



NATIONAL  
MINORITY  
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COUNCIL

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1995

## If Only I Had A Few Extra Hands

By Harold Phillips

It's been more than a few years since the Beatle's sang, "I get by with a little help from my friends", but in today's climate of increasing demands for service and decreasing financial resources, agency "helpers" or volunteers will come to play an even greater role in the provision of services. This article will outline the necessary steps to create an effective volunteer program. Whether you have a large or small agency, volunteers can play a tremendous role in strengthening your capacity.

First there is a need to examine the issues or circumstances that are affecting the agency and its desire for volunteers. These may include;

- increased work load
- decrease staff burnout
- funding for volunteer coordinator

Each set of issues will be different for each agency. To obtain a true sense of the circumstances fueling the need for volunteers, talk to staff. It is best to obtain their input and assess their feelings about using volunteers. It is also a

perfect opportunity to gauge their knowledge and comfort level regarding the use of volunteers.

All of this brings us to the next step. Once you begin the dia-



logue with staff, some of the barriers to using volunteers will emerge and may include:

- lack of staff skills regarding working with volunteers
- reluctance to place volunteers in key positions
- not enough time for follow-through, training and support

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It is best to address these concerns initially with staff. The attitudes and reactions of the staff to the volunteer program will have a tremendous affect on the success or failure of your efforts. In most cases, staff should be trained on the appropriate use of volunteers. This will help ease tensions and help to ensure that the staff knows the roles and responsibilities of the volunteers and what is expected from them as staff in regard to the volunteers.

Just as you have goals for other aspects of your service delivery, there is a need to develop goals for your volunteer program. These goals should stem from your organization's mission statement and support the program activities of the organization. This piece of the program plan answers in very broad terms what you want volunteers to do. It might sound like this; *The volunteer program's mission is to assist in improving the lives of PLWA/HIV in the predominately Latin community by providing meals.* You should notice that goal does not specifically address

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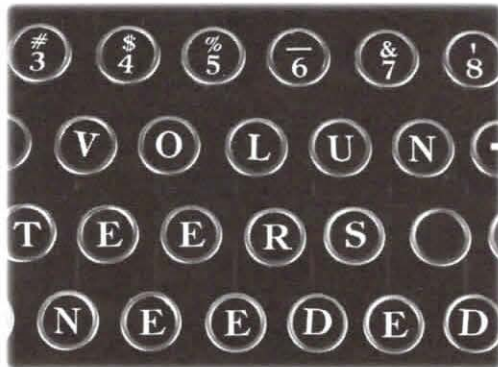
(If Only I Had a Few Extra Hands cont'd. from p.1)

how this is to happen or whether the volunteers will cook, chop, clean, or serve. It provides the framework for detailed job descriptions, volunteer functions and the program itself.

The next steps should be to develop internal systems to support and give guidance to the volunteers. These should include volunteer applications, systems to screen volunteers and assign tasks, volunteer job descriptions, volunteer manuals and the creation of mechanisms to make volunteers know their efforts are appreciated. Depending on the size of your budget or agency, you may also create a volunteer newsletter to keep volunteers connected to each other and the agency.

Look for ways to include volunteers in agency activities besides special events. A sample of potential volunteer functions include answering phones, stuffing envelopes, assembling safer sex kits, maintaining speakers bureau, providing office maintenance, offering transportation, being buddies, stocking food pantries,

organizing clothing or toy drives. Some of these activities are ongoing throughout the year. Others are project oriented with a definite beginning and end. It may be easier in many cases to get volunteers to commit to these finite projects. Many project volunteers who help with finite projects come back with a little prodding if their volunteer experience was a good one.



