

## THE JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

- 1** EDITORIAL
- 3** ABSTRACTS
- 6** FEATURES
- 6** IYV 2001 and Its Impact on Inter-governmental Legislation  
*Robert Leigh*
- 9** United Nations Resolution A/57/106:  
Follow Up to the International Year of Volunteers
- RESEARCH**
- 12** Assessing the Impact of the Three-Year Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. AmeriCorps Program  
*R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D., Ryan Schmiesing, Ph.D., Jeffrey E. King, Ph.D.,  
Judy Villard, M.S., Betty Wells, M.A.*
- 17** The Impact of the Senior Companion Program on Quality of Life Outcomes for  
Frail Older Adults  
*Donna J. Rabiner, Ph.D., Scott Scheffler, M. Ap.St., Elizabeth Koetse, B.A.,  
Jennifer Palermo, M.S., Elizabeth Panzi, B.A., Sandra Burt, B.A., Lynelle Hampton, B.A.*
- 24** Assessing Impacts on Volunteers Who Participate in Collaborative Efforts to Manage  
Environmental Disputes  
*Loretta Singletary, Marilyn Smith, George C. Hill*
- 33** Investing in Volunteerism: Recommendations Emerging From the Study of the Impact of  
Volunteers in Texas State Agencies  
*Sarah Jane Rehnborg, Ph.D., and Meredith DeSpain*
- 39** Dollar Value of Volunteer Time: A Review of Five Estimation Methods  
*Paula M. Anderson, CVA, and Mary E. Zimmerer, Ph.D., CPA*
- RESEARCH IN BRIEF**
- 45** VIVA in Europe: A Comparative Study of the Value of Volunteer Investment  
and Value Audit  
*Katharine Gaskin Ph.D.*
- COMMENTARY**
- 49** Valuing Volunteering  
*Justin Davis Smith, Ph.D., and Angela Ellis, Ph.D.*
- IDEAS THAT WORK**
- 53** Volunteer Opinion Surveys  
*Ms. Regi Mezydlo*



ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

---

The Association for Volunteer Administration, an international membership organization, enhances the competence of its members and strengthens the profession of volunteer resources management. Members include directors of volunteer resources 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.

Membership in AVA is open to salaried and non-salaried persons in all types of public, non-profit, and for-profit settings who choose to join with AVA to promote and support effective leadership in volunteerism.

AVA is an association run by its members. Active committees include: Professional Credentialing, Ethics, Fund Development, Organizational Relations, Communications, Member Services and Network Development. Members also plan the annual International Conference on Volunteer Administration, a major event held each year in a different city in the United States or Canada. This conference provides participants the opportunity to share common concerns and to focus on issues of importance to professionalism in volunteer administration.

Two major services that AVA provides, both for its members and for the field at large, are a professional credentialing program and an educational endorsement program. Through the process that recognizes leaders of volunteer programs who demonstrate professional performance standards, AVA furthers respect for and appreciation of the profession of volunteer administration. Similarly, AVA educational endorsement is given to those workshops, courses, conferences, and training events that provide opportunities for professional growth in volunteer resource management.

Finally, AVA produces publications including informational newsletters and booklets and *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*.

For further information about the Association for Volunteer Administration, contact us at:  
P.O. Box 32092, Richmond, VA 23294, U.S.A.  
Phone 804.346.2266  
Fax 804.346.3318  
E-mail: AVAintl@mindspring.com  
Web site: www.AVAintl.org

*The Journal of Volunteer Administration* is published quarterly. Subscription fees are discounted for members of the Association for Volunteer Administration. Non-members may subscribe at a cost of \$45 per year. Subscribers in Canada and Mexico should add \$5 per year to cover additional postage and handling. Subscribers outside the United States, Canada, and Mexico should add \$15 per year for additional postage and handling costs. Checks or money orders (payable through a U.S. bank or in \$US) should be made payable to: Association for Volunteer Administration.

Inquiries relating to subscriptions or to submission of manuscripts should be directed to *The Journal of Volunteer Administration* c/o AVA, P.O. Box 32092, Richmond, VA 23294, U.S.A. Phone 804.346.2266 Fax 804.346.3318 E-mail: AVAintl@mindspring.com

Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations contained herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the Association for Volunteer Administration, its directors or employees, or *The Journal of Volunteer Administration's* editors or staff.

ISSN 0733-6535

Copyright © 2003 by the Association for Volunteer Administration. All rights reserved. No portion of the contents may be reproduced in any form, including posting to the World Wide Web, without the written permission of the editor-in-chief except for brief quotations (not to exceed 500 words) in a review or professional work. Credit must be given to *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*, a publication of the Association for Volunteer Administration, as the source of the information. No reproduction allowed without a complete credit line that also includes the author(s) name(s), exact title as published, issue, and year of publication.

Printed on acid-free paper with soy ink.

*In growing numbers, service providers, governments, other funders, and the public are calling for clearer evidence that the resources they expend actually produce benefits for people. Consumers of services and volunteers who provide services want to know that programs to which they devote their time really make a difference. That is, they want better accountability for the use of resources. One clear and compelling answer to the question of "Why measure outcomes?" is: To see if programs really make a difference in the lives of people.*

(United Way of America, 1996, p. 4)

In recent years impact evaluation has become an important topic for managers of volunteer programs. Program managers are being called to a higher degree of accountability for program outcomes. There is also an ongoing debate about the value of and techniques for determining the dollar value of volunteer work. For many in the field it has become professionally challenging to learn techniques for measuring, calculating, and reporting beyond inputs and activities.

