

1997 International Conference on Volunteer Administration

1997 Harriet Naylor Distinguished Member Service Award Introduction

After spending many years as a volunteer coordinator for Young Life International and as a trainer and author in the field of volunteer management, Jane Justis became the executive director and a trustee of her own family's newly formed foundation, the Leighty Foundation. A small, family-run foundation, the Leighty Foundation does not accept unsolicited proposals, but instead identifies the issues and causes it wants to fund. Jane Justis is every volunteer manager's dream: a foundation executive and trustee who not only understands professionalism in volunteer management, but believes in it deeply and looks for opportunities to provide funding to support her beliefs.

Jane and the foundation have provided AVA with three separate grants: one to underwrite AVA's marketing retreat in 1993; another to underwrite AVA's Certification Revision Task Force in 1995; and a third to underwrite the AVA Region 12 Conference in 1994. This funding was provided because Jane, as a longtime AVA member, understands and believes in AVA's mission. Formerly a member of the AVA board, Jane is an ardent supporter of professional development for volunteer administrators.

But even beyond the financial support she has provided AVA, she is taking her fervent belief in professionalism in volunteer management into the foundation community where it is sorely needed. Jane now has the opportunity to communicate with other foundation staff and trustees about the critical need to support volunteerism and the profession of volunteer administration with funding. As a funder she has participated in panels locally in her community and has been active in the Council on Foundations' national meetings and other funder organizations.

Jane is the author of *We Can't Go On Meeting Like This* and has been a regular presenter at Marlene Wilson's Volunteer Management Program in Boulder. She has presented frequently at AVA conferences and is an active volunteer in her own community of Colorado Springs. She is on the advisory committee to the Colorado Governor's Commission on National and Community Service and serves on the steering committee to develop a volunteer center for the city of Colorado Springs.

Jane Justis is deserving of the Harriet Naylor Distinguished Member Service Award for her longtime active support of AVA in so many different ways and her commitment and contribution to the field of volunteerism through the active role she plays as a funder and an ambassador for all of us in AVA.

*AVA Awards Committee: Pam Sebern, Chair
Valerie Cooper, Sandy DeMarco, Anita Jones, Kathleen McCleskey*

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1997 Harriet Naylor Distinguished Member Service Award Acceptance Speech

Jane Leighty Justis

We all know that awards are never won by a single person. One of my favorite stories is about Sol Tax, a professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago, and his little granddaughter. Sol used to love to carry her around on his shoulders. One day, while they were attending a parade, Sol perched his granddaughter upon his shoulders so she could see all the activity. He met a friend of theirs who had not seen Sol's granddaughter for quite a while. The man looked up at her, high on her grandfather's shoulders, and said, "My, how you've grown!" The little girl looked down at him and said very seriously, "Well, you know, not all of this is me." What a great metaphor for each of us and for the field as well.

There are so many on whose shoulders I've stood. Receiving this award has given me a wonderful opportunity to pause a bit and say a little prayer of thanksgiving for each one. I want to mention two of those people who are here tonight.

I'll start with the one who has known me the longest. In fact, he was around at my conception. Since I can remember, my Dad has been in the front row of the balcony cheering me on. Tonight there's no balcony, but he's sitting in the front row, and I appreciate his coming all the way from Iowa to be here. Thanks, Dad!

And then there's the remarkable woman who invited me to attend the volunteerism parade and to sit on her shoulders so I could see better. Marlene Wilson introduced me to the field, shared her vision with me, and has been a mentor and dear friend for the last 20 years.

Many of us here tonight have joined the parade or remained a part of it because of her. Marlene, your biggest recruitment success story may be seen in the many gathered in this room. Thank you from all of us.

I want to thank AVA as well. This is a field full of heroines and heroes, people I want to be just like some day, people like "Hat" Naylor. AVA has afforded me the opportunity to meet these folks and work in leadership positions with them. What a wonderful privilege this has been.

We've all been carried on the shoulders of others. I encourage you to take a little time in the next few days to reflect on who those people are in your life. Some of them may even be at this conference. Take a minute to tell them "thanks."

Choosing a few words to say to you tonight has provided me with quite a challenge. Your knowledge and experience in the field of volunteer management is vast. So perhaps what I best have to offer are a few thoughts from my perspective as a funder who is still very committed to volunteerism.

In the winter 1997 issue of the magazine *Philanthropy*, the publisher's note begins with these words: "America is about to enter a golden age of philanthropy. In virtually all respects, giving by Americans, individually and institutionally, is poised to grow at an astounding rate. The question is no longer whether this will happen, but how rapidly, to what level, and to what end." He goes on to say that "foundation assets are expected to double in the next decade. Adding to this

will be the largest intergenerational wealth transfer in history."

Estimates of this transfer of wealth run anywhere from \$8-\$12 trillion in the next 20 years or so. Financial resources—in this country at least—will grow. That's the good news. But we all know that the needs and the problems we face will continue to grow as well. I'm concerned about how much of these resources will go toward building and maintaining the critical volunteer management infrastructures in the organizations working to meet these dramatic needs.