### “Make sure you take time out to show your appreciation for the work your volunteers do.”

Tactics for outreach to potential volunteers can be creative and cost very little. Public service announcements on radio or television are free in most areas. Community bulletins or notes in newspapers are spaces where non-profits can advertise or announce an event for free. Check with your local newspaper. Setting up a table with flyers on volunteer opportunities at community events such as street festivals and fairs is an excellent way to raise the visibility of the agency and announce the volunteer program. Another way to help put a face on the agency for the community includes hosting a volunteer opportunity night. Once a month have a meeting for those interested in volunteering. This gives them a chance to meet you and ask questions about the work. You can also schedule speaking

engagements to talk about the agency, HIV/AIDS and volunteer opportunities.

Several sororities and fraternities are service oriented and look for new volunteer opportunities. Talk with the local college or university's Greek council about arranging speaking engagements. In addition, many campus groups get involved in service projects. Look for natural matches, groups for people of color, gay/lesbian student associations,

social justice organizations. Some high schools give credit to students for volunteering as interns; check with your local schools to find out more about this.

If you want volunteers who are a little older, look for religious communities which have social action committees or are very involved in community service. It seems that for every church that turns its back on this epidemic, I hear of at least two who are delivering a humane and compassionate response to those affected by this disease.

Another source of volunteers that we often overlook are those who have retired or are on disability, particularly those living with AIDS/HIV. Many PLWAs on disability do so to reduce the amount of stress in their lives caused by the everyday strain of work. This



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does not mean that they are adverse to volunteering occasionally. I would encourage you to reach out to this community as well as retired seniors who have skills and training.

Finally, make sure you take time out to show your appreciation for the work your volunteers do. A volunteer lunch, dinner, certificate, movie passes,

happy hour, picnics are all ways to say "THANKS". This is important, as it affects the retention of volunteers and it often does not have to be an elaborate or expensive show of thanks. Save the expense of glamour until you have a million dollar budget! Then you can thank the people who helped you get there, including your volunteers.

Running a volunteer program takes planning, creativity and a little extra effort, but in the long run the benefits can make a world of difference. The reduction in staff work load, raising the visibility of the agency and just the completion of "back burner" projects will contribute to the overall health of you and your agency. ■

## 11 Steps to Effective Use of Event Volunteers

Volunteers are what make fundraising, outreach, and special events a success and cost-effective for your organization. Here are some things to remember for volunteer directors and event coordinators:

**1. Planning.** Staff tend to over-estimate the number of volunteers needed. Certainly you need to determine a comfortable cushion when estimating the need for support--considerations such as no-shows, late-comers, and emergencies must be taken into account. Plan for volunteers shifts of duty instead of just a "body count". Many volunteers will work several shifts or over a period of several days if you have an extended event. Require staff requesting volunteers to create a brief job description. Create a form to make this job easier. Include experienced volunteers in planning sessions--they've done the job before and know what works and what doesn't.

**2. Recruit from new sources.** Many corporations and service organizations have groups of employees who lend their time for one-time events. Contact the human resource departments for information. Many send out E-mail announcements with contact information about your event. Consider computer bulletin board services, include a small announcement at the bottom of your fax cover sheets, and include a message on your voicemail.

**3. Educate.** Make sure volunteers are knowledgeable about your organization. They are ambassadors for your guests. People attending your function usually don't know the distinction between paid staff and volunteers. Everyone should know what's going on to answer questions and be able to steer people to an information area or staff member when needed. The best way to educate volunteers is to hold an orienta-

tion/training before your event. Give them a volunteer handbook when appropriate. Help them to see the big picture and why their role is vital to the success of your event.

**4. Who's who.** Always provide identification, such as name badges and/or accreditation. This helps identify who is a volunteer, what duty they perform, level of access to areas of your event. Security, medical personnel, information, monitors, backstage/green room and other volunteers should always have distinctive identification. Control this process closely.

**5. May I quote you?** Identify media/press staff or volunteers to everyone. Encourage volunteers to express their personal experience to the media--speaking as a volunteer, but have them refer all other questions to official press representatives. It is sometimes tempting when a microphone and video

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camera is pointed at a volunteer, for them to want to respond to every question. Set a guideline to avoid this situation. Give volunteers a basic fact sheet if appropriate.

