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A quarterly journal devoted to the promotion of research, theory,
and creative programming of volunteer services.

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VOLUNTEER-STAFF RELATIONS*

by

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Sunny Hills

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* Presented at a One Day Forum for Supervisors of Volunteers; Sponsored by Volunteer Bureaus/Voluntary Action Centers of nine Bay Area Counties, San Francisco, California, May 1972.

There is evidence of a grave concern now existent in volunteer programs throughout our country. Coordinators or directors of volunteers seem to be increasingly aware of the serious problems which can and do develop between volunteers and paid staff members.

This has become particularly apparent in the last few years. For instance, at a workshop on self-renewal, during an annual conference of the American Association of Volunteer Services Coordinators, men and women who work with volunteers spoke of experiences where administrators (and often staff) were saying to them, in effect, "Since we have to have volunteers, keep them out of my hair," or "Just do your job, but don't bother me."

Later, at the same conference, which was attended by coordinators from all over the nation, a list was made of the 4 major problem areas (according to their importance) which the coordinators face in their day-by-day work with volunteers in agencies and institutions. They were:

administration

staff

involving volunteers in programs after 5:00 p.m.

attending administrative meetings

It is certainly significant that 3 out of 4 pertained to administration and staff problems.

At a recent conference for coordinators of volunteers in California, workshops were held to consider such areas

as administration, supervision, training, and so forth. In all of these, the recorded notes reflected a reoccurring theme: problems with volunteer-staff relations.

In "The State of the Art", a 3 year study by the Goodwill Industries, published in 1971 and financed by a special grant from HEW, several points are significant as they relate to volunteers in rehabilitation facilities.

"The attitudes of executive directors and administrators toward volunteer participation show a definite increase toward the positive as the level of volunteer program development increases:",

They found that the "Average attitudinal scores are highest for executive directors and administrators of facilities having volunteer programs classified as above average in organizational development."² In other words, the better developed the program, the more positive are the attitudes of administration.

The question then is, how do you get to the point of having a well developed volunteer program, if the administrator isn't backing the program? Doesn't this carry over to staff attitudes, also?

There were 2 other tables of questionnaire responses in "The State of the Art" study which should also be mentioned here: reasons for never involving volunteers in an institution's program, and reasons for discontinuing a volunteer program in an institution.

In non-hospital rehabilitative facilities, 52% of the administrators whose programs fell within the above 2 categories, said that volunteers were "unreliable" and 32% said that volunteers were "not worth the bother"³.

Let us look at the public sector for a moment. Currently, all states are required to have a director of volunteers, counties within many states have volunteer programs, and there are federal volunteer programs run

¹ Goodwill Industries of America, Inc., *The State of the Art: Volunteering in Rehabilitation Facilities*, October, 1971, p. 41.

² IBID, P. 41

³ IBID, P. 22

nationally as well as within individual states. Here we are talking about county, state or federal government employees as administration and/ or staff.

From the beginning, negative volunteer-staff relations cannot help but exist when the staff is *told* but *not involved* in the decision-making, as these laws are passed forcing departments to involve volunteers in programs.

I suggest there is a logical reason for concern about relationships among those who work with a volunteer program, private or public.

At this point, may we agree that there *are* problems in evidence between volunteers and staff. May we also agree, for the purpose of this discussion, on the definition of volunteers: that the volunteers, about whom we are speaking, are involved in direct service (*doing with*), not impersonal service (*doing for*).

Now, what can be done, in specific ways, to develop positive volunteer-staff relationships?

ACCEPTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS

Two things occurred at Sunny Hills, in the last year which can be used as illustrations of positive changes toward staff acceptance of volunteers in a facility. Sometimes there is a lot more involved in the terminology we use in this business than meets the eye. At the beginning of 1971, I began referring to the volunteers at Sunny Hills as the 'volunteer staff'. This was done verbally, in memos, reports, etc. It began to catch on among the paid staff, with reactions such as "Oh, you mean the volunteers on the staff. I thought you were referring to just the volunteers." When the paid staff realized the volunteers were on the 'agency staff' it made a tremendous difference in their attitude toward the volunteers. Simply by adding the word 'staff', when speaking of the volunteers, helped make this difference.

Another word became significant in the volunteer program at Sunny Hills. It was apparent that many paid

¹ Sunny Hills Children's Services: A residential treatment center for adolescent boys and girls with severe emotional and behavioral problems, San Anselmo, California.

staff member's attitudes toward the value of volunteer contributions to the agency program were based upon the strict meaning of the word 'use' when referring to volunteers. In other words, 'using volunteers' was just that, in many cases. I decided that the word should be eliminated from our vocabulary. I began a campaign to substitute 'involve' in place of 'use' and after many months, paid staff at Sunny Hills could be heard correcting themselves. It may seem a minor point, but attitudinal changes have really been apparent on the paid staff's part. *Involving* a volunteer in their particular part of the program means something entirely different to them than *using* a volunteer in a particular program.

These two changes in attitude have provided opportunities for a greater 'team' development between paid staff and volunteers, further enabling the paid staff to think in terms of volunteer ability rather than merely volunteer value in dollars and cents and time.

Maybe you have noted that there is one word which I do not use, when discussing volunteer-staff relationships. That is, I do not refer to paid staff as 'professional' as a way of distinguishing them from volunteers. As far as I am concerned, everyone on the staff at Sunny Hills is a professional, whether they are paid or not paid. In stating this, I am not referring to 'professional', for example, as a former teacher who is now teaching at the agency without pay. I mean, any volunteer involved in the Sunny Hills program is a professional in that he or she brings a skill, an expertise, a knowledge or training in some area which he can offer to the emotionally disturbed teenagers at Sunny Hills through his relationship with them.

