement initiatives on a "project-by-project basis" and has "no structure for volunteer coordination."<sup>31</sup> That said, however, volunteers are involved in the work of the TCA, which regards its board members as community persons volunteering their time for the duration of their six-year appointment. Community members also serve as panelists reviewing and evaluating funding applications. Acknowledging their contribution, TCA states "we could not distribute our grant funds without the thousands of hours donated by our review panelists each year. Their

30. Tracey Althans, Program Director, Visionaries in Preservation, THC, Economic Impact Survey of Volunteers, July 2002.

31. Although classified here as a decentralized program, the Commission on the Arts could be an ad hoc model of volunteer management as described at the start of this section.

expertise is essential to fair and equitable distribution of our public dollars." In addition to the review panel participants, interns are engaged as the opportunities arise. Organizations such as the Texas Accountants & Lawyers for the Arts provide valuable *pro bono* service. Another critical *pro bono* contribution to the Commission is the work of singer/song writer Willie Nelson who donated his time to appear in a public service announcement promoting the Commission's State of the Arts license plate. Established "to provide a stable funding source that will enhance the cultural quality of life by ensuring the future of the arts for all people of Texas," the Texas Cultural Trust Council operates as an independent charitable organization, closely affiliated with the TCA and its work. Although clearly a fluid decentralized system, volunteers are integral to the Commission and the work it performs for the benefit of all Texans.

The Texas Department on Aging provides a different picture of volunteer utilization. Separate survey instruments were submitted, one describing the work of the agency's volunteer Benefits Counselors, the other describing the Ombudsman Program. Two-hundred-twenty-one persons across the state are trained as Certified Benefits Counselors. Volunteer benefit counselors work side-by-side with salaried counselors assisting seniors in accessing available public services. The volunteers, who qualify as "certified" through 25 hours of training, 25 hours of counseling experience and by passing a qualifying examination, bring knowledge of the local community and the trust of their neighbors.

The Ombudsman Program has operated in Texas since 1982. The federal genesis dates back to a 1976 amendment to the Older Americans Act of 1965. This federally mandated program requires state agencies to engage paid and volunteer staff through each Area Agency on Aging regional office to "help assure residents' [of long term care or assisted living facilities] access to quality of life and quality care."<sup>32</sup> In Texas, 870 volunteers work through the state's 28 regional Area Agency on Aging offices, donating 82,690 hours of service in fiscal year 2001. A comprehensive policy manual with forms and operating procedures guides program administration.

Attention given to effective volunteer management practices varies considerably among decentralized programs. It should be noted that for many of the respondents reporting on the programs described in this section, their jobs are generally organized around the project goals. Less attention is given to the fact that, for many of these positions, the labor force is comprised of volunteers. Table 3.7 aggregates the information obtained from the survey instrument that addresses the attention given to the skills associated with effective volunteer management.

Only one decentralized program reported providing liability coverage for its volunteers on a consistent basis. Seven of the 14 initiatives were aware of policy and procedure documents guiding program operations.

Collecting information about volunteer engagement varies widely across programs. For many of these initiatives, project outcomes – miles of beaches cleaned, water source areas protected or maps preserved – take precedence over the number of volunteers engaged, the hours they served or the valuation of their contribution. Table 3.8

32. Texas Department on Aging, *Overview of the Texas Department on Aging Ombudsman Program* (brochure), p. 2.

**Table 3.8  
Key Statistics about Decentralized Volunteer Programs**

	Reported Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Funds Raised	In-Kind Contributions	Total Outreach
<b>Department on Aging</b>						
FY01: <sup>1</sup>	\$60,335,236					
FTEs:	35					
<i>Benefits Counselors</i>	221					\$0.00
<i>Ombudsman Program</i>	870	82,690				\$0.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1,091</b>	<b>82,690</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Commission on the Arts</b>						
FY01:	\$5,397,935					
FTEs:	18	74	1,383	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Commission on Environmental Quality</b>						
FY01:	\$367,078,599.00					
FTEs:	3,000					
<i>Lake and River Clean-Up</i>	25,436					\$0.00
<i>Source Water Protection Program</i>	30					\$0.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>25,466</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>General Land Office</b>						
FY01:	\$36,467,120					
FTEs:	628					
<i>Adopt-A-Beach</i>	8,966					\$0.00
<i>Adopt-A-Map</i>			\$21,052.94	\$210,139.13		\$231,192.07
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>8,966</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$21,052.94</b>	<b>\$210,139.13</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$231,192.07</b>
<b>Texas Historical Commission</b>						
FY01:	\$30,167,255					
FTEs:	100					
<i>Archeological Stewards Network</i>	108	15,374	\$153,740.00			\$153,740.00
<i>County Historical Commissions</i>	3,145	159,178				\$0.00
<i>Visionaries in Preservation</i>	192					\$0.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,445</b>	<b>174,552</b>	<b>\$153,740.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$153,740.00</b>
<b>Texas State Library and Archives Commission</b>						
FY01:	\$23,295,663					
FTEs:	207.5					
<i>Archives and Information Services Volunteers</i>	7	1,308	\$12,873.45			\$12,873.45
<i>Friends of Libraries and Archives of Texas</i>	10					\$0.00
<i>Recording Studio for the Blind</i>	96	5,133		\$2,800.00		\$2,800.00
<i>Talking Books Program</i>		39,869	\$408,000.00			\$408,000.00
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>46,310</b>	<b>\$420,873.45</b>	<b>\$2,800.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$423,673.45</b>

<sup>1</sup>These figures represent the agencies' legislative appropriation and salaried staffing component. Source: Guide to Texas State Agencies, 11th ed. (Austin: LBJ School of Public Affairs, 2001)

<sup>2</sup>Since January '02; \$200,000 since inception

<sup>3</sup>\$10/hour

<sup>4</sup>TBP: \$7.62, \$10.72, \$40; AISV: \$8.73, \$10.91

**Table 3.9  
Nonprofits Complementing State Agencies**

State Agency	Collaborating Nonprofit Organizations
Texas Commission on the Arts	Texas Cultural Trust Council, a nonprofit organized to solicit contributions for the Texas Cultural Trust, a funding mechanism established by the Texas Legislature in 1993
Court Improvement Project of the Texas Supreme Court Task Force on Foster Care	Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates—53 local, independent nonprofits and one state organization
Texas Historical Commission	Friends of the Texas Historical Commission Friends of the Sam Rayburn House Museum
Texas State Library & Archives Commission	Friends of the Libraries & Archives of Texas Friends of the Volunteer Recording Studio
Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation	Volunteer Services State Council, Inc.—one state-level nonprofit with 22 local organizations
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas, Inc.—a state-level nonprofit. Sixty additional local nonprofits support specific parks
Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Texas	Greater Texas Community Partners—more than 90 regional groups work to support child protective services across Texas
Texas Youth Commission	State Volunteer Resources Council for Texas Youth—state-level organization with six chapters Eighteen independently incorporated local nonprofit advisory councils to specific facilities, known as Local Community Resource Councils

reflects the data that is captured and reported relative to the number of volunteers, their service hours, and its valuation.

**The Community-Based Model**

Like the others, this model has many permutations. A nonprofit can be organized independent of the state agency, yet share its mission and goals. The work of the nonprofit may include advocacy and education, recruiting and placing volunteers in service to the work of the state agency, and/or assisting with fund development efforts. As a completely external organization, the nonprofit will select a board to steer the group, yet generally remains closely aligned with the mission of the public sector body. This model roughly parallels the organizational structure of Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates and The Greater Texas Community Partners organization.

Another variation is the nonprofit organization created under the auspices of the state agency. Organized as a “friends” group, auxiliary or foundation, the work of the agency and the nonprofit are closely linked, frequently sharing leadership ties. The nonprofit may be engaged in direct service activities, fundraising or education directly connected to the state agency. The volunteer service councils at the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation and at the Texas Youth Commission parallel this model as does the new Friends of the Libraries & Archives Commission.

Table 3.9 identifies some of the nonprofit organizations working in collaboration with, or under the auspices of, the state agencies studied for this report.

In addition, most all state agencies report close working relationships with nonprofits in their local communities. Specifically identified as community collaborators are United Ways in many localities, Retired Senior Volunteer Programs, Keep Texas Beautiful, Lions Clubs, US Coast Guard Auxiliary, American Sailing Association, Texas Cooperative Extension, US Power Squadrons and many more too numerous to list.

Greater Texas Community Partners and the Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates program typify the community-based

model. Working in close collaboration with the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services, Greater Texas Community Partners began as a project of the Junior League in Dallas, Texas. The success of the “Rainbow Room” and the Adopt-A-Caseworker programs inspired the Dallas leadership to establish a nonprofit organization. Although an independent charitable organization, Community Partners works in close collaboration with DPRS. The program has gone state-wide currently operating in more than 90 Texas communities.

The Texas Court Appointed Special Advocate program provides another excellent case study of a volunteer-driven community-based organizational model. Although the program began in Texas in 1991, the movement dates back more than 25 years to a judge in Seattle who realized that trained community volunteers could serve as the courtroom voice for abused and neglected children. With better information provided to the courts, children could be assured of more timely placements in permanent homes. Beginning in 1991, the Texas Legislature appropriated \$400,000 through

**Table 3.10  
Volunteer Management Practices  
of Community-Based Organizations**

Volunteers are interviewed and screened.	1.00
References are checked.	1.00
Criminal background checks are performed.	1.00
Personnel files are maintained on active volunteers.	1.00
Volunteers are oriented to the agency / program.	1.00
Volunteers are trained for the work they are asked to perform.	1.00
Volunteers' skills and interests are matched to available positions.	1.00
Volunteers are provided continuing education that is relevant to their assignment.	1.00
Volunteers are interviewed when they leave.	2.00
Volunteers receive feedback on their performance.	1.00
Volunteers are evaluated.	1.00
Volunteers are recognized for the work they perform.	1.00
The volunteer program itself is evaluated.	1.00

the Office of Court Administration for the new Texas CASA initiative. The appropriation has grown to more than \$4 million in the 2002-2003 biennium.

Today one of the organization's most important public sector partners is the Court Improvement Project (CIP) of the Texas Supreme Court Task Force on Foster Care. A legislative mandate charged CIP with the creation of cluster courts to hear only child abuse and neglect cases. Texas CASA has expanded to specifically address the needs of the counties served by these 16 Cluster Courts. Today 53 local, independent nonprofit CASA programs serving 142 Texas counties engage 2,014 volunteers as advocates for 11,684 abused and neglected children.

An affiliate of a national network of organizations, Texas CASA has well-honed management systems in place to facilitate the work of its volunteers. In addition to the organization's 30-hour pre-service training program, each volunteer is asked to commit an average of 20 hours per month for 12 to 15 months per assigned child. The organization has determined that each caseworker can supervise a maximum of 30 volunteer advocates at any given time. In addition to maintaining systems to track data, CASA has a comprehensive set of policies and procedures governing volunteer involvement. Volunteers assist in every phase of program operations, from board leaders and office assistants, to translator, transportation assistants, as well as the flagship position of Court Appointed Special Advocates. Table 3.10 describes the volunteer management of Texas CASA.

CASA provides its volunteers with liability coverage.

### Institution-Specific Programs

This section describes and provides data about the volunteer programs at the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, a division of the State Preservation Board; the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center, a facility operated by the Texas Commission for the Blind; and the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Although each is a public sector entity and each serves the citizens of the State of Texas, the volunteer initiatives reported in the survey responses are specific to an Austin-based facility and do not involve a statewide regional network of staff or community participants.

**Table 3.11**  
**Volunteer Management Practices**  
**of Institution-Specific Programs**

Volunteers are interviewed and screened.	1.00
References are checked.	3.67
Criminal background checks are performed.	3.67
Personnel files are maintained on active volunteers.	2.00
Volunteers are oriented to the agency / program.	1.00
Volunteers are trained for the work they are asked to perform.	1.67
Volunteers' skills and interests are matched to available positions.	1.33
Volunteers are provided continuing education that is relevant to their assignment.	1.00
Volunteers are interviewed when they leave.	2.50
Volunteers receive feedback on their performance.	1.67
Volunteers are evaluated.	1.00
Volunteers are recognized for the work they perform.	1.67
The volunteer program itself is evaluated.	2.67

The Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center, operated by the Commission for the Blind, is a residential facility for people who are blind or visually impaired. Residents receive training in basic skills, educational instruction and assistance with occupational exploration and development. One residential specialist staff member spends a modest amount of time coordinating the work of twelve volunteers who assist with duties including office support, mentoring, classroom assistance and client services.

At the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, a larger volunteer contingent of 132 people provides client services, assists with grounds maintenance and provides educational support services. Two employees at the facility contribute modest amounts of time to program coordination and community group partnership responsibilities. The School works closely with the downtown Austin Lion's Club, the local Junior League and the United Way. Although a written set of policies and procedures guides program operations, volunteer hours are neither aggregated nor reported. Of particular interest is the fact that the School recognizes and tracks the volunteer contribution of its Board of Trustees.

