

ABSTRACT

Drawing from a variety of current sources both inside and outside of the profession of Volunteer Administration, this article explores the future trends most likely to impact directors of volunteers through the year 2010. The author describes how relationships with business, funders, government, and individuals will transform in the coming years; and outlines the four trends most likely to affect volunteer administration through the next decade: technology, diversity, collaboration, and new paradigm thinking and leading.

The Future of Volunteer Administration

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Like the present, the future is not a single, uniform state but an ongoing process that reflects the plenitude of human life. There is in fact no single future; "the" future encompasses the many microfutures of individuals and their associations.

It includes all the things we learn about ourselves and the world, all the incremental improvements we discover, all our new ideas, and all the new ways we express and combine them. (Postrel, V, 1998 p. xiv)

Future forecasting is hardly an objective science, so it only seems fair to share my disclaimer at the outset. I am an optimistic futurist (as opposed to a pessimistic one). There are at least two reasons for this. First, I believe in the credo, "what we give our energy to is what will thrive." If I give my energy to describing a gloomy, frustrating future for our profession, I'll be more likely to create one for myself and to perpetuate that expectation for others. If, however, I interpret the data on the future in terms of the potential for good, I not only will expect and create good, but my heightened optimism will orient me to best recognize and utilize the

opportunities the future provides. Secondly, I believe it has been proven again and again that pessimistic predictions and visions of the future are flawed because they fail to take into account the power and nature of the human spirit. Where is that sterile, impersonal future predicted by James Orwell, numerous sci-fi flicks, and even Disney Land's original Tomorrowland exhibits? It is not here, and I'd argue, never will be because the human spirit has ensured that warmth, caring and community are central parts of any future we might create. Moreover, this "humanizing" effect grows over time, for it is not only technology that grows, evolves and becomes more self-aware over time, but also the human spirit - especially the human spirit!

The research for this article took me largely into realms outside our field, although I equally sought to honor and share the innovative thinking of the many talented leaders — seasoned and budding — in our field. I consulted the works of researchers, visionaries, social and technical innovators, trend-watchers and a mystic or two to honor the realms of the heart that are so often a part of the work of volunteer program administration. The sheer volumes of information and opinion —

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some of it disparate — could send any self-preserving would-be futurist running for the door (and should have if this author was smarter!) But surprisingly, what I found in the end was a relatively cogent, commonly agreed-upon handful of visions of the future. What I have included here are those trends that meet two specific (and relatively speaking) narrow criteria: trends most apt to influence and/or involve volunteer program administrators; and trends which were echoed in and confirmed by several different sources.

The goal of this article is to provide relevant, timely information to assist volunteer administrators in positioning themselves and their programs for the next ten years. It is my deeper wish that this article may serve as a wakeup call for us all: to see ourselves as the leaders we already are, and to glimpse the future context in which we will become the highly valuable leaders of the broader community of tomorrow. The first half of this article will focus on the four key constituencies (from outside our organizations) who influence what our volunteer programs will become: government, business, funders and individuals. **Shifts in our relationships with these constituencies will be significant throughout the next ten years.** The second half of the article will briefly outline the four societal trends most likely to be influential to volunteer program management in the first decade of the new millennium. Specifically, these are (in no particular order): *technology, new paradigm thinking and leading, diversity, and collaboration.*

Now is a Time of Unprecedented Opportunity for Our Profession ... A Defining Moment

[T]here is mounting evidence that civic engagement is increasing globally. (Ladd, C.E., 1999, p. 121)

[A]t this moment in history, we are more dependent on the nonprofit sector for ideas, innovation, and experi-

mentation than any generation that has come before.

