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ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

The Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) is the professional association for those working in the field of volunteer management who want to shape the future of volunteerism, develop their professional skills, and further their careers. Members include volunteer program administrators in a wide variety of settings, agency executives, association officers, educators, researchers, consultants, students—anyone who shares a commitment to the effective utilization of volunteers. AVA is open to both salaried and nonsalaried professionals.

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ABSTRACT

Descriptive data using an administered questionnaire were obtained from fifteen in-home respite volunteers and from fifteen paid in-home respite workers. From each group, five volunteers and five paid workers and the families they served, were interviewed in depth. Independent t tests showed volunteers to be older, have more education, spend less time in respite and more time in the confidant role than paid workers. Volunteers were characterized as a family surrogate motivated by altruistic and substitutive needs. They were shown to be reliable, competent, creative, and nurturant. Paid workers were found to be motivated by a liking for people and financial need. Though their services were also shown to be reliable, competent and nurturant, paid workers were characterized more as an extension of the family care-giver.

In-Home Respite Care: A Comparison of Volunteers and Paid Workers

Catherine Harris, MSN, RN-CS

INTRODUCTION

The majority of Alzheimer's Disease (AD) victims are cared for at home by a family caregiver. Caring for these individuals requires twenty-four hour surveillance and constant attention to their safety and needs. The provision of respite care, which temporarily frees the primary family caregiver from the arduous responsibilities of caregiving, has emerged as an important strategy to ease the burden experienced by families and to increase their ability to cope. Respite programs generally have developed in three levels: short term institutionalization, day care, and in-home respite, and they utilize a combination of volunteers and paid staff.

Studies have reported the beneficial effects of respite programs on family caregiver burden and the potential for delaying institutionalization (Burdz, Eaton and Bond, 1988; Larkin et al., 1988). Lawton, Brody and Saperstein (1989) report that

short term institutionalization for respite care delayed the final long term care placement 22 days. This is a costly way to obtain relief and, according to the authors, did little to achieve the goal of delaying placement. The decision to institutionalize a family member with Alzheimer's Disease arises out of a complex set of psychosocial and biological variables, and may not be a meaningful measure of the benefits of respite care. An evaluation of other elements of caregiver burden was needed to better understand the beneficial effect of respite service to families. Financial strain, isolation, including lack of knowledge of or access to resources, and ill health are important ingredients in the level of burden reported by caregivers. This study reports findings that have a direct bearing on the value of volunteers vis-à-vis paid workers for in-home respite service in the alleviation of these sources of stress.

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VOLUNTEER RESPITE PROGRAMS

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation recently published a report of the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers Programs which states that between 1984 and 1987, 11,000 volunteers served 26,000 frail elderly and disabled people (1989). They also report a volunteer attrition rate of only 3% over the three-year period, citing the religious convictions and deep personal commitment of their volunteers as reasons for their perseverance.

A volunteer home respite program for AD patients described by Virginia Bell (1984) trained volunteers to talk with patients, provide refreshments, take walks and participate in games. Bell stated that volunteers may function as a supportive friend for the caregiver but this role was not explored or evaluated.

Netting and Kennedy (1985) reported that, in a volunteer respite program for frail elderly, activities primarily consisted of talking with the client, watching TV or supervising the client during sleep. The authors reported problems encountered by the volunteer workers such as being caught up in family tensions, and clients being very ill or confused, tiring easily, talking incessantly and being hard to understand. The authors also reported problems in recruiting and retaining volunteers and in persuading some caregivers to accept volunteer help. In a study of the impact of volunteer caregivers on isolated frail elderly, Warren found a significant increase in the family caregiver life satisfaction measures between time of intake to the service and discharge (1988). She also reported that satisfaction scores were positively correlated with the intensity of contact with the volunteer. Though these programs involved volunteers for the provision of primary service, the programs had paid staff for administrative and educational purposes. Some volunteer programs even charged for services. The Helping Hand of Lexington, Kentucky assigned volunteers to provide in-home respite service

for a fee of ten dollars for four hours (Bell, 1989).

The Volunteer In-Home Respite Service sponsored by the Albuquerque (New Mexico) Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association has been in operation since October of 1983 and a National Respite Care Demonstration Project (AA NRCDP) since 1987. The program has volunteers in administrative, service and educational roles and no paid staff. The service is free of charge to any family caregiver who requests it. Small in national terms, the program was one of the first in the country and served as a model for many that developed later. The volunteer worker appeared to bring a richness to the AD respite care situation that was unique. There was also a trend for volunteers to move into additional roles with the families such as "friend," or "confidant." Program managers were interested in knowing if this approach was beneficial and what the strengths and hazards of an expanded role would be.

At the same time, the need for home services, including respite care, was increasing rapidly due to the aging of our society and the escalating cost of hospital and other inpatient services. This need has prompted the initiation of a variety of home and personal service businesses. The development of paid respite services in Albuquerque enabled this study of characteristics of a paid respite service vis-à-vis the volunteer service. The object was to determine if the paid workers, with all that the different basis for the relationship implies, would be received by families in a similar way as the volunteers. Would paid workers move into the role of confidant? Would they be seen as surrogate family?

Description of Programs Investigated

The volunteer respite service in this study consisted of the previously mentioned Albuquerque AA NRCDP group. The service provided temporary in-home care for Alzheimer's clients without

charge. Volunteers were insured through an affiliation with the University of New Mexico Hospital Volunteer Division. Program components consisted of 1) recruitment, screening, and training of volunteers; 2) monitoring and coordinating the activities of families and volunteers; 3) support of volunteers and recognition for their service; and 4) ongoing evaluation of the project. A central coordinator received requests for respite and contacted the volunteer, who made an evaluative home visit before actually providing respite.

The paid respite service consisted of in-home care as needed by the family caregiver. The founder and coordinator was a former volunteer, so the philosophies and program components were similar; the training regarding Alzheimer's Disease was provided by the Albuquerque AA NRCDP. Though care was not limited to Alzheimer families, for purposes of the study, data were collected only on AD service. The coordinator acted only as a broker and families made their own contracts with respite workers.

The study was conducted to determine differences and similarities in 1) the service provided by volunteers and that provided by paid workers; 2) characteristics brought to the respite situation by each group that had the potential to enhance the home caregiving situation; and 3) quality of the relationship of the worker with the family.

METHOD

The research was an *ex post facto* investigation of variables associated with two groups: 1) the AD volunteers and the AD families they served and 2) paid AD respite workers and the AD families they served. A criterion group design compared the two "naturally" constituted groups on:

- age
- gender
- marital status
- years of education
- professional affiliation

- years residing in locale
- respite hours per visit
- confidant role (hours spent relating primarily with the family caregiver)
- worker motivation
- general role (as indicated by other activities engaged in during the respite visit)
- competence

The purpose was to determine if there was a relationship between the two sets of variables.

Though the volunteers and volunteer coordinator had collected information about their activities with clients since 1983, the paid respite service had been in operation only since the summer of 1988. In the absence of similar data on the paid service, researchers felt that a semi-structured questionnaire and in-depth interviews would provide more comparable information of these two groups. A questionnaire guided interviews and included demographic data, as well as more penetrating questions about relationships and motivation. The author conducted interviews in the homes of the workers. The purpose and procedure was explained to each subject and a signed consent was obtained.

The Sample

The population of the study consisted of volunteers and paid workers who had provided in-home respite service for families of AD patients within the previous year. For baseline descriptive data, researchers found a convenience sample of fifteen volunteers and fifteen paid workers who had completed the standard training provided by the AA NRCDP of Albuquerque for volunteer respite workers, and who agreed to participate in the study. Of the 15 volunteers and 15 paid workers, five subjects were selected from each group, using a theoretical sampling technique, to complete in-depth interviews. In-depth interviews were also conducted with the families served by these subjects.

Table I
Descriptive Data: Volunteers and Paid Workers

Measure	Volunteers (N=15)	Paid Workers (N=15)
Mean Age	51.06	38.2
Gender	F: 13, M: 2	F: 12, M: 3
Marital Status	M: 11, S: 1, W: 2, D: 1	M: 6, S: 8, W: 1, D: 0
Mean Educ. Years	16.8	12.93
Professional Affil.	15	1
Mean Years in Locale	16.86	21.8
Mean Respite Time	2.5 hrs./visit	7 hrs./visit
Mean Counsel. Time	43 min.	13 min.

Data consisted of descriptive information regarding the two sets of respite workers, as well as qualitative data regarding workers' and families' perceptions of the service. Data from the in-depth interviews included worker competence and motivation, role perception and other activities during the respite visit. Descriptive data are presented in table and graph form and accompanied by the applied statistical tests which were used. Table I is a general presentation of descriptive data. Qualitative data are presented in narrative and table form.

Independent Samples t Test

For statistical purposes, the data were treated as two categorical independent groups of variables. The independent samples *t* test was applied to the variables age, education, time spent in respite care, time spent interacting with the family caregiver (confidant role) and years living in the locale. The purpose of the tests of significance was to determine whether the observed difference between the sample means arose by chance or represented a true difference between the two populations. Critical values were determined using the two-tailed formula. Alpha was set at .05. Assumptions for *t* tests were met or considered by the statistical theory to be inconsequential.

FINDINGS

Age

A comparison of the two groups indi-

cated that the mean age of volunteers was 13 years more than that of paid workers. The independent samples *t* test was significant at the .05 level ($df=28$), supporting the view that there is a relationship between age and group membership. The youngest volunteer was 32 and the oldest was 67 years. Though six of the volunteers were employed at least part time, nine of them were retired. The expectation of "retiredness" is that the individuals have spare time to pursue activities for pleasure or fulfillment without remuneration. If this is a valid assumption, it would help to explain the findings that volunteers tend to be older than paid workers. The oldest paid worker was 55, the youngest was 19, with only four reaching the age of 40 years. Paid workers were either in school or attempting to enter the work force through human service roles at slightly more than minimum wage. Figure 1 shows the comparison of the variable in graph form.

Rather, the altruistic motive may be paramount to some in older age. One of the most dedicated volunteers, 67 years of age, had two triple by-pass surgeries. She expressed a need to do as much for God and humanity as she can while she is still on this earth.

Gender

Though this variable was not analyzed statistically, the balance of gender in favor of female workers was found to be similar between the two groups, with the paid workers having one more male worker

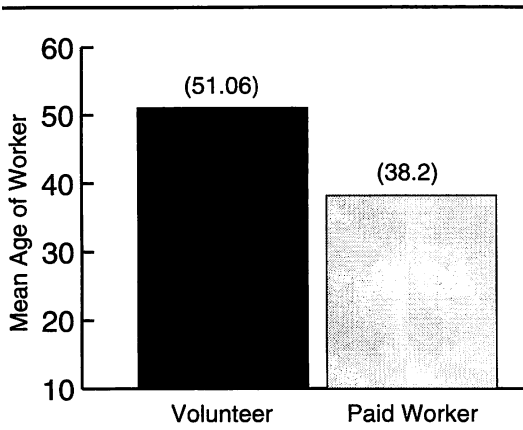


Figure 1
Age of Worker

than the volunteers. This finding is not surprising as national figures show a higher percentage of female volunteers and workers (e.g. nurses, social workers, nurse aides) in care-providing roles. National figures on volunteers without regard to type of volunteer work show 44% of volunteers are male (Allen, 1982). The 1982 National Long Term Care Survey showed that 71% of family caregivers of frail elderly were female (Stone, Cafferata and Sangl, 1987). Table I shows the number of male and female respite workers of both groups.