This issue focuses on outcomes, impacts and accountability by featuring a variety of evaluation studies. We begin with an overview of an evaluation of the United Nations International Year of Volunteers and the subsequent passage of two important United Nations resolutions regarding ongoing support for volunteer efforts.

*One significant impact of the Year [of Volunteers] is a growing recognition by governments of the role and contribution of voluntary action and the desirability, and feasibility, of adopting strategic approaches to enhancing the environment for such action to flourish.* (Leigh, p. 6)

The first research article is an assessment of a three-year AmeriCorps program, which was presented at the International Conference of Volunteer Administration (ICVA), October 2002. Using focus group interviews, the program managers identified six impacts relating to program participants, volunteers and collaborators. The assessment identified both knowledge gained and skills developed for participants and volunteers, and served as the basis for attracting ongoing funding in the local communities.

The next study is a summary of telephone interviews with a national sample of Senior Companion Program clients to assess the impact of this federally-funded senior volunteer program on quality of life issues for elderly clients. The study focuses on short-term outcomes. The third research study, by Singletary, Smith and Hill, measured impacts for volunteers engaged in an environmental dispute project. Using a mailed questionnaire, the researchers identified volunteers perceptions regarding increases in personal knowledge of the issues, and possible solutions for the dispute. Secondary impacts such as improved communication, networking and collaboration skills were identified.

*Investing in Volunteerism* presents a summary of an assessment of management structures governing volunteer programs in state agencies in Texas. Using a mailed survey instrument, the report offers a snapshot of volunteerism in Texas state government, as well as recommendations to refine practices and enhance volunteer program management.

Anderson and Zimmerer offer a comparative analysis of five contemporary methods for applying a dollar value to volunteer work. They point out that there is a lack of uniformity in dollar value practices, and caution that reporting dollar value does not address qualitative and quantitative outcomes of volunteer contributions. The Research in Brief article, by Katharine Gaskin, gives an overview of the Volunteer Investment and Value Audit (VIVA). Based on a study in three European countries, this tool calculates the cost effectiveness of volunteer programs by dividing total volunteer value by total volunteer investment.



The commentary by Dr. Justin Davis Smith, Editor of *Voluntary Action, The Journal of the Institute for Volunteering Research* of the United Kingdom, is a summary of a session presented at the International Association of Voluntary Efforts (IAVE) World Conference (Seoul, Korea, November 2003). Dr. Smith cautions volunteer management professionals about reducing volunteerism to the bottom line on a balance sheet (dollar value and cost benefits), and to look for ways to measure the impact of volunteerism on the development of economic, social, human and cultural capital.

Our last contribution is a volunteer opinion survey used to measure volunteer satisfaction at the Brookfield Zoo, Chicago. The survey had a 76 percent response rate and led to recommendations for strengthening the zoo's volunteer program. This "Tools That Work" was presented at the 2002 ICVA conference, and offers a step-by-step process for developing and administering a volunteer satisfaction survey.

The research studies presented in this issue are excellent examples of the ongoing work by program managers and researchers to measure the impact of volunteerism on volunteers, clients, collaborators, and organizations. Measurement techniques include focus groups, one-to-one telephone interviews and mailed surveys. These articles demonstrate models and techniques that help us document quantitatively and qualitatively that volunteer programs do make a difference in the lives of people.

Mary V. Merrill, Editor

#### SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT:

*The Journal of Volunteer Administration* is pleased to announce the creation of a new award to recognize outstanding contributions to the Journal. The 1st annual JOVA Award for Applied Research, with a \$500.00 cash award, will be presented at the International Conference for Volunteer Administration, Cincinnati, OH, October 15-18, 2003. The winner will be selected from researchers published in the *Journal* from September 2002 through June 2003.

## Features

- ***IYV 2001 and Its Impact on Inter-governmental Legislation***  
*Robert Leigh, Chief of UNV Representation Office in North America*  
An overview of the impact of the International Year of Volunteers, from increased understanding of volunteering to the growing recognition by governments of the desirability and feasibility of government action; and an introduction to the UN resolution on the outcomes and future perspectives of IYV.
- ***United Nations Resolution A/57/106: Follow Up to the International Year of Volunteers***  
This UN General Assembly resolution, co-sponsored by 142 Member States, calls upon stakeholders to support volunteerism as a strategic tool to enhance economic and social development, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its 60th session on the implementation of the current resolution.

## Research

- ***Assessing the Impact of the Three-Year Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. AmeriCorps Program***  
*R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D. – Associate Professor & Extension Specialist, North Carolina State University, Department of 4-H Youth Development*  
*Ryan Schmiesing, Ph.D. – Extension Specialist & Assistant Professor, Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development*  
*Jeffrey E. King, Ph.D. – Associate Professor & Assistant Director, Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development*  
*Judy Villard, M.S. – Associate Professor & Extension Agent, Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development*  
*Betty Wells, M.A. – Assistant Professor & Extension Agent, Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development*

Documenting the impact of community-based programs is increasingly important during this time of competitive resource allocation, fiscal responsibility, and shift in human resource commitment. The Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program, operating under the auspices of Ohio State University Extension, developed a holistic plan for collecting both qualitative and quantitative data to document program impacts. This paper reports the findings of focus group interviews conducted with youth and adult volunteers and/or collaborators. Six themes were identified from the data collected, three related to youth participants and volunteers, and three related to adult volunteers and collaborators.