— recent president of the Rockefeller Foundation, Peter Goldmark (cited in Shore, B., 1998)

We [at for the International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE)] believe that volunteering will be one of the fundamental defining worldwide social movements of the next decade. (Allen, K., 1998, p. 21)

Yes, this is a defining moment in the history of our profession. I suppose one could argue that any moment is potentially a defining moment. However, surfing enthusiasts know that there is an ultimate moment to catch a wave, and some waves are "better" than others, propelling you faster and longer than the rest. As I will describe shortly, there is a preponderance of evidence to support the assertion that never before have so many distinct constituencies in government, business and community cried out so blatantly for leadership and guidance in those areas in which our field excels and specializes. Never before have we been in a better position to play a key role in facilitating social innovation throughout the world. The rewards for ourselves as professionals and for the communities we serve will be tremendous. But we will need to make ourselves ready for the task. As the saying goes, "luck is where preparation and opportunity meet." We are in an enviable position: a great wave is on its way. Are we ready?

Yet this does not mean that hoards will soon be knocking on our doors, waiting on bended knee for us to answer. Literally and figuratively, they don't know where our doors are, or how to even begin looking us up in the phone book. The profession's visibility problem is currently a hot topic in chat rooms, on web sites and in newsletters and meetings that involve volunteer administrators. Recently, AVA posed a question to leaders in the profession, "What is the greatest

challenge that will face the profession of volunteer administration in the year 2010?" Volunteerism guru Sue Vineyard responded, "That of being able to change and adapt to the increasing needs and demands of our work....[O]ur role in the world's development is so critical." For the most part, we've been too busy with the nuts and bolts of our everyday demands (and rightly so) to hang up a shingle saying, "Experienced Volunteer Administrator, Open to new Leadership Roles." But if we don't do it, someone else, perhaps not so well equipped or community-focused, certainly will.

PART I: FOUR CONSTITUENCIES

Government Shift

Dollar for dollar, government investment in programs designed to complement and support the volunteer sector have proven to be among the most cost-effective means of providing social services in local communities. (Rifkin, J., 1995 p. 264)

Increasingly, governments are looking to the private and nonprofit sectors to pick up the slack left by eliminating or reducing public services and the "safety net." Visionaries such as Duane Elgin, author of *Voluntary Simplicity*, were predicting this governmental shift in America in the early 1980's. Recent submissions to *The Journal of Volunteer Administration* confirm that the shift has become real — and global (Bowen, P., 1997; Yanpingli, 1999). Changing values, demographics and even technological advances (particularly in communications) are making it more likely that in the future government will no longer be seen as the compassionate helper of first resort. Rather, communities will develop the capacities to take on that role (Rifkin, 1995). And to further complicate things, these communities may not be towns, cities or neighborhoods, but rather may span the globe or exist in no particular physical space at all!

Futurist Mark Knoff predicts that in the next century we will gain a significant amount of our support and belonging from virtual communities such as those created by activist and interest groups on the internet (1997). In his comprehensive report on the current state of community engagement, Carll E. Ladd (1999) confirms, "The old neighborhoods of physical propinquity are far less important than they used to be, but better systems of information exchange and transportation have created a great variety of new and more inclusive communities of social interaction" (p. 155).

In order to successfully take ownership of community issues formerly stewarded by the government, the public will need the guidance of those with expertise, information and connections regarding community needs, resources and mobilization. Government, looking to "unload" its former responsibilities, will encourage, and in some cases seed new programs to take on the burden. Social reinvention will be greatly enhanced and guided by the diverse talents and competencies of volunteer administrators.

How to ride the wave of government shift

There are likely to be more opportunities for volunteer administrators as community groups expand to deliver the services formerly provided by government. Skills and a proven track record in community mobilization will be at a premium. As these programs show their success, there's likely to be a snowball effect. A shift of values and perspectives in society which sees the community and the individual as the fulcrum of change will drive the further expansion of community-run programs.