The State Preservation Board is the entity responsible for the operations of the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum. A fairly

**Table 3.12**  
**Key Statistics about Institution-Specific Volunteer Programs**

	Reported Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Funds Raised	In-Kind Contributions	Total Outreach
<b>Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum</b> State Preservation Board FY01: \$19,824,191 FTEs: 127.5	200	8,000				\$0.00
<b>Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center</b> Commission for the Blind FY01: \$48,401,071 FTEs: 588	12					\$0.00
<b>School for the Blind and Visually Impaired</b> FY01: \$13,049,454 FTEs: 355	132			\$2,000.00		\$2,000.00

\*These figures represent the agencies' legislative appropriation and salaried staffing component. Source: Guide to Texas State Agencies, 11th ed. (Austin: LBJ School of Public Affairs, 2001)

sizeable volunteer workforce supports the activities of the Museum. Two staff persons devote a portion of their time facilitating the work of 200 volunteers who serve as docents, visitors' guides, special event assistants and support administrative functions. A set of policies and procedures guides the operation of the program.

The volunteer management practices of these institution-specific programs appear in Table 3.11. Two of these three facilities shared copies of the policy guidelines serving their volunteer initiatives. None of these programs provide liability coverage for their volunteers.

The volunteer utilization data collected by these three groups appears in Table 3.12.

## Discussion

This chapter provided an overview of the 33 distinct volunteer programs or initiatives representing the work of 18 different public or quasi-public organizations. Each of these programs was described within an organizational model framework (centralized, hybrid, decentralized, community-based) or classified as an institution-specific initiative. In addition, a sequence of tables captured the data that is collected by each of these programs as well as information pertaining to the program's volunteer management practices. The concluding section of this chapter will highlight key findings from this presentation.

It is clear both from the stories and the data gathered that virtually all of the programs described greatly facilitate the engagement of the community in the delivery of needed services and in the achievement of agencies' or programs' missions and goals. Texas' beaches are cleaned; our water sources are protected; our citizens receive education about boating, hunting and fishing; prisoners are mentored and their spiritual needs are addressed; the elderly are visited and their welfare guarded; funds are raised; children are helped to find new families; support is given to help people leave welfare; elderly learn about the benefits available to them; audio equipment is repaired; historical sites are preserved; the mentally ill receive additional services; citizens are hosted in our state parks; the list could go on for pages. Each of these activities occurs because of more than 222,281 Texans who volunteer their time, their energy, and their expertise to the work of state government and to the services that we, as a public, believe matter.

In some of our agencies, the engagement of volunteers is viewed as a critical element in the organization's delivery of service. The larger centralized programs with staff at both state and regional levels clearly demonstrate the enormous impact that accrues from volunteers' contributions. Not only do these agencies collect the data that allows for a thorough review of their community engagement efforts and fundraising output, but their attention to effective management practices demonstrates a high regard for the value of this resource. Volunteers are interviewed and prepared for their positions, training is available, references are checked, liability coverage is generally available, files are maintained, volunteers are generally matched to assignments suitable to their skills, and so forth.

Volunteers are engaged in many vital services in the hybrid and decentralized model programs as well. However, the data suggests diminished attention to tasks associated with effective volunteer management, including record-keeping practices, particularly within decentralized programs. Without senior level management investment in volunteerism demonstrated, in part, through

increased staffing support and budgetary commitments, these programs are forced to operate frequently under less than adequate circumstances.

The community-based model of program management raises interesting considerations as well. Groups such as Texas CASA and Greater Texas Community Partners exhibit excellent use of community resources. These initiatives would not exist were it not for volunteers. Staff provide volunteers entry into a complex legal and bureaucratic system so that concerned citizens, with training and supervision, can assist other public servants in working with abused or neglected children. In its twenty-five-year national history, CASA has honed its operations well and exhibits thoughtful attention to all the details of effective volunteer management. Although a much newer organization, Greater Texas Community Partners relies on its volunteers. Both organizations bring a wealth of support to a significant social problem that would be difficult to tap without their extensive community networks.

Table 3.13 provides an overview of the frequency with which volunteer management practices are implemented by the agencies examined in this study. The table aggregates the results by the organizational model designations used throughout this report.

There emerges a correlation between organizational models and frequency of effective management practices. That is, as the program structure moves from the centralized model to the decentralized model, effective volunteer management practices are performed less often. In some situations, certain practices may not fit particular models of volunteer utilization. For example, in large scale clean-up projects where volunteers gather for a day of work, individual interviews are neither necessary nor appropriate. The same logic applies to reference checks and personnel files. However, it would appear to be a more serious issue in the institution-specific programs where effective management practices are somewhat sporadic.

In addition, each respondent was asked if their program or agency had written policies and procedures guiding their volunteer program. Of the 31 respondents answering this question, 23 indicated the presence of policy and procedure guidelines. Two groups acknowledged not having such a document and six were not sure if policies and procedures existed within their agency. Thirty-three respondents addressed the question of liability coverage. Thirteen programs report providing liability coverage for volunteers, while five agencies were clear they did not offer such coverage. Six were uncertain if their volunteers were covered. Another five indicated that volunteers were included in liability coverage either Often, Sometimes, or Rarely. It should be pointed out that some agencies offer liability coverage via insurance policies, while others, the Texas Youth Commission for example, are exempt from liability as a result of legislation.<sup>33</sup>

A strong relationship appears to exist between staffing levels and effective volunteer management practices. Programs and agencies with staff positions dedicated to volunteer management demonstrate more attention to the tasks associated with effective management. All of the agencies with centralized models of community engagement allocate considerable staff time to volunteer management, as do many of the agencies described in the hybrid model. The portion of staff time among the agencies with decentralized or

33. House Bill 1756 of Texas 75th Legislature, 1997.

**Table 3.13**  
**Volunteer Management Practices**

	Centralized	Hybrid	Decentralized	Institution-Specific	Community-Based
Volunteers are interviewed and screened.	1.00	1.40	2.62	1.00	1.00
References are checked.	1.00	2.50	3.67	3.67	1.00
Criminal background checks are performed.	1.00	3.70	4.55	3.67	1.00
Personnel files are maintained on active volunteers.	1.00	1.80	2.75	2.00	1.00
Volunteers are oriented to the agency / program.	1.00	1.70	1.46	1.00	1.00
Volunteers are trained for the work they are asked to perform.	1.25	1.40	1.69	1.67	1.00
Volunteers' skills and interests are matched to available positions.	2.00	1.50	1.58	1.33	1.00
Volunteers are provided continuing education that is relevant to their assignment.	1.75	2.30	2.64	1.00	1.00
Volunteers are interviewed when they leave.	1.75	3.10	3.55	2.50	2.00
Volunteers receive feedback on their performance.	1.75	2.20	2.82	1.67	1.00
Volunteers are evaluated.	1.25	2.30	3.83	1.00	1.00
Volunteers are recognized for the work they perform.	1.75	1.60	1.64	1.67	1.00
The volunteer program itself is evaluated.	1.00	1.90	3.00	2.67	1.00

institution-specific programs varies considerably, with some programs designating less than 5% of one person's time to the job. The degree of attention given to volunteer management tasks appears to vary accordingly. The data gleaned from the survey does not present a more conclusive picture of the relationship between staffing levels and volunteer management practices

In fact, because data collection practices vary widely between and among programs and agencies, any presentation of cumulative data becomes virtually meaningless. No two agencies appear to treat data the same way. Some count hours of service, but not the numbers of persons serving. Others can tell you how many people volunteer for their programs and can provide outcome measures, but they do not maintain records of time commitments. Still others capture the time commitments for some forms of service, but not others.

Equally conflicted is the assessment of the dollar valuation of service. Some programs value volunteer time according to the figures provided by the Independent Sector, others use comparable wage values and still others allow certain volunteers to identify a value for their contribution, especially when professional services such as accounting or legal services are rendered. And of course some programs keep no meaningful records. While it is legitimate to question the value of any of these measures, they do at least provide a place from which to commence discussions about the size and scope of the volunteer workforce. Regardless of the dollar value ascribed to volunteer contributions however, such figures do not capture the goodwill generated by service, nor do they address the significance of service in building a cohesive and caring social fabric.

Effective management of volunteers does matter. A study conducted in 1998 by the United Parcel Foundation asked specifically why people stop volunteering. Although a lack of time and changing interests, reasons that volunteer management cannot address, lead the list of reasons people discontinue service, the study also states that, "two out of five volunteers have stopped volunteering for an organization at some time because of one or more poor volunteer management practices."<sup>34</sup> In order of importance, volunteers left their volunteer positions because the volunteer program was not well managed (26%),

the volunteer opportunity was not a good use of their time (23%), their skills were not put to good use (18%), the service tasks were not clearly defined (16%), and finally because they were not thanked (9%).

Reinforcing the significance of effective volunteer management and the importance of staff dedicated to perform this function, Brudney asserts:

The manner by which the office [of volunteer/community initiatives] is staffed sends a forceful message to employees regarding the significance of the volunteer program to the agency and its leadership. While organizations have experimented with a variety of staffing options (e.g., paid personnel who have other primary duties), none so manifestly demonstrates a sense of organizational commitment and purpose as does a paid Director of Volunteer Services position. Establishing the office as close to the apex of the formal hierarchy as feasible reinforces the sense of resolve.<sup>35</sup>

The Association for Volunteer Administration, the organization for managers of community engagement volunteers, outlines the following competencies as skills the director of a volunteer initiative should have:<sup>36</sup>

**Commitment to the Profession**

- Awareness of and commitment to professional ethics in volunteer administration.
- Knowledge of ethical decision making process.
- Knowledge and understanding of various theories of leadership.

**Planning and Conceptual Design**

- Knowledge of organizational mission, structure, governance, policies and communication channels.

35. Brudney, "Volunteers," p. 674.

36. Association for Volunteer Administration, "Improve Your Philanthropic Portfolio: A Guide to Investing in Volunteer Resources Management - Draft," (paper presented at the 2002 National Conference on Community Volunteering and National Service, Salt Lake City, UT, June 10, 2002), p. 16.

34. United Parcel Service. *Managing Volunteers: A Report to the United Parcel Service* (1998), p. 14.

## INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERISM

- Knowledge of organizational resources, both human and financial.
- Understanding of the planning process – long-term, short-term, implementation and evaluation.

### ***Resource Development and Management***

- Ability to assess organizational readiness for volunteers and to identify appropriate roles for volunteers.
- Ability to manage the recruitment and placement of volunteers, including marketing and screening.
- Ability to manage volunteer performance through orientation, training, and a variety of supervision situations.
- Ability to develop effective staff/volunteer relationships through training, team building, and conflict resolution.
- Knowledge of risk management principles related to volunteer management.
- Knowledge of various types of financial resources and options for involving volunteers as donors, contributors, and special events support.

### ***Accountability***

- Knowledge of various monitoring and evaluation methodologies.
- Ability to use data and program outcome results to improve customer service and plan for the future.
- Ability to report activity and outcomes related to volunteer involvement, both programmatic and financial.

### ***Perspective and Responsiveness***

- Awareness of the elements of cultural competence, especially as related to diversity and inclusiveness.
- Awareness of the global nature of volunteerism.
- Understanding of theories and strategies related to managing change.
- Ability to develop strategic relationships with various community partners.

In summation, volunteers make significant contributions to the work of state agencies; however, this workforce requires competent, dedicated leadership to maximize its utility. The next chapter provides more detailed information about the work performed by volunteers.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# VOLUNTEERS AND THEIR WORK

Attention is often given to where volunteers choose to serve and to their reasons for service;<sup>37</sup> however, virtually no attention has been given to the work volunteers perform within groups and organizations.<sup>38</sup> The survey instrument devoted numerous questions to the topic of who volunteers for state agencies, to methods of volunteer recruitment and to the specific tasks and functions performed by volunteers in the public sector. The survey instrument specifically asked if respondents engaged youth, adults and senior adults as volunteers and if volunteers were enlisted from the various national service programs (VISTA, AmeriCorps, RSVP, Service-learning, etc.). The survey further queried respondents about their recruitment methods for locating volunteers. In addition, respondents were given a list of 52 different jobs that volunteers might perform and asked to mark all of the positions that were available to volunteers in their agencies. Additional space was provided to list work responsibilities not appearing on the form. This chapter concludes with comments solicited from participants in a focus group discussion about volunteer utilization in state agencies and programs.

### Who Volunteers

Although respondents have a general concept of the age groups that compose their volunteer workforce, their data collection practices are insufficiently honed to distinguish adequately the number of volunteers within specific age groupings. Programs generally distinguished between adult volunteers and youth volunteers. Young persons up to age 18 are defined as "youth" volunteers. Many programs do not distinguish between the adult and older adult populations. Programs report receiving services from individuals 80 years of age and older. Likewise, while all programs could identify the types of work performed by volunteers, very few programs could identify the number of volunteers enlisted in specific assignment categories, or the number of hours served by category.