- ***The Impact of the Senior Companion Program on Quality of Life Outcomes for Frail Older Adults***  
*Donna J. Rabiner, Ph.D.*  
*Scott Scheffler, M. Ap.St.*  
*Elizabeth Koetse, B.A.*  
*Jennifer Palermo, M.S.*  
*Elizabeth Ponzi, B.A.*  
*Sandra Burt, B.A.*  
*Lynelle Hampton, B.A.*

The Senior Companion Quality of Care Evaluation was designed to assess the impact of a federally funded senior volunteer program on quality of care and quality of life outcomes for frail clients.

Telephone interviews were conducted with a national sample of frail Senior Companion Program clients and comparison group members. This study examined responses from 658 clients (N = 54,103 weighted) who were interviewed at baseline and 3 months later. Multivariate modeling procedures were performed on the data to examine relative 3-month client outcomes. Senior Companion Program clients did relatively better than comparison group respondents on a variety of outcomes, including self-reported health, functional status, life satisfaction, unmet needs, depressive symptoms, and overall satisfaction with care. Generally, the Senior Companion Program has been considered a relatively low-cost way of matching the needs of community-based frail older adults with the skills and interests of senior volunteers. Now, the

program has been shown to have small, but positive, effects on client well-being. These findings may take on greater significance in light of the desire to expand the supply of Senior Companions through the USA Freedom Corps Initiative.

- ***Assessing Impacts on Volunteers Who Participate in Collaborative Efforts to Manage Environmental Disputes***

*Loretta Singletary, Associate Professor and Extension Educator,  
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension*

*Marilyn Smith, Professor and Youth Development Specialist,  
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension*

*George C. Hill, Associate Professor of Educational Leadership, University of Nevada, Reno*

This study identifies several criteria to use in assessing impacts on volunteers who participate in collaborative efforts to manage environmental disputes. Study participants were volunteers who worked together over a two-year period to manage an environmental dispute involving water. Major findings are as follows: the collaborative effort raised general awareness of the dispute and increased knowledge about issues underlying the dispute. Volunteers heard diverse viewpoints, learned about technical aspects of the problem, interacted and networked with diverse parties involved, and shared their views. In addition, volunteers improved communication and relationship building skills, and learned how to manage a complex environmental dispute collaboratively. Results from this study may help establish guidelines for future impact assessments. Results indicate additionally that volunteers who participate in a collaborative effort may benefit potentially from education in many of the skills and concepts identified in this study.

- ***Investing in Volunteerism: Recommendations Emerging From the Study of the Impact of Volunteers in Texas State Agencies***

*Sarah Jane Rehnborg, Ph.D.*

*Meredith DeSpain*

Volunteer participation is big business in Texas State Government agencies. A recent study performed by the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service on behalf of the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service reveals that significantly more than 200,000 Texans serve this state through structured service opportunities, providing contributions in time, in-kind contributions, and donations valued in excess of \$42 million. Their work significantly expands the reach of state government, leverages scarce financial resources and actively engages citizens in the work of a democracy. A review of volunteer practices and citizen engagement in eighteen selected state agencies and organizations, points to the extensive, successful deployment of volunteer resources throughout the state of Texas. It also suggests recommendations ranging from the sharing of best practices and the building of partnerships and professional networks, to standardizing data collection and providing liability coverage, which are detailed in the following article.

- ***Dollar Value of Volunteer Time: A Review of Five Estimation Methods***

*Paula M. Anderson, CVA, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, City of Grand Junction*

*Mary E. Zimmerer, Ph.D., CPA, Professor of Business, Mesa State College*

There is a renewed call in the United States for volunteer service, and volunteers are answering the call—in fact, in 2000, it is estimated that 44 percent of U.S. citizens volunteered within our communities. Meanwhile, volunteer program managers struggle to account for the value of their volunteers' efforts. One of the prominent practices is to place a dollar value on hours of service—often referred to as the dollar value method. This review addresses the variables present in several methods, and applies those methods to one city's statistics. The result emphasizes the lack of uniformity in dollar value practices. The most effective method attempts to equate work of paid employees to the work of volunteers.

## Research in Brief

- ***VIVA in Europe: A Comparative Study of the Value of Volunteer Investment and Value Audit***

*Katharine Gaskin M.A. (LSE), M.A., Ph.D. (Michigan)*

*Gaskin Research & Consultancy*

This is a summary of research in eight large voluntary organizations in the Netherlands, Denmark and England using the Volunteer Investment and Value Audit. VIVA is an innovative tool that places a financial or market value on unpaid work, adds up all expenditures on volunteers, and then compares the two through the VIVA Ratio to measure cost-effectiveness in volunteer programs.

## Commentary

- ***Valuing Volunteering***

*Justin Davis Smith, Ph.D., Institute for Volunteering Research, UK*

*Angela Ellis, Ph.D., Institute for Volunteering Research, UK*

In this paper the authors argue that while it is no longer sufficient to simply assert that volunteering is a good thing, it is insufficient and potentially damaging to focus solely on the economic impact of volunteering. The authors suggest more sophisticated measures are required and recommend a total audit to focus on the physical and human capital produced and the social and cultural capital generated.

## Ideas That Work

- ***Volunteer Opinion Surveys***

*Ms. Regi Mezydlo, Volunteer Manager, Brookfield Zoo*

In 1998 and 2002, Brookfield Zoo (Chicago) staff designed and administered two volunteer opinion surveys to measure the satisfaction of their 500-member active volunteer corps. This article presents a summary of how the survey was designed, how it was administered, and how it provided support for change in the program. The article also includes a simple step-by-step instruction checklist useful to anyone considering designing and administering any type of satisfaction survey. A sample of the survey is included.