All of this sounds great for the field of volunteer administration. That is, except that volunteer administrators are not likely to be involved in guiding the governmental shift unless they make themselves known — and available — in the years ahead. This is one great paradox of the

future: although they need our skill, they may not be aware that we have it to give. Cloaked behind the thick wall of sponsoring organizations, most volunteer programs today are practically invisible to outsiders. Worse, as we enter the twenty-first century, volunteer program administrators have not yet gained the recognition and respect they deserve within their organizations and within the wider community. As early as 1985 volunteerism visionary Ivan Sheier uncovered this issue and expressed his concern that we develop a more prestigious role for volunteer administrators:

We tend to say [to managers of volunteer resources], apply your skills primarily to volunteers and the volunteer programs, not to staff, clients, boards or other aspects of the organization. This is an unnatural restriction, in my view, and precisely what job enlargement people are effectively surmounting. But they may be doing so largely unconscious of the general question raised for our profession: Are we a complete profession, as now defined, however excellent the range of skills we have, if we only apply these skills to one kind of worker in one segment of organizational operations? (1985/1986 p. 15)

If volunteer administrators and volunteers themselves are not recognized as important resources to the process of social innovation, it is likely they will continue to be viewed in a narrow context, but this time as those who "clean up" when governments end programs and community organizations scramble to fill in the gaps with inadequate staff and resources. Is this the kind of future we want for our profession?

Inclusion in the process of shaping governmental shift is further hampered by language. Simply put, we have ours and they have theirs. Or more recently, we have ours, they have theirs, and those other people have theirs, but we think we

are all talking about the same thing — or are we? Keeping the governmental shift trend in mind, the question then becomes, *what name and descriptions most accurately convey the roles our profession could ideally take in the more mobilized community of the future?* Certainly, this is the genius behind the "civil society" message: it is inclusive, not burdened with outdated stereotypes and somehow calls to mind a broader vision. We may not like it, but there is much to learn from the rapid success of initiatives that use new language to promote volunteerism, often creating whole new markets for support and participation. Sarah Jane Rehnberg, a past president of AVA and Director of the Center for Volunteerism and Community Engagement at the University of Texas, illustrated this point recently on a CyberVPM online discussion:

When I have spoken with school principals and administrators about community engagement ... they simply cannot get enough information. This is, from our perspective, volunteer management, but we haven't taken the time to articulate our cause in the language that is valued by the "consuming" audience and an audience, I might add that often regards volunteers as fluff, but considers the community as crucial. (April, 1999)

The Association for Volunteer Administration has recognized the critical importance of language to the profession. The executive summary of its January, 1999, Think Tank concludes, "What is needed is a new vocabulary that emphasizes civic involvement, innovation and results... Given current, compelling forces in the environment surrounding volunteerism, re-positioning is critical and timely." (compiled by Nora Silver, September 30, 1999)

The Age of the Evolved Individual

Even as they talk about avoiding commitment, volunteers often ache to

identify with a cause — not an agency or a program, but a cause. We have a huge number of "corporate refugees" looking for meaning in their lives. When they identify with a cause they bring commitment — deep and long term. (Nancy A. Gaston, CVA, personal communication, 1998)

We instinctively reach out to leaders who work with us on creating meaning. Those who give voice and form to our search for meaning, and who help us make our work purposeful, are leaders we cherish, and to whom we return gift for gift. (Wheatley, M., 1992, p. 135)

Individuals in unprecedented numbers are actively searching for and expecting to find deep, meaningful work in their lives. They are joining associations, volunteering and giving money at the highest rate in history. Gallop and Princeton Research Associates found that the percentage of the public who say they are engaged in social service work has doubled since 1977. The Roper Center for *Reader's Digest* found a 6 percent rise in volunteering between 1994 and 1997. (cited by Ladd, C. E., 1999, p. 62)

And the trend gets stronger as we look to the future. Faith Popcorn and Lyn Marigold, well-known trend-watchers and authors of *The Popcorn Report*, recently identified seventeen major trends affecting our lives and work. (1997) At least five of those trends point directly to a marked increase in individual interest in volunteerism over the next decade. They believe this is driven by a spreading awareness (after the "greed-driven, soulless 80s") that there is something more than the search for material success. Marigold and Popcorn predict a mainstream return to old values such as hope, faith and charity. (1997)

But while workers are searching for meaning, most corporations have failed to capitalize, instead demonstrating a disturbing trend of bottom-lining that dimin-

ishes and discounts the individual. Individuals today are more likely than ever to experience downsizing, plant closings, the erosion of fringe benefits, job shifting, and an employer who shoulders no responsibility for addressing the challenges of the dual worker household. It's no wonder that workers are demonstrating the lowest level of employee loyalty in history. Individuals searching for "more" are learning they cannot necessarily expect to find it at work.

