ABSTRACT

Three groups of leadership educators, including members of ALE (Extension Leadership & Volunteerism state contacts), the Association for Research of Non-profit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) and the Association of Volunteer Administrators (AVA) were surveyed via a mailed questionnaire to determine what societal, cultural, environmental and technological trends will exert the greatest impact and influence on volunteer leadership programs during the next decade. By determining these trends, volunteer leadership educators may position themselves for the next decade by anticipating and responding to their influences and impact.

Trends Impacting Volunteer Administrators in the Next 10 Years

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INTRODUCTION

Volunteer activity was first related to social and political shifts which occur in response to armed conflict. Early American volunteer leaders included Paul Revere, Betsy Ross, George Washington and Harriet Tubman. Volunteers are frequently active in the movements that lead to war, in support of efforts to win war, in the protest against war and in rebuilding societies after war (Ellis & Noyes, 1990). At the turn of the 21st century, we find an entire generation of Americans who have never been concerned with registering for the draft, being drafted into armed service or defending our nation's soil.

Early volunteer activity in America centered around protecting one's self, family, property and community from theft, damage, injury and loss of life. Looking back through American history, volunteer activity may be accurately predicted as it occurs in response to both domestic and national conflicts. With this long period of national peacetime and prosperity comes a new wave of volunteer efforts (Ellis & Noyes, 1990).

Preparing for volunteer activity during peacetime becomes somewhat more difficult. This process, of gathering unpaid people to rally behind a cause, has resulted in the emergence of a relatively new field, volunteerism. As a new field, volunteerism brings several needs, some of which are the need for research in the area of volunteer development and administration, professionalization of volunteer administrators, and volunteer leadership education.

Volunteer administration is currently experiencing rapid growth, development and evolutionary change. In order to effectively prepare for volunteer administration early in the Third Millennium, one must first determine what societal, cultural, environmental and technological influ-

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ences will impact on American life. By first determining these influences, volunteer administrators may prepare themselves for the next decade by anticipating and responding to these trends and their influences.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A perusal of the volunteerism literature reveals articles and reports which focus on trends in volunteerism. Authors present graphic illustrations of trends which they perceive in volunteer programs, either from first-hand knowledge or from a review of the literature. Ellis (1996) identified eight current volunteerism trends which included: legal liability, screening processes and risk management; service learning; evolving vocabulary in the field of volunteerism; distance learning; employee unrest and the elimination of volunteer director positions caused by budget-cutting and downsizing in non-profit and for-profit arenas; technology; inter-agency collaborations; and the evolution of the family. Additionally, Safrit and Merrill (1998) suggested ten contemporary trends in volunteerism which they based upon documented societal trends, published literature and personal experience. These included: volunteer burnout; increased competition for a decreasing number of volunteers; an emphasis by volunteers on the human touch; an increasing pool of potential volunteers; episodic volunteering; the professionalization of the volunteer corps; an emphasis on diversity; new forms of volunteerism (stipended volunteers); liability issues and risk management; and technology.

Additionally, a number of studies have been undertaken to probe trends in volunteerism. The most popular of these studies are the biannual Independent Sector Reports, undertaken by the Gallup Organization. With the exception of the Independent Sector Reports, however, most other studies have either focused on specific issues or have surveyed one distinct population. Examples of these include: Volunteering for Serious Social Problems (The Points of Light Foundation, 1994); Trends on Youth and Service-Learning (Search Institute & National Youth Leadership Council, 1994), Trends in Corporate Volunteerism (The Conference Board & The Points of Light Foundation, 1995), Trends in Family Volunteerism (Gallup International Institute 1994). Each of these studies surveyed individuals, families, or households regarding their past, present or future involvement in specific activities, helping or giving.

The discrepancy which exists is that research has not been widely conducted regarding trends in volunteerism across populations. Moreover, broad trends in volunteerism, which either cut across the entire profession or impact upon more than one specific audience or group have not been identified empirically. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to identify the societal, cultural, environmental and technological trends which could exert the greatest impact and influence upon volunteer programs during the next decade.