Marital Status

Eleven (73%) of the volunteers were married compared to six (40%) of paid workers, and both groups included women who were widowed. The single status of paid workers could reflect their younger age and earlier stage of development, whereas only four of the volunteers were without a spouse. These data negate the hypothesis investigated by Chambre (1984) that volunteering is a substitute for role or object loss in old age. Another possibility is that as couples retire, roles and responsibilities shift, and the individuals may find it beneficial in maintaining a satisfactory marriage relationship to have separate outside activities. Table I shows the marital status of paid workers and volunteers.

Education

The independent samples *t* test ($df=28$) applied to worker education level was significant at the .05 level, suggesting that whether a worker is a volunteer or a paid respite worker is related to years of education. The data show the volunteers had an average of nearly four years more of formal education than the paid workers. In academic degrees, this translated to volunteers having one Ph.D., one short of dissertation toward a Ph.D., two master's degrees, and six bachelor's degrees. Paid workers had four bachelor's degrees, two associate's degrees, five with a high school diploma and four with a 10th-grade education. Figure 2 shows the relationship of the variable in the two groups in graph form.



Figure 2
Years of Education

Professional Affiliation

Whereas the entire group of volunteers identified with a profession such as nursing, accounting, teaching, counseling or banking, only one paid worker claimed a professional affiliation. The paid workers tended to be at the beginning of a career ladder or stuck in a caregiving role with low pay due to lack of preparation or motivation to move upward. This relationship is illustrated in graph form in Figure 3.

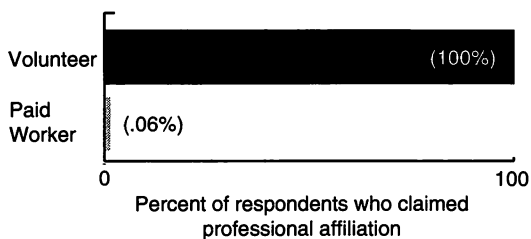


Figure 3
Professional Affiliation

Years in Locale

Because the qualitative data indicated that the volunteers brought to the situation a network of resources not observed with the paid workers, researchers suspected that they might have longer experience in the community where the client lived to become acquainted with local services. Though the data show that paid workers had lived in the locale an average of four years longer than the volunteers, the *t* test (*df*=28) failed to indicate a significant difference in the two means, leaving researchers unable to conclude that membership in a group is related to the length of time the worker has lived in the Albuquerque area. Other differences in the two groups such as education, age, experience and motivation might explain the knowledge of resources. Figure 4 presents years in locale in graph form.

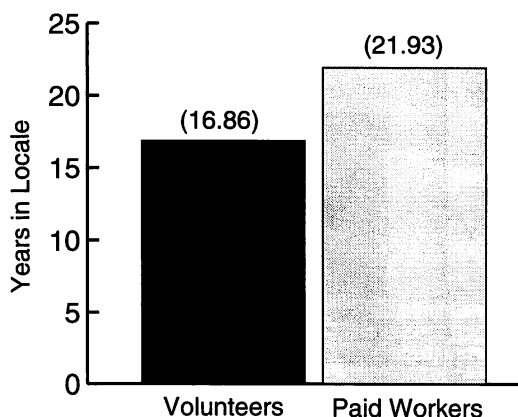


Figure 4
Years Worker Lived in Locale

Respite Hours per Visit

The independent samples *t* test was significant at the .05 level (*df*=8), indicating that paid workers spent significantly more time in respite service per visit than did volunteers. The paid workers provided respite care for a living. It is probable that they solicited, and actually put in, as much time as possible to increase their incomes. The volunteers, on the other hand, provided respite care for other reasons and had independent sources of incomes, thus not needing to put in as many hours per week to support themselves. In addition, it has been reported (Harris, 1989) that family care-

givers involving volunteers are reluctant to stay away long periods for fear of imposing, whereas family caregivers who pay for respite care have a contract and compensate the workers for their time by the hour or day. It may also be that the family caregiver who hires paid help also holds a job, and therefore stays away longer out of necessity. Figure 5 presents the respite hours in graph form.

Interaction with Caregiver (Confidant Role)

The independent samples *t* test comparing time spent by workers interacting with the family caregiver (confidant role)

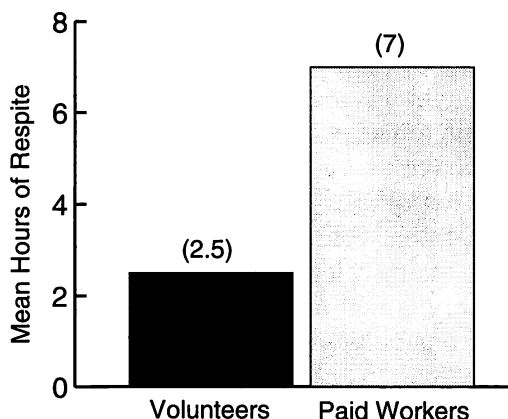


Figure 5
Hours of Respite Care per Visit

was found to be significant at the .05 level ($df=8$), indicating that volunteers spent significantly more time interacting with caregivers than did paid workers. The frequency and amount of time spent with the family caregiver over and above the actual respite service had been an important finding over the five years during which the volunteer program had been in effect and has been referred to as the "confidant" or "family surrogate" role.

It was of great interest to determine how much time the paid workers spent visiting or counseling the family caregiver before or after the actual respite period. The volunteers and paid workers were asked how much time they spent in supportive interaction (the confidant role) with the family over and above the actual respite period. The results showed that the volunteers spent an average of 43 minutes for every two and one-half hours (28%) of their time, whereas the paid workers spent only 13 minutes per seven hours (3%) of their time, clearly a significant difference. The volunteers claimed to have developed a confidant relationship with the family caregiver and this was confirmed by the caregivers. The paid workers reported that they shared information such as the day's events with the caregivers but did not spend time with them in addition to the respite service.

Despite the small sample, this finding suggests an important difference in the perception of roles and relationships. AA NRCDP program volunteer data for 1987 and 1988 show an average of 22% of the volunteer time was spent in supportive or confidant activities with the family caregiver. Figure 6 presents the Mean Confidant Time in graph form.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In addition to the demographic data and specific questions about workers' activities during respite visits, the subjects were probed for their perceptions of worker motivation, role, and competence. These in-depth interviews of work-

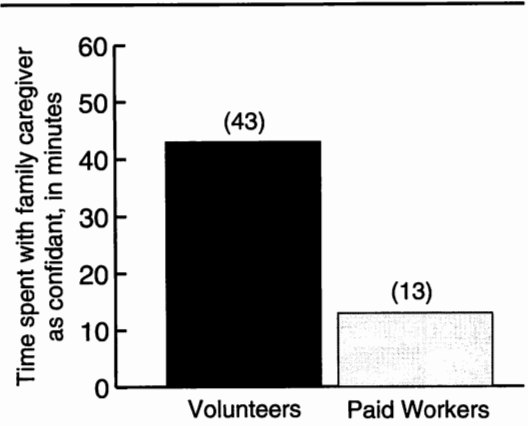


Figure 6
Mean Confidant Time

ers, families, and coordinators, together with observations gathered from training and coordination activities, revealed the following major themes:

Motivation

Volunteers were motivated by altruism and substitution, whereas paid workers were motivated by monetary compensation and by liking to care for people. Reasons given by the volunteers for joining the project and giving time and energy to provide respite care were generally of an altruistic or substitutive nature. One volunteer had taken care of her husband for a number of years until he died of cancer. She was alone and, though she had adult children and grandchildren, they were in another community and she had the time, experience and desire to help others. She remembered with gratitude the help she received from others during her husband's illness.

A male volunteer spent every Sunday morning for over a year staying with a client so the wife caregiver could attend church services. The volunteer's own father, who lived out of state, had AD and this was the volunteer's way of doing what he could for his father. Though he developed a strong relationship with the client family he served, was praised by the wife caregiver and attended

the funeral when the client died, his contribution was his best way of showing care and concern for his father and could be viewed as a substitution motive. This same volunteer aided the Alzheimer's Association in other ways, such as setting up computer programs and using his talents as an English teacher to help develop a Care-giver Care pamphlet.

A female volunteer lost both parents to AD, one after she began volunteering. Though she still had young children at home, she continued to provide volunteer respite care and volunteered in other aspects of the AA organization, including teaching transfer techniques (as a physical therapist), taking on speaking engagements, and fund raising. She was also a member of the Board of Directors. Other volunteers simply felt that they had something to offer and could help with the tremendous stress of family caregivers of AD patients. One of those with no personal experience with AD had a history of volunteer work for other organizations in the community. A retired accountant, she held the position of treasurer for the Alzheimer's Association and was an active leader in the Respite Project.

Reasons given by the paid workers for their interest in this line of work included liking old people, enjoying caring for people and/or eventually wanting to go into the field of nursing. One paid worker lost her husband to AD and, because she felt she had the time and talent to care for AD clients, agreed to serve in this capacity for pay. She was not representative of the paid workers as a whole and was the only one of the 15 in the sample who had a personal involvement with AD. In general, the paid workers were people without personal involvement with AD clients, searching for a line of work that would fit their abilities and family responsibilities. One paid worker, a mother of two young children, opened a shelter care home where she housed up to three frail elders, including AD clients.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

A number of theories have been put forward to explain motivation forces for volunteering or for selecting a particular line of work. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, as an explanation for motivation, has become a classic in the volunteer literature (Wilson, 1976). Having satisfied the basic physiologic and safety needs, individuals strive toward the three higher levels: the need for social interaction or affiliation, esteem or the need to be valued and the highest level, and the need for self actualization.

The volunteers presumably had met the two most basic needs and were motivated by higher level needs such as affiliation or esteem. This is in keeping with the observed motivations for volunteers in this study such as altruism and substitution. The paid workers had still to satisfy their basic needs for sustenance and security, so were required by human instinct to seek first these survival properties. This is not to imply that the quality of their work or their devotion to the product of their efforts was any less than that of volunteers, but simply that their motives for performance differed. The very fact that the mean age of volunteers was 20 years older than paid workers supports the probability that volunteers have, through longer years of productive effort, satisfied basic needs and are dealing with higher level needs.

Role

Volunteers fit the role of surrogate family members or confidants and advocates, whereas paid workers functioned more as extensions of the family caregivers. Reports of volunteers strongly suggested a friend/confidant or surrogate family relationship with the caregiving family. After a number of months of providing respite for a family, one volunteer finally accepted the offer of coming early to have dinner before the caregiver left for her weekly choir practice activity. This became a regular occurrence. Another care-

giver reported, "I don't know what I'd do without him. Sometimes after I get back from church, he stays a while and we just talk." And another: "I love L. When I get back from my errand, she stays and talks with me. I get so lonely. One day she just invited me out to lunch. We had a good time." "H is special. She told me not to hurry back. I feel comfortable being a little late." "Yes, I confide in her. I have no one else to talk to." "They take time to talk with me." "It doesn't take the place of my relationship with my husband, but they (volunteers) do fill the role of a confidant." "You have wonderful volunteers. N stays for a while after I get back."

Volunteers reported that their interaction with the family caregiver was of a friendly or family quality. Their conversations consisted of talk about the client, the onset and progression of the illness, physical and emotional concerns of the family caregiver, other family members, anger and stress, the weather, sports, world affairs, jokes, and small talk. Volunteers have attended funerals of clients and have often visited the family caregiver following the death of the AD victim.