How to ride the wave of the evolved individual

The manager of volunteer resources is in an excellent position to serve these individuals by pointing them to meaningful work that makes a difference while allowing them to experience the meaning, value, connection and respect they crave — and deserve. However, to successfully capture and harvest these lofty individual aspirations, we must continually work to develop our capacity to market, design and support volunteer opportunities that clearly connect volunteers to compelling, tangible goals. Nan Hawthorne of CyberVPM recently wrote,

One challenge I believe we must absolutely meet is the shift in how volunteers see themselves and want to be involved in our organizations. ... On the whole, volunteers are busier people with more demands on their time and they are better consumers now with 40+ years of both advertising and consumer education. (CyberVPM online discussion, April, 1999)

The implications for directors of volunteer services are nothing short of monumental. Volunteer management guru, Nancy Macduff, recently told AVA:

It means re-thinking the entire way the volunteer program is organized and carried out. This requires letting go of some old and outmoded ideas about volunteering and taking on new

ways to allow volunteers to participate in organizations. Change is not easy under any circumstances. This is structural change of the highest order. (personal communication, September, 1999)

Our capacity in this area will be challenged by the fact that individuals are becoming increasingly used to customization and choice in all aspects of their lives. A "point and click" mentality will become increasingly pervasive in the years ahead. Clearly, volunteer positions that unreasonably limit an individual's ability to choose will find a very limited market compared to those that allow for customization and continual reinvention of roles. This is already beginning to show, as informal, grassroots organizations are exploding in numbers while many traditional community service organizations with national headquarters such as the PTA are seeing declining membership (Ladd, C. E., 1999).

The trend toward customization and individuation, when brought to its natural conclusion, will drive many individuals to bypass existing volunteer opportunities in favor of inventing their own opportunities for service. Impatient with the cumbersome, slow-moving, and sometimes impersonal structure of established organizations, and aided by the tools of the Information Age, they are inventing ways to associate with each other to share their values and aspirations. In the early '90s, volunteerism futurist Ivan Scheier predicted the trend of free association and the emergence of a new career track for volunteer program administrators: consultant to entirely volunteer groups. (1992-1993) It seems as though his prediction is coming to pass as a viable and growing career track of the future.

Business and the Wave of Social Responsibility

[T]he wall between for-profit and

nonprofit may soon become an anachronism. (Shore, B., 1999, p. 137)

Some businesses, seeing the potential to attract this new brand of "evolved" customer, are defining a new wave of business-as-usual commonly known as "social responsibility." This means community-friendly initiatives such as proactive foundations and charitable trusts, family-oriented personnel policies and programs, and time off for employees to engage in community service. This is good business, say Popcorn and Marigold, (1997) who refer to a trend that they have called "Save our Society" defined as, "concerned with the fate of the planet, consumers respond to marketers who exhibit a social conscience attuned to ethics, environment, and education" (p. 315). "Many people, willing to put their money where their beliefs are, are tracking which companies are socially and environmentally responsible" (p. 332).

A new development that takes social responsibility a step further, actually breaking the traditional barriers between business and nonprofits, is "social entrepreneurship." Bill Shore, the leading proponent of social entrepreneurship writes, "The term 'social entrepreneur' is in vogue today, but often goes conveniently undefined. To some it means solving problems through the private sector rather than through government. To others, it implies a commitment to running your [nonprofit] organization as a business" (1999, p. 134). The kind of social entrepreneuring which Bill Shore is promoting in his book, *Cathedral Within*, is a much larger paradigm shift, however. In his vision, businesses cease to be selfless givers of money, materials or expertise who expect only an improved image in return. Instead, they have a vested interest in creating and profiting from wealth-generating ventures developed in partnership with community service programs (1998).