METHODOLOGY
Population and Sample

The purpose of this study was to survey volunteer administrators and volunteer leadership educators from three national organizations. These organizations included: the Association of Leadership Educators (ALE), the Association of Volunteer Administrators (AVA) and the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA) in order to determine their predictions of current or future trends in volunteer administration which will impact the field over the next ten years. These groups were chosen for three specific reasons. First, each represented a national organization which focused on volunteer utilization. Second, each organization could be accessed with current membership information.

Third, the three organizations each

focused on different aspects of volunteerism.

The frames for the study were supplied by the conference membership rosters of AVA and ARNOVA, as well as the state contacts for Volunteer Leadership Development which were supplied by the United States Department of Agriculture. The population included 50 state contacts for Volunteer Leadership Development, 728 members of AVA and 346 members of ARNOVA. Duplications were removed from the population and a random sample was taken from the AVA conference membership list in order to satisfy sampling requirements. This resulted in sample sizes of 49 state Volunteer Leadership Development contacts, 363 members of AVA and 341 members of ARNOVA.

Instrumentation

The population was sent a mailed questionnaire as outlined by Dillman (1978). The questionnaire contained a qualitative and two quantitative components. The qualitative component (Part I) asked respondents to identify current or future trends which will impact volunteer leadership education and volunteer administration over the next ten years. Part II focused on characteristics of the respondent's volunteer program, including the number of: organizational volunteers, clientele served annually, volunteer administrators/leadership educators and professional staff. Part III contained professional (demographic) characteristics of the respondents.

Data Collection and Analysis

Responses from the qualitative section of the survey were coded according to key word identification as outlined by Culp and Pilat (1998). The framework for coding responses was provided by the GEMS Model of Volunteer Administration (Culp, Deppe, Castillo & Wells, 1998.) The 18 phases of the GEMS Model provided the first 18 key word categories for key word identification. These 18 phases include: organizational needs assessment,

position (job) description, identify, recruit, screen, select, orient, protect, resource, teach, engage, motivate, supervise, evaluate, recognize, retain, redirect and disengage. (Two phases of the GEMS Model, resource and redirect, were not identified by any respondents in the key word analysis.)

Trends emerging from the open-ended findings were grouped categorically and evaluated utilizing descriptive statistics. Analysis of variance was employed to compare responses of the same variables between sample groups. Finally, relationships were explored between trend identification and professional (demographic) characteristics. Data from the quantitative questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Analysis of Variance utilizing SPSS 9.0 (SPSS, 1998) to determine differences between the three populations. An alpha level of .05 was set a priori.

To aid in controlling non-response bias, a comparison of early and late respondents was utilized to determine differences between the two groups. "With late respondents assumed typical of non-respondents, if no differences are found, then respondents are generalized to the sample. If differences are present, data are weighted proportionately for determining the statistics to describe the sample" (Miller & Smith, 1983).

The sample was mailed a cover letter and questionnaire in May, 1999. The initial mailing was followed up by a reminder postcard two weeks after mailing. The initial mailing resulted in 19 responses from the Volunteer Leadership contacts; 88 responses from the AVA group; and 65 from ARNOVA. The follow-up mailing resulted in an additional eight questionnaires for AVA and three for ARNOVA.

Response rates included: 38.78% for Volunteer Leadership Development contacts, 25.90% for AVA and 20.24% for ARNOVA.

It is important to note that the ranking of these trends in volunteerism are

impacted by a variety of factors. First, the researchers chose to divide the category "Changing Demographics" into six subgroups, including: youth, families, aging/retirees, baby boomers, generation Xers and group activities. It was the belief of the researchers that the data would have greater meaning when divided into smaller, more specific subgroups, rather than be left in a broader, less descriptive category. Had the category been left undivided, "Changing Demographics" would have been the most popular trend being identified 175 times.