### Youth

Due to the nature of the service provided by many of the state agencies, not all programs accept young people as volunteers. Specifically, people under 18 years of age are generally not accepted as volunteers by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the Texas Youth Commission, the Department on Aging, Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates, Greater Texas Community Partners programs (DPRS), the Family Pathfinders project (DHS), the Parks

and Wildlife Education Program Instructors initiative, the Commission on the Arts, several programs within the Texas Historical Commission and the State Library and Archives Commission, the Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum, and the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center.

An equal number of programs and agencies do use youth as volunteers, however. In an effort to learn more about the younger members of the volunteer workforce, the survey asked respondents to provide additional information about them. Do young persons seek to volunteer on their own, or do they serve as members of groups, clubs, organizations, or service-learning programs? Seventeen programs and agencies responded to a question asking if they engaged volunteers from any of the following groups or categories of volunteers. Table 4.1 shows that young people volunteer slightly more frequently through school based groups than they do as self-referred individuals. Respondents could check as many categories as necessary to identify the mechanisms through which young people choose to serve.

Respondents also indicated that youth entered their agencies as volunteers through Goodwill Industries, workforce centers and summer youth programs.

### College Students and Interns

Although many agencies and programs may be reticent to involve young persons under 18 years of age, most do report engaging college students and college interns as volunteers seemingly without specific regard to age. In fact, the Student and Volunteer Efforts (SAVE) program, a demonstration initiative within the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services network, targets student volunteers who are pursuing their degree in the field of social work and students who are determining if they are interested in this field of study. The program notes: "These volunteers are given the time and environment to test out their newly learned skills and begin to enhance and apply their knowledge of social work."<sup>39</sup> The program tracks its volunteers, identifying those who are later hired by the agency as child protective services specialists.

The Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation also engage student interns through their volunteer services offices. In both cases, records of service are maintained separately for interns; however, this data is aggregated into the agencies' statistics on volunteers. It should be noted that while a student or teacher may think of the young person as fulfilling a learning expectation or curriculum requirement, to the

37. Independent Sector. Research – *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*. Online. Available: <http://independentsector.org/programs/research/gandv.html>.

38. Brudney and Kellough, "Volunteers."

39. Heather Robinson, Volunteer Coordinator, Project SAVE, DPRS, Economic Survey of Volunteers, July 2002.

**Table 4.1**  
**Sources of Youth Volunteers**

School Groups (Key Clubs, service groups, school clubs, etc.)	14
Self-referred individuals (not connected specifically with a group or organization)	13
Youth Groups (Boy Scouts, Campfire, etc.)	11
Court-Ordered Service	9
Faith-Based Groups	7
Service-Learning classes	6

agency or organization, this “student” is a part of the agency’s non-salaried workforce and falls within the purview of the volunteerism or community relations program. The same proviso applies to service-learning groups. The classroom may regard the experience as meeting an instructional objective, but the participating agency generally manages this resource as a volunteer student group. Table 4.2 identifies respondents that engage college students and interns as volunteers.

**Adults**

The backbone of the public sector workforce, no program or agency reported excluding adults from its service opportunities! Furthermore, many respondents commented specifically about the value of senior adults as volunteers. The Source Water Protection program noted, “that volunteers, especially senior citizens, do an outstanding job performing Source Water Protection (SWP) inventories. We have 12 years of experience to serve as evidence. Senior volunteer organizations, specifically the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, are uniquely suited to recruiting volunteers for local

projects.”<sup>40</sup> The Talking Book Program of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) notes with considerable gratitude and admiration the contribution of the Texas Telephone Pioneers group. Working from six different locations around the state, this dedicated group of retirees cleans and repairs the audio equipment so critical to the Talking Book Program. In fact, TSLAC recently honored the Texas Telephone Pioneers with a Commission Resolution for dedicated service. Although record keeping is not sufficiently detailed to ascertain the number of senior adults serving in Texas State agencies, older adults were frequently singled out for attention and praise.

Another group of service providers deserves focused attention. Community Service Restitution (CSR) is a sentencing option that enables judges to give perpetrators of non-violent crimes the opportunity to become a productive member of the community through community service, or ‘mandated volunteering.’ This allows the offender to make a positive contribution to the community rather than becoming a financial burden to taxpayers as a resident of a corrections facility. CSR is a sentencing option available to both the adult and juvenile levels of the criminal justice system. A proscribed valuation of CSR work is set by the State Legislature. In 1999 the Texas State Legislature set the valuation rate for CSR work at \$12.50/hour of labor, up from the prior rate of \$6.25/hour.<sup>41</sup>

Although many programs report engaging the service of CSR recipients, the Talking Books Program relies heavily on CSR workers at the agency’s circulation facility. These volunteers inspect materials lent to patrons freeing staff to do the work for which they have been trained. To the State Library and Archives Commission, involving CSR volunteers is a mutually beneficial undertaking. Not only do these workers greatly extend the reach of the Library services, but the opportunity to serve allows the CSR worker to productively work off their debt to society.

Although it is clear that adults do volunteer, survey respondents were asked to describe further the composition of their workforce. Specifically, did persons volunteer as part of civic organizations, or through faith-based groups? Perhaps people simply select to serve as interested individuals concerned about their community. One question in the survey sought to address this question. Table 4.3 presents responses from the 32 different agencies or programs that responded to this question. Respondents were allowed to check as many options as were appropriate to their volunteer workforce.

**National Service Programs**

Another component of the volunteer workforce are participants in the national service programs. Respondents were asked if their programs used members from any of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) programs. CNCS programs include AmeriCorps, AmeriCorps VISTA, AmeriCorps NCCC, Retired Senior and Volunteer Program (RSVP), Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents. (See Appendix C.) It should be noted that

**Table 4.2**  
**Programs Engaging College Students and Interns**

Program Name	College Students	Interns
TDoA Benefits Counselors	•	•
TDoA Ombudsman	•	•
Commission for the Arts	•	•
OAG Outreach and Volunteer Programs— Child Support Division	•	•
TCFB Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center	•	•
Court Appointed Special Advocates	•	•
TDCJ Volunteer Program	•	•
TCEQ Lake and River Clean-Up	•	•
TCEQ Source Water Protection Program	•	•
GLO Adopt-A-Beach	•	•
Texas Volunteer Health Corps	•	•
TDH Volunteer Mailroom	•	•
DHS Adopt-A-Nursing Home	•	•
DHS Volunteer & Community Services	•	•
TDMHMR Community Relations Division	•	•
State Parks Volunteers	•	•
SPB Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum Volunteer Program	•	•
DPRS Foster Friends	•	•
DPRS Greater Texas Community Partners	•	•
SAVE: Student and Volunteer Efforts (DPRS)	•	•
Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired	•	•
TYC: Volunteer Services and Community Involvement Program	•	•

40. Dave Terry, Project Manager, TCEQ/TNRCC, Economic Survey of Volunteers June 2002..

41. Texas Legislative Reference Library, *Legislative Information*. Online. Available: <http://www.lri.state.tx.us>.

**Table 4.3**  
**Sources of Adult Volunteers**

Self-referred individuals (not connected specifically with a group or organization)	30
College students	23
Service Clubs (Jaycees, Lions, Jr. League, etc.)	22
Employee or Corporate Groups	17
Faith-based Groups	17
Interns	17
Retiree Groups	14
Court-Ordered Community Restitution	13
Family members or guardians of clients	12
Job Training Programs	8
Welfare or TANF recipients	4
Prison/Inmate groups	4

CNCS also sponsors service-learning initiatives through public schools and some community-based groups. This area of service was addressed in the discussion of youth volunteers and appears in Table 4.1. Table 4.4 reflects the number of the programs and agencies utilizing participants from these various streams of service and identifies agencies and programs that engage this service workforce. Clearly, senior adults serving through RSVP are the most frequently accessed national service resource.

**Methods of Volunteer Recruitment**

In addition to determining who serves as a volunteer, the study also sought insight into the methods that programs and agencies used to recruit volunteers. Twelve common forms of volunteer recruitment were identified. Participants were asked to rate the frequency with which they used any of the twelve forms. Beside each designated form of volunteer recruitment, respondents could indicate if they use this method always (1), often (2), sometimes (3), rarely (4) or never (5). The lower the number, the more frequently the particular recruitment method is utilized. Thirty-two programs and agencies responded to this question. In Table 4.5, the responses are grouped according to the organizational model of the volunteer program as described in Chapter Three of this report. The last column averages the responses from all 32 programs and agencies.

Although the wording in this section of the survey does not directly parallel the phraseology engaged by the Independent Sector, it is clear that there is considerable similarity in the data. The most commonly used recruitment strategy is "current volunteers refer new volunteers." This statement implies that volunteers "ask" friends and associates to volunteer. The Independent Sector's most recent survey notes that "if asked, 63% will volunteer, compared to 25% who volunteer when not asked."<sup>42</sup>

42. Independent Sector, *Giving and Volunteering*, Online.

**Table 4.4**  
**Programs Engaging National Service Participants**

	AmeriCorps	VISTA	NCCC	RSVP	Senior Companions	Foster Grandparents
Department on Aging						
<i>TDOA Benefits Counselors</i>		.				
<i>TDOA Ombudsman</i>		.				
Commission on the Arts		.				
Attorney General				.		
Court Appointed Special Advocates		.		.		
Commission on Environmental Quality (formerly TNRCC)						
<i>Lake and River Clean-Up</i>	.			.		
<i>Source Water Protection Program</i>				.		
General Land Office						
<i>Adopt-A-Beach</i>	.				.	
Department of Health						
<i>Texas Volunteer Health Corps</i>		.		.		
<i>Volunteer Mailroom</i>				.		
Department of Human Services						
<i>Adopt-A-Nursing Home</i>		.		.	.	.
<i>Volunteer &amp; Community Services</i>	.	.		.		
<i>Family Pathfinders</i>		.		.		
TDMHMR Community Relations Division				.		
Parks and Wildlife						
<i>Education Program Instructors</i>			.			
<i>State Parks Volunteers</i>	.					
Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum				.		
Protective and Regulatory Services						
<i>Greater Texas Community Partners</i>				.		
<i>Foster Friends</i>				.		
TSLAC Volunteer Recording Studio				.		
TYC—Volunteer Services						.

**Table 4.5  
Recruitment Methods**

	Centralized	Hybrid	Decentralized	Institution-Specific	Community-Based	AVERAGE
Current volunteers refer new volunteers	1.50	1.80	2.38	2.00	1.00	2.00
Make speeches and presentations	2.00	2.40	3.08	4.00	1.00	2.73
Internet-based recruitment	1.75	3.10	2.73	3.67	2.00	2.81
Agency or facility newsletter	2.00	3.00	2.82	4.00	1.00	2.84
Contact area colleges / universities	2.00	2.80	3.50	4.00	2.00	3.08
Area service clubs	2.00	3.30	3.36	4.00	2.00	3.20
Recruit through area corporations or employers	2.67	3.00	3.40	5.00	2.00	3.27
Register opportunities with area volunteer centers	2.00	3.70	3.44	3.00	2.00	3.28
Contact area high schools	3.25	3.20	3.64	5.00		3.45
Advertise in the newspaper and other publications	3.25	3.70	3.27	4.50	1.00	3.46
Recruit through the local United Way	3.00	3.90	3.44	4.00	2.00	3.56
Place notices in Church / Synagogue / Mosque Bulletins	3.67	3.80	3.80	5.00	1.00	3.81

**Table 4.6  
Services Performed by Volunteers According to Program Models**

Service	Centralized	Hybrid	Decentralized	Institution-Specific	Community-Based
<b>Administrative / Office Support</b>					
Clerical	.	.	.	.	.
Customer Service	.	.	.	.	.
Data Entry	.	.	.	.	.
Inventory/Stocking/ Shelving/Sorting Maintenance	.	.	.	.	.
Mail Room	.	.	.	.	.
Prepare Monthly Mailings	.	.	.	.	.
Receptionist	.	.	.	.	.
Website Development and Support	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Adopt-A-_____ Programs</b>					
Adopt-A-Beach	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Caseworker	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Cemetery	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Highway	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Map	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Marker	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Nursing Home	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Trail	.	.	.	.	.
Adopt-A-Wetland	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Advisory / Professional</b>					
Accountant	.	.	.	.	.
Advisor	.	.	.	.	.
Board Or Nonprofit Council Member	.	.	.	.	.
Bookkeeper	.	.	.	.	.
Community Liaison	.	.	.	.	.
Legal Consultation	.	.	.	.	.
<b>Client Services</b>					
Advocate	.	.	.	.	.
Arts/Music Instruction	.	.	.	.	.
Chaplain/Pastoral Care	.	.	.	.	.
Clothing Repair	.	.	.	.	.
Dance Classes	.	.	.	.	.
Entertainment/Guest Speaker	.	.	.	.	.
Home Visits	.	.	.	.	.
Mentor/Big Brother-Sister	.	.	.	.	.
Party Host/Cultural/Holiday Events	.	.	.	.	.
Pet Therapy	.	.	.	.	.

continued on next page—

Also of interest is the limited degree to which state sponsored agencies and programs, on average, utilize the services of faith-based groups to solicit volunteer involvement.