In the role of advocate, one volunteer wrote a letter to the military commander of a caregiver's grandson to try to get him transferred closer. Other volunteers gave talks and appeared on educational programs and radio and television programs to recruit volunteers, educate the public, and raise money for the organization. At least three volunteers led support groups, and one volunteer gave seminars in bio-feedback for family caregivers.

Paid workers reported that they generally relate as "hired help" or as an "aide" and that they "have nothing in common" with the family caregiver. One worker reported that the caregiver treated her like a "daughter" but didn't confide in her. She spent some time in the house while the family caregiver was still there, but it was most often doing housework or watching the client while the family caregiver was doing other things or get-

ting ready to leave. Another reported "no special relationship" and that she spent only about one-half hour per week relating the events of the week to the family caregiver. Another worker reported that she tried to get the husband caregiver to talk but that he did not open up. One worker stated, "I give good care and the family knows it, but I don't encourage talking." She claimed that she reported to the family after her "shift" was over, but that it was more like "reporting off duty."

Table II presents the tasks performed in connection with respite work as reported by volunteers and paid workers. The paid workers reported tasks associated with housework in addition to care of the AD victim, while the volunteers reported only activities associated with caring for the AD victim.

Table II
Activities of Workers
During Respite Visits

Volunteers	Paid Workers
Safety Supervision	Safety Supervision
Toileting	Toileting
Feeding	Feeding
Reading to	Cooking
Talking to	Bathing
Exercising	Cleaning
	Laundry
	Transportation

Objective vs. Subjective Needs:

The Confidant Role

The relationship between caregiving and burden has been expressed in the literature concerning families of Alzheimer's Disease victims (Zarit, Todd and Zarit, 1986; Deimling and Bass, 1986; George and Gwyther, 1986). In studies of the mentally ill, Platt and Hirsch (1981) recognized the difference between objective burden (events, happenings and activities) and subjective burden (feelings, attitudes and emotions) and the importance of this difference to a caregiver's mental and psychological health.

A study by Montgomery, Gonyea and Hooyman (1985) related this dichotomous view of burden to the gerontological literature. The distinction between subjective and objective burden helps to explain the differences with which family caregivers regard their respite workers, and the differing needs that are being met. Subjective burden was related to characteristics of the family caregivers which affected their perceptions of their situations, whereas objective burden arose out of the type of caregiving *task* involved. One could hypothesize that the volunteers, in relating as surrogate family members or confidants, were meeting the needs of the subjective burden experienced by the caregivers. Volunteers encouraged sharing of worries and feelings of frustration, whereas the paid workers tended not to feel as free to do this. In relieving the family caregivers of physical tasks and supervisory time, paid workers were meeting the objective burden needs.

Families of AD patients lose their friends, even families. There may be a discomfort which friends feel with the behavior of the client. There may be a divergence of interests as AD family caregivers become more and more involved with the daily caring routine and relate more to other caregivers through support groups and organizational efforts while friends continue with their usual social activities. One caregiver reported, "When we first retired here, several of us in the neighborhood became acquainted and we did a lot of things together. We had parties, played bridge and went out to dinner together. When D became difficult, they continued to visit for a while but now I never see them." Another caregiver reported, "When he was in the hospital they (church friends) were very supportive, but when I brought him home they came twice and I haven't seen them since. His daughters come sometimes, but at their convenience, not when I need them. If I need someone to help me with him, I need it NOW! I don't ask for help

unless I really need it. When M (paid worker) comes, she helps me dress him, do up the dishes and pick up the house a bit. That's a big help."

It may be that the paid respite workers were hired to provide assistance with objective burden tasks as an "extra pair of hands" or an "extension of the caregiver." The volunteers were acting as surrogate family and were seen as people to share with, to unload on and to be friends with, confidants. There are few human experiences which equate with the level of burden, isolation and emotional pain associated with caring for an AD victim. The physical and emotional strain encountered demand relief of subjective as well as objective burden.

The loss of a confidant, whether through physical death or cognitive impairment, is a profound loss. Lowenthal and Haven (1968) suggest that the presence or accessibility of a confidant, someone in whom to confide, is a critical factor in the maintenance of mental health and well being. Their studies show that 1) if one has a confidant, one can decrease the amount of social interaction without risking depression; 2) if one has no confidant, one can increase the amount of social interaction and still become depressed, and 3) if one has no confidant and becomes socially isolated (as in the case of AD caregivers), the risk for depression becomes overwhelming. The presence of an intimate relationship serves as a buffer against loss of role or reduction of social interaction.

Control vs. Mutuality

The other factor in the relationship of a family caregiver to a volunteer vis-à-vis a paid worker is one of control. To hire someone to assist is one thing, but for a peer to come voluntarily to the door to visit or to stay while the family caregiver leaves is quite another. George Homans's exchange theory (1961) applies a rational, economic model to the study of social behavior. In the case of contracting with and paying someone to perform a task,

the payor sets the agenda and is in control. Money is exchanged for service. The caregiver-volunteer exchange, on the other hand, may not appear to be balanced. The caregiver receives something and provides no compensation. In Homans's terms, however, the volunteer is compensated through gratitude on the part of the family caregiver, self-satisfaction or fulfillment of altruistic motives. However, because the exchange is more subtle, the family caregiver does not feel the same control of the situation as in the case of the paid worker. There is likely to be more sharing of control or mutuality in the relationship and the volunteer is regarded as a friend or surrogate family member.

Competence

Volunteers were nurturant. They brought many resources to the caregiving situation and were creative and reliable. Paid workers were also nurturant but were more static in their development and brought a linear benefit to the client and caregiver. Though strict measures of performance ability were not administered, in interviews with families of volunteers and paid workers alike, the general perception was that both groups brought competent, reliable and nurturant care to the respite caregiving situation. In every case the clients were clean, as well-nourished as their condition allowed, and adequately cared for by the worker.

Innovation and Resource Network

Interviews with volunteer workers revealed many occasions of creative and innovative intervention with the client. A male invented a modified game of golf which he played with his client. Other volunteer activities included taking the client for a walk, encouraging exercise and conversation. The family reported one client to be totally bedfast. Volunteers who attended her on a weekly basis gradually got her out of bed and eventually reported walking and dancing with her.

Interventions with family caregivers

also reflected innovation. One volunteer started a program she called "New Friends." Recognizing the loneliness and isolation of caregivers, she sent a letter to all newcomers to the support groups, offering to visit on just a friendly basis. She reported making four such visits per week. One volunteer occasionally invited a family caregiver out for lunch and another took a caregiver to a jazz concert. Volunteers also brought their knowledge and experience with community resources to bear on the family situation. Knowledge of Medicare/Medicaid benefits, home nursing techniques and equipment, home repair, leisure activities, and library facilities for blind or handicapped are examples of the creative ways volunteers intervened to improve the quality of life of the care recipients.

Researchers did not observe interventions such as these among the paid workers. Though they provided competent and even loving care, there seemingly was not the experience or motivation to try new ways of serving the client and caregiver. If it is a valid hypothesis that the paid worker has less control and acts as an extension of the caregiver, she/he is in an authoritarian situation and there is not the freedom or motivation to be innovative. Paid workers were nurturant with the client, but this posture did not extend to the family caregiver.

DISCUSSION

It was suggested that the volunteer-caregiver relationship developed along a mutuality model, labeled a confidant relationship, whereas the paid worker-caregiver relationship was an employer-employee relationship. Explanations include differences in role perception and control. In their role as family surrogates, volunteers attended the caregiving family in a holistic sense. The objective needs of the family were met by carrying forward the necessary maintenance tasks such as feeding, toileting, and surveillance. In addition, they served the subjective needs

of the family through the roles of friend and confidant for the family caregiver and creative "therapist" for the victim.

It is not suggested that the volunteer service might delay or prevent institutionalization of the client. The effect is rather one of adding to the quality of life through supporting the family caregiver in maintaining morale and resisting stress. The paid workers have also added to the quality of life of the caregiver by performing tasks such as bathing, cooking, cleaning, laundry, and transportation which allow the caregiver to escape, for a time, the demands of caregiving. The difference is that the paid workers served in a linear fashion, acting as an extension of the family caregiver and meeting primarily the objective needs of the caregiver, whereas the volunteers provided the dimension of the intimacy of a confidant.

Early studies of the relationship of the availability of support groups and confidants to the alleviation of burden (Strain and Chappel, 1982; Lazarus, Stafford, Cooper, Cohler and Dysken, 1981) have demonstrated a correlation. More recently, Scott, Roberto, and Hutton (1986); and Montgomery, Gonyea and Hooyman (1985) reported that it was primarily the support from family members that related significantly to the level of burden. However, some caregivers do not have family available or the family members are not supportive. In the absence of this source of emotional support, the volunteer in this study served as the confident or family surrogate. It is suggested that volunteer qualities which make this possible are the maturity of older age, the knowledge of resources and understanding of the dynamics of the caregiving situation gained from education and the experience of a profession, the altruistic motive, and creative and nurturant characteristics.

Economic Factor

Though it was not explored in depth in the study, the economic factor is an important one in comparing the relative value of

volunteers vis-à-vis paid workers. Financial burden is an important source of stress for family caregivers. Medicare and most private health insurance coverage exclude the diagnosis of AD. Family resources are rapidly depleted through medical and hospital costs, home nursing services and the supplies and equipment necessary to provide care. A volunteer service is appealing to families as a way of obtaining relief without great cost. This study indicates that caregivers accepting volunteer service may receive additional benefit from the added bonus of a friend, a confidant or a surrogate family member.

CONCLUSION

The study was conducted as an examination of the perceived relative benefit of volunteers vis-à-vis paid respite workers to the mental and physical health of AD caregivers. In this study, the volunteers were characterized as family surrogates motivated by altruistic and substitutive needs. They were older, had more education, including a professional identification, and spent considerable time interacting with the family caregiver before and after respite visits. They were shown to be reliable, competent, creative, nurturant and to have a beneficial effect on family caregivers. On the other hand, paid workers were viewed as competent, caring and reliable but acting primarily as an extension of family caregivers. Though their services were shown to have a beneficial effect on family caregivers, in this research, paid workers did not manifest the initiative to move the family to a higher level of function.

Generalization to other populations of AD caregivers is limited due to the small sample size and the lack of a control group. However, researchers think that the findings reflect a valid view of volunteers as a safe, reliable, unique and economical resource for Alzheimer's victims and their family caregivers. It was shown that volunteers easily move into the role of surrogate family and confidant, thus having the

potential to meet subjective as well as objective needs of AD family caregivers. The emergence of multiple studies which document the excessive stress to which AD caregivers are subjected underlines the importance of identifying resources that can support the caregiver and prevent physical and emotional breakdown. Research with a larger population and instrumentation could elicit nuances of the benefits family caregivers realize through respite services by volunteers. These studies would serve to guide the refinement of recruitment, training and supportive services for the volunteers.

Families of AD patients prefer to care for their disabled members in the home as long as possible. Support services such as respite care are needed to relieve the strain experienced by the family caregivers. Many paid respite services are being developed which have a potential to relieve caregiver burden. These are important and needed services. However, it is the conclusion of this study that volunteers play a unique role in the social support of AD caregivers and that efforts should be made to recognize their contributions and to promote the development of volunteers who can move into the role of friend and confidant for AD families.

