The Community Connection

Volunteer Trends in a Changing World

Research Review

Girl Scouts.

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Girl Scouts.
Where Girls Grow Strong.

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Following the terrorist attacks of Sept. II, 2001, volunteering has become more meaningful to many people. Youth development organizations can build on this increased sense of community spirit to expand and diversify their volunteer bases and implement new strategies to reach more volunteers. However, to best use this surge of goodwill productively, nonprofits need to understand the motives and backgrounds of potential volunteers. *The Community Connection: Volunteer Trends in a Changing World*, identifies key trends in volunteering so that youth development organizations, such as Girl Scouting, can garner the support they need to make a difference in the lives of young people.

Major areas of discussion include:

◆ Data on charitable behavior and volunteering post-9/11

◆ General trends in everyday volunteering

◆ Profiles of potential volunteers to work with Girl Scout youth

◆ Insights from girls ages 11-17 about the "ideal" volunteer

◆ Expanding the volunteer pool among young adults ages 18-29

◆ Information on adults underrepresented in the volunteer population

Strategies for action and implementation also are discussed.

Understanding the needs of youth today is critical to Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA) and other nonprofit organizations. Since the terrorist attacks, polls have shown that youth want to take action, be heard, are more concerned about the future and increasingly are looking to adults as a source of safety and support.

Some highlights follow:

Call to Respond: Volunteers Post 9/II

In a post 9/11 survey, 73 percent of respondents said that helping others had taken on greater significance in their lives, and 67 percent said that serving their country was more important.

Digital Touch: Online Volunteering

Over 75 percent of people surveyed online said they would increase their level of community involvement through online programs.

Young Adults Giving their Time

Forty-six percent of 18-24 year olds surveyed said that they had volunteered in the last year. Additionally, young people ages 18-24 are more likely to engage in episodic volunteering due to time and commitment issues.

Expanding the Reach

Approximately 46 percent of Hispanics volunteered in 1998. Over 19 percent of Hispanics served with religious organizations.

Good for Youth and Good for Business

Eighty-one percent of companies surveyed in 1999 connect volunteering to their overall business strategies, compared to only 31 percent who did so in 1992.
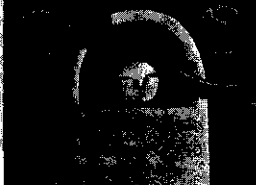
Volunteering Strengthens Communities

Polls reveal that since Sept. 11, Americans have found a new spirit of national unity and purpose, and are more willing to serve by contributing their time and money. In the months following the attacks, people across the country re-examined their priorities and thought about how to make their lives more meaningful—and many have turned to volunteering. Given this outpouring of volunteer support, there is no more fitting time than now to celebrate the role that these "ordinary heroes" play in our everyday lives. (Note: Connie Matsui, the President of Girl Scouts of the USA, was named International Year of Volunteers honoree by the United Nation's Association of the USA Council of Organizations.)

Additionally, the Independent Sector's *Charitable Giving: September 11 and Beyond* (2001) survey of more than 1,000 Americans found:

♦ Seven in ten Americans (70 percent) contributed money, blood or time to support the disaster relief and recovery effort.

♦ Three in ten Americans (30 percent) participated in one or more community, spiritual or local neighborhood event or activity as a direct result of Sept. 11.

♦ African-Americans (particularly females) were more likely than any other demographic group to have donated time in support of Sept. 11.

In a national survey of approximately 1,000 American women conducted by the Center for Gender Equality in November 2001:

23 percent of women said that they had volunteered in response to the Sept. 11 events.

Priorities Re-examined

Americans of all ages have re-evaluated their lives—from their careers, to how they spend their time outside of work, to what's important to them and why.

According to a poll commissioned by *American Demographics* in December 2001:

Of 1,000 respondents, 73 percent related that helping others and serving the country (67 percent) had taken on a greater significance since Sept. 11. In contrast, 19 percent said making lots of money was more important, and 30 percent said getting ahead was more important.

What Matters After September 11, 2001

| Helping others | Serving county | Getting ahead | Making lots of money |
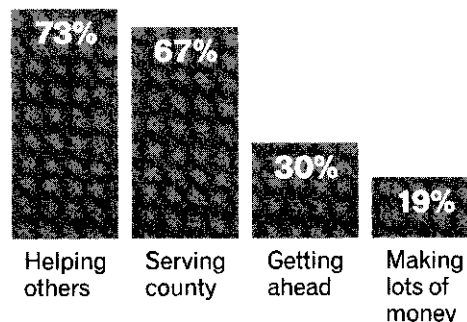
Source: *American Demographics/TeleNation*, Market Facts, Inc. (2001)

Since the terrorist attacks, people also have demonstrated a desire for community, connection and meaning through relationships with others online. Polls revealed people were feeling a greater sense of connectedness, not only to friends and family, but also to a broader community.

A Pew Internet & American Life Project poll of over 1,200 adults revealed:

Two days following the attacks, 13 percent of Internet users attended virtual meetings or participated in online communities through chat rooms, bulletin boards and list serves, a significantly greater figure than the usual 4 percent of users.
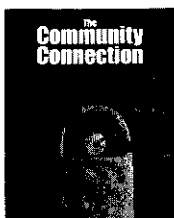
According to an *American Demographics* poll conducted in October 2001:

Following Sept. 11, 51 percent of Americans polled said they felt closer to their fellow Americans, 30 percent felt closer to people who live around them, 14 percent felt closer to people who share their faith, and 5 percent felt closer to people who share their political ideas.

Mobilization of Volunteers

As part of President Bush's special initiative in the war against terrorism, the Corporation for National and Community Service will mobilize more than 20,000 AmeriCorps and Senior Corps members to make a commitment to service in their communities. This includes volunteering, tutoring and participating in other local neighborhood efforts. The initiative also seeks for Americans to commit to at least 2 years (or 4,000 hours) of service.

Inquiries at AmeriCorps' online recruitment site increased 30 percent since Sept. 11.

Seniors, a growing sector of the overall population, are volunteering their time and skills, in many cases, simply as a result of being asked. Senior Corps, and other volunteers, will assist police and fire departments, public health agencies, government agencies that deal with disaster relief and other local agencies, such as parks and recreation departments. They also will assume administrative tasks and other functions so that local personnel can meet their frontline responsibilities.

Building on the Volunteerism Momentum

A challenge for nonprofits is determining how deep the current spirit of service and volunteerism runs and how long it will last. How can the appeal of volunteering be broadened to ensure that it remains a unifying force for the nation? How does the rise in patriotism, giving back and civic participation fit into a larger view of what volunteering historically has meant in the lives of adults?