## IYV 2001 and Its Impact on Inter-governmental Legislation

Robert Leigh

Chief of UNV Representation Office in North America

In his report to the United Nations General Assembly on the outcome of the International Year of Volunteers (IYV) 2001<sup>1</sup>, UN Secretary General Mr. Kofi Annan declared that the Year had been successful by any account. As indicators of this success, he highlighted the 123 National Committees and scores of local, regional and state committees formed in every corner of the globe, as well as the nine million hits on the official IYV web site. He emphasized the heightened recognition of volunteerism, the marked improvements in legislative frameworks and national and local infrastructure for voluntary action, and the networks established among and between the sectors.

These are some of the achievements, but what about longer term impact? While it is clearly too early to have a comprehensive idea of the difference the Year has made, we can say that there is now a much better understanding of the concept of volunteering and the connections between its various expressions, including traditional forms of mutual aid and civic engagement and more modern forms of volunteer service and activism. Global trends towards greater self-help, decentralization, participatory democracy and networking are all affecting civic participation, and volunteering is one defining characteristic.

There is also a better understanding of the diverse range of stakeholders involved, including government agencies, non-governmental

organizations, community groups, private companies, academia and the media. As the reciprocal relationships that lie at the roots of voluntary action are better appreciated, the issue of exclusion of certain population groups from access to opportunities to engage in volunteerism is now coming to the fore.

One significant impact of the Year is a growing recognition by governments of the role and contribution of voluntary action and the desirability, and feasibility, of adopting strategic approaches to enhancing the environment for such action to flourish. One convincing indicator of this recognition is the inclusion of voluntary action in statements and declarations of various inter-governmental fora<sup>2</sup>. The UN World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for all in a Globalizing World, held in Geneva in June 2000, took up the theme of volunteering as a new dimension in fighting exclusion. The Third UN Conference on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) held in Brussels in May 2001 encouraged, on the one hand, LDCs to build on traditions of voluntary mutual aid to enhance the effectiveness of social sector investment and, on the other, development partners to include voluntary action in policies and measures to strengthen LDCs. The Habitat+5 conference, held in Istanbul in June 2001, acknowledged the contribution of volunteerism to human settlements. The World Assembly on Ageing, held in Madrid

---

*Robert Leigh* is an economist with an M.A. from University College, London. He has worked in several country offices of the United Nations Development Programme and is currently the Chief of the New York office of the United Nations Volunteers which is headquartered in Bonn, Germany. Robert Leigh, Chief of UNV Representation Office in North America  
Tel: 212-906-3638; Fax: 212-906-3659; e-mail: robert.leigh@undp.org or visit [www.unvolunteers.org](http://www.unvolunteers.org) and/or [www.iyv2001.org](http://www.iyv2001.org)



in April 2002, recognized the opportunity volunteering provides to older people to continue participating actively in the life of their communities, and called for the removal of barriers to such participation. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in August 2002, for the first time at an Earth Summit conference, made explicit the linkage between sustainable development and the role of volunteer groups.

In addition to the above "thematic" inter-governmental resolutions adopted at special sessions of the General Assembly, there have also been two landmark resolutions adopted during the regular sessions of the General Assembly in 2001 and 2002 respectively. The first, *Res/A/56/38* deals with ways that governments and the UN system can support volunteering and the second, *Res/A/57/130*, concerns the outcome and follow-up to IYV 2001.

Inter-governmental resolutions have some important implications.

- First, securing wording on volunteerism in a resolution generally calls for clear articulation of positions, and often intense and lengthy negotiations both at national level and international levels, to arrive at an appropriate final text. The process of awareness-raising around the subject of volunteerism is in itself desirable for a subject area which is often invisible to policy makers.
- Second, while not legally binding, resolutions do carry the weight and moral authority of the world community.
- Third, resolutions help to contextualize volunteerism within the framework of some of the major issues of our times, and provide indications as to general directions to take.
- Fourth, resolutions provide opportunities for civil society groups to hold their governments accountable to text to which they have agreed.

The last in the series of General Assembly resolutions was *Res/A/57/130* on the Follow-up to IYV 2001. Tabled by the Government of Brazil and adopted on 26 November 2002 with co-sponsorship of 142 Member States, this resolution brought to a close a five-year cycle which began in 1997 with the designa-

tion of 2001 as IYV. Through this resolution governments welcomed the successful observance of IYV 2001, and in so doing, recognized the important role of volunteering in helping to achieve the development goals and objectives set in the Millennium Declaration and other major UN conferences.

The resolution encourages an expansion of networking among all stakeholders, including governments and civil society organizations, in support of such areas as volunteer-related research, information dissemination, and training. It encourages governments to enact enabling legislation supportive of volunteerism, and renews calls for implementation of the various actions that can lead to the promotion of volunteering which were outlined in the annex to earlier mentioned *Res/A/56/38*. The social dimensions of volunteering have long been accepted and recognized. This resolution raises the economic significance of volunteering as an additional benefit to be taken into account. It also stresses the need for an inclusive approach to volunteering which involves and benefits all parts of society, including more disadvantaged groups.

Some of the specific proposals include focusing public awareness campaigns around International Volunteer Day—which since 1985, occurs annually on December 5—on the follow-up to IYV 2001 with the active involvement of civil society. The private sector is also invited to support volunteerism through expanding corporate volunteering. As the focal point for volunteering in the UN, the UN Volunteers are invited to develop a global Internet volunteer resource to enhance network capabilities and expand information, knowledge and resource management, and all stakeholders are encouraged to contribute. There is a call to bodies of the UN system to integrate volunteerism into their policies and programmes and the UN Secretary General is requested to factor volunteer contributions into his reports on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and other major UN conferences. The UN Secretary General is required to report back to the General Assembly in 2005 on the implementation of *Res/A/57/130*.