Likewise, earlier reports group "risk management"and "liability" in the same category (Ellis, 1996; Safrit & Merrill, 1998). It was obvious from the data that respondents divided risk management and liability into two distinct categories. The first, "risk management," focused on protecting the organization from risk and centered on screening potential volunteers who may have goals or an agenda that differed from that of the organization. Therefore, "risk management" was categorized as "screening" in data entry, which is consistent with the GEMS Model (Culp, et al., 1998). "Liability," however, was qualified by respondents as a trend which was distinctly different from risk management/screening. Many respondents coupled and preceded the word "liability" with "volunteer." (The term "risk management" was never coupled with the word "volunteer.") Others used phrases such as "protecting volunteers from liability." Protecting volunteers from liability was viewed differently than risk management by respondents because it protects volunteers who have successfully passed the screening process and are engaged in volunteer service to the program, agency or organization. Therefore, the researchers chose to place "liability" in the "protect" phase of the GEMS Model.

Secondly, as expected, people handled their responses in different ways. Some wrote single word answers such as "technology." In this case, "technology"

became a single category. Others wrote phrases from which the researchers gleaned key words. The phrase "using technology to recruit" resulted in two key words: "technology" and "recruit." Others wrote complete sentences. The sentence, "Using technology to recruit families for community service" resulted in four key words: "technology," "recruit," "changing demographics: families" and "community service." Finally, some individuals wrote entire paragraphs which contained multiple key words. In all cases, as outlined by Culp and Pilat (1998), all three individuals involved in coding the questionnaires came to consensus about each entry as it was coded. Finally, some liberty may have been taken by the researchers in interpreting and categorizing data. Bias was reduced by utilizing three individuals in coding all items on all questionnaires. However, it was occasionally difficult to discern the exact intent of the respondent. For example, the response, "Recruiting an attorney to perform pro bono work for our organization", obviously contained two key words. It was easy to agree that "recruit" was one key word. But a decision needed to be made as to whether "an attorney doing pro bono work" was to be categorized under "corporate/workplace volunteers" or "volunteer interests, skills & abilities." In this case, the latter was selected by the three-member coding team.

RESULTS

When analyzing trends, no significant differences were found between populational groups. Volunteer Leadership contacts, Volunteer Administrators and Researchers of Non-Profit Organizations and Voluntary Action all identified similar trends.

The top 25 trends (those identified twenty or more times) are listed in Table 1.

These top 25 trends which are likely to impact volunteer administration/leadership education and were identified in the

greatest frequency include the following: technology/virtual volunteering (69); professional development and salary levels of volunteer administrators (66); corporate volunteerism/volunteers receiving work release time (63); short term/ episodic volunteers (62); volunteers requesting positions which utilize their skills and abilities or fulfill their specific interests (55); changing demographics of volunteers: aged or retirees (52); changing demographics of volunteers: youth (50); resource development and funding (45); teaching/ training volunteers (43); service learning initiatives (42); collaborations and networking opportunities with other agencies (39); volunteer recruitment (39); societal changes in families (single par-

ents, two income families, the "sandwich" generation, etc.) (35); diversity and cultural issues (35); screening and risk management (32); issues related to volunteerism (31); a lack of time for people to volunteer (30); volunteer and program evaluation and impact (27); scarcity of volunteers (26); developing alternative schedules for volunteer activity (26); changing demographics: family volunteering opportunities (26); changing demographics: baby boomer volunteers (25); administrators and employees recognizing and appreciating volunteers (24); protecting volunteers from liability (22); and utilizing position (job) descriptions (20). (See Table 1.)

Additionally, 26 other trends, which

TABLE 1
Trends Which Will Impact Volunteer Leadership, Education and Administration