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A Reader's Moment

A Volunteer's Perspective

Forwarded to *The Journal* by Winifred L. Brown

A special volunteer, Sol Goldstein, was referred through the New York City Mayor's Voluntary Action Center's Second Careers Volunteer Program which focuses on managerial, professional, technical retirees. He was assigned to the International Center which provides a program to facilitate the adjustment of newly arrived foreigners to life in New York City and the USA. The program includes tutoring in English, cultural activities and other immigrant services. It has a huge number of volunteers.

Mr. Goldstein now teaches a class in American idioms. He writes:

This place is overcrowded, it's noisy, it's not always clean. Low-grade pandemonium with staff dashing about, tutors looking for their students and vice-versa, and new members walking about in a daze. Just short of utter chaos. I LOVE IT.

It's the people. The staff members are all courteous, committed and knowledgeable. Eileen in the English department and Terre, the Director of Volunteers, are all of the above, plus charming. Little Anna makes the young men feel like they have married too hastily. The tutors have one trait in common: they are deeply devoted to their students. They have my sincere respect.

But the students! Here they are in a strange country with strange people, strange customs, strange language and a variety of odd problems to cope with.

One student has a husband who is teaching himself to play the flute. Since he is tone-deaf, his off-key renditions don't

bother *him*, but they drive *her* up the wall. Still, she always has her homework done on time . . . I bought her a set of ear muffs.

Another student works nights, her husband works days. She tells me they have never gotten along better. There is a lesson here.

One student works for a Chinese newspaper and finds that American idioms don't always work out well in Chinese. For example: "crocodile tears" comes out "fox cried for the dead rabbit — as he ate him."

One new student from Russia visited the Trump Tower with a girl friend. They decided to have coffee and cake. The tab was \$11. In shock, they paid and had just enough to get home. I asked her what she thought of this experience. "In my country, Mr. Trump goes to a gulag."

Finally, another student, giving her idiom report, looked me in the eye and said, "I have a crush at you. Let's tie a knot."

Too late. I'm already tied happily and finally to the International Center. And that's the way the cookie crumbles.

Editor's Note: Addressing the practical and philosophical issues of volunteer management are among the goals of *The Journal*. From time to time the editors receive smaller, lighter pieces which answer, in a moment, some of the questions managers of volunteers ask, provide inspiration or highlight a different perspective of volunteer administration. It is our pleasure to share some of these moments with our readership.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to provide a brief history of corporate/business involvement in volunteerism; to indicate how the pattern of corporate volunteering has changed and is changing; to provide projections for future involvement; and to suggest recommendations for strengthening the participation of corporate volunteers.

Corporate Volunteers

Kathy Straka

INTRODUCTION

Although not identified as "corporate volunteers," business leaders participated in volunteer activities for the good of society throughout our history. Business leaders also were viewed by the public as being community leaders.¹ Society has long held the belief that business leaders have a responsibility to assist with the problems facing society.

HISTORY

One early example of business volunteer involvement was the development of the New York Chamber of Commerce in 1792. This organization, while concentrating on economic concerns related to businesses, sponsored civic improvement projects which reflected an interest in the local community.²

In the 1880s and 1890s, various organizations were formed by businessmen in response to consumer concerns. One example is the American Association of Public Accountants formed in 1887. This organization formulated a code of ethics for accountants, and assisted with the establishment of an accounting college. Another example is the National Fire Protection Association started in 1895 by insurance and industrial representatives who worked together to solve problems involving increased fire hazards in factories.³

Business leaders also were interested in the development of youth. In the early 1900s, two businessmen organized the first Junior Achievement company to offer young people the opportunity to learn and experience the free enterprise system. By the 1970s, Junior Achievement had programs in 1,100 communities with over 30,000 business people who contributed their time to these programs.⁴ This organization continues to be an important part of youth education in this country.

In addition, during the late 1930s and early 1940s, business people developed new volunteer organizations such as the Kiwanis Key Clubs and Circle K Clubs which offered vocational guidance and community service programs to high school and college students.⁵

The prosperity and development experienced after World War I brought with it new safety concerns related to the workplace, home and the automobile. As a means to address these concerns, business leaders participated in the organization of various safety councils. The councils were established to provide education on safety hazards to the public as well as determine ways to eliminate these hazards.⁶

Following World War II, business volunteers broadened the scope of community projects being addressed by local and state Chambers of Commerce. Several of the new projects undertaken by the

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Chambers were assisting with the distribution of polio vaccine, working to eliminate slums, and acting as tourist and convention centers to promote their communities.⁷

In 1952, a United States Supreme Court decision which legalized corporate giving to institutions of higher education resulted in growth in corporate volunteerism. In *A. P. Smith Manufacturing Company v. Barlow*, it was determined that a corporation could give a contribution to a college without receiving any benefit from the college. This decision reinforced the commonly held belief that business was responsible to help maintain a healthy society. The Court stated, in part, as follows:

The contribution here in question is towards a cause which is intimately tied into the preservation of American business and the American way of life. Such giving may be called incidental power, but when it is considered in its essential character, it may well be regarded as a major, though unwritten, corporate power. It is even more than that. In the Court's view of the case, it amounts to a solemn duty.⁸

In 1968, when unemployment was high, President Lyndon B. Johnson requested the business community accept the challenge to improve the unemployment situation. As a result, the National Alliance of Businessmen was formed; 12,500 firms representing eight regions of the United States participated. Member firms located and hired large numbers of hard-core unemployed; the number hired totaled over 100,000 by July 1969. Although government assistance was available, two-thirds of the participating firms declined to accept it.⁹

CORPORATE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

In the late 1960s and 1970s some corporations, in recognition of their responsibility to broaden their participation in community activities and society at large, set

forth to develop corporate volunteer programs to address these responsibilities. Several of the first large corporations to establish corporate volunteer programs were Levi Strauss & Co. (1968), IBM (1971), Allstate (1972) and Honeywell (1974).¹⁰ Although the main purpose of these programs was to increase the corporation's participation in activities for the common good, an underlying reason was to enhance their public image. During this period, business experienced a decline in public confidence. A 1975 Harris poll indicated that only 15% of those surveyed had confidence in the business leaders, representing a drop of 40% from 1966.¹¹

Many corporations now encourage their employees to participate in community volunteer activities. The method of encouragement varies depending upon the corporate volunteer program. For example, some corporations allow an employee time off, ranging from several hours to a year or more, to participate in volunteer activities. Others provide supplies, services, or the use of company facilities for their volunteers. Another common practice is to loan personnel to assist nonprofit organizations. Still other companies support group volunteer activities in their communities or provide information and publicity to employees about volunteer activities. In addition, some companies have included retiree volunteer programs within their corporate volunteer programs.¹²

Another method used to encourage employee volunteerism is a matching gift program which matches an employee's financial contribution to a qualified nonprofit agency with a corporate financial gift. For example, The St. Paul Companies, Inc.'s matching gift program will double match a monetary contribution of an employee who volunteers with an organization for at least 50 hours during a twelve month period.

Due, in part, to the development of corporate volunteer programs, corporations were one of the primary sources of volunteers for nonprofit organizations during

the mid 1970s and 1980s. During this period, employee volunteering represented the greatest area of growth and development in the voluntary sector.¹³

Another impetus to the growth in corporate volunteerism in the 1980s was the Reagan administration's Private Sector Initiative Program which was established to encourage private participation dealing with public problems. Although corporate executives at first supported President Ronald Reagan's idea, they soon realized that they did not have the resources to deal with the growing problems which were compounded by the administration's budget cuts to social service projects.¹⁴

In 1985, there were over 600 major corporations which had organized corporate volunteer programs to encourage the participation of their employees in community service activities. In fact, in VOLUNTEER's 1985 Workplace in the Community survey, more than 200 companies reported that nearly 300,000 of their employees were active volunteers.¹⁵

In recent years, corporations within communities who share an interest in corporate volunteerism have joined together to form corporate volunteer councils to promote volunteering. These organizations provide a means for corporations to share information regarding volunteer programs, learn about the need for volunteers within the community and work jointly on ways to best meet those needs.¹⁶ In 1986, the Corporate Volunteerism Council of the Minneapolis/St. Paul (Minnesota) Metro Area had 49 member companies, 24 of which had formal corporate volunteer programs.¹⁷ By 1989, there were 36 corporate volunteer councils throughout the United States which reflects a growing interest in corporate volunteerism.¹⁸

PROJECTIONS FOR FUTURE INVOLVEMENTS

The outlook for future involvement by corporate volunteers in the 1990s is favorable. A major reason for this outlook is the aging of the "baby boomers" population.

Seventy-seven million baby boomers will move into middle age during the nineties. Of these, 44 million will be in the 25-34 age group and 33 million will be in the 35-44 age group. Statistics indicate that individuals in these two age groups volunteer approximately 11% and 42%, respectively, more than the average adult.¹⁹ This bodes well for corporate volunteerism as many of these people are part of the business community. These individuals are also establishing roots in their communities which will contribute to an increased interest in volunteering.

Another factor which will contribute to the participation of corporate volunteers in the 1990s is the recent change in attitude toward volunteerism by the American people. Some are predicting that the 1990s will be the "age of altruism."²⁰ Part of this change may be the result of President George Bush's "Points of Light Initiative" in which he is calling on all American and American institutions to volunteer. In this initiative, the President is calling on every business to 1) develop at least one community service project in which all employees are encouraged to participate; 2) consider volunteer service in hiring, compensation and promotion; and 3) donate services of some of its talented personnel to local volunteer organizations.²¹

The interest in corporate volunteer programs is expected to continue to increase in the future despite the worsening business conditions being experienced by corporations. As corporations have fewer resources to allocate to social service projects, they will substitute the talents of their employees by encouraging all personnel to participate in volunteer activities to help fulfill the corporation's responsibilities to society.²²

RECOMMENDATIONS

Corporations must pay attention to how they "encourage" employee participation in volunteer activities. A recent study was conducted in the Minneapolis-St. Paul (Minnesota) area to examine the degree to

which corporations influence employee volunteer participation and what effect this influence had on the employees' satisfaction with their volunteer activities. Employees of 21 corporations were surveyed; 211 individuals responded. Of these respondents, 28% indicated that they experienced no influence to volunteer; 44.5% mild influence; 16.1% moderate influence and 6.2% severe influence. When asked whether the influence experienced affected their satisfaction with the volunteer activities, which certainly is of importance to the nonprofit agencies, 22.7% indicated a low level of satisfaction; 69.5% medium satisfaction and 7.8% high satisfaction. The study recommended that corporations evaluate their use of influence and reasons for doing so since employee satisfaction will ultimately affect the viability of the corporation's own volunteer program.²³

This study also recommended that, in order to strengthen employee participation in, and satisfaction with, the corporate volunteer program, corporations acknowledge their employees volunteer participation by 1) recognizing the skills gained through the experience; 2) thanking employees for representing the company through corporate publications and personal contact with upper management; and 3) providing regular information to all employees regarding available volunteer activities, and allowing employees to participate in such activities during company time or offering some paid time off for these activities.²⁴

In addition, as competition for the available workforce stiffens, corporations will have to pay closer attention to the needs of their employees in order to hire and retain them. One of these needs may be the ability to participate in volunteer activities. Since greater numbers of individuals are volunteering, a company with a corporate volunteer program will have an advantage over those that do not.