Very much involved in paid staff acceptance of volunteers is the coordinators responsibility to help them be more sensitive to the direct needs which volunteers can fulfill. At Sunny Hills, I spend as much, if not more time, working with the paid staff to help them learn how to work with the volunteer staff. When I first began the direct service volunteer program at Sunny Hills, I spent my time helping the volunteers learn how to work with our youngsters and our paid staff. I learned very quickly that there was another side to this coin.

When the paid staff is sensitive to potential areas for volunteer involvement, it helps define recruitment for the coordinator of volunteers. Let us think of it in terms of

a circle. Sensitiveness sets up possibilities for a wider variety of volunteer staff jobs, which in turn increases the number of volunteers and volunteer hours, which in turn allows paid staff to see volunteers performing a wider variety of needed jobs, which in turn encourages them to be more sensitive to further possibilities for volunteers in the program.

Once again, may I use an example from my experiences at Sunny Hills. Two and a half years ago, because of various problems present in program changes and staff turnover, I called a moratorium on volunteers (with the approval of the executive director). We did not add new volunteers to the staff for nearly 8 months. During this period, considerable time was spent in helping paid staff understand why this seemingly negative approach was necessary. Paid staff began to understand that value of those volunteers remaining on the staff. They began to understand that volunteers really should not be considered baby-sitters; that if they were to have one or more volunteers involved in their particular part of the agency program, some input and involvement was necessary on their part, and that it was important for them to consider the time spent by the volunteers with the youngsters just as significant as the rest of the time each youngster spent in residential treatment at Sunny Hills. There were even times when I said to a paid staff member, "I don't think you're ready for a volunteer yet," and then tried to help him reach that point.

Happily, this moratorium on volunteers resulted in positive changes among paid staff attitudes and we had more volunteers, with more volunteer hours contributed that year than previously, despite the moratorium.⁵

It is very important for paid staff to understand that volunteers are there to *supplement not supplant*. Orientation for paid staff should definitely include the volunteer program. They should realize from the beginning that they will be seeing volunteers around, if not working with them; that volunteers are not *free* (in that paid staff time is very much involved) but they *do free* the paid staff for greater service to their clients. As an article in the Child Welfare League of America quarterly publication stated, "That

⁵ In 1971, direct service volunteers jobs increased by 33% over 1970, with an increase of 565% in volunteer hours for a total of 108 volunteers contributing 5,280 hours.

volunteers do not receive financial payment does not mean that their services cost nothing.”⁶ Administration needs to understand this, too, so that it does not assume that the coordinator or director of volunteers is the only one on the paid staff who should spend time with volunteers.

EXPECTATIONS OF PAID STAFF

Very much involved in acceptance is the paid staff's expectations for volunteers. It is not hard to find references to problems in this area. “Expectations of staff seem to be unrealistically higher for volunteers than for their professional colleagues. They have a way of remembering, forever, a not-so-good volunteer, and conveniently forgetting about the trained worker they once had who was touchy, know-it-all and took half-hour coffee breaks.”; “...some of our volunteers were kicked off the wards for getting in the way. The Social Workers said they couldn't be bothered. The Recreation staff hadn't had time to work out their own program patterns. And so it went. Throughout the hospital.”⁸

Since expectations vary from one facility to another, obvious questions arise in reading these 2 quotations. Does the paid staff expect baby-sitters, stamp lickers, etc.? If so, does the paid staff accept these volunteer jobs as important? Does their attitude reflect this? Or, do they expect more than that but don't provide the opportunities? Perhaps they say they want greater volunteer involvement with their clients but set it up for the volunteers to fail.

What is important is that the expectations of the paid staff at a facility are well defined and then either mutually accepted, or changed. Without definite expectations, a volunteer program cannot develop and grow. Instead, it may flounder and possibly die. It should be the job of the coordinator or director of a volunteer program to encourage realistic expectations among paid staff and administration.

⁶ Elizabeth M. Cantor, “The Challenge of Volunteer Services”, *Child Welfare*, Volume XLVII, Number 9, November 1968, p. 539.

⁷ Volunteer Bureau, United Community Services, “Workers Without Pay Who Pay Off,” Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1969, p. 23.

⁸ Sidney Zweig, C.V.C., *Volunteer Administration*, Volume V, Number 1, March, 1971, p. 2.

I mentioned earlier the involvement of paid staff time (input) in any volunteer program. May I also pose some questions for your consideration in this area of paid staff attitudes.

How do you justify the amount of time you and other paid staff members spend working with the volunteers? Where do you draw the line? Is it worth the input? What are you in the business for: helping clients through a volunteer program, or providing a way for people in the community to volunteer? As to this last question, neither is right or wrong. Both might be important. What is needed here is to be aware of which is the case for your facility.

Naturally, some volunteers are going to require more paid staff time than others. Those who need more should be looked at as to their value-in-return. When the effort is worth it, then the paid staff needs the help of the coordinator to see this as an important aspect of their job. Otherwise, negative attitudes among paid staff, such as 'wasted time' or 'another volunteer failure' can develop and become contagious much more rapidly, I'm sorry to say, than positive attitudes which are built up over the years.

It is also important for the paid staff to realize that they need to spend time with you, as the coordinator, to help ensure your understanding of the type of volunteer required to fill a client's specific needs. This kind of communication is very important for successful volunteer placement. "Get me a Big Brother for John" is obviously not an adequate amount of information nor should it be acceptable to the coordinator of volunteers.