Studies focused on general trends in volunteering reveal that as a "nation of givers," Americans are likely to continue their charitable behavior beyond the immediate relief efforts.

General Trends in Volunteering

Based on a sample of over 4,000 telephone interviews, the Independent Sector's *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (2001) reveals the following:

Volunteering in the United States, 2000

Percentage of adults who volunteered	**44%**
Total number of adult volunteers	**83.9 million**
Average weekly hours per volunteer	**3.6 hours**
Annual hours volunteered	**15.5 billion hours**
Estimated hourly value of volunteer time*	**$15.40 per hour**
Total dollar value of volunteer time	**$239.2 billion**
Percentage of adults asked to volunteer	**50%**
Percentage of adults who volunteered when asked	**63%**

More women (46 percent) volunteered than men (42 percent).

42 percent of Americans gave money and volunteered. Americans who volunteered gave twice as much money as non-volunteers, making average household contributions of $2,295 last year, compared to $1,009 by households that did not volunteer.

Note: All volunteering numbers are for individual adults over the age of 21 who report service for an organization (excluding informal volunteering).

*The hourly value of volunteer time is updated yearly by INDEPENDENT SECTOR, and is based on the average hourly wage for nonagricultural workers, published in the Economic Report of the President (2001 Edition), increased by 12 percent to include fringe benefits.

Source: *Giving and Volunteering in the United States*, 2001 Independent Sector (2001)

Giving and Receiving

Many volunteers report that what matters most to them is connecting with a cause that is larger than themselves. Volunteers often expand the support and connection they have with other people, make new friends and gain access to tangible resources, such as job training, which they may not otherwise have had. Volunteering also is seen as a way to foster self-confidence, develop leadership skills and allow people to give back to the community. Some studies have even identified a feeling of enhanced well being, sometimes described as a "volunteer's high," as an outcome of the volunteer experience. Indeed, research has shown that service benefits the giver and the receiver, not only in disasters, but in everyday acts of kindness as well.

For example, of 544 troop, group and assistant leaders surveyed for the *Girls, Families and Communities Grow through Girl Scouting* project (1997 National Outcomes Study), the majority agreed that they had benefited by being a volunteer.

♦ 97 percent said that being a leader had given them an opportunity to "give back to their community."

♦ 95 percent felt they had a positive influence on the development of girls.

♦ 88 percent reported they had developed leadership skills.

♦ 85 percent felt they now spend more quality time with their daughters.

♦ 85 percent said they received rewards they didn't typically get in their daily lives.

♦ 83 percent said they developed new skills.

♦ 74 percent found they had increased self-confidence.

♦ 64 percent reported a better appreciation for diversity.

♦ 50 percent valued the instant network of adults available if they relocated.

Youth Involvement Influences on Adult Volunteering

Volunteers not only help build communities, they sow the seeds among youth to give their time and effort when they become adults.

In *Defining Success* (GSUSA, 1999), over half of the adult women who had been involved in Girl Scouting as children said that it influenced their volunteering and serving in their communities as adults.

The Independent Sector's survey, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (2001), also demonstrates that youth experiences in programs shape future interests in volunteering as adults.

♦ Adults who gave or volunteered as youth were more likely to volunteer time and make larger financial contributions to charities as adults.

♦ Adults involved in formal volunteering as youth volunteered 16 hours per month as adults; adults not involved in volunteering as youth, volunteered 13 hours per month.

♦ Adults who were volunteers as youth contributed an average of $1,869 per year; adults not involved as youth gave $1,219 per year.

Because there is evidence that youth experiences last a lifetime, it is important to understand the developmental and environmental context of today's youth and the adult volunteers who work with them.

Girls at 11-12, 13-15, 16-17

Recent research conducted by GSUSA and Partners in Brainstorms, Inc. demonstrates that girls 11-17 represent three distinct developmental age groups (physically, emotionally and socially): 11-12 (tweens); 13-15 (teens); 16-17 (young adults).

Girls naturally "aspire up" in age—looking to girls who are a few years older as a gauge of what's to come, as well as of what's "cool" now. At the same time, girls crave a safe place to talk about their lives among their own peer group, or with those just slightly older.

Program activities and resources should be age-appropriate, based on the needs and interests of each age group. When girls feel an activity, publication or Web site is "a little kid thing," they lose interest quickly. Pre-teens and younger teens are particularly sensitive about not wanting to be seen as doing "kid stuff." It is very important for them to create the "right" image for themselves as they prepare for high school. Girls in the later years of high school are more apt to want to do things to prepare for their futures, but also are quick to say they want time and a safe place to talk about their lives with each other and just relax.

Charting Paths for Girls 11-17

Developmental Issues	Ages 11-12 Belong	Ages 13-15 Believe	Ages 16-17 Build
Defining Moments	Transition to junior high/ middle school	Rite of passage—becoming a teenager	New independence
Self-image	Want to be liked by others and belong	"Me" focused	Pressure to achieve
Worries	Worry about fitting in	Being liked by boys, looks, eating disorders	Stressed; worried about becoming somebody
Pressures	Teen pressures focused on new behavior such as dating and smoking set in	Pressure to act a certain way	Worried about getting into the right college
Activities/Interests	Talking about friendships; sports; improving the world around me; camping; improving self confidence	Personalize my space; taking trips; music—express myself; developing image through clothes/fashion; dating	Career opportunities; self-defense; managing time; girls leadership conferences

Source: *New Directions for Girls 11-17 Research Insights/Action Strategies* GSUSA/Girl Scout Research Insititue (2002)

In addition to age differences, it is important for adult volunteers to understand the changing world that youth are growing up in as a result of the terrorist attacks.

Pre-Sept. 11

According to the *2000 Roper Youth Report/* Roper Starch Worldwide young people identified as belonging to Generation Y (born between 1979 and 1994) are considered "idealistic pragmatists." Before Sept. 11, they had faith in the power of positive change and a sense of optimism from having grown up in a strong economy. They felt a sense of control over the future because they had been secure in the world.

Post-Sept. 11

For many of Generation Y, the environment in which they are growing up has drastically changed. They are asking difficult questions and relying on adults around them as a source of knowledge as well as for support. Findings from polls conducted immediately after Sept. 11, with youth ages 13-18, reveal they have a high level of anxiety about the current state of affairs, and have responded in various ways, such as with increased displays of patriotism, praying, donating money to the relief efforts and volunteering.

A GSUSA poll in December 2001, of over 1,400 girls ages 11-17, reveals that they are volunteering in great numbers as a response to the terrorist attacks, especially girls who are members of Girl Scouting.