An enormous amount of energy was expended, and creativity displayed, in the period leading up to IYV 2001 and during the Year itself. While there are still many issues that the volunteer movement needs to address, there now exists, in many parts of the world, an enhanced perception of volunteering as a powerful and vibrant force that can be harnessed to meet many of the challenges of our times. Indeed, as the UN Secretary General has pointed out, by "...neglecting to factor volunteering into the design and implementation of policies, there is a risk of overlooking a valuable asset and undermining traditions of cooperation that bind communities together."

Clearly, efforts on the part of governments to improve the well-being of billions of citizens can only complement what actions, individually and collectively, are taken by those very same citizens, often on a voluntary basis. A relationship between government and civil society based on mutual trust and respect, one where the willingness of people to volunteer is not exploited, and the responsibility of the State is not curtailed, needs to be nurtured. The adoption of resolutions by the international community described in this article are but a first step in the evolution of a more pro-active, intentional approach on the part of governments towards promoting volunteering. A concerted effort is now called for on the part of government and civil society, and other stakeholders, to work together to build on commitments made, with a view to positively affecting both the levels and impact voluntary participation makes to the well-being of societies.

---

#### ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>International Year of Volunteers: outcomes and future perspectives: Report of the Secretary General to the UN General Assembly, 24 September 2002

<sup>2</sup>Information on recent inter-governmental legislation on volunteering can be found at [www.worldvolunteerweb.org](http://www.worldvolunteerweb.org)



# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
13 February 2003

Fifty-seventh session  
Agenda item 98

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/57/L.8 and Add.1)]

### 57/106. Follow-up to the International Year of Volunteers

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolution 40/212 of 17 December 1985, in which it invited Governments to observe annually, on 5 December, an International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development,

*Recalling also* its resolution 52/17 of 20 November 1997, in which it proclaimed the year 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers, and its resolution 55/57 of 4 December 2000 on the observance of the International Year of Volunteers,

*Recalling further and reaffirming* its resolution 56/38 of 5 December 2001, which lays down recommendations for ways in which Governments and the United Nations system could support volunteering,

*Recognizing* the valuable contribution of volunteering, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help, formal service delivery and other forms of civic participation, to economic and social development, benefiting society at large, communities and the individual volunteer,

*Recognizing also* that volunteerism is an important component of any strategy aimed at, inter alia, such areas as poverty reduction, sustainable development, health, disaster prevention and management and social integration and, in particular, overcoming social exclusion and discrimination,

*Recognizing further* that volunteering, particularly at the community level, will help to achieve the development goals and objectives set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration<sup>1</sup> and at other major United Nations conferences, summits, special sessions and their follow-up meetings,

*Noting with appreciation* the efforts to increase awareness of volunteerism through global information sharing and education, including efforts to develop an effective network for volunteers through, inter alia, the International Year of Volunteers web site<sup>2</sup> and linked national sites,

<sup>1</sup> See resolution 55/2.

<sup>2</sup> [www.iyv2001.org](http://www.iyv2001.org).

*Acknowledging* the existing contribution of the organizations of the United Nations system to supporting volunteering, including the work of United Nations Volunteers around the world,

*Bearing in mind* the need for an integrated and coordinated follow-up to the International Year of Volunteers to be pursued in the relevant parts of the United Nations system,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on the outcome of and follow-up to the International Year of Volunteers, 2001;<sup>3</sup>

2. *Welcomes also* the successful observance of the International Year of Volunteers, 2001, with the support of one hundred and twenty-three national International Year of Volunteers committees and the many regional and city International Year of Volunteers committees with broad representation from Governments, international organizations, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as the private sector, recognizes the contribution of States and civil society organizations and alliances at the international, regional, national and local levels to such a success, and encourages this network to be maintained and expanded, as appropriate, with a view to further engaging all stakeholders, undertaking volunteer-related research, disseminating information and experiences, providing preparation and training to volunteers, particularly from developing countries, and forging new partnerships at all levels;

3. *Welcomes further* the various developments of policies and the enactment of legislations for the growth and development of volunteerism taken up as a result of the international year, and recommends that Governments continue to acknowledge the valuable role of volunteers and further support voluntary activities, including through appropriate policies and enabling legislation;

4. *Calls upon* Governments and the United Nations system to implement further the recommendations contained in the annex to its resolution 56/38, bearing in mind the economic significance of volunteering;

5. *Calls upon* Governments, with the active support of the media, civil society and the private sector, to observe 5 December, International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development, and to include activities focused on following up on the achievements of the International Year of Volunteers in its public awareness-raising campaigns;

6. *Reaffirms* the need to recognize and promote all forms of volunteerism as an issue that involves and benefits all segments of society, including children, young persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities and immigrants and those who remain excluded for social or economic reasons;

7. *Invites* all stakeholders, especially from the private sector community and from private foundations, to support volunteerism as a strategic tool to enhance economic and social development, including by expanding corporate volunteering;

8. *Welcomes* the work of the United Nations Volunteers, as the focal point for the International Year of Volunteers, as well as their role in the preparations and implementation of the Year, and requests them to continue their efforts, together with other stakeholders, to raise awareness of volunteerism, increase reference and