VOLUNTEER — PAID STAFF TEAMWORK

With acceptance come all kinds of possibilities. All kinds of doors will open. It then becomes alright for volunteers to be involved in staff meetings because they are a part of the agency staff. It then is possible for them to be in on case discussions, to handle confidentially, to enter into policy making and program changes.

As I indicated earlier, paid staff then see the necessity for feedback from the volunteers. "What's happening to our client when he's with you?" "What do you see through your relationships that maybe we don't see in ours?"

Methods can then be established for the feedback process to take place. This also provides the volunteer with a feeling that what he does is of value because someone is listening to what he has to say.

Honesty and trust enter the picture here, too. If a volunteer is included as a part of the agency team, if he is helped to understand what the agency is trying to do, if he is encouraged to participate in working toward program goals, then a climate is established which is conducive to *trust* on both the part of the paid staff and volunteer staff. There cannot be one without the other. Trust cannot develop where paid staff considers volunteers as second rate people. It can develop where paid staff wants volunteers to be identifiable members of the same working team. Most volunteers appreciate and need to have honest feedback from the paid staff as to how they are performing in their job. Just-tolerating volunteers should be replaced by open and honest evaluation, suggestion, information and promotion.

The role or relationship between the paid staff and the volunteer staff changes in other ways, too, as the volunteer program grows. Paid staff (other than the coordinator) become involved in orientation, training, screening, evaluation, development of more volunteer job possibilities, and so forth. If the paid staff begin to see themselves (or each other) in these roles, then the methods and techniques used in developing a 'team' won't be difficult to discover and develop.

It is helpful to start these 'doors opening' by picking out a key member on the paid staff who has a *feeling* for working with volunteers. Start slowly to involve him. Then, as other paid staff see positive things happening, they will want to 'have a piece of the action'. I have used this technique repeatedly at Sunny Hills in various areas of the agency program. Most recently it was used in our school program, where we had a number of new teachers last fall who were not ready or able to involve volunteer classroom aides. By working with one teacher over a period of time, she was finally ready for a volunteer in her classroom. Soon she could handle another and then another. Some very exciting volunteer relationships developed with the youngsters. As a result, other teachers began dropping by my office to request volunteers for their classrooms.

Also, with attitudinal changes comes the realization that volunteers need not be a *threat*.

How often have you heard words similar to this? "I've spent six years studying and training for this job. How can a volunteer possibly work alongside me?"

This is not uncommon in hospitals, schools, treatment centers, any facility where highly trained paid staff members work directly with clients.

Quite frankly, I would much rather place a volunteer without teaching credentials in a classroom at Sunny Hills. We have the necessary teachers. What we really need is a 'human being' who likes teenagers, who wants to spend time with them and who has some understanding of their kinds of emotional problems. Of course, this is an easy way to avoid the threat of volunteers for our teachers. Other parts of our program are different, however, and threat isn't that easily handled. Again, working with one member of the paid staff who isn't easily threatened is an excellent way of showing others it can work for them, too.

Fortunately, the trend today is to help students, particularly those studying for MSW degrees, learn how to involve volunteers in their profession once they are employed. This should become evident in institutions within the near future, hopefully.

THE COORDINATOR'S ROLE

In any discussion of problems with volunteer-staff relations, the coordinator finds himself in-the-middle. To make that position less vulnerable, and more workable, there are a few things which are important to keep in mind.

Volunteers should not be forced upon the paid staff, nor should the coordinator make unilateral decisions as to the placement of volunteers in the program. Open communication is a must between the coordinator and the rest of the paid staff.

Often, coordinators think in terms of a volunteer position as a specific task. Rather, I suggest it is much more effective to start with the person: the client, the

staff member, the volunteer. In meeting the needs of all three, the task then becomes the method, not the motive. Focusing on individual-personal needs in this way enables 'what do I want' grow into 'what do we want' and the result is a team effort among all those involved.

Flexibility and creativity is to be encouraged among both paid and volunteer members of the staff if a volunteer program is to grow and clients needs are to be met. That is the way new volunteer jobs are created, and it is certainly one way paid staff can be freed to give broader and more effective service.

A lot of words have been mentioned in this discussion of volunteer-staff relations:

ACCEPTANCE

INVOLVEMENT

SENSITIVITY

ATTITUDE

SUPPLEMENT

EXPECTATION

TRUST

HONESTY

FLEXIBILITY

CREATIVITY

May I suggest that they are not just words, but very important concepts for a coordinator or director of volunteers to be aware of as they relate to how the agency program and paid staff members are affected by the involvement of volunteers.

TROUBLE SHOOTING

James O'Reilly, C.V.C.*

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When we hear of a volunteer program being in trouble, most of the time it can be reduced to four basic problems: 1) lack of communication, 2) poor organization, 3) competition, 4) negative community attitude. Any one or combination of these can devastate any program.

In considering any of these problems, the personal ability of the Volunteer Coordinator is an obvious factor. That is, each has his own particular strengths and abilities, and the exact opposite. The trick is to recognize the best in each, and for each to seek assistance where indicated.

A major factor is the amount of time needed for the coordinator to learn the needs and available resources of the institution and the community. As each community is different, the amount of time necessary to develop contacts will vary. It is important that the coordinator join and become active in many community groups. This must be considered as a necessary part of the work.