Trend Identified	CES	AVA OVA	ARN Total	Grand	Rank
Technology/Virtual Volunteers	14	41	14	69	1
Volunteer Administrator's Professional Development	9	37	20	66	2
Corporate/Workplace Volunteers	4	39	20	63	3
Short Term/Episodic Volunteers	6	43	13	62	4
Volunteer Interests, Skills & Abilities	7	28	20	55	5
Changing Demographics - Aging/Retired Volunteers	11	29	12	52	6
Changing Demographics - Youth Volunteers	5	35	10	50	7
Resource Development & Funding	5	26	14	45	8
Teaching Volunteers / Training methods	11	22	10	43	9
Service Learning	1	34	7	42	10
Collaborations / Networking	4	20	15	39	11 tie
Recruitment	8	23	8	39	11 tie
Societal / Family Changes	7	19	9	35	13 tie
Diversity / Cultural Differences	5	17	13	35	13 tie
Screening / Risk Management	13	14	5	32	15
Issues Related to Volunteerism	4	19	8	31	16
Lack of Time	7	15	8	30	17
Evaluation / Impact	6	11	10	27	18
Volunteers are Scarce	2	17	7	26	19 tie
Alternative Volunteer Schedules	1	17	8	26	19 tie
Changing Demographics - Family Volunteering	4	20	12	26	19 tie
Changing Demographics - Baby Boomer Volunteers	2	17	6	25	22
Admins/Employees recognize volunteer contributions	5	14	5	24	23
Protecting Volunteers from Liability	7	7	8	22	24
Position (Job) Descriptions	2	12	6	20	25

Respondents were asked to describe themselves and their organizations according to a number of demographic indicators. Those demographic indicators which were not significantly different are identified in Table 2.

TABLE 2
Similar Demographic Descriptors

Descriptor	Grand Mean
Clientele served by organization in 1998	188,252.01
Administrative FTE's in organization	241.71
Years in current position	5.90
Years in volntr administration/dvlpment	13.80

were identified from 1 - 19 times were as follows: court-ordered/mandated service (19); competition among agencies for volunteers (18); community service (18); issues with labor relations/union groups/replacing paid positions with volunteers (16); marketing, PR & communications (15); recognizing volunteers (14); retaining/avoiding burnout (14); changing demographics: male or female volunteers (14); decline of volunteer service organizations (13); changing demographics: group volunteering activities (12); increased research in volunteer administration (12); conducting a needs assessment (10); supervising (10); economy (10); selecting volunteers (9); changing demographics: generation Xers (8); boardsmanship (8); location/distance to volunteer sites (8); identifying volunteers (7); engaging volunteers (7); faith-based volunteerism (7); perception of the non-

profit sector (7); future of health care (5); volunteer orientation (2); disengaging volunteers (1); and direct contact/personal touch (1).

Most of the variables which demographically described the respondents and those which characterized their organization were significantly different between sampling groups. The state Volunteer Leadership contacts utilized the greatest numbers of volunteers in their organization (because they reported all volunteers utilized by Extension in their state), employed the largest number of volunteer administrators within their organization (as Extension has the largest formal structure) and had the greatest number of FTE's devoted to both volunteer development and volunteer administrative issues (Extension has the largest paid staff.) AVA members had the lowest educational levels (bachelors degree), work directly with the greatest number of volunteers and spent the greatest percentage of their time on volunteer administration duties. ARNOVA members both attended the fewest educational in-services and spent the least amount of time in in-services, worked with the fewest number of volunteers and spent the lowest percentage of their time on volunteerism issues. (See Table 3.)

TABLE 3
Means of Demographic Variables with Significant Differences

Descriptor	CES	AVA	ARNOVA	Grand Mean	Sig.
Total # of volunteers in 1998	34,607.21[a]	2,758.96[b]	40.83[b]	7,112.5	.002
# of VA in Organization	52.72[a]	5.80[b]	2.45[b]	12.09	.0001
FTE's devoted to Volunteer Development	15.77a	4.19[b]	3.36[b]	5.74	.001
FTE's devoted to volunteer administrative issues	75.75[a]	5.10[b]	1.22[b]	14.17	.001
Highest level of Education 1=HS, 2=BS, 3=MS, 4=PhD	3.47[b]	2.23[a]	3.42[b]	2.73	.0001
Educational in-services attended in past year	6.63[a]	5.12[ab]	1.71[b]	4.55	.050
# of hours spent in in-services	34.74[b]	34.23[b]	14.11[a]	30.09	.002
# of volunteers respondent works with directly	54.23[a]	181.95[b]	36.25[c]	128.40	.049
% of time devoted to volunteerism	31.99%[a]	76.26%[b]	16.47%[c]	55.19%	.019

[a,b,c] Values with unlike superscripts are significantly different at the .05 value.