---

<sup>3</sup> A/57/352.

networking resources available and provide technical cooperation to developing countries, upon their request, in the field of volunteerism;

9. *Invites* the United Nations Volunteers to develop a global Internet volunteer resource based on the International Year of Volunteers web site<sup>2</sup> and on national web sites with a view to enhancing network capabilities and to expanding information, knowledge and resource management, and encourages Governments and all stakeholders, in particular the private sector, to contribute on a voluntary basis to this initiative;

10. *Calls* for the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to integrate volunteerism in its various forms into their policies, programmes and reports, and encourages the recognition and inclusion of volunteer contributions in future United Nations and other relevant international conferences, such as the World Summit on the Information Society;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to factor such contributions made by volunteers in his reports on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration<sup>1</sup> and of other major United Nations conferences, summits, special sessions and their follow-up meetings;

12. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to take measures, in particular within the mandates and the existing resources of the United Nations Volunteers and the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, to ensure that the potential of the International Volunteer Day for Economic and Social Development in follow-up to the International Year of Volunteers is fully realized;

13. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family".

*61st plenary meeting  
26 November 2002*

Note: Resolution A/Res.56/106 is available in multiple languages, including French and Spanish at [www.iyv2001.org](http://www.iyv2001.org).



## Assessing the Impact of the Three-Year Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. AmeriCorps Program

R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D.  
 Ryan Schmiesing, Ph.D.  
 Jeffrey E. King, Ph.D.  
 Judy Villard, M.S.  
 Betty Wells, M.A.

Individuals alone, particularly youth, cannot face the many challenges that they encounter from their peers and the larger community in which they live. Among other things, communities are faced with building greater social and human capital in a time of great change and uncertainty in society. Benson (1996) suggested that communities should seek the intentional involvement of organizations, institutions, and systems to provide programs and activities that offer youth positive experiences. Universities have the opportunity to form community partnerships to help address these problems and demonstrate that the institution values citizenship and a sense of responsibility (National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Universities, 1999). Building strong community collaborations to address local issues is critical to the success of providing positive experiences for youth/adult participants and volunteers. However, simply providing programs and activities and count-

**Impact assessment has become a, if not "the", critical issue for non-profits during the last five years.**

ing attendance will not ensure that young people are gaining new skills or overcoming obstacles that they face.

Impact assessment has become a, if not "the" critical issue for non-profits during the last five years. Contemporary volunteer organizations and programs exist in increasingly competitive environments regarding often-scarce resources. Although not limited to the public sector, this phenomenon is especially critical to non-profit organizations that must depend upon multiple funding sources in order to function while coming under increased public scrutiny and accountability (Kearns, 1996). Taylor and Sumariwalla (1993, p. 95) stated:

Increasing competition for tax as well as contributed dollars and scarce resources prompt donors and funding agencies to ask once again: What good did the donation produce? What difference did the foundation grant or United Way allocation make in the lives of those affected by the service funded?

*Dr. Safrit* is Associate Professor & Extension Specialist in the Department of 4-H Youth Development at North Carolina State University. He was Project Co-Director for the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program.

*Dr. Schmiesing* is Interim Leader, Program & Volunteer Risk Management for Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development. He was Project Coordinator for the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program for two years.

*Dr. King* is the Assistant Director for Ohio State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development. He was Project Co-Director for the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program.

*Judy Villard* is the Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development in Richland County, Ohio. Judy hosted an AmeriCorps member and was a subject matter specialist for the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program.

*Betty Wells* is the Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development in Noble County, Ohio. Betty hosted an AmeriCorps member for the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program.

Fisher and Cole (1993, p. 138) concluded that; "because programs involving volunteers must compete for resources in the community as well as within the organization, program evaluation has become an indispensable tool of the volunteer administrator." Consequently, evaluating the impact of volunteer programs has become an important management and program development focus for volunteer managers and administrators, especially within the past five years. According to Safrit and Merrill (1998, p. 9), "the challenge today is to use inputs and outcomes as a foundation for assessing client/participant behavioral and practice changes that are stronger indicators of program impact."

AmeriCorps programs conducted under the auspices of the Corporation for National Service (Bates, 1996) have come under increasing pressure to document not mere inputs and activities, but rather outcomes and impacts of member-directed, volunteer-delivered programs. Such documented impacts are critical if the national service movement in general is to become widely accepted in the non-profit sector, and if the AmeriCorps program specifically is to continue receiving federally appropriated funds and state-contributed resources in a time of political change.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. (Building Responsibility In teen Drivers through Growth in self-Esteem and Safety) was first established in 1996 as a collaborative effort among the Corporation for National Service and Ohio's Governor's Community Service Council; Ohio State University Extension 4-H Youth Development; and more than 40 local community agencies and organizations in 25 Ohio counties. The mission of B.R.I.D.G.E.S is to empower teens to aspire to be safe and responsible drivers. It is an ideal example of mobilizing traditional youth and adult community volunteers under the auspices of national service to successfully address a locally identified societal issue. Almost four years since its inception, B.R.I.D.G.E.S AmeriCorps members in a

total of 25 different Ohio counties have successfully utilized two innovative curricula (CarTeens and Mock Crash Safety Docudrama) to help adjudicated teen drivers as well as current, non-adjudicated and future teen drivers develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and aspirations necessary to accept the responsibility of driving a vehicle on Ohio's roads and highways.