40 percent of girls ages 11-17 reported that they have volunteered or are interested in volunteering within the next year. Their acts of giving included donating clothes, food or money to Sept. 11 charities, sending cards to victims' families, police officers, firefighters and to those serving in the military, and/or raising money for the children in Afghanistan.

The uncertainty of the future, the anticipated growth of the teen population (the population of girls is expected to grow from almost 14 million in 2000 to 15 million by the year 2010), and teens' willingness to "do something" calls for adults to step forward and support the next generation of youth.

Who Girls Turn To

A GSUSA study, *Teens Before their Time* (2000), reveals that girls ages 8-12 rely on their mothers (79 percent) and their friends (72 percent) for practical and emotional support. Girls 8-12 also rely on advice from their fathers (41 percent) and their teachers (28 percent).

Reliance on family members becomes less important for teen girls as peer groups assume more influence. Girls 13-15 turn to their friends (36 percent) for support, and to their mothers (42 percent); girls 16-17 turn to their friends (35 percent) and to their mothers (37 percent).

A largely untapped pool of potential volunteers, identified by girls through recent research conducted by GSUSA, are young adults ages 18-29. Girls overwhelmingly agreed that they would like to work with adults who are closer to them in age. To reach girls from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, it is important to first engage with the adults of their communities.

Expanding the Volunteer Base

An opportunity exists to expand and extend the volunteer base of Girl Scouting as well as other youth development organizations beyond the current volunteer population.

Of all Girl Scout registered adult members, 99 percent are volunteers. (In 2000, there were 917,775 adult members.) According to a GSUSA study, *National Profile of Adults in Girl Scouting* (1998), 25 percent of all women in the total population fall in the 35-44 age group; 56 percent of all Girl Scout adult volunteers are in this age group.

Typical Girl Scout Volunteer

◆ **Female**

◆ **40 years old**

◆ **Married with children (ages 6-11)**

◆ **Employed full time or part-time**

◆ **Relatively affluent (average household income of $54,800/year)**

◆ **Relatively highly-educated, having a college or advanced degree**

◆ **Regular participant in religious services**

◆ **White/Caucasian, 90 percent**

Unaffiliated and Unrelated Volunteers

Many current Girl Scout volunteers are motivated to volunteer based on their experiences of being involved in the organization as girls, or because of current experiences with their daughters in Girl Scouting.

According to the GSUSA (1998) study *National Profile of Adults in Girl Scouting:*

Two-thirds (67 percent) of adult volunteers said that they had participated in Girl Scouting as children. An earlier study estimated that 42 percent of the adult female population in the United States had been in Girl Scouting as children.

To expand the current volunteer base, nonprofit organizations should focus on attracting adults they traditionally have not reached—specifically those who have not been affiliated with any youth organizations and/or are unaware of them.

Tailoring the Ask

Surveys indicate that initial contact, along with an image and environment appealing to potential volunteers, is a major factor in recruiting them to an organization. In the *National Profile of Adults in Girl Scouting* study, one in four volunteer prospects (25 percent) indicated that they would be likely to volunteer for the Girl Scouts if asked.

Research from the Independent Sector's *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (2001) further demonstrates the power of "the ask."

Individuals who were asked to volunteer were much more likely to volunteer (63 percent) than those volunteers who had not been asked (25 percent).

The Power of the Ask

Volunteered when asked
 63%

Volunteered even though not asked
 25%
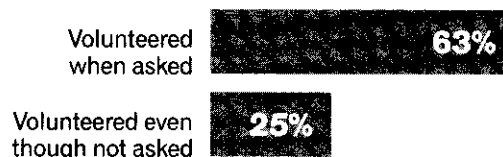
Source: *Giving and Volunteering in the United States.* Independent Sector (2001)

Huge opportunities exist to recruit Girl Scout volunteers from underrepresented groups. According to a GSUSA study, *National Profile of Adults in Girl Scouting*, only 3 percent of African-American, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian/Pacific Islander or multiracial adults are Girl Scout adult volunteers.

The MTV/Ad Council study, *Engaging the Next Generation: How Nonprofits Can Reach Young Adults* (2000), also reports that young adults are more likely to volunteer when asked.

- ◆ 46 percent of 18-24 year olds said that they had volunteered in the last year.

- ◆ Of 43 percent of 18-24 year olds asked to volunteer, 87 percent did. Of 57 percent not asked, 16 percent volunteered.

The Ideal Volunteer

As girls grow, they want to have new adults in their lives. They are acutely aware of people just beyond their ages who are "making it." In recent informal and formal surveys conducted by GSUSA, the majority of girls 11-17 (both in and out of Girl Scouts) identified young adult women (including those in college and those who have careers and skills interesting to the girls), as their ideal volunteer. These "ideal volunteers" could assist leaders or have other leadership roles.

"Girls need someone to look up to. For me it would be great to have several college-age girls involved in our group. They are closer to me in age and not too long ago went through the same things that I am going through now. College girls are responsible but fun and they don't judge me."

— Cordie, age 12

From Leaders to Advisors

Some adult volunteers need more training relative to the developmental needs of tweens and teens and on accepting that "successful troops and groups are the ones where leaders have learned to accept the role of advisors." Volunteers, recognizing that they have to adjust their roles as girls grow up, need more support and information to effectively serve girls as they progress through the tween, teen and young adult years.

Girls suggested that adults be required to get their input every year, and keep "active and up to date." Youth development organizations are looking for models for involving college students and other young adults as volunteers and for new delivery systems to involve both girls and adults in new ways.

Recent research conducted by GSUSA reveals that:

64 percent of non-Girl Scouts and 47 percent of Girl Scouts ages 11-17 felt that an ideal program should have a 50/50 balance between the girls' and advisors' input and influence.

A potential match exists between girls' desires to work with young adults and young adults looking for opportunities to make a difference.

A Shift Toward Civic Mindedness

In a spring 2000 online occupational listing survey, JobTrak.com noted that over half of college students and recent graduates (52 percent) expected to make their first million by the time they were 40 years old. However, the current economic downturn has left many of these young adults anxious about what the future holds, and for many of them, their search for personal identity has assumed a deeper significance.

In their current thinking about careers, there has been a shift toward considering public service—looking for a sense of purpose and affiliation with organizations that make a meaningful difference and have a positive impact. Turning away from thoughts of jobs on Wall Street, many college students instead are thinking about working for the government, maybe joining the FBI, the CIA or the Peace Corps. This provides an opportunity for youth-serving organizations, such as Girl Scouting, to communicate to them the importance of their mission and of volunteering.