IMPLICATIONS

Technology/Virtual Volunteers. In 1998, 42.1% of American homes owned a personal computer (an increase of 74.4% and 15.0% compared with 1994 and 1997, respectively.) (United States Department of Commerce, 1999). Additionally, 26.6% of U.S. households now have Internet access (an increase of 40.9% as compared to 1997.) (United States Department of Commerce.) Successful recruitment depends upon effective marketing to targeted populations who have an interest in the organization, its clientele or mission. Developing a home page, linking that home page to popular and related websites, regularly updating the home page, posting onto the home page up-coming events and volunteer opportunities, and developing and posting virtual volunteer positions and tasks will help an organization prepare for and respond to this trend.

Volunteer Administrator's Professional Development. The need for volunteer administrators to keep up with developments in the field, receive certification, attend educational workshops and conferences, receive cutting edge information, and find new ways to serve both the needs of the agency, its programs and volunteers may be addressed in a variety of ways. Volunteer administrators should participate in professional development activities which are available to them. These could include attending local, regional, state, national and international conferences and workshops, enrolling in continuing education courses in volunteer administration, public or educational administration, public policy, searching the Internet, subscribing to volunteer - related list serves, purchasing or reading resource materials, networking with other volunteer administrators and volunteers, etc.

Corporate/Workplace Volunteers. Corporations are often willing to provide volunteer services to groups, agencies or causes in their community. Many "white-collar" corporations will provide professionals with work release time to volunteer or perform community service; particularly if it is an off-shoot of their employment or will benefit the employer or the employee's organization in some way. In a study of corporate volunteerism, 92% of corporate executives surveyed encouraged their employees to become involved in community service (The Conference Board & Points of Light Foundation, 1995.)

Maximizing corporate volunteerism makes business sense; in fact, it can yield benefits relating to the company's image, employee growth and development, public recognition of social responsibility and more (Urban, 1997).

It is important to note that the vocabulary used in corporations related to volunteerism is often different and the recruiter must be cognizant of this if a successful arrangement is to be consummated between the volunteer organization and the corporate volunteer. The words "pro bono work," board member, corporate social responsibility, civic involvement, in-kind services, and community service are all effective and applicable to different corporations.

Attorneys, accountants and bank officers are often expected and required by their firms to participate in community service. Speaking to groups including Rotary, Lions Clubs, JayCees's and Chambers of Commerce, or to the corporation's Senior Partner will be a good way to "tell your organization's story" and to begin to identify potential volunteer sources. Additionally, identifying what resources are needed for your programs and volunteers and then determining who has access to these resources is an effective way of saving money without actually asking for a financial contribution. Specific examples could include printing and/or duplicating services, food or meal preparation, use of facilities, meeting space or equipment, etc.

Short-term/Episodic Volunteers. Respondents indicated that volunteers will be increasingly interested in short-term commitments or individual acts of volun-

teerism or service. Volunteers may renew their volunteer commitment for the same or a similar activity at another time but will not make indefinite commitments. Volunteer coordinators may need to strategize ways to utilize volunteers for single or short-term responsibilities. Utilizing teams of volunteers who extend their service over a longer period may be one option. Scheduling volunteer activity in day-long episodes and organizing simultaneous, multiple tasks may be another option.

Respondents differentiated between short-term volunteers and lack of retention; these were different issues. But the key issue identified was learning to utilize a larger number of short-term volunteers, rather than try to retain a smaller number of volunteers who were willing to make a longer term commitment.

Volunteer Interests, Skills and Abilities. Respondents noted that volunteers are no longer willing to perform menial tasks, but rather seek volunteer opportunities which fulfill personal interests, utilize their own special skills and abilities, or assist them in developing or refining a new skill. Volunteer leadership educators may prepare for this trend by tailoring specific volunteer positions or tasks to individuals with specific interests, skills and abilities. Referring to the GEMS Model, this becomes a volunteer identification issue. After the organizational need has been assessed, a position description has been developed (which outlines the specific qualifications and skills necessary to successfully fulfill the position), target audiences or individuals must be identified. Recruitment becomes much more effective when seeking individuals with specific qualifications for a certain position, task or responsibility.