The CarTeens program empowers adjudicated teen drivers to become safe and responsible drivers; some of these adjudicated youth become teen volunteers themselves who teach other youth about traffic safety and responsible driving. The Mock Crash Safety Docudrama uses wrecked automobiles as props and teen volunteer "actors" as "victims" to teach potential and current teen drivers about the tragedies caused by accidents resulting from drinking and driving, as well as the long-term effects such accidents have on young peoples' families, classmates, and communities. Additionally, in many counties, B.R.I.D.G.E.S members have developed unique curricula focused specifically upon local needs that fall within the area of teen vehicular safety (e.g., seat belt checks and use programs, child safety seat programs, etc.)

During its three years of operation (1997 - 2000), Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S helped 7,340 adjudicated teen drivers; 35,637 current, non-adjudicated teen drivers; and 35,453 future teen drivers (i.e., 13-15 year olds) develop the self-esteem, knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to be responsible drivers. The program mobilized 7,949 youth and adult volunteers (OSU Extension - State 4-H Office, 2000, n.p.) in support of these teens; collectively, they contributed a documented 33,464 hours of service. O'Neil and Richardson stated that, "As recipients of public funding, Extension faculty are accountable to government leaders and stakeholders for reporting program impact" (p. 1). To move beyond merely reporting numbers of participants, program administrators used an extensive impact assessment evaluation model from its inception based upon Bennet and Rockwell's (1994) Targeting Outcomes of Programs (TOPs) model.

## PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to identify programmatic impacts on participants (their families, schools and communities) of the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program. The researchers framed the research question based upon Marshall and Rossman's (1989) approach to qualitative inquiry; they utilized fundamental concepts of grounded theory discovery within the context of practitioner research (Jarvis, 1999) to develop a qualitative methodology to identify impacts of the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program. The researchers considered Ary et al.'s (1990) recommendations regarding the "concern for context," the "natural setting" for data collection, and the investigators as "the data-gathering instruments" (p. 447) in qualitative inquiry.

According to Merriam (1998), "qualitative inquiry, which focuses on meaning in context, requires a data collection instrument that is sensitive to underlying meaning when gathering and interpreting data" (p. 1). An interview schedule consisting of 12 questions, with appropriate probes (Lopez, 1996) was used to collect qualitative data between October 1 and November 30, 1999. The researchers identified six sites that had participated in the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program for three consecutive years. Study participants were selected through an open invitation to previous and current participants and to volunteers in each of the selected counties. The researchers conducted a total of 12 focus groups involving either teen program participants (i.e., adjudicated youth, teen volunteers, etc.; six focus groups; 34 participants) or adult program stakeholders (i.e., participants' parents, adult volunteers, school officials, etc.; six focus groups; 30 participants). All focus group interviews were tape recorded and transcribed.

Six experts in youth development and/or volunteerism/service read the transcriptions and identified reoccurring themes documenting program impacts for Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. This follows the constant

comparative method first suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Subsequently, the researchers read and reviewed the themes identified by the experts, and collapsed the data into holistic reoccurring themes using a modified story boarding technique developed based upon Tesch's (1990) discussion of content analysis in uncovering grounded theory from qualitative data.

The researchers used triangulation (Cohen & Mannion, 1985; Creswell, 1994) to strengthen the internal validity and rigor of the initial study findings. The researchers themselves as well as three youth development experts and/or faculty familiar with qualitative research reviewed the raters' initial comments and collapsed the identified themes into a single, holistic set of overarching themes. The researchers reviewed the resulting four sets of suggested overarching themes, and combined them into one suggested set of themes. The resulting set was shared with the three experts who either 1) approved the content and wording of the themes, or 2) suggested revisions to them. Of the three reviewers, two accepted the themes and one suggested revisions. The researchers reviewed the suggested revisions and made appropriate changes in the suggested themes. This edited set of themes was re-submitted to the three reviewers, again for their acceptance or modification. This process was repeated an additional time until the researchers and each of the three reviewers agreed upon the content and wording of the overarching themes.

## FINDINGS

The researchers identified six overarching themes as impacts of the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program, three related to youth (program participants and volunteers) and three related to adults (volunteers and collaborators.) Those youth-related impacts included: (a) The Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program further defined and stressed the importance of teen vehicular safety issues such as using safety belts, driving defensively, and the consequences of drinking and driving;

**The purpose of the study was to identify programmatic impacts on participants of the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program.**

(b) youth volunteers in the program gained valuable experience and enhanced their public speaking skills as a result of participating in the Ohio Teen

B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program; and (c) the Ohio Teen

B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program generally made a positive difference in the lives of youth participants. The adult-related impacts included: (a) Adult volun-

teers developed a positive attitude towards volunteerism and had a strong desire to become involved in other volunteer programs that will impact the lives of young people in their communities; and (b) the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program increased the awareness of teen vehicular safety issues in communities resulting in more partnerships formed and new programs developed; and (c) the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program offered meaningful leadership opportunities in local communities for both youth and adults as volunteers.

## CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

All too often, nonprofit organizational leaders fail to evaluate programs at all; when they do, they often rely solely on either qualitative or quantitative data, and rarely employ both methodologies in conjunction with and support of each other. Academicians, evaluators/researchers, and funding agencies often focus exclusively upon the numbers of clientele reached as a result of implementing a particular program. In contrast, practitioners are often more interested in program participants' testimonies and/or anecdotes related to their initial attitudes about the program or their experiences in the program. The authors recognize that both methodologies require considerable organizational time, energies, and resources in order to be purposeful and effective.

The reoccurring themes identified affirm that the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program made a difference in the lives of youth and adults, both participants and volunteers. Furthermore, focus group participants indicated specific new knowledge gained; new skills

developed or current skills enhanced; and a desire to continue their involvement in similar programs.