Increasing the Appeal of Volunteering

Of approximately 13 million 18-24 year olds, 46 percent volunteered in the last year. Data reveals that young adults describe a positive volunteer experience as one that provides:

◆ rewarding work;

◆ life-enlarging experiences;

◆ affiliation with an organization;

◆ clear communication of expectations;

◆ flexibility;

◆ recognition;

◆ a belief that the volunteers' input matters.

It is important to note that within the broader age range (18-29) of potential volunteers, there are varying issues to consider, such as employment status, college attendance and lifestyle choices. There is little research on the motivation of volunteers ages 24-29 who might already be in the workplace and currently are engaged in volunteering activities. However, the research on the 18-24 year olds can be generalized to the broader age range, particularly strategies focused on issues related to flexibility, image and language.
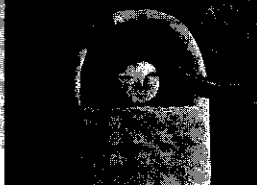
While no "quick-fix" exists to transform an organization overnight so that it is more responsive to the needs of young adult volunteers, two major studies, one conducted by the AdCouncil/MTV, *Engaging Volunteers in the Next Generation* (2000), and the other from the Institute for Volunteering Research, *National Survey of Volunteering* (1997), provide insights about key characteristics.

Flexibility Many young adults (18-29) do not want set schedules and routines, and because time is a scare resource for them, they prefer one day or once a week projects, part-time internships; and "fit it in when you can" projects. Organizations must institutionalize episodic or short-term projects so that they are legitimate forms of volunteering. Because this demographic is also often online, volunteering opportunities should be available through interactive Web sites.

Fun Young adults are under increasing pressure in college and when starting careers to be responsible and successful. Volunteering with youth can be an important outlet for fun.

Fulfillment Involvement can be sustained through meaningful projects and real leadership roles. They do not want to feel they are "babysitting for teens."

Incentives Young adults often have little time to give and would like to receive some kind of reward for participating. Incentives, such as references, awards, or certificates may be a motivating factor in recruitment.

Interest-based Many teens desire a connection with young adults who will share their expertise.

Information Volunteering opportunities need to be advertised where young adults are—for example, in bookstores, coffee shops, online and on radio stations popular with this age segment.

Connection Young adults often desire to volunteer for social reasons—to meet others facing similar life issues and interests. Offer volunteers opportunities to connect with each other.

Commitment While reluctant to make long-term commitments, young adults are now more committed to re-evaluating their lives, and are increasingly engaging in volunteer opportunities. Their commitment to projects might not be as long term as for older adults, but their emotional commitment to social causes is noteworthy.

Culture Young adults want the culture of an organization to speak to them personally. Organizations must be responsive to their needs, and research the experiences they expect to gain in working with youth, before launching programs to attract them.

Systems Many young volunteers have expressed concerns about the lack of training and follow up in organizations, so be sure organizational systems are in place.

Skill development Offer volunteers an opportunity to gain personal or professional skills. If volunteers can develop a cadre of skills transferable to other settings, they would be more likely to join programs and remain involved.

Savvy Many young adults feel that the word "volunteer" implies too many responsibilities. When inviting newcomers to volunteer, phrases such as "help out," "lend a helping hand," "get involved with," or "pitch in" may be received better by certain groups based on cultural background or custom.

The Girl Scout resource, *Volunteer Development in Girl Scouting* (2001), describes the purpose and components of a volunteer development system, lists the steps for implementation and offers suggestions about recruitment, selection, placement and retention of volunteers. The overall goals of a volunteer development system can be described as:

◆ **Purpose-focused**—supports the purpose of the organization

◆ **Strategic**—is long-range and future-focused

◆ **Flexible**—able to change ways of work without compromising the intent of the organization

◆ **Adaptable**—meets the needs of adult volunteers

◆ **Holistic**—considers the whole person, not just the services provided

◆ **Pluralistic**—inclusive for adults of multiple populations

An effective volunteer development system is one that provides:

◆ mentoring and/or coaching for every volunteer;

◆ training commensurate with the task to be done and knowledge and talents of the volunteer;

◆ understandable assignments and reporting methods;

◆ a climate that encourages volunteer satisfaction, self-motivation, and retention through a program of individualized support and performance appraisal;

◆ ongoing feedback on volunteer performance and timely performance appraisal based on mutually developed expectations.

These volunteer development goals generally can be applied to the various models for volunteer participation noted below.

Campus Recruiting

In 1999, the Independent Sector reported that 46 percent of 18-24 year olds had volunteered in the past year. (In 1998, 74 percent of college freshmen volunteered their last year of high school, although only 21 percent reported service-learning graduation requirements.)

According to Youth Service America's 2000 report, *Youth Service at Record Highs:*

◆ Over 600,000 students at over 620 Campus Compact (a national coalition of more than 750 college and university presidents committed to higher education through promoting community service and partnerships between campuses and communities) volunteered during the 1997-1998 school year, giving over 29 million hours of community service.

◆ The majority of college seniors (72 percent) do internships and 67 percent were involved in community service and volunteer work.

Youth Service America (YSA), an alliance of more than 200 organizations committed to increasing youth services throughout the world, revealed that collegiate volunteers donate their time to the following concerns: tutoring; housing/homelessness; environment; hunger; elderly; mentoring; health; HIV/AIDS; developmentally and physically disabled; and multicultural issues.

Community Colleges and Campus Girl Scouts

According to the American Association of Community Colleges, there are over 1,166 community colleges in the United States. These local academic institutions could provide a diverse pool of volunteers, typically ages 18-24, from broad racial/ethnic, socio-economic and educational backgrounds. Girls also express interest in many of the issues that young adults relate to. Therefore, great potential exists for youth to connect with young adults and work together on social causes they care about.

Campus Girl Scouts, sponsored by GSUSA, are active on campuses, in communities, and at Girl Scout councils. At their schools, they assist during freshman orientation and host Senior Girl Scouts on overnight visits. In their communities, Campus Girls Scouts register voters and read to children. And at councils, Campus Girl Scouts organize special events for girls, help publish council newsletters, and develop Web sites. In return, Campus Girl Scouts often receive college credit for their work.

The Right Partners

Nonprofit organizations must take advantage of opportunities to recruit campus youth volunteers. College youth usually volunteer for the following reasons:

◆ A sense of satisfaction

◆ Club or activity involvement

◆ Duty to society, social event, career skills

◆ Acquisition of experience

It would be beneficial for youth-serving organizations to partner with coalitions and organizations like Campus Compact, Youth Service America, Do Something, and others who actively engage youth in community service and service-learning arenas.