**6. Check-in often.** No one likes to be left working alone or sweating over a decision with no one official to answer questions. Even when clear instructions are given for a volunteer assignment, go back and review the area to make sure your goals are understood. Always shift at least two volunteers for every job. Consider rotating volunteers for difficult or boring jobs. Bathroom, food and beverage breaks are needed by everyone.

**7. The right tool...** Make sure they have the supplies to get the job done. Nothing is more frustrating to volunteers who donate their time than to sit and wait for materials to begin helping. Always have back-up jobs ready in case the party invitations you need to mail haven't arrived on time from the printer. Have change in the cash-box, a safe ladder to hang the banner, or sunscreen for outdoor venues.

**8. Accessibility.** Inform volunteers about guests, other volunteers or staff with special needs. Information on accessibility issues for people in wheelchairs, people with AIDS complications, blind or deaf/hard of hearing persons will make everyone feel comfortable and welcome. Discuss at the orientation/training what is appropri-

ate, how to offer assistance, how to handle a medical emergency, where to make a 911 call if needed.

**9. Care Team.** Create a Volunteer Support Center for larger events. This area could consist of volunteer check-in, information, emotional support, a secure place for belongings, food and beverages for breaks, a place to share a ride home, etc. Create a bulletin board for volunteer messages and "hot-

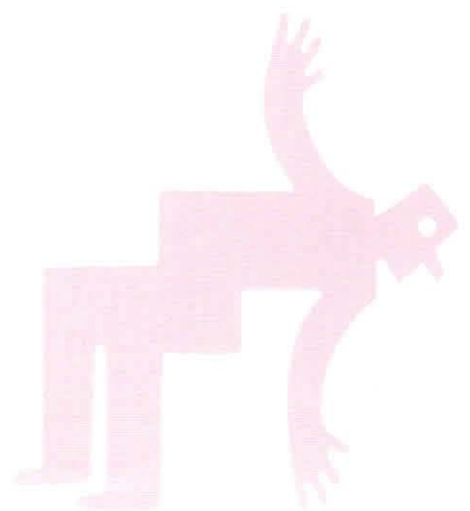
**“Although most people are motivated by helping a good cause, give them a reason to come back and help again.”**

list” volunteer needs for people who have extra time to give. Post announcements for future event volunteer needs and don't forget to have information on how to continue helping the organization in other volunteer roles. Turn a one-time volunteer into a valuable asset.

**10. Last minute details.** Don't forget yourself. Recruit a volunteer assistant to help you during the event. Make sure volunteers know exactly when and where they are to show-up. Put details on your office voicemail in case a volunteer loses the address or time. Remind staff that no one volunteers to do a bad job. Sometimes people don't understand instructions or get a job that isn't appropriate for them. Ask staff to be patient and calm--

model this behavior. Identify all key people to volunteers, those who can over-ride any decision (such as the executive director or board president), or not (such as the executive director or board president).

**11. Have fun.** Although most people are motivated by helping a good cause, give them a reason to come back and help again. Make their time enjoyable. Play music during set-up and breakdown, offer a fun gift at the end of their shift, a autograph from a celebrity at your event, a souvenir of the event, give them a “100% Pure Volunteer” button, schedule a volunteer appreciation party for large functions. Hold a simple raffle with prizes for the volunteers who show-up on time or stay until clean-up is over. Follow-up with volunteers to tell them how much money was raised or how their efforts helped you reach your goal. Now, take a vacation. ■



THE NATIONAL MEETING  
AND  
CONGRESSIONAL DINNER  
**OUR PLACE  
AT THE  
TABLE**  
MAY 22- 23, 1995

NMAC's 1995 "Our Place At The Table" Conference and Congressional Dinner was a major success. Over 500 people attended the conference and dinner. Here are few pictures from the event.



(From left to right) **Representative Jerrold Nadler (D-NY)**, **Paul Kawata**, NMAC's Executive Director and **Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ)**.



**Miguelina Maldonado**, NMAC's Director of Government Relations and Policy addresses the crowd at the "Our Place" reception as NAPWA's **Cornelius Baker**, looks on.