Like corporations, nonprofit agencies will face tough competition to get the

number of future corporate volunteers needed. To enhance their ability to attract the needed volunteers, nonprofit agencies must take into account the varied work schedules of their potential corporate volunteers, and adjust their volunteer opportunities to accommodate those schedules. In addition, nonprofits need to address volunteers' growing reluctance to accept long-term positions and provide rewarding short-term volunteer opportunities.²⁵

Nonprofit agencies must also take the time to learn what goals their volunteers have in regard to their volunteer activities. Ascertaining whether or not a person is satisfied with his or her assignment is important. Does the person want to participate in an activity that will utilize his or her current skills or want to learn new skills? Is the person's goal to use the skills gained through volunteer activities to assist in gaining employment? If so, records of that person's volunteer activities will be important.²⁶

Finally, and probably most importantly, nonprofit agencies need to recognize the volunteers for their contributions to their organizations. Making sure that volunteers know that their work is appreciated will certainly enhance an organization's ability to retain and attract the volunteers needed for the future.

FOOTNOTES

¹Kenn Allen, Shirley Keller & Cynthia Vizza, *A New Competitive Edge*, (Arlington: VOLUNTEER - The National Center, 1986), p. 4

²Susan J. Ellis & Katherine H. Noyes, *By the People*, (San Francisco; Jossey-Bass Inc., 1990), p. 59

³*ibid*, pp. 131-138

⁴Frank Koch, *The New Corporate Philanthropy*, (New York: Plenum Press, 1979), pp. 137-138

⁵Ellis & Noyes, *By the People*, p. 207

⁶*ibid*, pp. 202-205

⁷*ibid*, pp. 242

⁸Koch, *The New Corporate Philanthropy*, p. 103

⁹Ellis & Noyes, *By the People*, pp. 260-261

¹⁰*ibid*, pp. 268, 270

¹¹Koch, *The New Corporate Philanthropy*, p. 4

¹²Allen, Keller & Vizza, *A New Competitive Edge*, pp. 63-64, 134

¹³*ibid*, p. 2

¹⁴Dan Cordtz, Corporate Citizenship: No more soft touches, *FW*, (May 29, 1990), p. 31

¹⁵Allen, Keller & Vizza, *A New competitive Edge*, p. 2

¹⁶*ibid*, pp. 171-172

¹⁷CVC of the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metro Area, *Corporate Volunteerism 1986, A Report to the Community* (1986)

¹⁸Alvin R. Reiss, Executive Volunteers: The hidden workforce, *Management Review*, (November, 1989), p. 55

¹⁹Peter K. Francese, Heading Into the 1990s, *Fund Raising Management*, (May, 1989), pp. 27-28

²⁰Barbara Kantrowitz, The New Volunteers, *Newsweek*, (July 10, 1989), p. 36

²¹William H. Miller, Corporations: "On" Switches for "Points of Light," *Industry Week*, (September 17, 1990), p. 64

²²Dan Cordtz, Corporate Citizenship: No more soft touches, *FW*, (May 29, 1990), p. 32

²³E. Levang, The existence of coercion in corporate voluntarism: An exploratory study, (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Fielding Institute, Santa Barbara, CA), 1991

²⁴*ibid*

²⁵Ellis & Noyes, *By the People*, p. 362

²⁶Minnesota Office on Volunteer Services, Volunteer for Minnesota, Recruiting Alternative Sources of Volunteers, (May, 1984), pp. 2-3

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ABSTRACT

Not-for-profit service firms depend upon volunteer employees for the success of their programs. This article offers a change in perspective—volunteer as customer instead of employee—to stimulate insights and provide recommendations about attracting and retaining volunteers. The volunteer is viewed as a customer, the service purchased is the volunteer experience, paid for in the currency of donated time and energy, and the not-for-profit service firm is seen as being in the business of designing, managing, communicating, and delivering a quality volunteer experience.

Volunteers as Customers: A Service Quality Perspective

Susan M. Keaveney, Ph.D., Marilyn Saltzman and Nancy Sullivan

Countless nonprofit service providers in religious, educational, health, recreational, civic, social, political, and cultural pursuits depend upon the hard work and enthusiasm of volunteer employees for much of their success. Volunteers serve in various capacities and meet a wide variety of needs for nonprofit service agencies. The American Red Cross (1990, p. 1) notes,

[Volunteers] are considered central to the organization—not mere extensions of paid staff. Their jobs range from service and middle management to the highest echelons of leadership. They bring with them experience, skill, dedication, clout, passion, and an unparalleled ability to reach out to the American public.

Fortunately for nonprofit volunteer organizations, most Americans agree that volunteerism is a worthwhile and necessary pursuit. Of all adult Americans, 98.4

million (54%) log over 20.5 billion service hours annually (Gallup, 1990). President George Bush's "Points of Light" initiative has provided "official" visibility, encouragement, and recognition to the concept of volunteerism. Yet, the profile of the volunteer—traditionally white, middle-class, middle-aged, and female—is changing. Women who fit the "volunteer profile" are now part of the paid workforce, forcing nonprofits to learn to attract and retain a different kind of volunteer. The volunteer force of the 1990s will include employed men and women, retired persons, and teenagers, from diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds (Schindler-Rainman, 1990).

This article argues that to attract and retain these new volunteers, volunteer organizations must stop thinking about volunteers as employees and start thinking about them as *customers*. In the same way that for-profit firms provide goods

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and services that satisfy the wants and needs of their customers, so must non-profit volunteer organizations determine 1) what constitutes a quality volunteer experience and 2) how to effectively deliver a quality volunteer experience.

VOLUNTEER AS CUSTOMER

What do we mean by the "volunteer as customer"? Specifically, volunteer organizations must recognize that they provide services not only to their constituents, but to another group of customers, their volunteers. Hospitals provide not only medical services to patients, but provide volunteer experiences for volunteer candy-strippers, gift shop employees, and cafeteria workers. The Y.W.C.A. provides more than services to women in the local community in the form of day care, classes, and job assistance; it provides a volunteer experience for volunteer secretaries, teachers, and day care workers. In marketing terms, the service received, the *intangible product*, is the volunteer experience. The *price* paid for the volunteer experience is donated time and energy. *Customer benefits* include feeling good about oneself, a feeling of giving something back to the community, feeling charitable, feeling needed, feeling helpful, an opportunity to work with other people with similar interests, a chance to meet new people—the list is as long and diverse as the number of volunteers.

Like any other customer, volunteers "shop" for high quality volunteer experiences. Contrary to beliefs commonly held by dedicated managers and paid staff, the benefits of volunteering are *not* supplied only by one "vendor" (i.e., non-profit organization). A satisfying volunteer experience may be "purchased" from the local hospital, library, school, or charitable organization. Thus "competition" for volunteers exists between non-profits, regardless of whether the organizations themselves recognize that fact. For-profit organizations have long since

learned that providing a high quality service is one of the most effective means for service firms to successfully compete for customers. This article argues that providing a high quality volunteer experience will be equally effective in helping volunteer organizations compete for the best volunteers.

IMPORTANCE OF SERVICE QUALITY

Service quality (generally defined as excellence or overall superiority of the service) has been cited not only as a prerequisite for success, but also as a requirement for survival of service firms in the increasingly competitive environments of the 1990s and beyond (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988). Studies have shown that when for-profit firms deliver consistently high quality service, they enjoy greater repeat business than competitors, command higher prices, can reduce marketing expenditures yet increase market share, and earn increased returns on investment (Phillips, Chang, and Buzzell, 1983). If lessons can be learned from the experiences of these for-profit service businesses, similar benefits might be expected to accrue to nonprofit service providers that provide high quality service ("volunteer experiences") to their customers ("volunteers").

For example, companies that deliver high quality services generate increased referral business and positive word-of-mouth. Given that most new volunteers are recruited through word-of-mouth by current volunteers, providing a high quality volunteer experience should be a critically important element in attracting and retaining volunteers. The reverse is also true: providing a high quality service can *prevent* the potentially far-reaching effects of negative word-of-mouth—research shows that a satisfied customer tells three people about a good experience but a dissatisfied one gripes to eleven.

Providing high quality services to "internal customers" (like volunteers) can also provide benefits to paid man-

agement and staff. Merrill Lynch, for example, found that good "internal service"—such as providing high quality management, operations, and sales support to its people—was vital in improving retention among account executives (Rudie and Wansley, 1985). Furthermore, improving service quality to customers can directly improve the working conditions of employees. The rationale is straightforward: employees *know* when their firm does (or does not) provide good service to customers. In day-to-day contact with customers, employees continually feel the stress of dealing with customers unhappy with poor quality service. Indeed, improvement in the quality of *customer* service has an indirect effect on *employee* retention: studies have shown that *employees* are less likely to express an intention to leave their jobs when *customers* perceive that the firm is delivering high quality service (Schneider and Bowen, 1985). Applied to volunteer organizations, improvement in the quality of volunteer experiences will be felt immediately by paid staff who are in day-to-day contact with volunteers.

In summary, if the experiences of for-profit organizations can be applied to nonprofit organizations, improving the quality of volunteer experiences may stimulate widespread positive effects throughout the nonprofit organization. Directly, providing high quality volunteer experience should improve the nonprofit organization's ability to attract and retain volunteers. In addition, providing quality volunteer experiences can be expected to generate favorable word-of-mouth communications about the organization. Finally, a commitment to high quality volunteer experiences may improve the ability of the organization to retain management and paid staff. The questions become: 1) how does a volunteer define a quality volunteer experience and 2) how then does the organization deliver that quality volunteer experience? To that end, this article next introduces a model of ser-

vice quality that may assist volunteer organizations to address each of these issues.

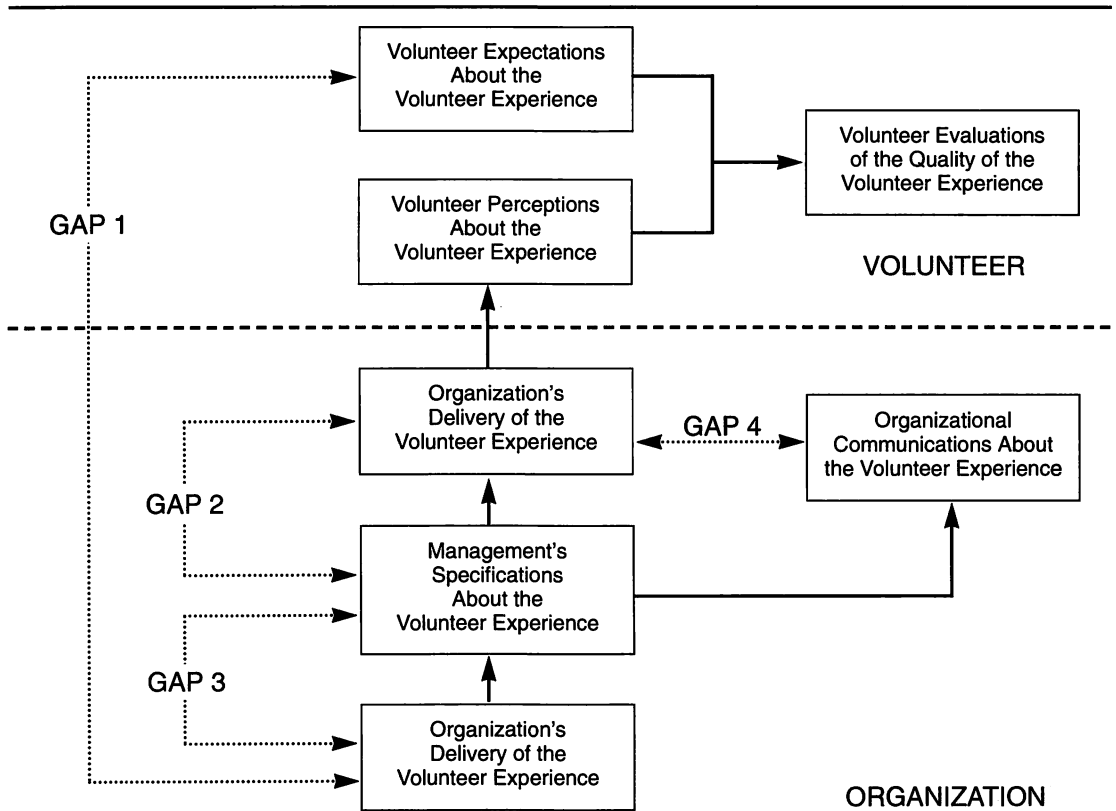
DEFINING AND DELIVERING A QUALITY VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

The model introduced in this article is adapted from Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry's (1985) conceptual model of service quality. The original model was the product of research conducted among customers and managers of for-profit service companies including credit card companies, repair-and-maintenance companies, retail banking, securities brokerage, and long distance telephone services (see also Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry, 1990). That research was designed to determine how customers define service quality and to identify problem areas preventing service firms from delivering high quality services. The model provides a useful conceptual framework to explore issues of defining and delivering high quality volunteer experiences. The model in this article is revised based on a review of conceptual and empirical volunteer literature. In addition, conceptual development and revision was enriched by fifteen exploratory in-depth interviews conducted with both executives and volunteers of nonprofit organizations. Approximately half the interviews were with executives and half were with volunteers; each interview lasted approximately one hour.