Campus Compact maintains a database of active community service and service-learning projects engendered by colleges and universities across the nation. Organizations can become resources for projects for students so that the joint efforts are mutually beneficial.
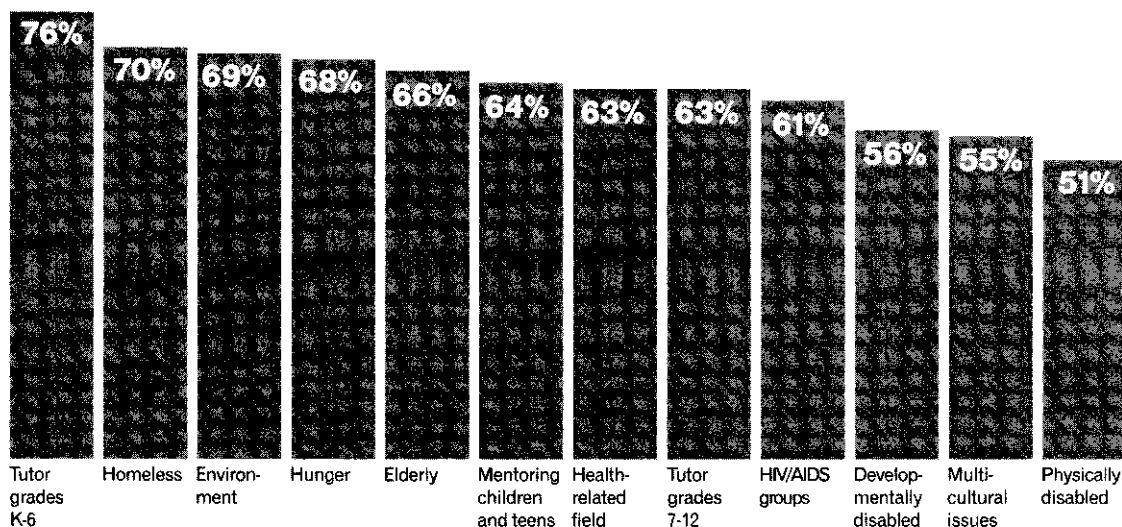
Episodic Volunteering

According to the Independent Sector's *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (1999), volunteering was a sporadic or one-time activity for 41 percent of volunteers. For example, a small number (9 percent) reported that they volunteer only at specific times of the year such as Christmas or Hanukkah.

Findings from *National Profile of Adults in Girl Scouting* (1998) revealed that the majority of adult prospects were not aware that Girl Scouts offered volunteer activities other than serving as troop leaders. Therefore, marketing the positive aspects and opportunities of episodic volunteering is important for recruiting and retaining greater numbers of potential volunteers.

The Institute of Volunteering Research found that "FLEXIVOL" meets the requirements of volunteering for the 18-24 year-old age group: Flexibility, Legitimacy (i.e. promoting positive images about volunteering in the culture that make the activity seem "cool"), Ease of access, Experience, Incentives, Variety, Organization, and Laughs.

Issues College Volunteers Are Involved In

Tutor grades K-6	Homeless	Environment	Hunger	Elderly	Mentoring children and teens	Health-related field	Tutor grades 7-12	HIV/AIDS groups	Developmentally disabled	Multi-cultural issues	Physically disabled
76%	70%	69%	68%	66%	64%	63%	63%	61%	56%	55%	51%

Source: *What Collegiate Volunteers are Doing*. Youth Service America (2000)

Online on the Rise

Though Internet volunteers and donors represent a small portion of the online community, online or virtual volunteerism, should be viewed as a viable extension of the existing volunteer system and taken into account when making organizational plans.

According to the *U.S. Bureau of the Census Current Population Survey* (2000), 55 percent of adults 18 years of age and older have at least one computer at home and 37 percent have access to the Internet at home. A survey conducted over the Internet by Impact Online revealed that over 75 percent of people surveyed said they would increase their level of community involvement through online programs.

The Independent Sector in *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (2001) revealed that:

Virtual Volunteerism Activity

10%

3%

Search for Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Online
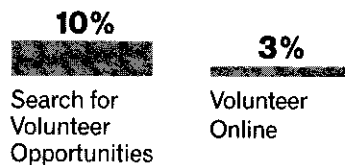
Source: *Giving and Volunteering in the United States.* Independent Sector (2001)

Of over 4,000 respondents, 60 percent report having Internet access. Of those, 10 percent use the Internet to search for volunteer opportunities, with 3 percent of them volunteering over the Internet as mentors, tutors or Web site developers.

To many adults, virtual volunteering is ideal because of time constraints, personal preference, a disability, or home-based commitments that prevent on-site volunteering.

Two Forms of Virtual Volunteerism

The Virtual Volunteer Project, created in 1996, estimates over 1,000 groups and organizations actively engage volunteers online, and defines two forms of online or virtual volunteering: technical assistance or direct contact.

Virtual volunteers provide technical assistance to staff or other volunteers at an agency by:

◆ conducting online research through searches or surveys;

◆ providing professional consulting services;

◆ offering multimedia expertise;

◆ designing and maintaining organizational Web sites;

◆ developing and programming online databases.

The mediums for direct contact between adult volunteers and youth are e-mail or appropriate chat rooms. Through direct contact, virtual volunteers:

◆ provide online mentoring and instruction via e-mail or Intranet on academic and career advancement topics;

◆ assist with distance learning for other volunteers;

◆ staff a support e-line, e-letter or chat room for adults or youth who seek support;

◆ work with volunteers or youth with disabilities;

◆ manage other volunteers through e-mail and e-newsletters;

◆ promote community collaborations through regular e-communications.

As youth become ever more tech savvy, so must the adults who teach, mentor, guide or assist them. To broaden outreach, nonprofit and for-profit organizations must provide accessible avenues for technological advancement for staff that interact with youth. In doing so, organizations must incorporate appropriate screening of potential online volunteers and adherence to online safety guidelines.

Organizational "Musts" for Virtual Volunteerism

Nonprofit organizations must have the following cornerstones in place before engaging in virtual volunteering:

◆ Effective volunteer management with a range of skills, including staff who have the technological expertise to manage online volunteers

◆ Up-to-date database of volunteer information including e-mail addresses

◆ Comfort of volunteer staff with e-mail and Internet capabilities

◆ Safety guidelines and screening procedures for recruiting volunteers

Collaborations should be pursued with technology organizations or companies to assist in preparing volunteers for technical fundamentals.

According to Census 2000, there are over 249 racial and ethnic combinations in the United States. The following population percentages for the major non-White racial/ethnic groups in the United States were reported: Black or African American, 12 percent; Asian and Pacific Islander, 4 percent; American Indian and Alaska Native, 1 percent; and Hispanic (of any race), 13 percent.