In my experience as a grantmaker I have become increasingly aware that few foundations have an understanding—let alone a vision—for the critical role that effective volunteer management plays in an organization's ability to accomplish its mission. These same foundations would not consider funding an organization that didn't utilize its financial resources well, and yet they do not realize the tremendous significance of how that organization utilizes its volunteer resources. In light of this, I want to pose three questions for you to consider.

First, why do we as a field seem to be wrestling with the same issues and asking the same questions year after year? At each AVA conference I hear the same discussions about insecure jobs and dwindling budgets at a time when your skills have never been more needed. Someone once said, "Experience is a funny thing. After working 10 years, some people have 10 years of experience. Others have one year of experience 10 times." What is it we still are not learning after all our years of experience?

Second, why isn't there more awareness and understanding of the field of volunteer administration after so many years of singing our song? The general public—including funders—still doesn't really know who you are or what you do.

In a *Chronicle of Philanthropy* article, I recently read the following: "Volunteerism won't have an impact on social problems without coordination. We have

to increase the capacity of agencies to utilize volunteers well. Volunteers don't magically recruit, place, manage, and reward themselves." You need to share this message with funders and then offer to equip them with the tools to evaluate the effectiveness of volunteer programs run by those to whom they award their grants.

And third, where are the funders at this conference? They will not invite themselves nor do they even perceive a reason to be here. We must make it a priority to personally invite them, show them why it's important for them to understand what you do. Let's create forums here for funders to learn from each other and from you, and for you to learn from them. It is time for these dialogues to be happening at conferences like this one.

But this conference is just one platform for educating funders as well as ourselves. Many others have yet to be created. Betty Stallings and I have begun to look closely at this issue from both the funder and seeker side of the table. We've placed a survey in your packets that will help us gather important information from you. We urge you to complete it, and we look forward to exploring this topic more.... However, Betty and I, and a handful of others, will have relatively small impact alone. You are the ones with the greatest potential to be the ambassadors and educators. **[Editor's Note: The questionnaire has been printed on page 6. It can be filled out and returned to Jane Justis.]**

I have shared three hard questions with you. I also share with you my deep conviction about the critical nature of the work you do. You, individually and collectively, must be at the table as resources are being allocated over the next few years. The stakes are high and I urge you to make this one of your top priorities. I assure you it will continue to be one of mine. We owe that effort to ourselves, to our field, and to those who stand on our shoulders.



Do You Want To See Increased Financial Support to Volunteer Programs?



Yes! No

If you answered yes, please keep reading...

Glad we got your attention. Now we ask you to invest a few minutes to assist us in our quest to improve giving to volunteer programs from foundations. Our combined experience includes training in fund raising and volunteer management and grant-making with a family foundation. In our work we have jointly begun to see tremendous potential for increased foundation funding. Never has the time been better, but our field has not previously launched a conscious effort to do the following:

- 1) provide education and criteria to funders to assist them in evaluating the impact of a well-led volunteer program; and
- 2) become more proficient ourselves in approaching and selling our "case" to foundations.

Our first step in this endeavor is to survey you, the leaders of volunteer programs, to learn about your experience in seeking funds from foundations to support your volunteer program. Simultaneously we are seeking information from foundations regarding their history, philosophy, and giving patterns to volunteer programs.

Armed with this data we feel our follow-up steps of education, materials development, and workshops will proceed with increased credibility and momentum and ultimately will pay off with additional funding to your programs.

Please return this survey to Jane Leighty Justis, P.O. Box 37, Cascade, Colorado 80909 (even if you have had no interaction with foundations). Many thanks.

Betty Stallings
Trainer and Author

Jane Leighty Justis, Trainer,
Director, The Leighty Foundation

We would appreciate your name and address so that we can reach you should a follow-up be necessary.

Name _____ Position _____

Organization _____

Address _____ Phone _____

_____ Fax _____

_____ E-mail _____

Foundation Support Survey

1. Are you responsible for funding all/part of the volunteer program?

Yes No

2. What are the major sources of funding for your volunteer program?

3. Have you attempted to gain financial resources from foundations to support any aspect of your volunteer program? Yes No

4. Were your proposals successful in securing funds? Yes No

5. If yes, what was (were) the name(s) of the foundation(s), approximate amount and purpose of the grant(s), and number of years funded?

6. Who initiated foundation contacts?

7. Were you involved in creating the proposal? Yes No

Were you involved in meeting with foundation personnel? Yes No

8. Have you discovered any foundations that have effective criteria for assessing their grantees' volunteer programs? Yes No If yes, explain.

9. What barriers and/or challenges (internal/external) do you face as you attempt to access funds from foundations (e.g., fund raising is not in your job description, volunteer program is low priority relative to other agency needs for financial resources, no contacts with foundations, no grant writing experience, etc.)?

10. Additional comments, thoughts, insights, successes, etc.