The revised model addresses the issue of high quality volunteer experiences from two perspectives. On the volunteer side, the model defines how volunteers evaluate the quality of a volunteer experience. On the volunteer organization side, the model addresses how volunteer organizations might deliver, or be prevented from delivering, quality volunteer experiences. The model is outlined in Figure 1.

How Do Volunteers Evaluate the Quality of Their Volunteer Experiences?

Service quality refers to customers' overall judgments of the excellence or superiority of a service (Parasuraman,



Adapted from: Parasuraman, A., Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry. A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and Its Implications for Future Research. *Journal of Marketing*, 1985, 49 (Fall) p. 44.

Figure 1
A Conceptual Model of Service Quality as It Applies to the Volunteer Experience

Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988). Specifically, judgments of service quality are a function of the extent to which customers perceive the level of service performance meeting or exceeding their expectations. If an organization regularly provides service at a level that exceeds customer expectations, the service will be evaluated as high quality. In contrast, if an organization fails to meet customer expectations, the service will be judged as poor quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1985).

Volunteers, like customers of other services, make judgments about the quality of their volunteer experiences by comparing their expectations against their perceived experiences. It is important for nonprofit volunteer organizations to be

aware of both elements of the service quality equation, because each affects a volunteer's evaluation of the quality of the volunteer experience. First, nonprofit organizations must realize that if volunteer expectations are not in some way met, or exceeded, the volunteer experience will be judged as poor quality. Second, the organization must recognize that it is *volunteer* perceptions of the experience—not management or staff perceptions—that determine the quality of the experience.

How Do Organizations Provide a Quality Volunteer Experience?

Nonprofit organizations can improve their abilities to deliver quality volunteer experiences through the careful design,

management, implementation, and communication of the volunteer services they offer. However, a series of "gaps" has been found to occur on the organizational side that prevent organizations from delivering high quality services. Figure 1 illustrated the four gaps, identified as follows:

Gap 1: . . . occurs when there is a difference between customer expectations and management perceptions of customer expectations.

Gap 2: . . . occurs when there is a difference between management perceptions of consumer expectations and service quality specifications.

Gap 3: . . . occurs when there is a difference between service quality specifications and the service actually delivered.

Gap 4: . . . occurs when there is a difference between service delivery and what is communicated about the service to customers (Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1988, p. 35).

The next sections discuss each of these serviced quality delivery issues in the context of volunteerism.

GAP 1: Is There A Difference Between Volunteer Expectations and Management Perceptions of Volunteer Expectations?

Gap 1 refers to differences between volunteers' and managers' expectations about what constitutes a quality volunteer experience. An oversimplified answer is that a quality volunteer experience is one that meets the needs of the volunteer. However, volunteers and managers have quite different views about what motivates an individual to seek a volunteer experience.

Volunteers become involved with nonprofit agencies for a number of reasons. A 1990 Gallup poll (p. 149), for example, reported that 62.2% of volunteers surveyed cited "wanted to do something

useful" as the reason for first becoming involved in volunteer activities. "Thought I would enjoy the work" was cited by 33.6%; "family member or friend would benefit" was cited by 28.9%; and "religious concerns" was cited by 26.4%. Other volunteers "wanted to learn" (7.8%); had "previously benefitted from the activity" (8.9%); or "had a lot of free time" (10.1%); and "wanted to engage in an activity more fulfilling than current job" (8.4%). Still others may have seen volunteerism as a way to enhance their employment prospects by getting free training, as a chance to more fully utilize talents and abilities, or as a leisure pursuit for those with discretionary time. A total greater than 100% reflected the fact that volunteers had multiple reasons for volunteering. As one volunteer noted, "When I volunteer I do something for my children, something for myself, and something for the community. Part of my ethic is to give something back. It's also a chance to play with a number of different roles, be an important part of my community, and meet different people."

In contrast, managers of nonprofit organizations believe, usually mistakenly, that volunteers are driven by the same single-minded altruism that drives them. Problem-centered organizations tend to overlook the fact that a volunteer has alternative options—he or she can volunteer somewhere else. One executive director of a volunteer umbrella organization in a major metropolitan area related what she called a "typical anecdote" of volunteer management. The new manager of a member agency was chagrined because the public was not donating "as it should" to "the cause." Despite a lack of any marketing planning, the manager believed the program was so inherently "right" that any and all potential donors would surely see the light. The executive director confessed, "People in volunteer organizations are often so immersed in their cause that they assume others will be. They're not businesslike or even reasonable in their expectations."

Overcoming negative discrepancies between management and customer expectations about the volunteer experience is a crucial first step in the delivery of a quality volunteer experience. If the volunteer's needs are not accurately identified, then a quality experience cannot be delivered. The American Red Cross, for example, notes that nonprofit organizations should have an "awareness of a volunteer's motivations and expectations so as to provide a satisfying volunteer experience" (1990, p. 14). To research volunteer motives, some organizations carefully interview prospective volunteers to assess their needs vis-à-vis the needs of the agency (Yeager, 1986). Time is spent at the outset getting to know the prospective volunteer. Some degree of insight and intuition is required on the part of the interviewer to unearth the needs of the volunteer: volunteers feel that "I want something in return," however accurate, is not a socially sanctioned response. Other nonprofit organizations address the reticence of volunteers to articulate their "real" expectations by asking prospective volunteers to choose what he or she would like to contribute from a menu of tasks (Keyton, Wilson, and Geiger, 1990). Still others ask prospective volunteers to offer suggestions about what kinds of projects or tasks they would like to accept.

What these organizations have in common is what marketers call a "customer orientation." Customer-oriented nonprofit organizations exhibit a willingness—a commitment—to ongoing research about volunteer expectations. Further, successful nonprofit organizations recognize that upward communication (from volunteers to management, and not the other way around) about volunteer needs should not stop after the interview process is complete. Volunteer motivations change with time and experience in the organization. One volunteer noted, "At first, I thought I should, I just need to . . . you get some praise and feel good." He then talked about a turn-

ing point where "you realize that you get more than you give." The volunteer experience had, over time, helped this volunteer to reorganize priorities and reassess personal values.

The Junior League of a major metropolitan area recognizes that a met need no longer motivates. They designed a "career track" approach to volunteerism by offering a hierarchy of volunteer tasks ranked by leadership and responsibility. A volunteer starts with an entry level position, where he/she serves for a specified period of time. The volunteer is at some point *required* to accept a promotion to the next position. This progression serves the needs of the organization for skilled, experienced volunteers at managerial levels while stimulating personal growth and development in its volunteers.

GAP 2: Is There A Difference Between Management's Perceptions of Volunteers' Expectations and Volunteer Experience Specifications?

The second gap to providing a high quality volunteer experience occurs when the nonprofit organization's managers are unwilling or unable to develop volunteer experience specifications—specific tasks, standards, goals, and interactions—that foster a quality experience. In the first case, managers may recognize the differences described in Gap 1 but lack a commitment to providing volunteer experiences that meet *volunteer* needs. One author made the dismal observation that top management commitment to providing a satisfactory volunteer experience "varies from open hostility to vague lip service to avid commitment and is reflected throughout the organization" (Wilson, 1983, p. 185). Managers and staff caught up in fund raising, grant proposal writing, and other survival issues may have neither the time nor the inclination to "stroke" volunteers. Other managers and staff, driven by the intrinsic "rightness" of the cause, may not see the need for further volunteer support—after all,

the volunteer has been given the opportunity (read, "privilege") to contribute to a worthwhile cause.

Gap 2 must be closed before a quality volunteer experience can be delivered. An unwilling management is doomed to fail to structure volunteer experiences that meet volunteer needs. Only when managers believe that volunteers are critical to optimal functioning of their organizations will the needs of volunteers prevail over the needs of management. The experiences of for-profit companies, whose commitment to service quality resulted in gains in revenues, market share, or returns on investment, may provide successful case models to convince reluctant managers. One volunteer suggests, "An organization should appeal to more than just your sense of duty. It should try to appeal to a sense of vision."

The second case, where managers feel unable to develop volunteer experience specifications that will satisfy all potential customers, may be even more difficult. Compare volunteer expectations about volunteer experiences with management's specifications for jobs that need to be done: volunteers view volunteer experiences as opportunities for personal growth while *at the same time* providing a useful service—in that order. Volunteers expect that their needs, as well as the needs of the organization, will be considered; they do not want to feel that their time is being wasted; they expect to be treated with respect; and they expect at least some feedback and recognition for the work that they provide. In contrast, managers of nonprofit organizations may simply need free labor—what one manager calls "those nice, free people" (Wilson, 1983, p. 186). Nonprofit service organizations often do enough fulfilling jobs, requiring diverse talents or even skilled people, to satisfy volunteer needs. Envelopes need stuffing, beds need to be made, floors need washing, food must be prepared. Managers want volunteers to be committed, to take their

responsibilities seriously, to follow through, and to communicate their needs to management. Yet, by necessity, managers and volunteers look at volunteer jobs from opposite ends of the spectrum: a manager evaluates a task in terms of the needs of the organization, a volunteer evaluates that same task in terms of meeting his or her personal needs.

Successful nonprofit organizations recognize that, if properly handled, even routine tasks can be designed in such a way as to meet some volunteer needs. For example, the nonprofit organization can develop clear descriptions of jobs that include goals to be met, tasks to be accomplished, and time (or other) commitments required. Even if the task is not intrinsically interesting, a structured, efficient approach will at least meet volunteer expectations that the organization respects the value of their time, does not waste their time, and that the job contributes in an identifiable way to the goals of the organization. Organizations can also develop need profiles to segment volunteers and match them with jobs (Heidrich, 1990): volunteers with a need for achievement may be directed to take leadership roles; volunteers with a need to help others may be trained to provide direct service with constituents; volunteers who need to learn job skills may be trained to assist paid staff in running the business; and volunteers who need an opportunity to apply some special skills or talents may be utilized on an "as needed" basis.