## The Work of the Volunteer

Volunteers are actively engaged in the public sector. This section addresses the work they perform. Before examining this issue it is important to note what work is allowable. Federal Regulations interpreting the Fair Labor Standards Act address this concern,<sup>43</sup> stating: "There are no limitations or restrictions imposed by the FLSA on the types of services which private individuals may volunteer to perform for public agencies."<sup>44</sup> The act goes on in Sec. 553.106 (a) to state that "volunteers may be paid expenses, reasonable benefits, a nominal fee, or any combination thereof, for their service without losing their status as volunteers."<sup>45</sup> With such broad options, it is not

surprising to find that volunteers perform a great number of tasks to augment and extend the reach of state government.

To explore the question of the work performed by volunteers in state agencies, a list identifying 52 service opportunities was developed. Each respondent was asked to identify which of these positions volunteers held in their programs. Furthermore, respondents were asked to list additional duties performed by volunteers not listed on the grid. It should be noted that at least one program or agency selected each of the 52 originally identified volunteer positions. In addition, 14 duties were named by more than one of the respondents. The original 52 positions, plus the additional 14 volunteer duties are incorporated into the list which appears in Table 4.6.

Thirty-nine other duties specific to the work of 15 different programs were also identified. These duties or positions appear in Table 4.7, organized by the agency or program naming the function.

### Discussion of the Work Volunteers Do

The growth in "Adopt-A-" programs is particularly interesting. Their popularity may be attributable to the fact that volunteers assume responsibility for an entire project rather than specific tasks. While a

43. Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. § 201 *et seq.*

44. 29 C.F.R. § 553.104 (a).

45. Peter J. Eide, "Volunteers and Employment Law," in *The Volunteer Management Handbook*, ed. Tracey D. Connors (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1995), p. 343.

Table 4.6 continued from previous page—

Service	Centralized	Hybrid	Decentralized	Institution-Specific	Community-Based
Recreational Aide/Chaperone	.	.		.	
Riding Therapy	.				
Shopping	.	.	.	.	
Support Group	.	.			
Translator/Interpreter	.	.			.
Transportation	.	.	.		.
Twelve-Step Programs	.				
<b>Education</b>					
Computer Skills Tutor	.	.	.		
English as a Second Language Tutor	.				
Foster Grandparent	.	.			
GED Diploma Tutor	.	.			
Homework Tutor				.	
Interviewing/Job Search Skills Tutor	.	.			
Life Skills Tutor	.	.			
Literacy Tutor	.	.			
Public Education	.	.	.	.	
Special Education (IRD) Surrogate Parent	.				.
Teacher/Classroom Aide	.			.	
<b>Fund Development</b>					
Canteen Clerk	.				
Event Assistant	.	.	.		
Event Organizer	.	.	.		
Fundraising	.	.			
Grant Writer	.	.	.		
Pledge Participant	.	.			
Thrift Shop Clerk	.	.			
<b>Land Preservation / Beautification</b>					
Clean-Up Workers	.	.	.		
Construction	.	.	.		
Facility Maintenance		.	.	.	
Groundskeeper		.	.	.	
Horticulture Instruction/Assistance	.	.	.		
<b>Public Relations</b>					
Flyers			.		
Newsletter Support	.	.	.		
Speaker	.	.	.		

**Table 4.7  
Program-Specific Volunteer Positions**

Court Appointed Special Advocates	Court Advocate / Guardian Ad Litem
TDCJ Volunteer Program	Guide Dog Training
TCEQ Source Water Protection Program	Source Water Protection Inventory Fieldwork Airphoto Interpretation GPS Mapping
TDH Texas Volunteer Health Corps	Community Organization/ Development Program Development Program Management
THC Archeological Stewards Network	Recording Archeological Sites Monitoring Archeological Sites Seeking Protective (Legal) Designations for Archeologists Performing Emergency Archeological Investigations Assisting professional archeologists Recording private artifact collections
THC Visionaries in Preservation	Research Design/Architecture
DHS Adopt-A-Nursing Home	Reminiscing Oral History Exercise Classes Ham Radio Training Parade Participation Support or Foster Resident Volunteer Efforts Theatrical/Music Performances/Entertainment
DHS Family Pathfinders	Train Volunteer Teams
DHS Volunteer & Community Services	Home Repair / Maintenance
TSLAC Talking Books Program	Inspecting Patron Returns/ Circulation Selecting Patron Requests/ Circulation Prepare New Materials for Processing Cleaning Cassette Machines/Lending Repairing Cassette Machines/Lending
TSLAC Volunteer Recording Studio	Narrator Monitor (Audio Technician) Reviewer (Audio Proof-reader)
TDMHMR Community Relations Division	Clinical Interns One on One, Special Friends, Long Term Friends Friendly Visitor
PWD Education Program Instructors	Outdoor Education
DPRS Foster Friends	De-Identifying Records Diligent Searches
SAVE: Student and Volunteer Efforts (DPRS)	Mediate

more in-depth look at the Adopt-A- model is beyond the scope of this report, it is clear that agencies and volunteers benefit from the focused attention that groups bring to such initiatives.

Benefits from volunteer involvement are equally clear in other areas as well. Speaking of the volunteers who serve as 'certified benefits counselors,' a staff person who attended a focus group conducted by the researchers noted: "Without volunteers we'd have a program but it wouldn't work because there's just one staff person." Noting that volunteers are known and trusted in their local community, the staff member added: "We do everything we can to keep them there, they come into the office, we give them badges, they maintain case files, etc."

As evidenced by the 108 positions volunteers currently hold in the work of the eighteen responding organizations, volunteers have found a way into the public sector workforce. Their contribution is both valuable and valued. Although noted for "stretching public dollars," "achieving maximum effectiveness," "raising millions of dollars," and being a critical component for the delivery of services, working with volunteers does present significant challenges. Volunteer positions must be carved to achieve meaningful segments of work within limited time frames; financial support is necessary to insure effective program operations; qualified managers are needed to run effective programs.

The focus group participants noted several critical issues facing volunteer utilization in the public sector. Financial issues entered the equation in two specific ways. First, as already stated volunteers are not free, nor can they function well without an infrastructure that includes staff direction and oversight. Within the criminal justice system, guards need to be available to monitor most of the group activities that volunteers conduct behind prison walls. As one staff member noted: "Even though you have a volunteer who's willing to come teach a class, you have to have a security officer in there to watch that class, so if we don't have enough security officers, it doesn't matter if we have fifteen people willing to come teach." The same concern was echoed by the Department of Parks and Wildlife, which engages prison groups as volunteers within parks. If guards are not available to supervise the volunteer work crews, the prisoners will not be able to offer the services they have expressed a willingness to perform.

The Historical Commission staff member in attendance at the focus group noted: "Professional staff know that really the only way we can do what we do is to involve community groups." She went on to say: "We rely on the local historical commissions and museum volunteers and preservation organizations and nonprofits to know what they have in their local communities and what makes them unique." She did note, however, that "we need staff working on-site with these folks . . . but we don't have the staff or budget."

The second fiscal concern relates to a budget for the volunteer or community relations initiative itself. One director noted: "They seem to want me to fulfill the job responsibilities that would lead to a strengthened volunteer program, but there is no talk of getting a budget or money for volunteer services, there is no volunteer procedure plan in place, there is no knowledge of how volunteers are an integral part of our program." An understanding of the role of volunteers within many of the agencies is limited at best. "We don't have insurance," was a critical concern echoed by several leaders. Likewise, others spoke

of the need for training, training for the volunteer management personnel as well as those who interact with the volunteer workforce on a regular basis. Top agency leadership was also criticized for not recognizing what is involved in the position of volunteer management. These staff members are responsible for "managing nonprofits, training field staff, working with volunteers and assuming public relations duties."

Others noted the need for a "proactive vision and policy from the top down." "I'd really like to see an agency-wide or division-wide vision or mission to really incorporate volunteers," noted another. In response to the issue of vision, another focus group participant honed in on middle management as the greatest challenge: "The professional staff sort of have this attitude of, 'we

don't really want to work with them.'" Providing training for all staff on how to work with volunteers emerged as a recommendation to address this issue. The Texas Department of Criminal Justice acknowledges providing such instruction. The 2001 TDCJ Fiscal Year report notes:

On September 1, 1996, the Correctional Training Academy in Beeville implemented a two-hour slot of instructions with emphasis on volunteerism and volunteer programs with the Agency. This orientation/training format has become an integral part of the academy's pre-service/in-service training. As of August 31, 2001, 4,968 employees received training that included information stressing the importance of volunteerism.<sup>46</sup>

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46. Texas Department of Criminal Justice, *Volunteer Coordination Committee Report, Fiscal Year 2001*, Texas, p. 39. (internal report).

## CHAPTER FIVE

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Clearly, volunteers are indispensable to the functions of Texas State government. Individuals seeking to do good works, to gain professional experience, to repay a debt to society, members of community service organizations and school clubs, participants in national service initiatives and many others regularly give their time, effort and expertise to state agencies. When well-managed, state agencies leverage the work of their volunteers to increase efficiencies and deliver sound government and effective services to the people of Texas, they accomplish things that simply would not happen through tax dollars and state employees alone. Putting the time of volunteers to good use is not only a matter of common sense and common concern, but it is also an issue of good management and adequate fiscal allocations. It does not happen on its own. It does not happen without thoughtful attention. Volunteers may work for no pay, but they are not free!

A modern state requires the skilled orchestration of dozens of institutions and the collective efforts of thousands of permanent employees as well as thousands of volunteers. All too often we lament the inefficiency and lethargy of government agencies. Yet when jobs are done well, when benefits are delivered, when children and seniors are safe and cared for, when parks are clean and inviting, when services are rendered efficiently and well, and when historic sites are preserved and made available for all to see and appreciate, we rarely acknowledge the efforts behind the countless duties and innumerable tasks that make it so. Likewise, we rarely notice and even less frequently hear about the work of the volunteers who serve this state willingly and effectively every day, 365 days a year.

Requested by the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, this investigation endeavors to provide a "snapshot" of volunteerism in Texas State Agencies. Seventeen state agencies and one nonprofit organization with close ties to state government provided detailed information about their volunteer management structures, their data collection practices, and the services rendered by volunteers. Chapter Three organizes these various programs according to the respective organizational models that best describe them. Four state agencies operate centralized volunteer management models. Four state agencies, representing twelve distinct programs, are characterized as hybrid models (a cross between centralized and decentralized systems) of volunteer management. Six state agencies and their fourteen programmatic thrusts are categorized as decentralized volunteer management systems. One independent nonprofit fits within a community-based model of volunteer engagement, and three state facilities operate institution-specific programs. In Chapter Four, the study details the composition of the volunteer workforce. Adults provide extensive

service and the assistance of senior adults receives special recognition. While young people do serve, their service opportunities are more limited, but as they move into the ranks of college students, most agencies are willing to engage them in service. In total, 105 different volunteer opportunities are described for those interested in serving in these state agencies.

Through this "snapshot," several pictures emerge and with them a sequence of recommendations and summary comments:

1. Volunteers make an incredible contribution to the work of state agencies delivering needed services, protecting our environment and preserving our cultural heritage. Their contributions represent serious commitments and clearly extend the reach of government and enhance service delivery. With increasingly tight budgets, volunteers do provide a needed alternative service delivery system. But it must be remembered that volunteers are not free. They represent an investment that allows the state to leverage and extend its limited resources. To facilitate the expansion of this system of service delivery, the state should examine its system of providing liability coverage to volunteers. Currently coverage is provided on an agency-by-agency basis. The state should consider a blanket policy offering uniform coverage to all residents who are serious about formal, organized volunteer service within Texas state government entities. As this question is explored, the state should consider allowing volunteers to drive vehicles in select situations and provide those volunteers with the same automobile insurance that it provides to salaried state workers. While volunteers may be willing to contribute their expertise to the state, this service ought not expose citizens to additional personal risk or expense.
2. While tight budgets may propel the discussion of volunteer engagement, citizen involvement is far more the response to fiscal or other crises. A democracy is predicated on the active and informed involvement of citizens in the affairs of governance. Knowledgeable voters need to know far more than the names and political slogans of candidates seeking office. It is imperative that they understand the consequences of their political actions and the ramifications of policy decisions. Active citizen service in the day to day affairs of government encourages thoughtful analysis and supports informed participation. Volunteerism as a mechanism to support citizen involvement is, in its most basic analysis, simply good government.
3. Hundreds of thousands of people volunteer to serve state government agencies. Recognizing the contributions of volun-

teers is critical to volunteer retention. The Commission is charged with orchestrating the annual Governor's Volunteer Leadership Awards. Although this ceremony is meaningful to the persons who receive this commendation, attention should be given to finding additional ways to recognize volunteers. Recognition events should be staged regionally and designed to recognize far more individuals, as well as groups of people dedicated to causes or representing service organizations.