Volunteering is important within these diverse racial/ethnic groups, and continues to rise among African-Americans and Hispanics. High percentages of Hispanics volunteer when asked and their patterns of giving and volunteering mirror those of other ethnic groups.

Diversity in Diversity

It is important to note that no racial/ethnic groups are homogeneous, but comprise distinct nationalities with distinct cultures, languages, histories and lengths of residency in the United States. For example, among the Hispanic population, the following nationalities are represented most in the Census:

Hispanics by Origin: 2000

Cuban 4%
Other Hispanic
Puerto Rican 9%
Central & South American 15%
Mexican 68%
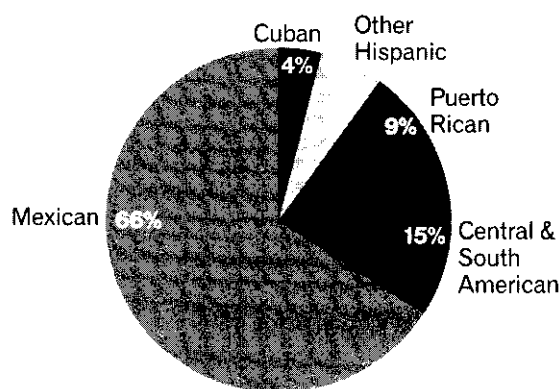
Source: *Current Population Survey*, US Census Bureau, March 2000

According to the 1999 Independent Sector's national survey, *Giving and Volunteering in the United States,* Hispanic giving and volunteering patterns are significantly influenced by cultural backgrounds, such as familiarity with organized philanthropies in the United States. For example, 56 percent of those of Hispanic background (but born in the United States) volunteered, compared to 37 percent of Hispanics born outside of the United States.

The Independent Sector in *Giving and Volunteering in the United States* (1999), relates that:

◆ approximately 46 percent of Hispanics volunteered in 1998;

◆ over 19 percent served with religious organizations and 17 percent volunteered in the education field;

◆ Hispanics also volunteer with youth development organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Catholic youth organizations, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts.

Hispanics and Non-Hispanics Who Gave Money and Volunteered Time

Gave: 71% / 63%
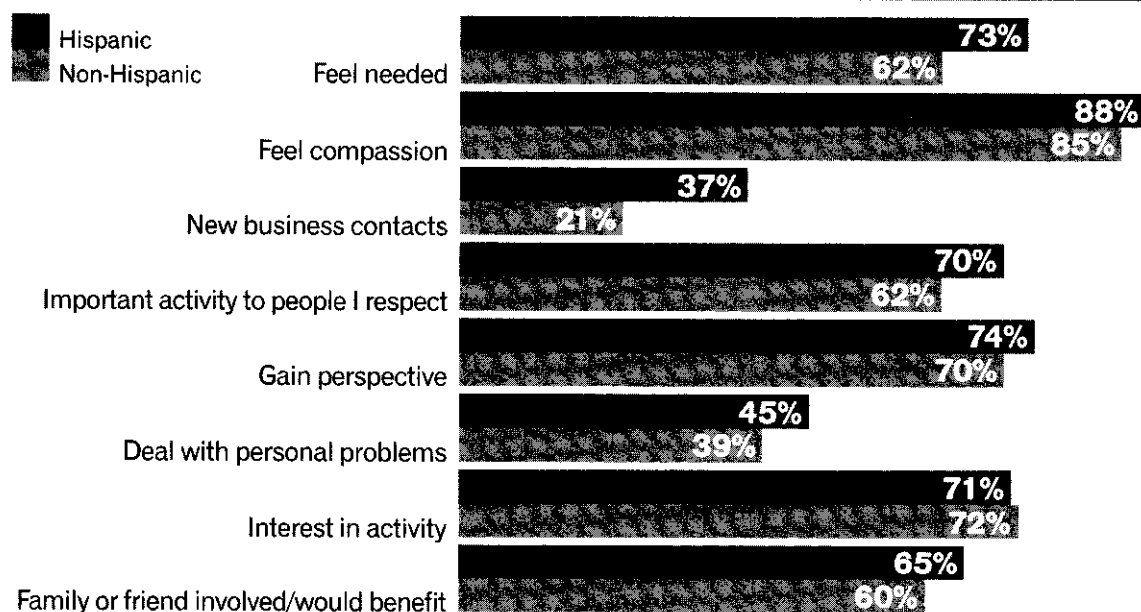Volunteered: 57% / 46%

■ Hispanic
▨ Non-Hispanic
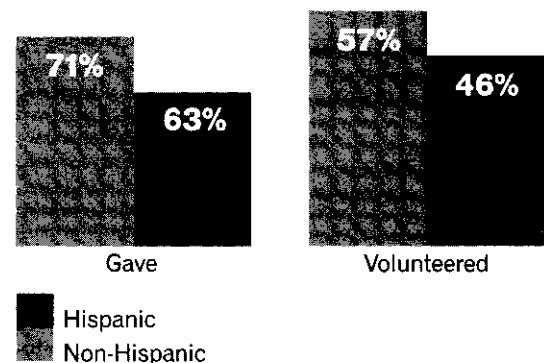
Source: *Giving and Volunteering in the United States, 1999.*
Independent Sector (1999)

A higher percentage of Hispanics (65 percent) than non-Hispanics (60 percent) volunteered in order to benefit family or friends. According to Jade Magazine, Asian volunteers stated similar reasons for volunteering: give back to the community, enjoy experiences/skills gained from the community, strengthen community, feel compassion and gain perspective.

There are definite distinctions and similarities among Hispanic, Asian and Native American communities. Many organizations struggle to create relational opportunities with these communities because they are unfamiliar with their needs, concerns or perceptions. If organizations ignore the youth and adult voices of these communities, it is more likely

Hispanic and Non-Hispanic Adult Volunteers

■ Hispanic
■ Non-Hispanic

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic
Feel needed	73%	62%
Feel compassion	88%	85%
New business contacts	37%	21%
Important activity to people I respect	70%	62%
Gain perspective	74%	70%
Deal with personal problems	45%	39%
Interest in activity	71%	72%
Family or friend involved/would benefit	65%	60%

Source: *Giving and Volunteering in the United States, 1999.* Independent Sector (1999)

According to the GSUSA study, *Strength in Diversity* (1994), a lack of affiliation with Girl Scouting as children resulted in barriers to later adult volunteer involvement. (Almost 50 percent of current Girl Scouts have mothers who were Girl Scouts.) The study also finds that girls from racial and ethnic backgrounds other than White, non-Hispanic do not have a strong family tradition of Girl Scouting. In fact, 16 percent of parents or guardians of girls who were never Girl Scouts perceive the organization as being primarily for middle-class Christian White girls.