In summary, management commitment to quality volunteer experiences, combined with a commitment to defining goals and tasks in such a way as to meet volunteer needs, are required to close Gap 2 and provide a quality volunteer experience.

GAP 3: Are Quality Volunteer Experience Specifications Delivered as Specified?

Gap 3 suggests that a third barrier preventing organizations from delivering

high quality volunteer experiences is a failure to deliver the experience as specified. That is, management has successfully researched volunteer expectations and designed a portfolio of volunteer experiences to meet various volunteers' needs. However, management finds that the specified volunteer experiences are not implemented. What causes Gap 3?

One reason for a failure to deliver management specifications for quality can be the presence of conflict in the organization (Zeithaml, Parasuraman, and Berry, 1988). For example, *managers* may recognize that volunteers are critical to the organization, may understand what motivates volunteers and what they expect from a volunteer experience, and may be committed to the idea of delivering a quality volunteer experience. *Paid staff*, with whom volunteers most frequently interact, may not share that vision.

Some conflicts arise because paid staff, like management, are often driven by altruistic motives. As a result, paid staff may expect total commitment from volunteers that mirrors their own. It may be difficult for paid staff to remember that other, perhaps less lofty, motives compel volunteers. Staff may resent the seemingly cavalier attitude of volunteers who give only so much and no more, who come and go as they please. Indeed paid staff have been known to exert a "self-righteous pressure" on volunteers to comply with their philanthropic expectations, thus hastening the volunteers' feelings of dissatisfaction and guilt (Schindler-Rainman and Lippett, 1975).

Alternately, staff may resent the freedom of volunteers, seeing them as "prima donnas" who resist supervision, ignore policy, and even embarrass the agency (Schindler-Rainman and Lippett, 1975). Volunteers who circumvent channels, "do their own thing," and do not become integrated into the organization exacerbate this separation. Paid staff may also see themselves as the "professionals" and the

"experts" and may resent their dependence on "amateurs" to get the job done. This aura of exclusivity and elitism may bolster the egos of the staff, but will alienate volunteers and keep them from participating in meaningful decision making (Wilson, 1983). Further, staff attitudes that volunteers "have nothing better to do" reflect a lack of respect for volunteers that is often only thinly disguised.

To close Gap 4, necessary to successfully deliver high quality volunteer experiences, conflict must be reduced and a sense of teamwork fostered. To reduce conflict, volunteer coordinators must clearly structure volunteer activities that do not encroach on the responsibilities of staff. If conflict between volunteers and staff is reduced, staff may be more comfortable involving volunteers in the operations of the organization. In addition, promoting a spirit of teamwork should reduce conflict and further the goal of a quality volunteer experience. For example, volunteers want to be respected and welcomed as part of the team, invited to participate in decision-making, and share in the success of the organization. They should be treated as professionals rather than as free labor and second class citizens. Including volunteers in brainstorming session about projects can tap their creativity and allow volunteers to personalize their contributions (Keyton, Wilson, and Geiger, 1990).

A second reason that management specifications for quality volunteer experiences are not delivered occurs because, while paid staff are professionals in the field, they are usually not trained as managers. Even specially designated volunteer coordinators may not possess the unique skills required to recruit, train, motivate, and supervise non-paid individuals. A series of excellent suggestions, which need not be repeated here, have been provided by Barkman (1990). Briefly, Barkman advocates the use of "job aids" (checklists, worksheets, flow charts) to improve volunteer perfor-

mance. Such job aids could be a very useful tool for helping paid staff to deliver quality volunteer experiences as articulated by management.

GAP 4: Does Communication of the Volunteer Experience Reflect Reality?

The fourth gap refers to differences between what the nonprofit organization communicates about the volunteer experience and what it delivers. For example, honesty about the time required to do the volunteer job is a critical issue here. As the American Red Cross (1990, p. 12) warns, "Volunteers must never be exploited. If volunteers are pressured to work longer hours than they anticipated, they may feel exploited. If they are led to expect resume-building opportunities but never get them, they may feel exploited. Because of their enthusiasm and deep sense of commitment, volunteers make easy prey. It is essential not to take advantage of them."

A second problem for nonprofit organizations, and a direct route to volunteer burnout, is over-reliance on "good" volunteers. Ex-volunteers will attest that demands increase proportionately with a volunteer's willingness to comply. Indeed, the number one reason that volunteers cite for quitting volunteer involvement is that they are "too busy" (Gallup, 1990).

A third mistake that organizations make is undervaluing the experience. The 1990 Winner of a Governor's Volunteer Award warned, "If someone tells you that you're the ninth person he's called and no one wants this job, you're not going to take it either. I recruit by saying, 'You have valuable skills that I need in this position and you're my first choice for this job.' Nine out of ten times I get them." Organizations also discourage volunteerism by a not-so-subtle elitism. An underlying message saying "We are the experts and you are the amateurs" may be read between the lines.

"Rubber stamping" is a fourth way that nonprofit organizations lose volunteers. Many government agencies, for

example, are guilty of asking for input but never completing the feedback loop. Volunteers quickly tire of attending meetings where they listen instead of being heard (Yeager, 1986). As the American Cancer Society warns, "There is nothing more deadly than a recruitment process that sets up false expectations." Whatever the cause, Gap 4 must be closed before volunteers will evaluate their experiences as being of high quality.

SUMMARY

This article has explored the issue of attracting and retaining volunteer employees by considering the volunteer as a customer of a not-for-profit service organization. From that perspective, the article highlighted possible service quality gaps between volunteer expectations and the service firm's expectations, as well as gaps between the firm's intentions and reality, that might stand in the way of delivering a high quality volunteer experience. Not-for-profit service organizations are dependent upon volunteer employees to provide much of the labor to implement programs. Since volunteer employees are "paid" in the currency of quality volunteer experiences, lessons learned by services firms in the business of providing high quality services are most useful for not-for-profit firms attempting to provide quality volunteer experiences to the "customers."

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Book Review

Fostering Volunteer Programs in the Public Sector

by Jeffrey L. Brudney

Reviewed by Donald P. Gage, D.Mn.

Fostering Volunteer Programs in the Public Sector. Jeffrey L. Brudney. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. 1990. 243 pages.

Jeffrey L. Brudney's *Fostering Volunteer Programs in the Public Sector* is a mine full of veins of rich minerals, integrating a wide array of literature and research. A good way to explore volunteerism would be to start with this book and follow the author's references.

Brudney's central focus is public sector volunteer programs. One point that is particularly interesting concerns the strength of these programs in areas participating in the recent tax revolts. It might appear that participation would grow as citizens sought to limit taxes. Indeed, pressure to increase services while cutting funds has been a factor in the expansion of volunteer programs. Yet Brudney cites research indicating that few volunteers are motivated by a desire for lower taxes, and that in cities where the tax revolt has been strongest, volunteering was actually lower.

In many ways, this is a thorough treatment of the subject. The essential points of public sector programs are covered, along with the primary steps needed for successful volunteer programs. Essential

trends are also presented, including such data as the number of Americans now engaged in volunteer activities and how many hours they donate.

As a manager of a public sector volunteer program, this reviewer found much that reinforced practices already in place, along with ways to improve.

Among the issues that Brudney covers are:

- The importance of professional leadership
- The special administrative tools that must be developed in managing volunteer as opposed to paid positions
- Maintaining quality and reliability
- Proper assignment of volunteers as essential to overall agency effectiveness
- The empowerment of citizens through volunteering
- The human and caring dimension of volunteering
- The support volunteers can generate as advocates
- The unique contributions volunteers can make to clients
- The conflict between public agency values and volunteer attitudes
- Cost-effective, as opposed to cost-free, programs

Donald P. Gage, D.Mn., has managed the volunteer program at Westborough State Hospital in Massachusetts since 1985, currently as Director of Community Affairs. His background includes experience in human services management and business with education in the ministry and college administration. He is a member of the Task Force for a State Office on Volunteerism in Massachusetts, a past Executive Committee member of the Massachusetts Association of State Volunteer Directors, and is a member of the regional and state-wide committees for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Employees' Campaign.

- The growth of volunteering during good times *and* bad
- The ability of volunteers to enable government to provide far greater services for the same funds
- Development of positive volunteer and staff relations
- Enhancement of services *vs* replacement of staff
- The ability of volunteers to increase the effectiveness of paid staff by taking over functions not requiring staff's clinical expertise

The only short-coming is the general nature of the "how-to" sections. Most prac-

tioners will already be familiar with the level at which these basics *e.g.*, volunteer recruitment and placement, are treated. However, the essentials are presented, and adding extensive detail would greatly magnify the size of the book beyond its scope.

Fostering Volunteer Programs in the Public Sector is helpful reading for all kinds of students and practitioners of volunteerism. For those managing public sector programs, and especially for those considering involving citizen participants in government service, this book is highly recommended.

Volunteerism by Students at Risk

Joyce Sauer

BACKGROUND

At a time when the dropout rate among students who attend public schools in New York City is estimated to be as high as 33%,¹ The Jewish Home and Hospital for Aged, Bronx Division, (JHHA) is working with neighborhood schools to address this problem. Junior high and high schools students who are at risk of dropping out of school because of a history of poor attendance and below grade level basic skills achievement, are being encouraged to complete school through their participation in intergenerational work/study programs. The objective is attendance improvement and dropout prevention.

In September, 1988, the New York City Department for the Aging approached the Volunteer Services Department to discuss bringing its Intergenerational Work/Study Program to The Jewish Home. This program had been launched in 1987 to address the problem of "students leaving high school before graduation who were consequently unable to compete successfully in the job market or to qualify for higher education."² The program gives teenagers the opportunity to establish meaningful relationships with older adults in senior centers and nursing homes. It provides role models, particularly older adult role models, which may help these students to succeed. Studies show that the loss of role models is:

... particularly problematical for at-risk youth. Recent research suggests that

meaningful relationships with caring, interested adults are a key factor in helping young people who grow up in disadvantaged and stressful circumstances to forge, against great odds, successful and self-sufficient lives. Such relationships are critical to developing emotional and social survival skills such as self-esteem, resistance to stress, the capacity to adapt, and the ability to plan for the future.³

Students growing up today do not have the role models that existed in the extended family of two or three generations ago in which grandparents, aunts or uncles were part of the household. Many of these at-risk students live in single parent families. The premise of The Department for the Aging program is that supervised part-time work at agencies serving older adults would give these youngsters the role models and relationships missing in their lives.

These at-risk students, when successful, are often the first in their families to graduate from high school. In attempting to do so they are forging uncharted paths. Not only is the road much more difficult without an experienced guide, the benefits to be gained often do not seem real to a teenager who has not had the chance to see them at close range. In addition, financial pressure at home can make dropping out to pursue employment seem more important than remaining in school. When what they see at home is the need to survive from day to day, the immediate

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need to be gained from dropping out to pursue employment becomes the only recognizable goal. Students at risk often have a feeling of isolation or alienation, whether it is at home, in school or in their communities.

Students who drop out of school often cite the lack of a single person who cared about them as one of their primary reasons for leaving. Their attachment to school was weak and they have no close social bonds with teachers and staff.⁴

With the same needs showing up in junior high school students, the local school district began a pilot intergenerational work/study program in the fall of 1988 for eighth- and ninth-grade students.