COMMUNICATION:

Each community will have one or two groups which are stronger and more effective than the others. Obviously the coordinator must have considerable skill in dealing with people to avoid being placed in the position of taking sides between groups in the event of any contention. It is wise for the coordinator to develop a diversified program and limit each group to one program, or to one specific area of the institution. It is fatal to good public relations to assign groups, or individuals, to any area unless a specific need is to be filled. This means the coordinator must develop the project in conjunction with the people in the area in which the volunteers will work. A written job description of the project and what is expected of the

volunteers is essential to maintaining good rapport between the coordinator, the volunteers and the people in the work area.

It is equally important for the coordinator to arrange time to visit regularly each area of the institution to keep current about changing programs and needs. This is also a way of sharing information in order to promote continuing cooperation between employees.

If other areas and departments are aware of the purpose and scope of the volunteer program, they can use the volunteers to better advantage. In addition, if all areas are knowledgeable about the total volunteer program, they can help supervise the volunteers' work, and meet needs before they become problems. The people who work directly with the volunteers and receive the benefit of their services are the institution's official hosts.

In the interest of saving time, a form can be developed which is to be filled out by employees in the work area. This should show the name of the volunteer, the activity, the time involved, the name of the employee supervising the project, the response of the patients and any unusual problems or results. This should be returned to the coordinator by the day after the activity. The coordinator then has the information at hand to follow up to help solve any problems encountered. Notes of appreciation must be written to volunteers thanking them for their interest and participation in the program. These notes should be written within 24 hours of the volunteers' visit. The only exception to this, would be if the coordinator has personally seen and thanked the volunteers at the time of their visit.

Communication within the institution and the community is limited by the failure of the coordinator to take time to develop it. Communications can be assisted by the development of brochures and training-orientation programs. These are necessary to acquaint the communities and departments of the institution with the scope and purpose of volunteer services. That is, in addition to speaking to and becoming involved with community groups, the coordinator must become involved with other programs within the institution. This would involve special events, such as, seminars, workshops, or seasonal programs, such as Christmas, etc. These involve careful organization of time and schedules.

ORGANIZATION:

For the most part, "organization" means organization of work according to available time. In order to meet the many demands of the public, and maintain an effective liaison between the communities and the institution, the coordinator must remain flexible. The name of the game is "Stay Loose." Most of the time when the door opens, or the telephone rings, it is the volunteer coordinator who is "IT". This makes it very difficult to maintain a schedule. Therefore, we must set priorities on certain blocks of time. Tasks which must be done daily are best done early.

A survey of how time is spent is a good investment. Tasks can be divided as to importance, whether they are daily, weekly, monthly, or seasonal. One thing which must be pointed out is that setting priorities does not solve problems. It only rearranges them so that they can be handled effectively.

A survey of telephone usage can also be a help. If a record is kept of in-coming calls, it can be determined if there are certain times of the day when calls can be expected. If there are office chores that are not affected by interruptions, do them at a time when you are expecting calls. It may also be discovered that certain times of the day are better for initiating calls. Nothing consumes more time, or is more frustrating, than finding yourself short of time and unable to get an outside line for a call that must be made at a certain time.

Another great waster of time is meetings which accomplish nothing. Never hold meetings for the sake of the meeting just because it has always been done a certain day. This is also very irritating to volunteers. Do as much communicating as possible on a one to one basis. When group meetings are required, have a definite agenda with important items which require group decisions first. Set up a definite starting and stopping time and stick to it on both ends. It can be quite startling to discover that weekly meetings can be held once a month with the same amount of work effectively accomplished. This is not intended to infer that meetings with volunteers or groups should be reduced at the expense of public-relations. This is the most important facet of the volunteer coordinator's work.

Develop a correspondence file divided into the categories most useful to the individual coordinator. Among others, it should contain the following sections: Community Contacts, Publicity Contacts, Previous Donations File, Material Resources File, Hours of Time Donated File, Idea File, and Requests for Service File.

Delegate routine tasks and decisions whenever possible. One frequent mistake made by coordinators is that they find themselves doing, rather than coordinating. This is not a problem of long duration. The coordinators correct this for themselves, or do not survive very long in the position. Their competition eats them up alive.

Again every community and institution is different. The amount of work that can be done is limited by each individual situation and the amount of available time in which to do it.

COMPETITION:

It seems that every day new agencies are created, which compete for available volunteer time and materials. Don't try to lick-em, join-em. You may have volunteers who can be of help to a beginning agency in establishing projects similar to those you are using. Perhaps the new agency has ideas which can help your program and your materials can be mutually shared. By coordinating seasonal programs, such as Christmas, with a number of agencies, more suitable programs can be developed.

The idea of a number of agencies getting together and presenting a seminar to acquaint all volunteer groups in a community with the needs of all agencies is not new. It also helps in selecting groups which are most suitable to an individual agency's needs.

Do not overlook the most obvious source of volunteer recruitment, the volunteers themselves. Encourage volunteers to invite guests to accompany them for a day. This gives program exposure to people who are most apt to fit in with existing programs. However, volunteers must be given to understand that final selection and placement of volunteers remains with the coordinator. It is easier for prospective volunteers to overcome any fears they may

have about working with patients, if they are assigned with an experienced volunteer whom they have known previously.

COMUNITY ATTITUDE:

Not many institutions have incurred the outright animosity of their surrounding communities. Some stigma exists and also, just as deadly, apathy. Constant constructive publicity in as many of the news media as possible is the most effective tool in conquering either apathy or stigma. The old adage, "The wheel that squeaks the loudest is the one that gets the grease", holds true here.