To give an example, the Girl Scouts have been engaging in social entrepre-

neurship for decades, selling Girl Scout cookies that are produced by for-profit bakers. But in social entrepreneuring, it is just as likely for the business be the one to take on the role of marketing, selling and distribution, while the community service program takes on the design and production process. The point is for the partnership to draw upon the unique strengths and intrinsic value of its partners, and for both partners to play a mutually enhancing role in creating and reinvesting revenue.

How to ride the wave of social responsibility

The impact of these business trends are obviously an influx of volunteers and money to support our programs - but not without a price. They require us to look at and honestly evaluate — as well as protect — the value and public image of our organizations and programs. In order to become empowered partners, we must examine the risks and benefits of engaging in partnerships, and we must have access to and be able to trust information about our potential partners. Exploring partnerships will require a great deal of time and energy at the outset, but with potentially enormous and relatively stable long-term benefits. We must be savvy and adjust our thinking to better incorporate the needs, the concerns and the language of business. The financial pressures on non-profits are enormous, and already a large wave of distrust has been directed toward their non taxable status (Bradner, J. H.,1997). We need to be willing to explore new hybrids of profit/nonprofit, even when these partnerships threaten our nonprofit tax-exempt status, for the benefits of a long-term financial partner may become more stable and lucrative than the benefits of our increasingly shaky tax status.

Funders: From Philanthropists to Venture Capitalists

We seek respect, but often do not pro-

vide our stakeholders with the information they need to recognize the impact of what we do... Yes, it's hard work, but if we ever hope to be recognized for what we do, we need to show, in quantifiable and/or qualitative terms the impact of citizen engagement in all of its forms. (Mary V. Merrill of Merrill Associates in an April, 1999 CyberVPM online discussion)

I do feel we need to get beyond simple measurements of inputs (number of bodies, number of hours, number of matches, etc.) and move more as a profession towards "thoughtful and discrete analysis." (Chris Dinnan, VT Department of Corrections in an April, 1999 CyberVPM online discussion)

Funders, no longer satisfied with throwing money at social problems without real, tangible evidence of impact are searching for ways to tie their gifts to outcomes. Nonprofits, weary from the cumbersome grant seeking process, are looking for alternatives that don't repeatedly drain significant amounts of time and energy from delivery of services. These two concurrent forces together will drive two successive, yet different trends — one short term and one longer in duration.

In the short term, funders will exert pressure on grant applicants to expand and transform their documentation processes. Although even more cumbersome than previous "bean counting" forms of evaluation, outcomes or impact-based evaluation will finally lead to greater understanding and trust between funders and grant recipients. The initial investment on the part of a nonprofit to learn and apply the new techniques of outcomes based evaluation will not only improve relationships with funders, but will also lead to greater understanding of the community whose needs it exists to address. The walls between funder, nonprofit and recipient of services will be sig-

nificantly thinned.

Eventually, as trust and connection are built, some funders will no longer feel the need to embrace the role of monitor. Evaluation will always be a key tool in program success, but it will have become more integrated into ongoing connections between funder, program and community. And as the shortcomings of the grant-making process are exposed (namely, the "quick fix" approach of one-time gifts), longer-term, integrated partnerships will emerge. Like businesses, some funders will catch the wave of social entrepreneurship. The new focus will then become the design and maintenance of these new ventures. There are enormous incentives for funders to consider social entrepreneurship. This point is perhaps best illustrated by the experience of funders who have already undergone this shift:

[Funders] felt like their money was going to have a social impact, which was a big part of their interest, but they were also going to get it back, so it could have a second social impact somewhere else if they so chose. Investments are risky; there was no guarantee that they would get their money back, but compared to making a grant, in which the guarantee is that they will not even get one penny back, this was a risk they were willing to take. (Shore, B., 1999, p. 227)

How to Ride the Funding Wave

In the immediate future, savvy volunteer administrators will refine their evaluation and data collection goals to track outcomes rather than inputs. Guidance on how to do this is becoming more widely available (see Saffrit, R. D. & Merrill, M., 1997). In the long term, volunteer administrators must become more willing to give up some degree of control over the direction of their programs, welcoming clients and funders as on-going, integral partners in the process of program planning, implementation and evaluation.