Setting Up the Programs

Since the fall of 1988, 113 students identified as at risk of dropping out of school have participated in the work study programs. The students range in age from 14 to 18 years old. They come to the Home from three neighborhood schools: a junior high school, an intermediate school and a high school. All are public schools.

All participating students are selected to become a part of the program by their teachers and guidance counselors. Students who have been absent 20 to 75 days out of the school year, whose academic achievement is below grade level, and those who are teen parents are all candidates for this special program. Schools select students whom they believe to be capable of improving their school performance with the added incentives the programs provide.

Several elements are built in as incentives to motivate these students to stay in school and to graduate. All students receive a stipend from the Board of Education. In addition, the high school students receive class credit. Students are permitted to serve at The Home only on days when they attend school. The key element in motivating these at-risk youngsters to stay

in school is the opportunity the program affords them to form relationships with the residents at The Jewish Home. The students offer the residents companionship and the residents, with their wealth of experience, reach out to these students and give them the acceptance, recognition and guidance they need to succeed in school. The staff who supervise these youngsters serve as role models. They give the students the one-to-one attention and support the students so often lack.

THE PROGRAM

The initial group of high school students began in the fall of 1988. As this was the first experience with the program it was decided to start with four students. In that way the Home's Department of Volunteer Services could determine the special needs of these students. The needs of the students were discussed with their teacher before the interview to determine if the student would benefit from placement in a large site such as the 816-bed Jewish Home and Hospital for Aged.

An initial site visit by the teacher helped the teacher and the Director of Volunteer Services to establish a good working relationship. At that time a structure was set up to insure that the Volunteer Services Department would be notified of absences from school or other problems that needed monitoring. It was vital to the success of the program that the teacher have the time necessary to interact with the program that the teacher have the time necessary to interact with the work site, so that any problems could be communicated and solved quickly. It was important that the students knew that problems picked up at the work site, such as poor attendance or problems with job performance, would be communicated to the teacher for the weekly meetings with students.

The Program Method

The students are interviewed by the staff in the Volunteer Department to assess language skills, interpersonal skills

and academic background in order to screen for appropriateness to the nursing home setting, as well as to determine an assignment. Students are assigned to work in particular departments and are supervised by the department in which they work.

Before beginning service, students participate as a group in an orientation process. The goals of orientation are to educate students about aging; about the mission, programs and services of the nursing home; to inform them of the policies and procedures of the Department of Volunteer Services; and to discuss the special role they will fill with residents. The orientation includes demonstrations by staff of proper wheelchair use, infection control procedures and feeding techniques. These sessions include hands-on practice by the students. They experience being confined to a wheelchair, play the role of a resident being fed, try to read with a yellow plastic over their eyes to simulate cataracts or try to hear with cotton in their ears or tie a shoe lace with their fingers taped together to simulate the effects of arthritis. These experiences open the eyes of the students to the aging experience.

An equally important byproduct of the orientation process is the chance the students have to come together as a group. One of the goals of the program is to overcome the feelings of isolation they have experienced. A student group that begins to bond during orientation is more likely to support its members and work together to overcome personal conflicts.

As students learn to set new standards for themselves, as they learn to follow instructions, to conduct themselves with courtesy and respect in order to aid in the mission of providing the highest quality of care to the residents, they begin to identify with The Home and the residents. This sense of loyalty to a common mission can help further group bonding.

The participation of first semester students in the orientation of new students

who join the group in the second semester is very helpful in maintaining the status and sense of ownership the students feel about the facility and their program. It also allows new students to feel accepted as they are shown the ropes by their fellow students.

The program has grown to include as many as 16 students a semester. The students serve at The Home four days a week, three hours a day, and are given school credit for their efforts. They engage in a variety of activities at The Home which includes feeding, friendly visiting, transporting residents to activities and appointments, and assisting in the Geriatric Day Center Program, Occupational Therapy, the Therapeutic Recreation Department, the Accounting Department, the Pharmacy, the resident Canteen, Medical Records Department and the Kittay House Senior Apartment Residence.

Students from two local junior high schools, who are at risk of dropping out of school, participate in an intergenerational work study program, *Attendance Improvement Means Success (A.I.M.S.)*. Between 15 and 18 students from each school are selected by their counselors and teachers to work directly with residents. Each group, accompanied by a teacher/supervisor is on site two afternoons a week. The students participate in a resident visiting program in which pairs of students visit residents. The residents have been referred to the program by The Home's recreational therapists because they have no visitors. They are able, however, to interact with the students. In addition to visiting residents, this is the third year in which junior high students and their teacher are working with residents and the Therapeutic Recreation Department staff on an intergenerational musical theater production.

Visiting Activities

Students involved in the visiting program visit several residents each time they come. Visits last about twenty min-

utes, which is a comfortable time period for students to engage in conversation with residents. Students also read to residents, write letters for them, learn craft skills from residents, discuss current events and learn about the lives and history the residents have experienced. The students help fill the void in the lives of elderly residents, whose families may live far away and cannot visit as often as they might like, or who may not have friends or family.

These junior high students, together with the residents, put on an intergenerational musical theatre production each spring. Residents, many in wheelchairs or using walkers, learn their lines with the student with whom they share a role in the play. Students do "wheelchair dancing," holding the hands of residents in wheelchairs, while moving to the music. They turn pages in the script for their resident as they rehearse. Students learn what it means to help someone who cannot do everything for himself or herself. Students may visit these residents as part of the visiting program.

The intergenerational musical theatre production is unique in that the youngsters have been selected because they are at risk and not because of any talents in the performing arts.

The junior high school students participate in an orientation process much the same as the high school students. In addition they participate in role playing exercises to prepare for visiting residents. Students play themselves as well as staff and residents, both those interested in having visitors and those who are less enthusiastic. Students feel more comfortable about visiting when they have learned how to initiate conversations, handle problems and plan activities to do with residents. The orientation process takes place over a three week period. The gradual process helps this group of 14-year-olds prepare for their new roles. It also allows for students whose behavior is not appropriate to be screened out of the program.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STUDENTS & RESIDENTS

Many of the young people refer to the residents they have befriended at The Home as their "adopted grandparents." The residents talk with the students about school, their friends and their families—indeed many of the topics grandchildren and grandparents might discuss. The students perceive the residents as adults who are non-threatening, a perception which enables them to build relationships with the residents more readily.

In one such relationship, Lisa (age 15) gets advice from her adopted "grandma" Birdie, a participant in the Geriatric Day Center, one of the Home's community programs. "Birdie tells me that I should do well in school. She wants me to have a career." On Birdie's 83rd birthday, Lisa displayed certificates she had received at school for academic and attendance achievement. Birdie was delighted with this birthday gift. Her relationship with Lisa is something she says she never dreamed would start at this point in her life.

Another volunteer, Maria, takes Helen, who is wheelchair bound, to the boutique and helps her to select her purchases. Helen looks forward to their visits. Maria says: "I entered the program for the school credit, but I would do it again without the credit. I hope someone will help me when I am no longer capable of doing for myself."

The students' own comments in their daily journals tell of their feelings about being in the program. One student, involved in the intergenerational play, wrote, "When we are doing the play I get very happy, because I feel good about what I am doing for older people. Another reason why I am so happy is because I never got a chance to see my grandparents, so now I feel that the residents are my grandparents. I treat them just the way I would treat my own grandparents." Another student writes, "I like working here because we get to share our feelings and thoughts with the residents." One student summed up the mutual benefits this

way, "I enjoy working with older people. I can teach them and they can teach me."

Students need the outlet which the journals provide. One student explained that after visiting with a resident and "being sad to leave him," it helped to be able to write about it. The journals provide an opportunity for students whose written skills are weak to gain experience in writing without concern about being graded.

In summing up their feelings about the intergenerational programs at JHHA one student and resident describe their experiences this way: "The residents and the students have learned that inside we all have the same kind of feelings." Said the resident, "Ours is a mutually beneficial interaction. The students make me feel young again. I contribute to them and they contribute to me. These children are beautiful."

RESULTS

Participating in the program gives these youngsters an opportunity to start something brand new. Where they associate school with a failure to achieve, at The Jewish Home they can give all they have to a new endeavor and find out that they can do the job well. Some of the students have had difficulty with authority figures. However, they relate well to the residents, whom they perceive as non-threatening adults. They can build relationships with the residents as well as with the staff because these are adults who accept the students as they are. Students benefit from the role models our staff provide. They have the opportunity to see that jobs are a way out of what they see on the streets. Many of our students are quite open about the fact that there is much drug related activity in their neighborhoods and that being in the program keeps them off the streets.

The students have seen their peers hired for summer and permanent staff positions. They see that there is a reason to finish school and that it can be done. Students have been known to work extra

hours, for which they are not stipended, because they feel, as one student put it, "that The Jewish Home is like family." One student's industriousness and willingness to stay to do extra tasks enabled him to be hired to work in the Dietary Department, on a part time basis, while still in high school. He plans to graduate and is interested in becoming a chef. To do so would be to break the cycle of poverty from which he comes.

Success feeds on itself. As students learn new skills, become more competent, and receive recognition for their achievements, they want to do more. Students whose home life is disorganized find the stability of The Home particularly helpful.

High school students who do well during the school year program and who return for the summer have the opportunity to assist in managing the summer program. These students serve as team leaders, helping to supervise the summer junior volunteers. For students who have been identified as "at-risk," a leadership position is a new experience that elevates them to a position of status. This role gives the students a new challenge while providing assistance to the Volunteer Department. Team leaders assist with the sign-in and -out procedures, check for adherence to dress code and alert staff to absences. Leaders monitor lunch time activity, both in the cafeteria and in areas designated for recreational use by junior volunteers.

Students in the two intergenerational programs have achieved impressive results, turning around a record of excessive absences and below grade level academic achievement. In a recent letter, the teacher/supervisor for a junior high shared with the The Home's Director of Volunteer Services what he termed the fine academic and attendance achievements of the students who took part in the work/study program.

The school attendance of these students was 93.5% as compared to an 84% attendance rate school wide. Seven of the 18

students made the Honor Roll and three of the students had perfect attendance for the year. These results would not have been possible without the intergenerational experience at The Jewish Home.

This kind of turn-around is particularly remarkable because the same student who attained perfect attendance initially qualified to be in the program because of excessive absences. One student who achieved perfect attendance had been absent 52 of 180 school days before entering the program.

In fact, at a time when other programs aimed at preventing students from dropping out of school are not succeeding, there are impressive results. At the end of the last school year, two-thirds of the "at-risk" high school students achieved an academic average of 81%. Their absence rate was cut in half and all seniors graduated.

SUMMARY

This program has made it possible for students to experience some important firsts: the first report card they are proud to share, the first award they receive at an honors assembly. Students have gained a

new awareness of the elderly: "I never used to look up to them," one student said. "Now I really understand that they are history. I will have more respect for the elderly, because I will want respect when I am older."

NOTES

¹New York City Board of Education Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment, April 1990.

²Between Friends: Creating Intergenerational Work/Study Programs for Youth at Risk and Older Adults New York City Department for the Aging/New York City Public Schools, December 1990, p. 5.

³Between Friends, p. 2.

⁴Between Friends, p. 1.

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New York City Board of Education Office of Research, Evaluation and Assessment. (1990, April 2). Private communication.

New York City Department for the Aging/New York City Public Schools. (1990, December). *Between friends: creating intergenerational work/study program for youth at risk and older adults.*

THE JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

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