Another effective procedure is to establish a Speakers Bureau within your institution to provide knowledgeable speakers to the community on request. Establishing an auxiliary, or council of volunteers, will put your volunteers in a quasi-official position to help with this problem. They are usually the institutions most loyal goodwill ambassadors. Hold an open house occasionally with the volunteers helping to provide guided tours of the institution. Make it known to the public when there are changes in programs or professional personnel. Obviously, the coordinator must get to know the news editors of all local newspapers, radio, and television stations.

In short, instead of the institution just being in the community, work toward having it become an active part of the community. This cannot be accomplished without the support and cooperation of all areas and employees of the institution.

CONCLUSION:

There are no programs which do not have problems from time to time. Very seldom are there any straight, uncomplicated answers for problems. However, by putting to work our three most important tools, time, cooperation, and elbow grease, needs can be filled and problems solved.

THE ROLE OF STUDENT VOLUNTEERS IN CORRECTIONS TODAY*

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*** I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Jean Hibbard and Mary Windt.**

Criminology and delinquency students in cooperation with the Department of Corrections and the Connecticut School for Boys recently completed their second year of a student volunteer program. The student volunteer program was established to augment the existing (and allow for expansion) institutional programs in an era of reduced state budgets and to provide students with practical field experience.

The utilization of volunteers in correctional facilities is not unusual nor a recent phenomenon. Many institutions have used volunteers before. Some of the less common aspects of this program are its low cost (has operated on a budget of less than \$500 over the two year period and students have contributed over 35,000 working hours) and its wide academic/practical scope. The students (an average of 120 participate per semester) are drawn from the criminology and delinquency classes. The students are first exposed to academic materials on corrections. In addition to lectures, films, tapes, they are urged to find out about correctional centers, institutions, and juvenile facilities. Informed students appear to be more effective in volunteer work.

The students engage in volunteer work in many different settings. The present participating institutions include a women's prison, boys school, four jails, mental

hospitals and ex-inmate groups. The students travel to institutions all over the state (the expenditures mentioned above were for transportation).

SELECTION

The maximum number of students that can be accommodated among the participating institutions is approximately 150 (we are, however, continually contacting and developing new sources). Each semester over 300 students apply for the volunteer positions. The selection process has been one that is difficult to formalize. Our problem has not been recruitment as with many volunteer programs.

The only attempt at recruitment is to locate interested black students. Because of the smaller campus population and already heavy demands on black students (black students are *expected* to take part in social action activities) recruitment of black volunteers has been necessary. Black volunteers are particularly needed for the boys school program in order to present the black youngsters with college role models.

A screening process has been developed that involves two steps, the first selection device is year in school. Originally seniors were picked because they would be more mature and it would be their last chance to acquire field experience before graduation. The institutions have questioned this. Selecting seniors while increasing the chance of maturity decreases the possible continuity of the program. Seniors will be volunteers for one or at the most two semesters. The turnover of volunteers is too great. Starting next year juniors will be given first consideration. It is hoped that some students will take part in a particular program for a full two years.

Following selection on the basis of year standing the interested volunteers are interviewed. This interview is an attempt to determine their attitudes towards prison and training school populations and to locate prejudices. Selected volunteers are further interviewed by the institutions and given an orientation. The institutions have had only one volunteer that had to be "disciplined". This volunteer overstepped his authority. He was called in for a discussion of his role. With the exception of helpful

comments the volunteers have not required supervision (a common area of misunderstanding is with the co-eds who must learn differences in backgrounds and the interpretation of whether a behavior is viewed as a sexual advance, e.g., holding hands).

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

The role of the volunteer varied from institution to institution but in general they performed the following roles: 1) counseling, 2) big brother/sister, 3) recreation aides, 4) tutoring and program evaluation.

Volunteers working in the area of counseling attempt to be a friend interested in the client's program in the institution and his or her success upon release. The student volunteers follow the client after he has been released from the institution. The post release assistance is considered one of the most important aspects of the volunteer program. This aspect will be expanded into a separate group whose responsibility will be to locate jobs and assist men due to be released.

It is emphasized in the orientation meetings that the volunteers are to be thought of as a friend, not part of the staff and therefore cannot make any promises with respect to the institutional setting. Being viewed as a friend has certain advantages. The volunteers are more readily accepted than they might be if they were labelled as staff. The client and the volunteer seemed to become closer - the volunteer cannot use what the client says against him. If the client relates personal fears or insecurities to the student volunteer he need not worry that later the volunteer will use the information as a discipline strategy.

A recurring problem in all the institutions is the absence of counseling for the quiet, less troublesome person. Manpower shortages have forced institutions to employ therapy for the obviously troubled client. Many times the troubled client who broods and responds with quiet desperation is not given needed therapy. The student volunteers are crucial in aiding these clients. Student volunteers allow the institutional counselors to handle their caseload more effectively. Volunteers should report to institutional counselors particularly when they detect a person who seems to be "building up pressure". The volunteer

students have not been assigned to particular clients but rather are placed in a situation where they can relate to a group and naturally select out the client for whom a rapport develops. For example, in the boys school group, eight or so counselors would be assigned to a cottage of twelve boys. Volunteer counselors could therefore develop one to one relationships based upon mutual compatibility.

The big brother/sister activities are more structured than the counseling. Here a certain boy is selected by the boys school for a big brother or sister and the institution attempts to place him with an appropriate volunteer. They work on a one to one basis.

The recreation program varied a great deal between the institutions. Differences are a result of facilities and clients within the institutions.