Inclusivity as a Goal

The great diversity of families in the United States presents a challenging and rich opportunity for nonprofit organizations to establish valuable collaborations across the Hispanic, Asian and Native American community sectors. These associations will strengthen community relations and advance organizational policy and programming to benefit families within these diverse communities.

that incorrect assumptions or inaccurate needs assessments will be made. To avoid alienating members from possible recruitment, use the following as a guide:

1. **Acquire a thorough understanding** of each community—its people, culture, historical background and socio-economic dynamics— before inviting community members to participate in organizational functions.

2. **Communicate with community leaders,** agencies, groups and individuals to gather detailed input on mutually beneficial organizational planning, and specifically for programming to benefit adults and families in the community.

3. **Invite a diversity of community members** to serve on the organizational board to solidify community relations.

4. **Maintain consistent, open communications** with community leaders on organizational issues and opportunities that affect the community.
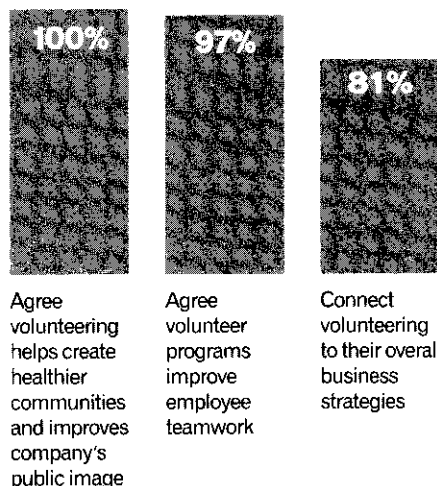
Corporate America is placing a greater value on employee volunteer programs as a resource for achieving strategic business goals. Of companies surveyed in 1999 by the Points of Light Foundation, 81 percent say they connect volunteering to their overall business strategies, compared to only 31 percent who did so in 1992. Survey respondents unanimously agreed that corporate volunteering helps create healthier communities and improves a company's public image.

Guiding Principles

The Points of Light Foundation, in its corporate volunteer guidebook, *Principles of Excellence in Community Service: A Plan to A.C.T* (1992), outlines the following principles for companies to begin their volunteer efforts:

1. **Acknowledge that the corporation's community service involvement** and its employee volunteer efforts contribute to the achievement of its business goals.

2. **Commit to establish, support and promote an employee volunteer program** that encourages the involvement of every employee, and treat it like any other core business function.

3. **Tailor community service efforts to** serious social problems in the community.

Corporate Volunteerism

100%	97%	81%

Agree volunteering helps create healthier communities and improves company's public image

Agree volunteer programs improve employee teamwork

Connect volunteering to their overall business strategies

Source: *Corporate Volunteer Programs–A Strategic Resource: The Link Grows Longer.* Points of Light Foundation (1999)

Connecting the Players

At the national level, nonprofit organizations must take the lead in establishing communications and collaborations with major corporations. This will set the stage for subsequent communications with local agencies.

At the local level, nonprofits must be proactive in developing and presenting compelling reasons to corporations why encouraging their employees to participate in volunteer efforts is in the best interest for their companies.

Nonprofits must engage corporate leaders in planning and programming of activities and ventures beneficial to all parties involved.

The *UPS Volunteer Impact Initiative Report* (1999) suggests tailored strategies to promote corporate volunteerism:

◆ Create an employee volunteer program.

◆ Provide resources to nonprofit organizations that support volunteer management.

◆ Identify resources (other than human and cash) that can help support a volunteer program—vehicles, space for training sessions, etc.

Nonprofits should modify these strategies as necessary to help companies engage their staff as volunteers.

The UPS Foundation found that people would be more likely to volunteer if the volunteer organization:

♦ made more appropriate use of their time by matching their talents to interests;

♦ was well managed;

♦ defined tasks clearly;

♦ thanked them;

♦ provided opportunities for them to profit experientially.

Management and Systems Strategies

Nonprofits should consider the following management strategies to engage volunteers more effectively and foster stronger commitment.

1. **Local affiliates should create a database** noting volunteer skills and motivations to match with volunteer opportunities. If no opportunities exist, the nonprofit should engage the volunteer in planning a mutually beneficial event, consistent with the organization's mission, and one that utilizes the volunteer's skills and meets her/his expectations.

2. **Establish a mentoring or buddy system for new and veteran volunteers.** These systems are beneficial not only to the veteran volunteer (mentor) and protégé (new volunteer), but also to the parent organization. Diversity, Inc. and The Journal of Extension reveal how, in for-profits and nonprofits, mentors and coaches play a major role in people's career development through increased job satisfaction, personal productivity and employment stability within an organization.

3. **Engage volunteers in defining better support mechanisms for themselves.** Conduct research through surveys and discussion groups with volunteers to gather their ideas about what they need to create fulfilling and lasting experiences.

4. **Embrace diversity as a management goal.** Diversity Challenge, an initiative of The National Center for Volunteering in England, details a 10-point plan for diversifying volunteers that includes conducting an organizational survey or audit, consulting stakeholders, devising a diversity statement or policy, and increasing the diversity of management committee/trustees and, ultimately, volunteers.

Build on Momentum

There is a real opportunity to build on the momentum of volunteering and giving among youth and adults following the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11. As girls and youth are negotiating life in an uncertain world, they need support from a wide range of adults—family members, teachers and other unrelated adults. Volunteers and advisors need information to increase their awareness about the needs of tweens and teens. Girls want to be heard and adults need to listen to them and value their concerns.

Connecting with Young Adults

Further research on the motivations of volunteers in the 18-29 age range is needed, but it is clear that this potential pool of volunteers can be an important resource for youth development organizations, especially given their potential to connect with younger girls. These young people may have had positive experiences with nonprofits and want to continue their involvement in different programs, especially given the surge in intentions to volunteer after Sept. 11.

Changing Demographics, Changing Strategies

Organizations need to consider culturally relevant approaches when designing and marketing programs to diverse communities. Strategies to engage volunteers should reflect the lifestyle and culture of distinct populations. Organizations will benefit from developing alternative delivery systems to respond to the needs of volunteers who may not be able to make long-term commitments.

Innovative Delivery Systems

Understanding the management and structure of episodic volunteering models that provide short-term opportunities are important for engaging untapped pools of volunteers. Virtual volunteering through online mentoring programs, campus volunteering in exchange for service learning credit and corporate volunteering are all viable options for nonprofits to consider adding to their menu of volunteering options.