PART II: FOUR FUTURE TRENDS

There is always some risk in attempting to name the most influential future trends of our profession's future. First, these four trends will affect each of us and each of our programs differently. The uniqueness of our programs dictate that what has a heavy impact for you, may have little impact for me, or vice versa. Secondly, one cannot rule out the inevitability of "wild cards of fate," those totally unsuspected, sudden events that alter the course of history in monumental, unexpected ways (Consider the impact of such events as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr.). Further, the points of division between the trends presented here are more arbitrary than real, for they are intimately interconnected and overlap in many directions. But then this is yet another example of the "blurring" to which Marlene Wilson so aptly points in her spring, 1999, article entitled, "Listening for Today: Envisioning Tomorrow." Indeed this is precisely what the fabric of the future is all about. That being said, I encourage you to interact with these four trends — technology, diversity, collaboration and new paradigm thinking and leading — extracting from them what empowers, aids and interests you.

Technology

It's easier to be an engaged citizen in the Informational Economy than in the Industrial Economy. ... [P]ostindustrialism extends the resources for civic participation. It increases dramatically the proportion of the public given advanced educational skills and new communication tools. It frees broad segments of the populace from grinding physical toil. By extending material abundance, it widens the range of individual choice and invites millions to explore civic life in ways previously out of reach for them. (Ladd, C. E., 1999, p. 21)

As connections are made between various forms of telecommunications — digital television, the Internet, cable television, e-mail, personal computers, and fax/scan/copier machines, the pace of change will greatly accelerate and transform the way we work and think. Technology will continue to transform our profession in ways we are only beginning to glimpse. Some of these creative approaches include: 1) on-line philanthropy including on-line auctions; 2) sharing resources through inter-agency volunteer opportunity databanks; 3) listserv discussion groups and real time on-line conferencing (chat) to discuss issues germane to civic engagement; 4) educational resources including on-line libraries, courses, certification programs and book stores; 5) web pages with articles, advice, speakers bureau, etc.; 6) quick response to time-sensitive lobbying or aid efforts through combinations of e-mail, Internet, chat and teleconferencing; 7) actual volunteering on-line (editing, disseminating information via e-mails, maintaining a web site, posting information to bulletin boards and discussion groups.)

Soon to become mainstream is the digital television revolution which transforms a one-way media to an interactive one where active viewers have a variety of choices, including choosing when they want to watch a show; pausing a show without missing any of it; selecting a camera vantage point from which to view the show; and exiting a show to watch an informational video about some aspect of the show (perhaps how to learn more about volunteer opportunities).

The net effect (no pun intended) of these technological advances will be to make it quicker, easier and more convenient for individuals to find and participate in the volunteer opportunities of their choice. The enormity of possibilities presented by these technologies will force individuals to become better consumers and choice-makers, so your volunteer program is likely to experience an influx of very savvy and motivated volunteers

who have already gone through many self-initiated steps to find you. What it will take from you, however, is a significant investment in technology, in continual learning, and in locating your program where it can be found by techno-volunteers. Further, you will need to adapt or develop new methods for recruitment, retention and evaluation of volunteers that are customized for use in virtual space.