Volunteers at the Conn. School for Boys have participated in the following:

Arts and Crafts: The program consisted of ceramics, sand casting, drawing, and leather work (here care must be taken with respect to loss of cutting tools).

Gym Activities: Basketball and Volleyball

Swimming: Usually, it consists of free swim, with some occasional private lessons. Volunteer participation is minimal.

Photography: Volunteers are trying to develop a program.

Future Possibilities:

Arts and Crafts: Along with reopening it under the direction of a full time staff member, the program should be greatly expanded. Volunteers on a regular basis are needed to help direct and organize the program, as well as make available any special skills or talents they may have (such as drawing, painting, etc.) Also a greater and more diversified supply of materials are needed so that more activities can be offered. (Leatherwork, tie-dying, copper etching, clay work and any other materials which will allow for creativity).

Gym Activities: The program could be extended to include a greater variety of sports, thus utilizing UCONN volunteers in its organization. Any student with special skills could conduct classes in such areas as gymnastics, karate, judo, boxing, etc.

Swimming: NO female volunteers will be welcome or allowed in the pool area. Male volunteers could be used for teaching swimming, diving, and supervising water sports.

Photography: Even though there is limited interest, the program should be made available for those who desire it.

Dramatics: This program has great potential. The activities undertaken should be on a one-night basis until a regular participation by the boys is established. Once this interest is developed, larger scale activities can be attempted. Some possibilities include sensitivity groups, role playing, acting, and creative writing.

Miscellaneous:

"Go Cart Creations": Mechanically minded UCONN volunteers can locate wheels, old motors, and other parts, and help the boys build these creations. Once interest has been built up, and the go carts finished, races and other hillwide activities can be organized.

Some suggestions for one night affairs include:

Casino Night: Have the boys plan and organize a "Little Las Vegas."

Cooking: A cottage can plan, prepare, and serve a full course dinner to which they may invite guests.

In addition to the above recreational programs, spontaneous activities such as kite flying and frisbee playing are useful.

The recreation activities in other institutions are designed to accommodate the clients and the available facilities. For example, at the women's facility in Niantic, Ct. recreational activities center around softball, hiking, sewing and gardening. At one correctional center recreation is

limited to sedentary activities because there is no recreation area - at another, inmates are taken outside to play basketball and baseball.

Recreation activities are not viewed as distinct from the counseling and self-awareness goals. Recreation is of course primarily an activity that enables the client to maintain his health, release tension, and encourage learning organizational skills, e.g. how to work as part of a team. In addition to these goals, recreation that involves volunteers can provide a sense of closeness and therefore lead to rapport. With one group of youngsters, the volunteers used recreational pursuits as the introduction to group or rap sessions. Recreational activities allow people to laugh at themselves and frequently drop the walls they have built around themselves.

A question that has emerged is with respect to organized sports. The perspective from the volunteer end has been to accept the institutional decisions since the staff are much closer to the "aftereffects" of competitive sports.

The advantages of volunteer contacts have been evident in the area of recreation. Volunteers have been able to locate free sports equipment (University athletic department) and free tickets to athletic events to list just two accomplishments.

Tutoring is a one-to-one activity to teach basic writing or math skills or to strengthen areas that the tutee has a weakness in. The effectiveness of tutorial programs should be continually tested.

The last major activity is program evaluation. Approximately twelve students per semester work in evaluative capacity. Some have assisted the department of Corrections in its correctional evaluation program and others evaluate the volunteer program. The results of their review are offered in the next session.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

Two years is a short time for a program that was initiated without months or years of planning. Many shortcomings have appeared and the program as a result is continually changing. To summarize the shortcomings we

find that: 1) the screening process needs to be tightened up to exclude students with limited interest who have been involved in the program, 2) the program needs more structure at the University and within the institutions, and 3) the volunteer handbook must be expanded.

The student volunteers coming into the program must be able to fit into a fairly well defined position and have activities available (particularly alternatives). If a particular recreational activity is not going well an alternative activity should be readily available. In many cases this means that the volunteer group should have the needed equipment.

We hope to solve this problem by having a more detailed volunteer handbook. An extensive handbook of volunteer activities is under consideration. In addition to the handbook, will be a monthly newsletter to all volunteers. This newsletter will suggest new ideas as well as be informative with respect to what is happening within the institutions. Meetings have been used for this purpose to date, but finding a suitable time and getting the word out has been a problem. Volunteers need to exchange experiences and ideas with each other.

The success of the program is difficult to measure but one level at least - that is the reception by the clients - it clearly has been successful.

For example, at the Boys School which has a shortage of recreation aides the expansion of recreation time was eagerly received by the boys.

Individual cases of success could be listed but it is only necessary to indicate that the major contribution of the program is in terms of demonstrating that someone cares - it is essential that this concern with the ex-offenders return to the free world is backed up with basic help such as employment opportunities. As suggested above we are increasing our attention to this aspect.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that a student volunteer program can: 1) be rapidly initiated and filled with capable volunteers, 2) allow for expansion of recreational, counseling, tutorial and other institution efforts (especially at a time of tight

budgets and student concern for the improvement of societal institutions), and 3) provide the stimulus for more successful re-entry into the free world.

Two years of a volunteer program and over 35,000 donated work hours make it clear that pretraining is the essential element of a successful program. The students must have clear ideas where they are going and what they are doing. As suggested earlier a comprehensive volunteer handbook is essential. Students must be completely informed before they embark on a volunteer activity.