4. The contribution of volunteers can and should be augmented by participants in national service programs. Although many state agencies commented on the expertise and commitment of volunteers registered with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, the other Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) programs were not as well represented. One agency commented that AmeriCorps had been tried unsuccessfully. To facilitate greater integration of national service members with community volunteers, the Commission might consider seminars targeted specifically to state agency personnel to explain all of the CNCS programs as well as the methods to access these services. Special attention could be given to streamlining the AmeriCorps grants process to facilitate applicants from within state government. Additionally, state agencies could be encouraged to join together to submit joint applications designed to meet collective needs.
5. Volunteers should be treated well and managed competently. Research demonstrates that volunteers leave positions where their time and expertise is poorly utilized. The data collected in this investigation points clearly to the advantages of centralized systems of volunteer management supported by qualified staff on both a state and regional basis. Model programs should be highlighted and the experience of those currently managing these centralized programs should be broadly shared with other state agencies and commissions serious about expanding their systems of volunteer involvement and community engagement. Additional research should be undertaken to develop accurate cost-benefit analyses and to address issues of position classifications and the necessary qualifications of competent volunteer management personnel.
6. An experienced group of state level volunteer managers currently meets in Austin on a regular basis to share experiences and learn from each other. A larger and more formalized version of this group exists in Arkansas. Calling themselves "The Council for Promoting Volunteerism in State Government," these managers of volunteer initiatives meet to "(1) promote volunteerism in State Agencies by acting as a clearinghouse, (2) for sharing information, solving problems, and (3) identifying information, trends and issues."<sup>47</sup>

The Commission should consider serving as focal point for such a group in Texas. In addition, such an organization could be organized to address the unique needs of state agency managers based on their level of experience and the organizational structure of their programs. Such a partnership could leverage

the educational opportunities available through the Governor's Volunteer Leadership Conference with a track of programs and workshops designed to meet the specialized needs of this audience.

Likewise the Commission website could be expanded to provide the information and data needs of volunteer programs in state government. Respondents shared several excellent policy and procedure manuals. With permission from the developers, posting documents such as these would assist other agencies with the creation of comparable documents. In addition, some of the state agencies have prepared materials to facilitate community volunteer involvement. Prepared in both English and Spanish, these documents are a valuable public service. The Commission should explore partnering with these groups and disseminating proven resources more broadly.

7. Innovative programs should be studied and the findings publicized. From the state's Adopt-A-Highway program, eight additional "Adopt-A" programs have emerged. These programs are worthy of careful investigation and the findings should be shared. What are the ingredients of successful "adoptions"? What is the optimal level of staffing support? What publicity is most effective? These programs appear to address current trends in volunteer participation by providing short-term options for service as well as activities in which groups of people can participate together. Other adoption programs appear to encourage a sense of ownership between the volunteer group and the targeted problem or issue providing participants with a clear picture of the value and consequences of services rendered. Understanding these service experiences will facilitate appropriate replication.
8. Expanded knowledge about all forms of public sector service is particularly significant given the country's current attention to the roles volunteers can perform in response to disaster. A great deal can be gleaned from current practices and existing challenges. These findings can be applied to homeland security concerns and shared with nonprofits to encourage more effective volunteer involvement.
9. Adequate infrastructure is critical to the development of any volunteer initiative. When asked about significant challenges facing volunteer managers, funding and staff development were key. Insufficient funding for support personnel prevents agencies from engaging all the volunteers willing to serve. Experienced volunteer managers suggested that more volunteers were generally available to serve than could be assimilated into available openings. Although the sample was limited, this finding is of critical importance. This study does *not* support the development of a media campaign to encourage more people to volunteer, rather it strongly recommends the attention to infrastructure development to utilize those resources fully and effectively. Similarly, the lack of certainty among middle managers regarding appropriate volunteer roles for volunteers thwarts a number of available opportunities. The Commission is encouraged to engage the state agency volunteer managers, along with policy advisors, to strategize ways to gain additional support for volunteer program development and staff training opportunities.

47. *Spirit of 110 Council's By-laws*, March 24, 2000, p. 1.

10. The Commission should seek additional funding to address the specific concerns of volunteer utilization within state agencies. Either working through the Commission's Foundation, through developing partnerships with other entities, or through a request for an expanded appropriation, adequate staffing will need to be in place to address the recommendations outlined in this report. An exploration of the literature confirms that little work has been done in this area. The data collected from this survey suggest that Texas is home to many innovative state agency volunteer initiatives. Rich possibilities exist to develop a relationship that is mutually beneficial.

Yes, we are a "nation of joiners" and we are clearly "a state of

joiners." We are a people who want to make a difference, a people who care deeply about the problems and the challenges facing Texas. Yet, in today's complex and bureaucratic environment, joining requires an open door and frequently a guiding light so that people can focus their time, their efforts, their skills and their talents in the places where those gifts can make a difference. As the state's entity charged with supporting volunteerism and facilitating national service, the challenge is great and the opportunities are endless. Collaboration with other state agencies, along with nonprofit service providers, will extend the reach and enhance the impact of the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service.

**APPENDIX A**

**CONTACTS COMPLETING SURVEY FORMS**

## Respondents Completing Survey Forms

### Texas Department on Aging

Ray Bryant, Benefits Counselor (512) 424-6874  
 John Willis, State Ombudsman (512) 424-6875  
 PO Box 12786  
 Austin, TX 78711-2786

### Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Jon Weizenbaum, Director of Communications/  
 Government Relations (512) 349-6610  
 PO Box 80529  
 Austin, TX 78708

### Texas Commission on the Arts

Laura Weigand, Assistant Director  
 for Programs and Technology (512) 936-6565  
 PO Box 13406  
 Austin, TX 78711-3406

### Office of the Attorney General

Kevin O'Keeffe, Outreach and Volunteer Programs—  
 Child Support Division (512) 460-6124  
 PO Box 12017  
 Austin, TX 78711-2017

### Texas Commission for the Blind

Danna Hooper, Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center (512) 377-0371  
 4800 N. Lamar  
 Austin, TX 78756

### Texas CASA

Cathy Cockerham, Program Operations Director (512) 473-2627 x14  
 145 West 5th Street, Suite 300  
 Austin, TX 78703

### Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Debbie Roberts, Programs and Services Division (936) 437-2180  
 Janie Cockrell, Institutional Division (936) 437-2170  
 PO Box 99  
 Huntsville, TX 77342-0099

### Texas Education Agency

Debbie Blue, Policy Analyst (512) 475-3488  
 1701 N. Congress Avenue  
 Austin, TX 78701

### Texas Commission on Environmental Quality<sup>48</sup>

Dana Macomb, Lake and River Clean-Up (512) 239-4745  
 Dave Terry, Source Water Protection Program (512) 239-4755  
 PO Box 13087, MC 113 / 155  
 Austin, TX 78711-3087

### General Land Office

Sonya Bestiero, Adopt-A-Beach<sup>49</sup> (512) 463-5057  
 Elna Christopher, Adopt-A-Map (512) 463-5169  
 PO Box 12873  
 Austin, TX 78711-2873

### Texas Department of Health

Tom McVey (512) 458-7111 x2089  
 Summer Youth Volunteer Program  
 Texas Volunteer Health Corps  
 Volunteer Mailroom  
 1100 W 49th Street  
 Austin, TX 78756

### Texas Historical Commission

Tracey Althans, Visionaries in Preservation (512) 463-3345  
 Cynthia Beeman, County Historical Commissions (512) 463-5854  
 Pat Mercado-Allinger, Texas Archeological  
 Stewards Network (512) 463-8882  
 PO Box 12276  
 Austin, TX 78711-2276

### Department of Human Services

Sharon Zambrzycki (512) 438-4037  
 Adopt-A-Nursing Home  
 Family Pathfinders  
 Volunteer & Community Services  
 PO Box 149030, MC W 440  
 Austin, TX 78714-9030

### Texas State Library and Archives Commission

Diana Houston, Archives and Information Services (512) 463-5426  
 S. Miles Lewis, Talking Books Program (512) 452-7306  
 Erica McKewen, Friends of Libraries and Archives (512) 463-5514  
 Sara Stiffler, Volunteer Recording Studio (512) 463-5546  
 PO Box 12927  
 Austin, TX 78711-2927

### Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation

Charlmaine Ferguson,  
 Community Relations Division (512) 206-5343  
 PO Box 12668  
 Austin, TX 78711-2668

### Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Kevin Good, State Parks Volunteers (512) 389-4415  
 Steve Hall, Education Program Instructors (512) 389-4568  
 4200 Smith School Road  
 Austin, TX 78744

48. Formerly the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission.

49. No longer employed at the General Land Office as of July 2002.

**INVESTING IN VOLUNTEERISM**

**Texas State Preservation Board**

Bob Bullock Texas State History Museum

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**Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services**

Penelope Doherty, Greater Texas

Community Partners

(512) 438-4308

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Austin, TX 78714-9030

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Heather Robinson, Project SAVE

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401 West Sanford, Suite 2400

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Ralph Salinas, Human Resources, Prevention and Early Intervention

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(512) 719-6310

Austin, TX 78714-9030

**Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Patricia A. Robinson

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(512) 206-9248

Austin, TX 78756-3494

**Texas Youth Commission**

Tammy Vega, Volunteer Services and

Community Involvement Program

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## APPENDIX B

# DESCRIPTIONS OF VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS REVIEWED FOR THIS REPORT

### **Centralized Agencies**

Office of the Attorney General, Child Support Division  
Department of Criminal Justice  
Mental Health and Mental Retardation  
Texas Youth Commission

### **Hybrid Agencies**

Department of Health  
Department of Human Services  
Parks and Wildlife Department  
Protective and Regulatory Services

### **Decentralized Agencies**

Department on Aging  
Commission on the Arts  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
General Land Office  
Texas Historical Commission  
Texas State Library and Archives Commission

### **Community-Based Agency**

Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates

## APPENDIX B

# DESCRIPTIONS OF VOLUNTEER INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS REVIEWED FOR THIS REPORT

### Centralized Agencies

#### **Office of the Attorney General, Child Support Division: Volunteers Teaching Parental Responsibility**

The 2,600 employees of the Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General of Texas (OAG) work to locate absent parents, establish paternity, secure court orders for financial and medical support, enforce child support orders, and collect and disburse child support payments. With over one million outstanding cases, 17,000 new cases each month, and approximately 5,000 customers for each of the Division's lawyers, volunteers have become a crucial asset.

The Division manages a diverse and growing volunteer workforce.<sup>1</sup> Fourteen regional outreach coordinators recruit, interview and place volunteers throughout Texas. These volunteers permit the agency to extend its services to more citizens than would otherwise be possible. In fiscal year 2001, working in 65 field offices across the state, 672 volunteers contributed 87,500 hours to child support offices. The OAG values this service at approximately \$1.1 million.

In each of the Division's eight child support regions, the Outreach and Volunteer Program conveys critical information to young parents about their rights and responsibilities. For example, since 1995, the Paternity/Parenthood initiative (PAPA) has taught teenagers from a curriculum designed to stress the seriousness and responsibilities inherent in parenthood. Volunteers made 258 child support presentations and 195 PAPA presentations in 2001. The Paternity Opportunity Program (POP) encourages unwed fathers to sign acknowledgement of paternity forms. Last year, Texas hospitals were able to get signatures acknowledging the paternity of 73,474 children, 60% of those born out of wedlock.

Since 1999, the Outreach program has collaborated with many local workforce development boards and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to assist unwed parents seeking employment.<sup>2</sup> Overall, the program has been a great success, making 2,758 recruitment contacts in 2001.

#### **Volunteers in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice—Rehabilitation, Education, Faith and Compassion**

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) has built a

comprehensive program to integrate volunteers safely and effectively into its day-to-day operations.