The Congressional dinner's mistress of ceremonies, **Dr. Rovenia Brock**, of Black Entertainment Television and **Moisés Agosto**, NMAC's Director of Research and Treatment Advocacy.



**Congresswoman Carrie Meek (D-FL)** delivered an entertaining and empowering address at the Congressional Dinner.



(From left to right) **Carlos Velez**, **Patricia Fleming**, National AIDS Policy Director and NMAC Advisory Board member **Steven Trujillo**.

## NMAC Board Member, Sandra McDonald, Receives \$100,000 Award for Community Health Leadership

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation named Sandra McDonald, an NMAC Board member and the Executive Director of Outreach, Inc. in Atlanta, as the recipient of a \$100,000 award in its Community Health Leadership Program (CHLP) for 1994. Ms. McDonald was one of 10 recipients chosen from a national pool of nominations. The awards are given to individuals for their work in creating or enhancing health care programs serving communities whose needs have been ignored or unmet.

"I am thrilled and honored to receive this award," said Ms. McDonald. "As personally encouraging and satisfying this award is to me, it will mean so much to the people of Atlanta, who are desperately in need of new health care programs."



Ms. McDonald has already begun thinking about how to utilize the money. She is currently planning to open a free clinic near Outreach, Inc.'s newest satellite location. The clinic would be run on Saturday's, two to three times a month and would be designed to assist and be sensitive to the needs of local families. Ms. McDonald plans to provide a full-range of health care services. In addition to general medicine, HIV/AIDS testing and counseling and addiction treatment and counseling, the free clinic would also allow clients the opportunity to meet with specialists in many fields including Psychiatry and Internal Medicine.

"I want to create a health care forum where the family is viewed as a single unit," explained McDonald. "You can't treat someone who is addicted to drugs or who is HIV positive, without dealing with the effects of that individual's situation on the entire family. You need to take a wholistic approach to health care."

Another program McDonald is planning will focus on major issues affecting young, African American males, specifically HIV/AIDS, addiction and violence. Both programs will be fine-tuned through "rap sessions" with target audiences.

The deadline to nominate someone for a 1995 CHLP award is September 1. You can call (617) 426-9772 for further information. ■

## NMAC Opens New Headquarters

The National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC) officially opened the doors to its new headquarters on June 1, 1995. The renovated brownstones are located at 1931 13th Street, NW in Washington DC's historic Shaw district. The buildings were burned out during the civil rights riots of the late 1960's and have stood abandoned until now. With this move, NMAC becomes the first national AIDS organization to own its own building.

The need for a new headquarters is, unfortunately, directly related to the rising number of AIDS cases in communities of color. The Shaw neighborhood was chosen for several reasons. It is currently undergoing an economic rebirth and is also a community filled with NMAC's constituents. In addition, Shaw's largely African American and Latino/a population has not avoided the particular devastation that AIDS has wrought on communities of color across the country.

NMAC will celebrate the grand opening in the fall with a major special event appropriately entitled, "In Tribute." The event will honor the neighborhood and its history and celebrate its revitalization as well as memorialize those who have been lost to or are living with AIDS. The event will be held at the historic Lincoln Theatre.

"This is both an exciting and sobering moment for us," explained Paul Kawata, NMAC's Executive Director. "The new building signifies the strength and importance of NMAC as an organization and we hope the building will serve as a beacon of hope and empowerment for communities of color across the country. However, the move also signifies an acknowledgment on our part that the AIDS epidemic is not going away."

The move also means good business for NMAC. The annual savings for NMAC by paying a mortgage, rather than rent, will be nearly \$10,000. In addition, the unused space in the new headquarters will be rented out to various AIDS/minority organizations at affordable rates and will generate additional income for NMAC.

"We hope the new headquarters will help to build the infrastructure of the movement," added Kawata. "The number of AIDS cases is continuing to rise, particularly in communities of color and among women and children. We all need to work together to put an end to this epidemic." ■

# Why Join NMAC?

NMAC is the only **national AIDS organization** dedicated solely and specifically to minority communities.