The students almost universally report (all students keep a journal of their volunteer work) that they "got more out of it than the clients.. learned more..received more." (from Journals) Students need a forum to present their experiences to others. Next year, the student volunteers will go into the community to talk to the community about corrections. It is hoped that correctional officials will also speak at these public lectures.

Additional activities to encourage more outside community involvement will be tag sales, book collections, etc., in the community to let people know about the needs of inmates. Students through referral publications will keep in touch with student groups from other schools. A network of student volunteers may emerge out of this communication.

As the volunteer program becomes more structured, an attempt will be made to develop indicators of the effectiveness of the program. The measurement of effectiveness will require follow-up studies and evaluations.

Finally, the obvious must be mentioned and that is for any volunteer program to be effective the participating institutions must be genuinely interested. We were fortunate to have a Department of Corrections and a boys school with a superintendent such as Dr. Charles Dean that were willing to accept over one hundred college students per semester. Both the Department of Corrections and the Connecticut School for Boys worked diligently to establish the volunteer program.

THE ROLE OF TEEN-AGE VOLUNTEERS IN WORKING WITH MULTIPLE-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

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The author wishes to acknowledge his thanks to Dr. M. Mendelson, Mrs. G. Fountain, Mrs. Oleta Bast and Miss Connie Dunn for their co-operation in preparing this article.

This article will deal with the roles played by a teen-age volunteer group in the Children's Unit of a rehabilitative chronic disease hospital. The Children's Unit is composed of about 31 children between the ages of 8 months and 12 years. Most of the children have multiple handicaps and possess one or more of the following disorders: hydrocephaly, microcephaly, paraplegia, hemiplegia, spastic quadriplegia, hyperkinesis, brain damage, hypoglycaemia, convulsive seizures, malnutrition, urinary tract dysfunction, cortical blindness, deafness, horseshoe kidney, neurogenic bladder, and battered child syndrome, etc. A large number of these children are mentally retarded, ranging from mild to severe.

A number of these children do not have parents and close relatives and rarely do they have any visitors. Although the children receive excellent medical and nursing care, they get a very limited exposure to different people and to the stimuli of the outside world. In the summer of 1971 a group of young people from Bowie Sacred Heart Church, as part of the summer program, contacted the hospital to spend some time with the children, especially to take them out to the playground to play. Initially the group started with only three volunteers but as word spread, the number grew much larger.

Presently the group consists of 33 young boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 17 years with 3 adult leaders. These teen-agers are all from the Bowie, Maryland area and attend either Bowie Senior High, Bel Air Junior High, Benjamin Tasker Junior High, or Samuel Ogle Junior High Schools.

During the initial phase of the volunteer program, this group was limited to spending time playing with the children, since the group did not have any knowledge of medical, nursing and other psycho-social techniques. This posed some risks as many of the younger children needed careful handling. As a result, some training and teaching sessions were introduced to these young volunteers covering the areas of mental retardation, feeding techniques, handling techniques and a general assessment of each child. The physiotherapist provided several training sessions to the volunteers in how to assist the children in walking, dressing, feeding and other activities without causing any discomfort.

The initial purpose of this church group was to give the teenagers an opportunity "to grow as Christians by serving others." At Glenn Dale Hospital they could give of themselves without necessarily receiving anything in return. When I asked some of the teen-age volunteers what motivated them to come regularly and work with these handicapped children, their answers were invariably that they got satisfaction by helping children that "did not have it as well as I did while growing up," "how little the kids have," and "how much we could give them." As some of the children did not have parents or relatives to come and visit them, these young volunteers played the roles of substitute parents and visitors.

Now the young volunteers not only play with the children but also they feed and provide companionship on a regular basis. Because of the great impact of this group on the psycho-social aspects of these handicapped children, the group has extended their services even further. They are now taking the children twice a month to the Church for cookouts, barbecues, or for dinner-recreation. They bring a large number of normal children of the same age from the community to freely mix and play with the handicapped children. These youngsters play records and games, sing, and provide other recreation depending on weather and other factors. They also take some children to their own homes for dinner and for a week-end visit.

In addition to the above activities they also arranged birthday parties, Easter party, Christmas party, Halloween party, etc. During Christmas they gave gifts to each child. The expense of these activities are mostly borne by the group members themselves. On several occasions they

collected money to cover the expenses of some of their activities by bake sales.

This volunteer program provided an opportunity to these young people to take the initiative in responding to other's needs who were so dependent for day-to-day survival on others. In so doing they tended to grow into compassionate and understanding individuals. Another positive aspect of the volunteer participation is that a number of young people have strongly indicated the desire to work with handicapped children as a vocation.

This teen-age volunteer group has not only brought new life to these children but it also has acted as a catalyst in involving other disciplines in collaborating with other community agencies, and, finally in opening new doors for the total and more humane treatment of the children.



PROJECT "GOLF"

Doris C. Dauksis

Assistant Chief of Volunteer Services

Mass. Department of Mental Health

Last year, a new volunteer program was introduced at Belchertown State School, Belchertown, Massachusetts. It was initiated by a very interesting person, Mr. Jim Nichols, a resident of the nearby Town of Monson.

Jim quit a career in boxing for a career in baseball which was ended abruptly by an automobile accident in March of 1929. Jim lost an arm in that accident. It was a bad time for him, but at the insistence of a friend, he learned to play golf. Jim practiced 8 to 10 hours a day before he got to know the game. After five years of playing, he was good enough to get on the pro tour and join the Spaulding Advisory Staff. Jim was on the tour for 25 years and during that time supported himself entirely with his golf activities. He has given golf exhibitions all over the world.