Volunteers have always been a vital support of many large nonprofit organizations. The impact volunteer trends have on youth development organizations, including Girl Scouting, is significant, especially on future adult recruitment and retention. Girl Scouts is deeply committed to providing girls with optimal learning experiences. In reaching and supporting current and future volunteers, it is important for youth development organizations to respond to the unique needs of adults by providing a range of volunteering options, while providing young people with high-quality experiences with which they can build relationships and skills.

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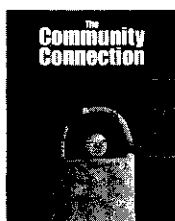
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America's Promise
www.americaspromise.org
Mobilizes volunteers in support of the nation's youth by providing ongoing relationships with caring adults and safe places with structured activities for youth during non-school hours.

AmeriCorps
www.americorps.org
Engages more than 50,000 Americans each year in intensive service such as teaching children to read, making neighborhoods safer, building affordable homes and responding to natural disasters.

Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA)
www.avaintl.org
Works to enhance the competence of members and strengthen the profession of volunteer resources management.

Campus Compact
www.compact.org
Engages more than 750 college and university presidents committed to civic participation through higher education, actively engaged both on and off campus in community service.

Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL)
www.cool2serve.org
Educates, empowers and mobilizes college students of all backgrounds to participate in communities and foster civic and social responsibility.

Charity Village.com
www.charityvillage.com/
Serves as Canada's supersite for the nonprofit sector—3,000 pages of news, jobs, information and resources for executives, staffers, donors and volunteers.

City Year
www.cityyear.org
Unites hundreds of young people from diverse cultures and backgrounds for one year of full-time commitment to leadership development and civic engagement.

Coalition of Asian American Children and Families
www.cacf.org/moreresources
Advocates for social policies and programs supporting Asian-American children and families and empowering Asian-Americans to advocate for change.

Cooperative Extension System's Journal of Extension
www.joe.org
Seeks to expand and update the research and knowledge base for Extension professionals and other adult educators to improve effectiveness.

Corporation for National and Community Service
www.cns.gov
Engages Americans of all ages in service to help strengthen communities through programs like AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and Learn and Serve America.

CyberVPM
www.seattlecats.com/cybervpm
Provides online networking for professional managers of volunteer programs.

Diversity Challenge
www.diversitychallenge.org
Provides a guide towards diversity as a goal, with tools, interactive questionnaire, action plans and answers to frequently asked questions concerning diversifying volunteer pools.

Diversity, Inc.
www.diversityinc.com
Provides best practices, news, resources and commentary connecting diversity to the corporate bottom line.

Do Something
www.dosomething.org
Serves as a national network of young people who know they can make a difference in their communities and are given resources and support to bring their vision to life.
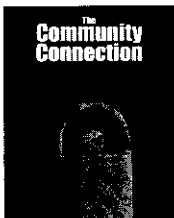
Center for Children and Technology
www.edc.org/CCT
Supports organizations interested in learning how to set up telementoring programs and the value of such programs for young women and girls in science, engineering and computing.

Energize, Inc.
www.energize.com
Provides international training, consulting and publishing specializing in volunteerism.

E-Volunteerism
www.e-volunteerism.com
Provides downloadable, online interactive materials and resources for volunteer managers and leaders.

Helping.org/NetworkForGood
www.helping.org
Helps people find volunteer and giving opportunities in their communities and beyond, and provides comprehensive online resources to help nonprofits bolster their mission and successes online.

IMPACT Online/VolunteerMatch
www.impactonline.org
Provides a matching service to connect volunteers and thousands of local nonprofits nationwide. VolunteerMatch has become the web's largest database of volunteer opportunities.

Independent Sector
www.IndependentSector.org
Strengthens not-for-profit initiative, philanthropy and citizen action through a coalition of leading nonprofits, foundations and corporations.

International Year of the Volunteer 2001
www.iyv2001.org
Highlights the achievements of millions of volunteers worldwide and encourages more people globally to engage in volunteer activity through increased recognition, facilitation and promotion of volunteering.

Institute of Volunteering Research
www.ivr.org.uk
Acts as a focal point for research in England on volunteering, sharing knowledge and exchanging ideas. Stimulates and contributes to education and training on volunteering.

Jade Magazine
www.jademagazine.org
Provides forum for English-speaking Asian women around the world that highlights and showcases the talents and successes of Asian and Asian-American women in all arenas.

Just for Volunteers/GSUSA
www.girlscouts.org
Offers support to adult volunteers in Girl Scouting.

National Association of Service and Conservation Corps
www.nascc.org
Unites and supports youth corps as a preeminent strategy for achieving the nation's youth development, community service and environmental restoration goals.

National Centre for Volunteering
www.volunteering.org.uk
Supplies support to volunteer managers and organizations that involve volunteers in England.

National Mentoring Partnership
www.mentoring.org
Provides the resources and tools mentoring organizations need to effectively serve young people in their communities.

National Service Resource Center
www.etr.org/nsrc/
Provides training and technical assistance to programs funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Native Web
www.nativeweb.org
Provides resources for indigenous cultures around the world.

New York Cares
www.nycares.org
Unites and enables caring New Yorkers to help people in need and improve their city through volunteer service and creative giving.

Points of Light Foundation
www.pointsoflight.org
Engages people more effectively in volunteer community service to help solve serious social problems.

Public Allies
www.publicallies.org
Advances diverse young leaders to strengthen communities, nonprofits and civic participation through full-time, paid apprenticeships in nonprofit organizations, weekly leadership trainings and team service projects.

Public/Private Ventures, Inc.
www.ppv.org
Serves to improve the effectiveness of social policies, programs and community initiatives, especially as they affect youth and young adults.

ServeNet
www.servenet.org
Provides a service for users to search for calendar events, job openings, service news, recommended books and best practices in volunteering nationwide.

Service Leader
www.serviceleader.org
Provides volunteer management and community engagement online resources

U.S. Bureau of the Census
www.census.gov
Collects and provides timely, relevant and quality data about the people and economy of the United States

Virtual Volunteering Project
www.serviceleader.org/vv
Provides comprehensive resources to help agencies involve volunteers in activities that can be performed via the Internet.

Volunteer Center National Network
www.volunteerconnections.org
Coordinates nationwide activities to provide citizens with volunteer opportunities and resources.

Volunteer Today
www.volunteertoday.com
Aims to increase the capacity of individuals to organize effective volunteer programs and enhance the profession of volunteer management.

Youth Service America
www.ysa.org
Serves as a resource center committed to increasing the quantity and quality of opportunities for young Americans to serve locally, nationally or globally.