NMAC sponsors **award-winning conferences** including the *National Skills Building Conference*, *Our Place At The Table* and the *Prevention Summit*.

NMAC's TA department provides **unsurpassed technical assistance** and training to member CBOs.

NMAC's Public Policy department **protects your rights** on Capitol Hill.

NMAC's Treatment and Research department **advocates for better treatments** and treatment information in communities of color.

NMAC produces **national prevention education campaigns** directed at people of color living with HIV.

NMAC's membership of over 600 CBOs around the country provides members with **opportunities for networking and collaboration**.

NMAC produces **state-of-the-art technical assistance manuals** such as the "Strategic Planning Manual For AIDS Service Organizations" and the "Finance Manual."

NMAC's ongoing publications, **TA Newsletter and Update**, keep members updated on the latest events, issues and information in the fight against AIDS.

NMAC's Honorary Board Chair is Grammy award-winning artist, **Patti LaBelle**.

NMAC has created the, **"Women's Project"** to document and address the needs of women and families of color affected by HIV/AIDS.

**NMAC is dedicated to using all of its resources on a national level to help develop leadership in minority communities to address issues of HIV/AIDS.**

## I WANT TO BE A LEADER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV/AIDS!

By joining the National Minority AIDS Council, your organization becomes part of the powerful national voice of over 600 minority community based organizations fighting to win the war against AIDS. NMAC provides its members with representation on Capitol Hill, comprehensive technical assistance, innovative communications programs, a wide range of publications and a dedication to develop leadership within communities of color to address issues of HIV/AIDS infection. For more information contact the NMAC membership department.



SEND COMPLETED FORM TO:

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### Non Profit Organization Membership Fees

For Community Based Organizations and National HIV/AIDS-Related Associations:

IF YOUR ANNUAL BUDGET IS:	YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE IS:
less than \$250,000	\$ 125
\$250,000 to \$500,000	\$ 250
\$500,000 to \$1,000,000	\$ 500
\$1,000,000 to \$2,000,000	\$ 750
\$2,000,000 and above	\$1,000

Health Departments

IF YOUR ANNUAL BUDGET IS:	YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE IS:
less than \$150,000	\$ 125
\$150,000 and above	\$ 250

## From the Managing Editor...

This issue of TA Newsletter examines the use of volunteers in our agencies. There is a myth that people of color don't volunteer. Guess what. We do! How many church bake sales, food, clothing and toy drives have you participated in during the last year? How many rides have you given people to the doctor or gone to the store to run errands for a sick neighbor? All of the "helping" that goes on in communities of color is really an unrecognized form of volunteerism which can be tapped by our AIDS Service Organizations in the form of long or short term projects. This issue also contains suggestions on how to use special event volunteers. Some of the suggestions offered there can be used when working with regular volunteers.

Our next issue will preview the **Fifth Annual National Skills Building Conference in Los Angeles, October 19 -22**. This event will be the largest Skills Building Conference ever and is sure to be spectacular. The conference is designed to enhance the effectiveness of front-line community based organizations and individuals responding to the needs of those living with HIV/AIDS and those at risk for HIV infection. You won't want to miss this valuable opportunity and TA Newsletter will tell you why in its Sept./Oct. issue.

Speaking of things you won't want to miss, the **Minority Executive Director's Leadership Forum, August 10 - 13, 1995**, in Palm Beach, FL and the **People of Color Living With HIV Leadership Forum, August 24 -27, 1995**, in Paulden, AZ. These two Regional Conferences sponsored by NMAC provide support to people of color involved in this epidemic. The Minority Executive Director's Forum provides an opportunity for executive directors to discuss their issues and network with one another. The POC Forum is designed for PLWA/HIV and teaches them how to become their own advocates, take care of themselves and learn from each other. For more information on these Leadership Forums, contact Jenny Gough at 202-483-6622.



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