The agency has established a Volunteer Coordination Committee, which "coordinates programming among the various divisions in order to maximize the safe and successful use of volunteers in rehabilitating and reintegrating offenders into communities."<sup>3</sup> The Texas Legislature requires *all* state agencies to deploy volunteers wherever feasible,<sup>4</sup> and it requires that TDCJ in particular "actively encourage" volunteer programs to provide services such as parental training, literacy training, job skills development, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, and other programs deemed useful in decreasing recidivism.<sup>5</sup> In fiscal year 2001, 24,682 approved volunteers worked with TDCJ, making 104,528 visits to TDCJ facilities and donating 513,744 volunteer service hours. TDCJ estimates that these volunteer donations represent \$7,906,520.16 in benefits to Texas.<sup>6</sup>

Religious volunteering is a foundation of TDCJ's efforts to rehabilitate offenders and reintegrate them into society. Reaching the faiths of all inmates under its supervision, the Chaplaincy Department strives to enrich the spiritual lives of offenders in order to help prepare them for life beyond incarceration. This program opens up many service opportunities, from assisting with administrative duties, to leading worship services, to mentoring offenders through a comprehensive rehabilitation program. The department has established the "Life Changes Academy," with a detailed curriculum, divided into six tracks, that takes a holistic approach in helping inmates modify their behavior. Volunteers teach classes and lead activities that focus on inmates' specific developmental needs.

Perhaps more than in other agencies, volunteer safety is fundamental to all TDCJ activities and programs. Agency directives require that volunteers apply to become "approved volunteers" and obtain extensive safety training.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, TDCJ staff carefully

3. Source: TDCJ, *Volunteer Coordination Committee Report FY 2001*, p. 6.

4. The Texas Government Code, Ch. 2102, §2109.002 provides: "A governmental entity that provides human services shall use volunteers, if feasible, to assist in providing human services of a high quality."

5. See the Texas Government Code, Ch.501, §501.009.

6. Based on the Independent Sector's 2000 National Average Hourly Value of Volunteer Time of \$15.40.

7. TDCJ defines "approved volunteer" as "An individual who provides a service or participates in volunteer activity on a regular basis and has been approved through the application process. All approved volunteers have completed the required volunteer training program. This category includes employees, volunteer student interns, and volunteer chaplains in its totals." TDCJ, *Volunteer Coordination*, p.8.

1. The Attorney General's Office website is located at: <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/>.

2. See the TWC's website at: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/>.

oversee almost every aspect of volunteer work. It is crucial that TDCJ volunteers, while trying to help offenders, do nothing that might endanger staff, offenders or themselves. To this end, the agency provides volunteers with a detailed handbook that helps them to anticipate and thus avoid potential areas of trouble.

**Building Partnerships, Broadening Communities—Volunteers in the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation**

Volunteers have long been indispensable to the Texas Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (TDMHMR). For nearly a half century, TDMHMR has served the needs of Texans with mental illness and mental retardation. Volunteers are highly valued as an essential component of the agency's functions. Today, more than 19,000 employees and 2,000 volunteers work in facilities throughout Texas, supporting an array of services.<sup>8</sup> The agency helps individuals receiving services to live dignified and independent lives, with programs ranging from job training and housing assistance to substance abuse rehabilitation, counseling and therapy for troubled youths. TDMHMR has made a strong commitment to managing its volunteers, leveraging these efforts to extend the agency's reach to its unique clients.

TDMHMR has become a model agency among those tracking data on volunteers. Since 1993, it has created a rigorous system for measuring volunteer contributions at its facilities statewide. Every fiscal quarter, community relations staff members compile comprehensive statistics on volunteers and the organizations and groups that help them.

The agency assesses its volunteer programs using both statistics and best practices. In fiscal year 2001, a total of 2,685 volunteers collectively donated 184,818 work hours, at an estimated value to the agency of \$2,740,855.<sup>9</sup> These numbers

8. The MHMR website can be located at: <http://www.mhmr.state.tx.us>.

9. MHMR arrived at this number by multiplying 184,818 hours by \$14.83, the "Independent Sector Value" of one volunteer hour. (\$14.83 X 184,818 = \$2,740,855.) The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics establishes this value by averaging the hourly earnings of all private, nonagricultural workers. Source: <http://www.independentsector.org/>. This site lists the value of one volunteer hour at \$15.39 for FY2000 and \$16.05 for FY2001.

**Volunteering at TDMHMR: Five Core Values**

1. The strength of a democratic society rests on the acts of its individual members in service to the society.
2. Voluntary action gets things done and produces change.
3. Civic participation fills gaps in our social fabric and creates community.
4. The participation of volunteers and donors is critical to organizations for accomplishing their missions, getting results, and ensuring organizational survival and vitality.
5. An organization must invest in its people resources and manage them wisely.

reflect the agency's commitment to an accurate, unduplicated accounting of volunteer data.

TDMHMR operates a network of Volunteer Service Councils (VSCs), which are independent, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that help to fund the agency's individual facilities.<sup>10</sup> Other agencies have followed the lead of TDMHMR and created networks of nonprofits dedicated to supporting their facilities.

**The Texas Youth Commission: Volunteers Helping Youths by Example**

As the agency responsible for juvenile correction, the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) recognizes that seriously troubled youths need diverse experiences and positive relationships to grow and develop.<sup>11</sup> The TYC outlook is that, through its volunteers, a community can enhance the lives of troubled youths with meaningful activities and resources that promote pro-social, educational, emotional and spiritual growth. Volunteer initiatives are designed to augment the agency's highly regimented, core programs, which involve correctional therapy, disciplinary training, work and education.

The TYC has a strong and purposeful structure for its volunteer programs. Regional volunteer specialists have the authority and discretion to implement initiatives effectively. Coordinators can exercise creativity in recruiting potential volunteers and tailoring service to an individual's areas of expertise. TYC has also extensive training for volunteers and seeks feedback about their service experiences. Its Volunteer Services Program deploys volunteers in four major initiatives:

- **Mentoring**—Carefully screened volunteers, working under staff supervision, spend approximately six months helping TYC youths set and achieve goals. The agency measures the effectiveness of its mentoring initiative by analyzing the re-arrest rates of youth participants.
- **Tutoring**—Teachers identify a youth's areas of educational need, and the agency selects a skilled volunteer to assist him or her for six to nine week segments. TYC administers tests before and after tutoring segments to measure improvements in learning skills.
- **Chaplaincy**—Based on student requests, hundreds of community volunteers visit TYC facilities to join in services and lead lessons in religious education. Volunteer clergy and laity from communities of all denominations cooperate to build inclusive programs for the spiritual growth of TYC youths.
- **Community Resource Councils**—These nonprofit groups solicit donations and facilitate exchanges between the TYC and the community. Organized under the State Volunteer Council, 24 such councils have been created to improve agency facilities, expand resources, and help families of TYC youths.

10. The Internal Revenue Code provides specific criteria according to which organizations are deemed to be nonprofit and thus exempt from federal taxation. See 26 U.S.C. §501.

11. The TYC's website is located at: <http://www.tyc.state.tx.us/>.

Service does not stop at the gates of TYC facilities. Paroled graduates are strongly encouraged to volunteer their time, and statistics indicate that those who worked with volunteers at TYC are more likely to offer their time in volunteer service after they leave. TYC's goal is to build networks that tap into and enhance the economic, social, and spiritual resources of communities throughout Texas.

### Hybrid Agencies

#### ***The Texas Department of Health: Volunteers Building Healthier Communities through Education***

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) provides a myriad of volunteering opportunities, from large scale programs designed to build community health resources, to smaller, administrative initiatives that give work opportunities to volunteers with special needs.<sup>12</sup> Last year, the agency's 536 member Volunteer Health Corps logged 59,377 hours of service. Currently, it is in the process of re-aligning its priorities to address the new issues of bio-terrorism and public health preparedness that have emerged since September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.

TDH has cooperated closely with VISTA workers since 1994, designing community health initiatives that lead to sustainable local programs. The Healthy Neighborhoods program helps inner city neighborhoods recognize and exploit their untapped human resources. Volunteers offer educational programs about children's health and welfare, they facilitate community meetings for discussing urban issues, and they provide vocational training and mentoring. The goal of these cooperative programs is to let neighborhoods develop their own local, social support networks.

TDH has several other innovative volunteer programs that have direct, positive effects on the community. The Hallmark Card Program is a collaboration between the Hallmark Corporation and TDH, in which hundreds of volunteers – Girl Scouts, Brownies, incarcerated women, students and others—send congratulatory cards to new mothers, reminding them to have their infants immunized. The Volunteer Mailroom is another small but significant program. In 2001, it engaged 188 persons, many of whom have some form of physical disability, in a work-therapy/volunteer experience preparing and processing mail. Mailroom volunteers donated 5,960 hours to this program, directly assisting 29 separate TDH programs. And, finally, the agency's Summer Youth Volunteer Program engages several dozen youths each summer in a variety of interesting tasks.

#### ***... And it is Work: Volunteers in the Texas Department of Human Services***

The Texas Department of Human Services (DHS) supports Texans in need, delivering necessary welfare assistance while helping them become self-reliant.<sup>13</sup> The agency administers the broad array of state and federal programs that benefit children, families, elderly people, and refugees. Every day, volunteers invigorate this indispensable work.

Among the many responsibilities of DHS is the regulation of

long-term care facilities, providing them with federal Medicare / Medicaid certification and state licenses. The agency estimates that 50% of Texas nursing facility residents have neither a family nor a surviving spouse, and that 60% have no regular visitors. Adopt-A-Nursing Home addresses this condition by facilitating friendships between seniors and volunteers. Like many other "Adopt-A" initiatives, this program capitalizes on the educational nature of volunteer service. Volunteers learn about issues central to elder care, such as Alzheimer's Disease and sensory awareness. Youth participants, Girl Scouts groups in particular, are crucial to the success of Adopt-A-Nursing Home. As of July 1, 2002, the number of active adopter groups (each with a minimum of three members) is 3,831, and the number of long-term care facilities adopted was 656.

The Family Pathfinders program works with civic groups, faith-based organizations and other nonprofits to improve the situations of individual families on public assistance. Working in teams, volunteers commit themselves to a family for one year, during which time they identify and answer specific obstacles to self-sufficiency. Success stories are diverse and plentiful, some families receiving clothing, some housing application assistance, and others encouragement and vocational mentoring. The effectiveness of this model stems from its pragmatism, teams pooling their experience to solve problems in ways not found in any manual.

#### ***Texas Parks and Wildlife Department: Texans Lend Nature a Hand***

Perhaps more than any other state agency, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) relies upon the efforts of volunteers.<sup>14</sup> The agency's mission is to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. With over 600,000 acres of parklands to manage and protect, it is unfeasible to use paid employees for all agency positions.<sup>15</sup>

Sixty local and two statewide nonprofit organizations assist TPWD in protecting state parks. Texans for State Parks, for example, is a statewide nonprofit organization that supports parks, state historic sites and state natural areas.<sup>16</sup> Local groups support specific historical sites, individual state parks and river regions. Since 1991, The Parks and Wildlife Foundations of Texas,<sup>17</sup> a dedicated 501(c)(3) nonprofit, has been raising funds for TPWD through individual and corporate donations.

TPWD itself operates two distinct volunteer operations. The first is the Volunteer Instructors program, through which TPWD provides education to Texans engaged in outdoor recreational activities. This initiative is the backbone of the state's hunter, boater and angler education programs. The division's 3,500 trained and certified volunteers provided 33,000 Texans with hunter education, 10,000 with boater education and 7,000 with angler education. These volunteers provided a total of 55,000 hours of service. The second

12. The Department's website is located at: <http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/>.

13. The DHS website is located at: <http://www.dhs.state.tx.us/>.

14. Visit the agency's website at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/>

15. The Texas Legislature specifically authorizes TPW to deploy volunteers and solicit funds. See the Texas Parks and Wildlife Code, Ch.11, §11.028.

16. Their website is located at <http://www.texasforstateparks.org/>

17. See the Foundation's website at <http://www.pwfix.org/>

volunteer initiative is the State Parks Volunteer Program. Working in collaboration with local park management, volunteers perform tasks ranging from Adopt-A-Trail and Adopt-A-Wetland projects to the extensive Park Hosts program, in which volunteers exchange weekly volunteer time for use of a campsite. Less intensive service options and groups projects are also available. Although the exact number of persons volunteering to support the work of maintaining and sustaining Texas parks is not tracked, TPWD does know that volunteers donated 451,560 hours of service, valued at \$5,069,256.

TPWD has another, highly successful volunteer model, through which it accumulates important information about migrating wildlife species. In collaborative educational programs, volunteers record their observations about certain species and TPWD compiles and analyzes their data. Since 1993, thousands of volunteers have helped TPWD to track monarch butterflies as they make spectacular biannual migrations through Texas. Each fall, volunteers fill out surveys reporting their observations as the monarchs, in colonies numbering in the thousands, make their way towards the warmer boreal forests of central Mexico.<sup>18</sup> The program is patterned after the national Monarch Watch program,<sup>19</sup> and is both educational and scientific. A similar program, the Texas Hummingbird Roundup, has been operating since 1994,<sup>20</sup> and has helped TPWD to learn a great deal about the migratory patterns and feeding practices of the 18 species of hummingbird found in the state.