Diversity

Our model of volunteer management within programs within formal organizations is an extremely Anglo-industrial model which does not translate well to other cultures. We must learn how to take those things that make a volunteer/helping experience good, and find other methods and ways of sharing that with diverse groups. (Melissa Eystad, Director of Volunteer Development AFS Intercultural Programs, USA, personal communication, September, 1999)

We are moving from the Age of Reason, of analysis, into the age of synthesis. ... Western civilization has tried to put everything and everyone into categories and classifications - few of which work any more. ... Wait a minute, you might be asking, "How can you say things are coming together when there's all this emphasis on diversity? Aren't we actually more diverse?" As I see it, we deal with more diversity because people are coming together across the old boundaries. When our agencies and programs were staffed by and served people who all looked and thought pretty much alike, those with differences were invisible, because they were someplace else. Not any more. (Nancy Gaston, CVA, personal communication, September, 1999)

Depending on whom is speaking, our profession is either doing a good job at

incorporating and honoring diversity, or is just barely beginning. I would suggest that it is both simultaneously. This is because so much of our success as a profession in this area depends on the personal attitudes and values of each practitioner. In a 1997 article on diversity in volunteerism, Santiago Rodriguez points to the all-important personal dimensions of a profession's approach to diversity:

Rather than learning about other groups — and that, indeed, may be important — diversity requires an individual to assess what one's personal values are, and how these values affect our individual behaviors with other people. What we value will affect how we behave with other people. We need to be consciously aware of our values. (p. 19)

As Nancy Gaston noted, there is wide agreement across disciplines that the world is emerging from a 300 year old focus on classification into parts to a new focus on unity and whole system thinking (Wheatley, M.,1992). Shedding light on what this means to diversity, Maryanne Williamson (1997) writes, "Unity and diversity are not adversarial but, rather, complementary parts of a unified whole. They are at their best, synergistic partners in the creation of a more highly evolved culture. We are woven from many diverse threads, yet we make one piece of fabric" (p. 72). She touches on the personal dimensions of this endeavor: "Unity in diversity is a principle that demands of us personal maturity. We must develop the ability to tolerate the creative chaos of many voices and opinions all expressing themselves at once; to not seek control over the thoughts or behaviors of others just because they are different from us; and to listen with respect and recognize the dignity of those with whom we disagree" (pg. 73).

What will equally challenge our skills and attitudes as a profession is that where diversity is concerned, there is no wise or

reasonable place to stop. Cultural, gender, educational, age and socioeconomic diversity just begin to scratch the surface. (Wilson, M., 1999) Consider some other areas in which we are challenged to become more inclusive: broadening the definition of volunteering and who volunteers; welcoming as legitimate multiple motivations for volunteering; including those who need special accommodations in order to engage in volunteering; globalization of networking in our profession where there is unequal access to communication technology. One thing is certain in this uncertain realm: as individual awareness and leadership capabilities evolve (and they will), we will steward one another's participation and empowerment in increasingly effective — and mutually rewarding — ways.

Collaboration

The paradox is that in the midst of the confusion of these now blended versus separate sectors, there has never been a greater opportunity of meaningful collaboration. We need one another in increasingly significant ways. (Wilson, M., 1999)

The thinning of barriers between sectors and the new focus on synthesis and whole systems thinking will lead to an age of unprecedented collaboration and interdisciplinary effort. Many predict that this will signal the beginning of the second Renaissance, a time when the synergistic potential of humankind will finally be realized (August Jacacci & Susan Gault, 1999; Matthew Fox, 1994). Blurring borders and the pervasive "point and click" sensibility will literally make the word "collaboration" outdated, in favor of a more accurate rendering such as "free association."

In the immediate steps before this Renaissance period, we are challenged to topple the barriers between sectors, between types of organizations, and between people themselves. When people

come together in true partnership across cultural, disciplinary, philosophical, and social lines, an unprecedented level of creativity and innovation takes wing. From an efficiency standpoint, we simply cannot afford to do things the old way, confining our collaborations or talk of innovation to those within our profession. We must boldly seek partnerships that cross old barriers. These partnerships may not, at first, seem obvious. One of the pioneers in this area is Jane Leighty Justis, who has contributed significantly to bringing funders and volunteer administrators to the same table. (Justis, J. L., 1998) Recently, she wrote,

In the end, volunteerism and philanthropy are woven together — threads in the same tapestry ... the giving of time, talent and treasure will always be linked. It is time to broaden our thinking, and our language, and advocate for volunteers as the critical resources we know them to be. Who can tell the story better? (personal communication, November 1, 1999)

Susan Ellis (1987) exposed another invaluable yet under-explored partnership. How have we done answering her twelve-year-old call?