It was during the summer of 1970 that Jim decided to "whack some golfballs around" with patients at Belchertown State School. He spent many hours at the school and his good humor and expertise with the residents was much appreciated by everyone.

Early in the spring of 1971, Jim and a close friend of his, Ex-Senator Vite Pigaga (also a one-armed golfer, and Director of the Massachusetts Health, Welfare and Retirement Trust Fund Board) came to the Department of Mental Health Central Office of Volunteer Services to see if there would be a way of expanding on this golf program in other facilities of the Department.

Meetings were set up including these two volunteers, the Central Department Office of Volunteer Services and pertinent professional staff at the facilities. It was decided that there be a pilot project and involve only three facilities at this time, Belchertown State School, Monson State Hospital, and Northampton State Hospital. With full cooperation of the Superintendent of each facility, space was made available for driving golfballs, and staff on the wards was advised of the schedule for patient participation.

"Project Golf" has been supervised by the recreation departments of the facilities and Mr. Nichols has given untold hours of his time to teaching residents how to play the game.

During June, a Springfield television station took pictures of the Northampton State Hospital golfers at their driving range and the pictures were shown on the evening news on June 14th on Channel 22.

Used golfclubs and golfballs have been generously donated but many more are needed. The program is very popular and plans are underway for setting up putting greens for use next season at Northampton and at Monson.

Staff at the hospitals and schools has stated that it is very important for the patients to get outside and do things and they all enjoy golfing so much. "They come down to the range and start hitting balls even before Mr. Nichols arrives", said one staff member.

Many people have become interested in this golf project and a very exciting new development has come about.

For background on this new development it must be explained that for the past few years, the Department of Mental Health Office of Volunteer Services at the Central Department, has been holding monthly meetings of the Supervisors of Volunteer Services from each Department of Mental Health Facility. These meetings have been used as a means of information exchange about Volunteer Services Administration as well as in-service training.

In line with the human services concept and the recognition of the importance of all agencies working together, during the past two years the invitation list for attendance at these monthly meetings has been enlarged to include Volunteer Supervisors and Coordinators from other human service agencies. Recently, attendance has included Volunteer Coordinators from Department of Public Welfare, Department of Public Health, general hospitals, Massachusetts Association for Mental Health, Massachusetts Association for Retarded Children, United Community Services, Aquarium, Youth Service, as well as the Department of Mental Health.

At a meeting of this group in October 1971, a progress report on the golf project was given by those involved and a great new idea emerged.

When Rutland Heights Public Hospital took over their property from the previous tenant, the Veterans Administration, there was a 9 hole golf course on the property. It had fallen into disuse and was not maintained. Shortly after the patients moved into the Public Health Hospital, a small group of them decided to rejuvenate the golf course and spent many hours trimming, cutting, and cleaning up the golf course. This was excellent therapy for these patients and it wasn't too long before they began playing golf on their own golf course.

At the October 1971 meeting of the Volunteer Supervisors, Rutland Heights Hospital threw out a challenge to Northampton, Monson, and Belchertown. The challenge was pure and simple - "You play golf - we play golf - we have our own golf course - let's have a match!"

The challenge was immediately taken up by the Supervisors of Volunteer Services at each institution and plans are now underway to set up a series of matches between the patients.

This clearly points out that the best way to understanding of one another is to work together.

Isn't this what Human Services is all about?



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A VOLUNTEER

Diane S. Roupe

Volunteers in Rehabilitation

Goodwill Industries, Washington, D.C.

GIVING . . .

from the center of one's being.

RECEIVING . . .

from lives blessed with courage and rich understanding.

HELPING . . .

*to bring mankind closer to Truth
as one perceives it.*

FEELING ONENESS . . .

with ourselves and with humanity.

TASTING ETERNITY . . .

through investment in other life.

FINDING FAITH . . .

in the human soul and the ultimate order of all things.

BEING A FRIEND;

HAVING A FRIEND.

TOUCHING . . .

other lives.

BEING TOUCHED . . .

by other lives.

CARING.

SHARING.

Volunteer Administration is attempting to determine the need for education and training among individuals who are responsible for conducting a broad range of volunteer programs. If this need can be substantiated, **Volunteer Administration** will develop training workshops oriented to specific issues in volunteer service, and offer them in the localities where the particular need exists. We have had substantial experience conducting such training programs for volunteer administrators in the Boston area.

Previous experience suggests that certain questions tend to recur:

What special factors influence the selection and supervision of volunteer personnel?

How can I obtain practice in such supervisory skills?

How can the volunteer administrator deal with the ever-present questions of volunteer-staff interaction?

What content and process skills are needed in order to prepare for effective service?

These are major issues. Others will occur to you. Using the form on the following page, would you list issues which have emerged during your efforts to develop programs of voluntary action and service.

Thanks for your attention and hope to see you in a workshop soon.

Marvin S. Arffa, Editor

Issues in volunteer administration which ought to be addressed in training workshops:

- a.
- b.
- c.

Would you be willing to attend a three-day workshop in your region of the country dealing with a range of such questions in volunteer administration?

Yes

No

Would your agency be willing to send you if the tuition fee were within the vicinity of \$100 for the three days?

Yes

No

Would you be willing to attend if your agency's situation required that you contribute to the fee and/or expenses?

Yes

No

Which time period would be most convenient for your assuming that the workshop would run from Thursday morning through Saturday noon:

March 1973_____

April 1973_____

May 1973_____

June 1973_____

Name_____

Title_____

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