



relationships, cultural sensitivity, coping with burnout, and other topics. The guide is based on training provided through the long-established volunteer program, Shanti. Authors of the guide are Charles Garfield and Carol Kleinmaier. The guide, "Training Volunteers for Service Agencies," is available through Jossey-Bass Publishing at a cost of \$149.95.

Social Service Activities of Congregations

The Urban Institute has released a new report on the social service activities of religious congregations, based on an analysis of the 1998 National Congregations Survey. Overall, the report finds that 57% of congregations, containing about 75% of religious service attendees, participate in or support social service projects in areas such as provision of food and shelter, homelessness, domestic violence and substance abuse, and other areas.

Of more direct relevance to *Grapevine*, "Half of all congregations say that they support social service activities via the provision of volunteers. Of congregations engaged in some level of social service activity, 90 percent report supporting at least one activity in the form of volunteer labor from the congregation. At the same

time, although providing volunteers is a common kind of congregational involvement in social services, the total number of volunteers provided by the typical congregation is rather small. In 80 percent of the congregations engaged in these activities, the number of volunteers mobilized in the past year is less than 30; the average congregation has mobilized 10 volunteers over the past year.

Given this, it is no accident that the highest levels of congregational involvement are in areas, such as food and housing, where organizations are able to take advantage of congregations' capacity to mobilize relatively small numbers of volunteers to carry out well-defined tasks. Programs or projects able to adapt to this model are likely to be more successful at drawing congregations into their efforts than programs or projects for which the model is not appropriate."

You can get the entire report at www.urban.org/periodcl/cnp/cnp_6.html.

A Quick Review of the Academic Approach

Here are some excerpts from recent articles that have come to our attention about volunteer involvement in various academic journals:

- From "The Volunteer's Folly and Socio-Economic Man: Some Thoughts on Altruism, Rationality and Community," by Trevor Knox, in *The Journal of*

Socio-Economics, July 1999:

"Personal acts of altruism are different from charitable donations in the same way that carefully selected birthday gifts are different from gift certificates or cash gifts. Both the giver and beneficiary experience charity differently depending on whether it is furnished in money or in kind. Perhaps the source of this perceptual difference is the objectification to which money lends itself.

Money altruism is inherently commensurable with all other priced commodities. To the giver, the extent of his altruism can easily be deducted from gross taxable income, alongside mortgage interest and gambling losses. The receiver, too, knows the quantity of his or her blessing as precisely as he or she knows his or her AFDC benefit or earned-income tax credit. The result is that the giver and receiver are alienated from one another...Volunteers can argue that their in-kind contributions are superior not because they prescribe a preferable object of consumption, but rather because