There is also room for more collaboration between scholars and practitioners. Both sides can initiate a meeting in which useful research projects are discussed. Why should volunteer administrators sit and wish for data when a local faculty member might love to do that very research study? And why should graduate students and faculty pick topics out of thin air when the volunteer community might have a wish list of pressing questions worth studying? (p. 36)

New Paradigm Thinking and Leading

... [A] broader mosaic [is] just beginning to come into focus and take recognizable form. That mosaic gives us

our first picture of a new kind of leadership for the next century that looks very different from anything that has come before. It is servant leadership more than political leadership, community leadership more than national leadership. (Shore, B., 1999, p. 236)

What leaders are called upon to do in a chaotic world is to shape their organizations through concepts, not through elaborate rules or structures. (Wheatley, M., 1992, p. 133)

At the risk of sounding redundant, the more synergistic, blended world of tomorrow will require a new paradigm of thinking and leading. The values for a new millennium will include effective ways to cope with change, chaos, paradox and ambiguity in our everyday living and working. Many are talking about this new paradigm of leadership, including such heavy hitters as Peter Drucker, Tom Peters, Steven Covey, Peter Senge, Duane Elgin, Ken Wilbur, Fritjof Capra, Gregory Bateson, and Depak Chopra. A new paradigm of service — empowerment instead of handout; client-volunteer instead of recipient-victim, and bottom-up instead of top-down — will permeate this new work. Paradoxes will be commonplace: leader as servant, client as volunteer, teacher as student, competitor as collaborator. Those who stretch themselves to learn these new skills and philosophies will find that they will be able to surmount the sea of risks and fears ahead to reach the rich, synergistic ground beyond.

There is evidence that when it comes to new paradigm leadership, managers of volunteer services may have a significant head start on their counterparts in other professions. For example, a recent (1997) study by Robert F. Ashcraft and Carlton F. Yoshiokota measured five widely recognized practices of the new leadership paradigm: challenging the process, inspiring a shared vision, enabling others to act, modeling the way, and encouraging the

heart. They reported that, "mean scores for AVA respondents were found to be higher for each of the leadership practices factors when compared to the other functional fields" (p. 27).

Discussion

... my own conclusion, from two years of rummaging through the assembled findings, is that we have allowed our persistent anxieties about the quality of our citizenship to blind us to the many positive trends that have been occurring. What emerges ringingly from the diagnosis presented here is that civic America is being renewed and extended, not diminished, and that a new era — here in the United States, but worldwide as well — will be more participatory, not less so. (Ladd, C. E., 1999)

Never before have so many constituencies been so vocal and so aware of the need for new social invention, yet so ill equipped to carry it out. At the dawn of the new millennium, there is emerging a critical mass of awareness of this need. We, in the field of volunteer administration, are poised at the threshold of a new era, one in which we can take an evolutionary leadership role. This is a wakeup call of unprecedented opportunity and service, asking you to connect with your deepest aspirations and to remember what called you to the field of volunteer administration in the first place, then to take that and re-energize it for service in a bold new world.

This article is just a beginning, a glimpse of the rich, fertile ground that lies ahead. It is my hope that it has provided grist for the mill as we meet and work together to provide direction and vitality to our profession in the years ahead. I have intentionally stopped short of prescribing specific "ideal" responses to the trends revealed here, abiding by the advice of Ivan Scheier, (1995) who cautioned that it is risky for the futurist to

predict how people or organizations will respond to the various options presented to them. I would add that in the new paradigm model of thinking and leading, the futurist serves us best when he or she limits the role to gathering and sharing information. It is always best for the community of readers to take charge of interpreting and applying that information in ways that uniquely serve them. In that spirit, I encourage each of you to discuss the information in this article within your local Doviats, your organizations and your cross-disciplinary networks, and to share your future-oriented strategies with others by writing an article, presenting a workshop, or participating in an on-line discussion.

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