

and committed citizens. With a growing public insistence on effectiveness of government programs, the role of volunteers to assist in bridging the gap between government agencies and programs and the people they intend to serve becomes increasingly important. By promoting cooperation between the public sector and the voluntary sector, government can augment its own capabilities with citizens' energy and skills.

In this respect, the governors wish to note the valuable assistance provided by statewide offices of voluntary action and citizen participation, which currently operate in 29 states. These offices use a variety of approaches to mobilize citizen resources, with each reflecting the differing priorities and circumstances of the state and citizens it serves. Through training and technical assistance activities, statewide offices have sought to ensure that volunteers will be used productively. They also transmit information concerning federal and state actions of importance to local volunteer activities and channel federal and state resources to local needs.

Statewide offices will be particularly valuable as participants in implementing the administration's recently announced urban policy, helping to secure the involvement of neighborhood and other voluntary organizations in implementation efforts through the networks which the offices have established within the voluntary sector of the states they serve.

The governors commend the statewide offices and recommend their continued support. They also encourage the creation and refinement of mechanisms which will maximize citizen participation in the quest for solutions to the problems which face the nation and its communities.

VOLUNTEERISM AND UNIONS . . .

NCVA's Volunteers from the Workplace project conducts survey on union involvement in worker volunteerism.

Results are in from questionnaires utilized by the VFW project to develop an understanding of the dynamics of union involvement in worker volunteerism. In conjunction with the Community Services Department of the AFL-CIO, NCVA circulated a written survey to labor organizations affiliated with the AFL-CIO with possible volunteer programs. Preliminary findings indicate significant union efforts and point to several parallels with corporate volunteerism.

Of the 114 labor organizations which responded to the survey, 66 were local central labor councils, 12 were state labor councils, 7 were international unions, 2 were united labor agencies, and 27 were labor community service liaison representatives employed by local United Ways. This diversity in respondents indicates that union volunteerism is structured along the complex lines characteristic of overall AFL-CIO organization. The resources of 14 1/2 million people are available for this unified effort. A detailed description of labor union structure and volunteer administration will be provided in the project's final report. Despite the variety in categories of respondents of the union survey, answers indicated similar attitudes and activities among them; thus, the different groups are not segregated in this preliminary report.

Reflective of labor's commitment to volunteerism is the fact that 109 of 114 respondents promote rank and file involvement in community volunteer activities. For 37 percent, this included reimbursing union members for time off from their jobs to do volunteer work. Sixty-four percent of those questioned report some

form of awards system to reinforce employee volunteerism. Sixty-eight percent claim to actively match members with community programs in need of volunteers.

The labor policy that mandates the existence of the entire community services network throughout the AFL-CIO hierarchy speaks to the substance of union-directed volunteerism. Community service departments and committees exist at every level of union organization. At the national level, leadership, technical assistance, and encouragement are provided with state labor bodies, local central labor councils, and individual local unions. Each is mandated to fulfill the "human contract" for union members and the community at large. The surveys indicate that a part of this service is met by volunteerism.

In spite of the formalized structure which is available to AFL-CIO to guide volunteer involvement, survey responses indicated that little is done to track or coordinate members' volunteer activities. Sixty-four percent of the respondents had no written guidelines concerning members' volunteer involvement; sixty-six percent did not maintain any records on the extent of worker participation in volunteerism; and only six percent had surveyed their membership to determine the extent or type of their volunteer involvement. The lack of record-keeping and use of established structures to track volunteer activities has made it difficult to assess the scope and nature of union volunteer involvement in community services activities.

The most frequently cited program which involves union members as volunteers is the union counselor program. Members, who complete an AFL-CIO sponsored training program, act as information and referral counselors for fellow workers to help them gain needed services from community social service agencies. Graduates of this program often serve as volunteers in the community and tend to become the nucleus for other volunteer efforts within the workplace.

Other ways in which members become involved are through service on community agency boards and through one-shot and group projects. Notable program areas include crime prevention, blood bank drives, fundraising telethons, and youth assistance programs.

A consensus (97) among respondents reveals that they perceive that labor's community service activities and volunteer involvement improves community awareness of the union as a responsible citizen, and 90 felt that it enhanced labor-community cooperation. These beliefs mirror those held by corporations. Both apparently appreciate the public relations return on their community service investment. Improvement of skills, morale, and the delivery of better services were among other benefits cited by labor.

A similar parallel exists between corporate and union perceptions of obstacles to volunteer involvement. Labor organization respondents mentioned lack of time, lack of leadership commitment, and lack of paid staff as the major obstacles to effective volunteerism. The corporate response was identical. However, a notable deviation was revealed with regard to community receptiveness to volunteer initiatives. Several labor groups asserted anti-union sentiment as a hindrance to their volunteerism. Other unique union problems appeared, including the high turnover in local union leadership, inflexible work schedules, and inability to reimburse members for time off the job to do volunteer work.

Further survey results and details will appear in the project's final report to be issued later this year. Follow-up interviews are being conducted to research exemplary union volunteer activities and programs. Other major national labor unions including the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America are being studied to identify volunteer activities which may be focused upon. The resultant data should greatly aid in an accurate understanding of union volunteerism.