### ***The Department of Protective and Regulatory Services: Giving Families and Children Fresh Starts and Peace of Mind***

The caseworkers and staff of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (DPRS) protect children, seniors and disabled Texans suffering from abuse and neglect.<sup>21</sup> With an array of services that includes abuse investigation and prevention, foster care placement and adoption, childcare and elder care facility inspection and licensing, and community education, the Texas Legislature has given DPRS great responsibility.<sup>22</sup>

For years, when a Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworker would make the decision to remove an abused child from his family home, the child's trauma was intensified by the fact that his or her belongings were typically placed in garbage bags. Volunteer Carol Castlebury, moved by the indignity of this procedure, began raising funds to purchase duffel bags for DPRS children. With the help of the Texas Elks lodges, Castlebury raised \$35,000, and has purchased 4,500 duffel bags. This simple, symbolic gesture gives abused children new hope that their condition will improve.

DPRS works closely with nonprofit Greater Texas Community Partners to assist caseworkers in their efforts to work with abused

children and indigent families. Two programs, the Rainbow Room and Adopt-A-Caseworker, have been great successes. The Rainbow Room is a special store just for CPS caseworkers. There they can get emergency resources—new clothing, diapers, and formula—for abused and neglected children, all free of any overhead or administration costs. Every dollar this program takes in goes directly to its intended recipients, endangered children.

Adopt-A-Caseworker allows charitable organizations—faith-based groups, schools, and businesses—to assist the work of CPS in their communities. Like other Adopt-A's, the groups in this program identify and assume responsibility for remedying a specific, social problem. Working through the caseworker, the adopting group provides financial, material and emotional support to a caseworker's clients.

### **Decentralized Agencies *Texas Department on Aging: Volunteers Protecting the Rights of Seniors***

Volunteers for the Texas Department on Aging (TDOA) guide senior adults through an intricate and potentially confusing system.<sup>23</sup> Covering over 1,150 licensed nursing homes, volunteers and staff in each of Texas' 28 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) work together to administer the Ombudsman Project. Funding for TDOA programs comes from both state and federal sources, supplied in part by the Texas Legislature,<sup>24</sup> and by Congress under Title III of the Older Americans Act of 1965.<sup>25</sup>

The TDOA Ombudsman Project provides a voice to older Texans living in long term care facilities. Ombudsmen are volunteers who investigate complaints made by or on behalf of older Texans in nursing homes. They facilitate improvements in the lives of the elderly by explaining their rights and entitlements. TDOA works to ensure that residents understand the role ombudsmen play in their facilities. Ombudsmen are expected to maintain a visible presence, making themselves readily available to long term care facility residents. TDOA staff and volunteers work together to compile data about every facility in their region and they regularly consult with facilities to ensure that they meet acceptable standards of care.

TDOA's second volunteer program is the Benefits Counseling Program. A Benefits Counselor explains the legal complexities of Medicare / Medicaid, private health insurance, and other benefit programs to anyone 60 years of age or older. Recognizing that many seniors may be reluctant to assert their rights or claim certain entitlements, counselors offer free advice. This advice comes in two categories: legal awareness, explaining the details and procedures of government programs; and legal assistance, offering free, legal advice to seniors with specific benefits-related problems. In fiscal year 2001, 221 dedicated counselors volunteered for this program.

### ***Texas Commission on the Arts: Volunteer Experts Creating a "State of the Arts"***

Collaborating with other state agencies and working independently, the Texas Commission on the Arts (TCA) has a broad set of responsibilities.<sup>26</sup> It fosters a receptive climate for the arts in Texas,

18. For more information on participating in this project, visit the Texas Monarch & Milkweed Resources at <http://home.satz.rr.com/txento/dplex.htm>, or email Mike Quinn, invertebrate biologist for TPWD's Wildlife Diversity Branch, at [mike.quinn@tpwd.state.tx.us](mailto:mike.quinn@tpwd.state.tx.us).

19. Monarch Watch has a website at <http://www.monarchwatch.org/>

20. The Hummingbird Roundup site is at <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/birding/humrunup.htm>

21. See the DPRS website at: <http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/>.

22. For legislative authorization of DPRS see the Texas Family Code, Chapter 264, §264.001-004.

23. The TDOA website is found at: <http://www.tdoa.state.tx.us/>.

24. See the Texas Human Resources Code, Title 6, Chapter 101.

25. See 42 U.S.C. §§ 3001-3058ee.

educates Texans about the arts, encourages outstanding artists to take up residence in the state, and it conveys its artistic expertise to a range of public officials and agencies. The Commission is comprised of 18 appointed commissioners, acclaimed experts from diverse professional backgrounds, each of whom works on a *pro bono* basis to promote culture and the arts in Texas. Each spring, the commissioners and experts convene in Austin for a series of panels about art education, community arts, performing arts, media and multimedia and visual arts.

The TCA has statutory authority to solicit donations from private contributors. In 1993, the Texas Legislature established the Texas Cultural Trust to give the TCA a stable source of outside funding.<sup>27</sup> Perceiving a steady decline in federal and state government support for the arts, the Texas Cultural Trust Council (TCTC),<sup>28</sup> a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was established in 1995 to solicit private sector donations to the Cultural Trust. The TCTC has set the goal of raising \$100 million in private charitable funding for the trust.

The TCA has also begun a creative fundraising campaign, issuing specialized "State of the Arts" license plates to Texas drivers who pay a small, additional registration fee. Revenues from this program help the agency fund artistic projects and performances throughout the state, without creating a burden on taxpayers. Legendary Texas singer-songwriter Willie Nelson has endorsed the campaign, donating both his time and likeness for its advertisements. Agency grantees carry these "Willie" ads for free in their publications and periodicals. In FY 2002, the license plate campaign raised over \$1 million.

**Texas Commission on Environmental Quality:  
Volunteering to Protect our Natural Resources**

The Texas Legislature combined the Texas Water Commission and Texas Air Control Board to create the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) in 1993.<sup>29</sup> This year, the agency changed its name to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). With a budget exceeding a half billion dollars, the agency's mission is to protect the air, water and land of the nation's second largest state.

Two programs illustrate well the tremendous value of volunteers to TCEQ. The Lake and River Clean-Up Program, administered by the agency's contract manager, is a partnership between the agency and Keep Texas Beautiful, a statewide nonprofit with over three hundred affiliates.<sup>30</sup> This program seeks both to educate Texans about the health hazards associated with poor quality drinking water and to organize community-based litter cleanup efforts. It also explains the hidden dangers of Nonpoint Source Pollution, the everyday products and byproducts like pet waste, cleaning supplies and automobile fluids that flow harmfully into sewer and storm drains. Volunteers serve the program in a broad range of capacities,

not just as collectors of waste, but also as clerical workers, event planners, teachers, drivers, writers, attorneys and mentors.

Since 1990, with its Source Water Protection Program the TCEQ has worked with the national nonprofit Groundwater Foundation, training volunteers to inventory potential sources of water contamination and to help safeguard community water supplies.<sup>31</sup> Often, the information gathered during these inventories serves as the basis for source water protection reports, allowing localities to design effective water protection management strategies. Both in the field and through its recruitment efforts, the Retired and Senior Volunteers Program (RSVP) has enhanced this project. Youth volunteers, service groups and school groups are also major contributors. Volunteers are currently working to generate a Global Positioning System (GPS) mapping system for the program, which, when completed, will be of tremendous environmental and economic value to Texas.

In FY 2001, 25,436 volunteers served in the Lake and River Cleanup. It also tracks, in tons, how much waste these volunteers remove from the Texas coasts and riversides. More compelling than statistics, however, are the human impact and the visible outcomes of its programs.

**Texas General Land Office: Volunteering to Preserve Texas, Past and Present**

The Texas General Land Office (GLO), the oldest state agency in Texas, takes care of Texas' vast natural resources, manages its mineral-right properties, and preserves the state's heritage by maintaining its historic maps, records, surveys and land titles.<sup>32</sup> Volunteers play a significant role in the GLO's work. Adopt-A-Map and Adopt-A-Beach represent the GLO's two principal programs involving volunteers.

Historically, Texas is older than the United States, and the traces and fragments of its past must be preserved. The GLO holds literally millions of ancient, priceless documents, maps and lithographs, some over 150 years old. Adopt-A-Map is an innovative program that has brought together thousands of Texans. Their donations of money, time and expertise allow the agency to restore and preserve valuable pieces in its extraordinary map collection.<sup>33</sup> Tax deductible donations by individuals, foundations, groups and corporations have reached \$210,139 since FY 2000. With these donations, more than 200 maps have been preserved, scanned electronically, and placed on the Internet. This project both conserves a valuable state resource and makes it available to the public.

- The GLO holds hundreds of thousands of ancient, priceless documents, maps and lithographs.
- Grants are made from over 275 foundations and hundreds of individuals, and range from \$10 to \$10,000.

26. The TCA's website is located at: <http://www.arts.state.tx.us/>

27. See the Texas Government Code, Ch.444, §444.026, acts 1993, 73rd Leg., ch. 951, § 4, eff. Sept. 1, 1993, creating the Texas Cultural Endowment Fund, which, under §444.027, is authorized and required to deposit annually interest on its principal into the Texas Commission on the Arts Operating Fund.

28. Visit the TCTC's website at <http://www.txculturaltrust.org/>. The Council notes that, currently, Texas ranks last among the fifty U.S. states in funding for the arts.

29. See website at: <http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us/>.

30. Keep Texas Beautiful's web site is located at: <http://www.ktb.org/index.htm>.

31. See the Foundation's website at: <http://www.groundwater.org/>.

32. See the GLO website at <http://glo.state.tx.us>.

33. The Texas Natural Resources Code, Ch. 31, General Land Office, § 31.065, authorizes the commissioner to accept gifts and bequests of real and personal property on behalf the state of Texas.

- Programs throughout the U.S. and the world have emulated the Texas Adopt-A-Beach program.

Twice yearly, the Adopt-A-Beach initiative organizes volunteers to cleanup litter from the extensive Texas coastline. This is a popular program among all segments of the volunteer workforce: Youth groups, service groups, faith-based groups, as well as those doing court-ordered service, college students, corporate groups, and even prison work groups. Two hundred eighty three thousand volunteers have removed over 5200 tons of trash since 1986. Volunteers do more than pick up bottles and cans. They also document the types of debris found on the beaches, building an invaluable database for those seeking to prevent and prosecute illegal, off-shore dumping. In fact, in 2001, such data were crucial in passing the International Maritime Organization's MARPOL Annex V treaty, which bans the dumping of plastics anywhere in the world's oceans.

### **Texas Historical Commission: Volunteers "Visioning" Texas History**

Texans have long sought to learn about their history and to uncover their prehistory. Since 1953, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) has sought to satisfy this demand, working to preserve Texas' architectural, archeological and cultural landmarks. The agency is composed of 18 citizen members appointed by the governor to staggered six-year terms. It employs about 100 people who work in various fields, including archeology, architecture, history, economic development, heritage tourism, public administration and urban planning.<sup>34</sup> THC is inherently suited to recruiting enthusiastic volunteers and putting their skills to work.

In each of Texas' 254 counties, volunteers support or comprise county historical commissions (CHC's), which cooperate with the THC and outside preservation groups to restore and preserve the state's history and material culture. Forming the backbone of THC's 2001 preservation plan for the State of Texas, CHC's target courthouses, cemeteries, historical markers, outdoor sculptures and other archeologically or historically significant sites for preservation. In addition to their statewide duties, CHC's have extensive local responsibilities. They operate county history museums and archives, cultivate broad knowledge of local history, and lay much of the groundwork for THC projects. THC calculates that 3,145 people have volunteered for CHC's, donating 159,178 hours.

An important strategy through which CHC's complete their projects is called visioning, a process by which a community creates an image of the future it wants and then plans how to achieve it. The THC uses the visioning process in its new Visionaries in Preservation Program, acting as a community liaison and encouraging volunteers to commemorate and preserve their communities' histories. For instance, in historic Castroville, "the little Alsace of Texas," residents have formed taskforces to preserve their town's unique, French architectural heritage and to manage the flow of development from nearby San Antonio.<sup>35</sup> These projects have both tangible and intangible benefits. On a concrete level, the Visionaries program facilitates local preservation of architectural landmarks throughout

Texas. Less tangible, but perhaps of equal importance, is how it encourages communities to build partnerships, discover new leaders, and develop a common sense of heritage and identity.

The THC works to preserve Texas' unique prehistory through its Texas Archaeological Stewardship Network (TASN). The THC's ten staff archeologists have worked with hundreds of volunteer stewards, "avocational archeologists," to preserve archeological sites throughout the state. Training is supported by funds from the nonprofit Friends of the Texas Historical Commission. In 2001, TASN began the Marine Stewards Group, whose volunteers assist THC in identifying and safeguarding historic shipwrecks along the Texas coasts. Between 1999 and 2002, THC researchers, staff and volunteers recovered the historic wreck of the *Belle*, the ship of early French explorer Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle. The *Belle* is a rich find, with over a million artifacts that show French preparations for building a New World colony.