Changing Demographics: Aging and Retired Volunteers. Forty percent (40%) of all retirees are involved in volunteer activities (Independent Sector, 1995). Americans are retiring earlier, are healthier, live longer lives, remain active longer and enjoy a higher standard of living in their retirement years than ever before. Retirees have fewer time obligations, have fewer fiscal restrictions and have accessible skills and experience which younger volunteers do not. Many new retirees are interested in identifying a useful and meaningful direction or diversion after employment. For others, active volunteerism may be a good segue into retirement.

Volunteer administrators should consider ways to tap into older volunteer audiences. It is important to note, however, that senior citizens are now being characterized as early, middle and late seniors. Early seniors are mobile, have transportation and are generally available during both the daytime and evening hours. Late seniors have less energy, are less active and mobile and often are willing to volunteer only during the daytime, or from their own home.

Retirees have resources which younger volunteers do not: time, experience, wisdom, well-developed skills and abilities, and, in some cases, financial resources. Retirees are excellent mentors and are often willing to volunteer for activities which they previously performed for a living. For example, retired teachers may volunteer to be reading aids or tutor students one-on-one; a retired accountant or banker may serve as an organization's treasurer or bookkeeper; a retired auto mechanic may work with a school's building trades class.

Changing Demographics: Youth Volunteers. Youth are volunteering in greater numbers than ever before. This may be due in part to an increased emphasis on service learning, community involvement, and the Presidents'(or is it "President's"?) Summit on Service. Whatever the reason, effective volunteer administrators will plan to utilize youth in their programs. Youth have assets which other groups of volunteers do not have: namely energy, enthusiasm and often a passion for a cause which evolves into commitment.

Effective volunteer programs which

utilize youth will involve youth in the design and delivery, as well as the implementation of the program. These young people desire a voice in program planning. They are not interested in doing menial work, but rather, want to be "where the action is." Youth are also often motivated by affiliation and will join activities in which their friends are involved. Youth volunteer activity should be engaging, fun, developmental and social.

Resource Development. Developing long-term, on-going funding sources and developing new resources was a concern of many respondents. Volunteer administrators may prepare for this trend by continuously reassessing the impact their organization is making upon its clientele, community, and the volunteers who drive its programs. Funders are currently interested in outcomes and impacts. Reporting the number of hours of volunteer service is not likely to make a great impression or to increase an organization's level of funding. Seeking alternative funding sources, applying for grants, seeking in-kind services and donations and establishing an endowment may be useful alternatives to consider.

Teaching Volunteers; Training Methods. Teaching methods were often mentioned in combination with other key words; namely "alternative time schedules," "technology," as well as "changing demographics." Educating volunteers via the Internet or home study courses may be effective alternatives to training through group lectures. Additionally, involving volunteers in teaching others is often an effective means of presenting and receiving information.

Service Learning. More and more schools are integrating service learning into their curriculum, while others make it a graduation requirement. One benefit is that service learning is introducing many youth to a wide range of community agencies (Ellis, 1996). Volunteer leadership educators may capitalize upon this trend by collaborating with schools to have students perform community service as an academic component. Involving the students in developing a service project, its planning, implementation, delivery and evaluation will not only benefit the community, but may assist students in developing a connection to their community. Another benefit is that youth who become involved in volunteer and service activities often continue volunteering as adults (Search Institute, 1994). Youth who have been involved in service-learning activities report that it is likely they will continue to volunteer during the next five years (Independent Sector, 1995).

The implications which result from this study will enable volunteer administrators and volunteer leadership educators to anticipate and prepare for trends which will impact their volunteer programs during the next decade. By anticipating and preparing for the next decade, administrators will be in a stronger position to more effectively coordinate volunteer programs by developing the volunteer resources necessary to meet programmatic, organizational, and clientele needs. Volunteerism is a rapidly growing and evolving field. By anticipating emerging trends, effective volunteer administrators will be prepared to strategically position themselves, their organization and its programs to effectively address new and evolving issues in their communities.

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