### **Texas State Library and Archives Commission: Volunteer Voices for Blind Texans**

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) provides disabled Texans full access to library materials, public information and state archives. Volunteers enable this access by participating in the agency's Talking Book Program (TBP), which has been making recordings for the blind since 1932.<sup>36</sup> The agency's audio library contains over 80,000 titles and, each year, its Austin recording studio uses volunteers to produce approximately 150 new books, many of which have a Texas connection. Volunteer work includes reading, operating audio equipment, delivering products, manning telephones, filing paperwork, fundraising, and performing public relations duties for the program. Quality control is a high priority to TSLAC, and volunteers work alongside full-time staff not only to create books, but also to monitor and proofread recordings.

TSLAC has several beneficial collaborations with nonprofits. It works closely with the Recording Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped program, operated by the United Way of Midland.<sup>37</sup> United Way volunteers donated 3,400 hours of service to the program last year. Another nascent nonprofit, Friends of Libraries & Archives of Texas, is dedicated to building support for the TSLAC statewide, through its local chapters.<sup>38</sup> This volunteer business model gives the agency and its volunteers the flexibility they need to generate a high volume of top-quality audio book recordings.

The Texas Telephone Pioneers, an affiliate of the Telephone Pioneers of America,<sup>39</sup> organizes retired electronic technicians to donate their time and expertise to fix talking book machines. TSLAC is seeking new ways to leverage volunteer services. A full-time volunteer service coordinator works to manage time donated by volunteers. A steady source of volunteers comes from an agreement between TSLAC and the Travis County Community Supervision & Corrections; TBP provides an excellent opportunity to those performing Court-ordered Community Restitution.

36. A brief history is located at <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/tslac/50074/50074.html>.

37. See United Way of Midland's website at: <http://www.uwmidland.org/>.

38. The Friends website can be found either at: <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/friends/> or <http://www.silentpartners.com/friends/friends.html>.

39. <http://www.telephone-pioneers.org/>

34. Find this and additional information at the THC website: <http://www.thc.state.tx.us/index.html>.

35. Castroville's website is located at: <http://www.castroville.com/>.

TSLAC believes that volunteer work is the best candidate for expanding Talking Books.

- TBP used 39,869 volunteer hours in FY 2001 at a value of \$408,000.
- TSLAC records books in English and Spanish.
- 20,000 clients benefited from Talking Books.
- The *Spotlight on Texas Books* series contains thousands of audio titles—biographies, histories, westerns, romances, mysteries, self-help, travel, and children’s books—related to Texas history, people and culture.
- Last year, Community Service and Restitution volunteers donated 15,923 hours.

**Community-Based Agency**  
***The Texas Court Appointed Special Advocate: Volunteering for Abused Children***

The Texas Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) is a statewide network of independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations helping abused children who have been removed from their homes and placed in foster care by Child Protective Services.<sup>40</sup> Part of the national CASA organization,<sup>41</sup> Texas CASA trains CASAs—court appointed special advocates—who volunteer to act in an abused child’s best interest and provide vital information to courts of law for the duration of his or her case. Although CASA is not a state agency, it does receive direct funding from the Texas Legislature, over \$4 million in the 2001-2002 biennium.

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40. The agency’s website is located at: <http://www.texascasa.org/>.

41. Visit the national CASA website at: <http://www.nationalcasa.org/>.

A CASA volunteer is, in effect, a case custodian, the one person who ensures that all services are performed and all information is gathered and presented on a child’s behalf. The volunteer’s main tasks are to investigate the conditions of abuse and to present to the court their assessment of a child’s circumstances. This means speaking with a child’s friends, relatives and teachers, searching through court and administrative records, and collaborating with the legal and administrative professionals handling the case. The goal is to find the child a safe, permanent home.

In fiscal year 2001, over 2,000 volunteers served as advocates for over 11,000 abused and neglected children. The program currently covers 142 Texas counties and hopes to expand to reach an additional 41 by 2003. Since 1999, CASA has collaborated with the Texas Supreme Court Task Force on Foster Care to implement its Court Improvement Project.<sup>42</sup> Working with a \$500,000 federal grant under the Children’s Justice Act Project,<sup>43</sup> the result has been the creation of sixteen “Cluster Courts,” specialized courts that serve multiple counties in hard-to-reach rural areas of Texas. This initiative brings the advantages of a specialized court—subject matter expertise, familiarity with specific cases, docket efficiency, and consistency of dispositions—to juvenile justice.

CASA is always seeking new ways to recruit volunteers and raise revenues in order to reach more children. Like the Texas Commission on the Arts, CASA has a license plate campaign, “Lone Star Proud For Kids,” which generates money to raise awareness about child abuse and advocacy opportunities. In a state as vast and populous as Texas, it is impossible for the organization to help every child in the court system. Nevertheless, Texas CASA is expanding faster than any other CASA program in the country, and its volunteers are an invaluable asset to Texas.

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42. For Information on the CIP: [http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/Child\\_Protection/About\\_Child\\_Abuse/court.asp](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/About_Child_Abuse/court.asp).

43. See [http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/Child\\_Protection/About\\_Child\\_Abuse/cja.asp](http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us/Child_Protection/About_Child_Abuse/cja.asp).

**APPENDIX C**

**NATIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN TEXAS**

**AmeriCorps  
Learn and Serve America  
Senior Corps**

## APPENDIX C

# NATIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS IN TEXAS

### AmeriCorps

Inspired by the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps is the largest of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) service programs. Its goal is simple and straightforward: to get things done. AmeriCorps participants perform 1,700 hours of work (or 900 if they choose to be part-time members), teaching, building, repairing, mentoring, cleaning, and helping communities to build towards the future. In return for their service, participants receive compensation awards to offset college tuition or to repay student loans.

AmeriCorps has sponsored dozens of diverse projects throughout Texas. Some participants have helped create parent-supported early literacy programs for pre-kindergarten students. Others have worked with communities to weatherize and renovate homes. For *colonias* residents in the Grande Valley, Laredo, and El Paso regions, AmeriCorps participants have provided health education and job training. Many programs are connected to schools, providing tutoring to educationally disadvantaged students.

Several AmeriCorps projects overlap with efforts by Texas state agencies. In Lubbock, the "AmeriCorps Project Connect Team" collaborates with the regional TDMHMR office to provide mentors, to work with facility customers and to lead community service projects.<sup>1</sup> Other AmeriCorps participants joined with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to educate El Paso and Edinburg residents on the dangers to the environment of improper and illegal waste disposal.

Homeland Security has become a major priority to AmeriCorps in Texas. This year, the City of Austin received \$400,000 from CNCS to coordinate two separate disaster readiness programs. The Office of Emergency Management and the Austin Police Department's Civil Defense volunteer program will benefit from the services of 500 additional volunteers through this grant. The initiative will also coordinate with the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army and other groups to ensure that the region has made the best possible preparations for any act of terrorism or other disaster.

In Texas, the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service (TxCVCS) administers the majority of AmeriCorps grants.<sup>2</sup> This year TxCVCS will make compensation awards to approximately 3,700 individuals for service in Texas. Also assuming the function of the Governor's Office of Volunteerism, the Commission hosts the Governor's Volunteer Awards, recognizing the commitment and dedication of Texas volunteers for their communities.

### Learn and Serve America

Making service a way to achieve critical learning objectives, Learn and Service America (LSA) is the branch of the Corporation for National and Community Service focused specifically on students of school age.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of service learning, is, like the words that describe it, twofold. One critical objective is to develop the next generation of volunteers by providing opportunities for service to young people; the second and equally important objective is to utilize community based service experiences as a classroom "without walls." Through focused and meaningful service experiences that combine preparation, service, and reflection, students apply the skills they are learning in the classroom to situations in the real world.

Service learning projects have ranged from beautification of schools and visiting nursing homes, to cleaning graffiti, building handicapped-accessible walkways in parks, and studying environmental conditions. Teachers plan their lessons prior to each project, exploring with their class the project's purposes and going over the techniques and concepts they will employ. In Texas, LSA estimates that over 60,000 Service Learning students performed approximately 340,000 hours of service in 2001.

Funding for service learning is funneled through the Texas Education Agency to the state's twenty regional education centers. The Abilene-based Region 14 Educational Service Center works in collaboration with the Texas Center for Service Learning. Together, they provide in-service education programs and small grants directly to the classroom teacher and the local school district, facilitating service learning opportunities. Mini-grants of up to \$2,000 allow teachers to learn the concepts, techniques, and funding procedures for service learning. Teachers demonstrating their grasp of service learning techniques may apply for expansion grants of up to \$4,000 to build upon earlier projects. Campus grants, up to \$10,000, allow a school to integrate service learning more fully into its curriculum, extending lessons across all grade levels.

The Learn and Serve model holds great potential benefit to the Texas educational system. It is cost-effective, leveraging its federal funding by requiring all schools to obtain 2:1 matching funds for grants they receive from their grantees. Last year the program made grants totaling \$915,000 and generated over \$1.83 million in matching funds.

LSA is unique among CNS programs in its focus on both education-based and service-based outcomes. As project director John Spence points out, service learning generates experiences that

1. Visit the Lubbock Regional MHMR website at: <http://www.lrl.mhmr.state.tx.us/>.

2. The Commission's website is located at: <http://www.txserve.org/>.

3. <http://www.learnandserve.org/about/index.html>

affect students positively. Especially when service learning is made a regular part of a school curriculum, its impact on students is lasting, both in raising their awareness of their vital place in the community and in improving their academic performances. Moreover, service learning brings schools into their communities, demonstrating that they are not just recipients of tax revenues, but contributors as well.

### Senior Corps

Senior Corps is a network of programs that tap the experience, skills, and talents of older citizens to meet community challenges. Through its three programs—the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions—more than half a million Americans age 55 and over assist local nonprofits, public agencies, and faith-based organizations in carrying out their missions. SeniorCorps, now part of the USA Freedom Corps, is administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the federal agency that also oversees AmeriCorps and Learn and Serve America. Together these programs engage more than 2 million Americans of all ages and backgrounds in service each year.<sup>4</sup>

Facilitating collaboration among state agencies, universities, and nonprofits, as well as other federal agencies, RSVP puts senior volunteers on the front lines of service throughout Texas. In 1993, Congress passed and President Bill Clinton signed the *Government Performance Results Act*, to “improve the confidence of the American people in the capability of the Federal Government, by systematically holding Federal agencies accountable for achieving program results.”<sup>5</sup> In compliance with this legislation, Senior Corps instituted “Programming for Impact,” which allows its programs to show the broader context of their community impact, measuring their successes in ways that go beyond the statistical tracking of volunteer hours donated. RSVP volunteers have compelling stories, not just statistics.

In Big Spring, a few hours’ drive west of Abilene and south of Midland, RSVP has been participating in the Seniors/Volunteers for Childhood Immunization project (SCI). Since 1993, with grants from the University of North Texas, The Texas Department of Health, and the Center for Disease Control, volunteers in thirteen cities have encouraged new mothers to inoculate their children. RSVP volunteers Barbara Brooks, a retired nurse, and her good friend, Jo Wyatt go to the Scenic Mountain Medical Center, where they explain the benefits and risks of immunization to between thirty and forty mothers each month. Big Spring RSVP director Nancy Jones says that creative women like Brooks and Wyatt take initiative, running this project pragmatically and solving problems as they go. The goal of SCI programs is to reach inoculation levels of 85% for two-year-old children.

RSVP volunteers assist local law enforcement in a variety of ways. When the Abilene Police Department asked Big Country RSVP director Brenda Trojcek for volunteers to sort through pawn-shop tickets in search of stolen goods, eight senior volunteers responded. They dubbed themselves the “Granny Squad.” Trojcek reports that “the Squad” has helped police to recover hundreds of thousands of dollars in stolen property. Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, homeland security has risen to the top of everyone’s priority list. According to Jerry Thompson, State Program Director for the Corporation for National Service, the transition is a natural one for RSVP, which, with programs like the “Granny Squad,” has built a sound working relationship with state law enforcement.

Senior Corps’ Senior Companion program lets seniors help other seniors by spending time with them and helping them with everyday tasks. In 2001, 764 Senior Companion volunteers spent 581,508 hours serving 1,377 Texas seniors. The Foster Grandparent program gives seniors an opportunity to work with troubled or disabled youths. These senior volunteers give advice to youth about health and nutrition, they assist them with schoolwork, counsel them in dealing with family difficulties and, generally, act as friends and mentors. The Foster Grandparent program emphasizes educational efforts, especially tutoring and child literacy initiatives.

4. “About Senior Corps.” <http://www.seniorcorps.org/about/index.html>

5. Government Performance Results Act of 1993, 31 U.S.C. § 1115 *et seq.*, Pub. L. No. 103-62, 107 Stat. 285.

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