**The program was able to survive, and even gain additional funding during the following fiscal year as a result of the extensive impact data collected.**

During the second year of funding for the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program, the Ohio Governor's Community Service Council was required to make its funding base available to additional programs, yet the total dollars available remained constant.

Consequently, the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program, along with two other programs, absorbed a 30 percent budget cut. However, the program was able to survive, and even gained additional funding during the following fiscal year as a result of the extensive impact data collected.

In recent years, AmeriCorps programs across the country have been challenged to document the impact of programs and establish sustainability in local communities (Bates, 1996.) With Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S., the extensive evaluation and impact documentation efforts conducted contributed significantly to gaining local sustainability of program efforts. Nineteen of the 27 participating counties have established ongoing programs through key volunteers, paid staff, or agency partnerships now that the AmeriCorps funding has ended. The results of this statewide program impact evaluation have also been instrumental in establishing positive dialogues with potential donors and future collaborators on other teen vehicular safety programs.

As Fandray (1999) so accurately stated, "If we measure our progress, we can manage it. If we don't, we'll be swept away in a flood tide of change, and few of us will be afforded a second chance to get it right" (p. 64). Safrit and Merrill (1998) concluded:

*Traditionally, volunteer administrators have focused primarily on program inputs and immediate outcomes. The challenge today is to use inputs and outcomes as a foundation for assessing client/participant behavioral and practice changes that are stronger indicators of program impact.* (p. 9)

The researchers conclude that the quantitative data gathered throughout the Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program, fortified by the qualitative data and resulting themes identified, have served important roles in the program's day-to-day management as well as longer-range impact on youth and adult participants. Both qualitative and quantitative data are important and instrumental in addressing the ongoing demands for program impact documentation by funding agencies, administrators, and the taxpaying public.

## REFERENCES

- Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., & Razavieh, A. (1990). *Introduction to research in education*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.
- Bates, S. (1996). *National service: Getting things done?* Chicago: Robert M. McCormick Tribune Foundation.
- Bennett, C., and Rockwell, K. (1994, December). *Targeting outcomes of programs (TOP): An integrated approach to planning and evaluation*. (Available from Claude Bennett, ES-USDA, Ag Box 0905, Washington, D.C., 20250-0905), 1, 24.
- Benson, P. (1996). Beyond the "village" rhetoric. *Assets*, 1(1): 3-4.
- Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cohen, L., & Mannion, L. (1985). *Research methods in education*. London: Croom Helm.
- Creswell, J.W. (1994). *Research design: Qualitative & quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Fandray, D. (1999). Measuring stick: Know when to make changes. *Continental* (July), 63-64.
- Fisher, J.C., & Cole, K.M. (1993). *Leadership and management of volunteer programs*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 138.
- Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Jarvis, P. (1999). *The practitioner-researcher: Developing theory from practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Kearns, K.P. (1996). *Managing for accountability: Preserving the public trust in public and nonprofit organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Lopez, J.L. (1997). *Attitudes, motivations, and barriers of Hispanic Americans in Cuyahoga County, Ohio toward volunteerism*. Unpublished masters thesis, The Ohio State University, Columbus.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G.B. (1989). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Merriam, S.B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges. (1999). *Returning to our roots: The engaged institution*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Ohio Governor's Community Service Council. (1997). *Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. annual report*. Columbus, OH: Author.
- OSU Extension — State 4-H Office. (2000). *Ohio Teen B.R.I.D.G.E.S. program overview*. Columbus, OH: Author.
- O'Neil, B., & Richardson, J.G. (1999). Cost-benefit impact statements: A tool for Extension accountability. *Journal of Extension* [On-line], 37(4). Available: <http://www.joe.org/joe/1999august/tt3.html>
- Safrit, R.D., & Merrill, M. (1998). Assessing the impact of volunteer programs. *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, XVI(4), 5-10.
- Taylor, M.E. & Sumariwalla, R.D. (1993). Evaluating nonprofit effectiveness: Overcoming the barriers. In D.R. Young, R.M. Hollister, and V.A., Hodgkinson (Eds.), *Governing, leading, and managing nonprofit organizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 95.
- Tesch, R. (1990). *Qualitative research: Analysis types and software tools*. New York: The Falmer Press.



# The Impact of the Senior Companion Program on Quality of Life Outcomes for Frail Older Adults

**Donna J. Rabiner, Ph.D.**

**Scott Scheffler, M. Ap.St.**

**Elizabeth Koetse, B.A.**

**Jennifer Palermo, M.S.**

**Elizabeth Ponzi, B.A.**

**Sandra Burt, B.A.**

**Lynelle Hampton, B.A.**

The increasing demand for home health care has placed new attention on the role of volunteerism in the United States (Kilpatrick & Danziger, 1996). It is believed that volunteers providing home health care services to frail older adults can help relieve the burden on families, caregivers, social service agencies, and health care professionals (Morris, Caro, & Hansan, 1998). Although volunteers remain largely untapped as a resource for frail older adults in the United States, policymakers currently examining the long-term care crisis in America should seriously consider the viability of a volunteer service force to care for the increasing needs of a growing older population. Drawing on the country's resource of volunteers may save time and money for frail adults and for society at large (Wacker, Roberto, & Piper, 1998). In addition, an impending labor shortage of workers to care for older adults at home creates opportunities for volunteers to serve in new and more extensive ways (National Academy Press, 2000).

The Senior Companion Program (SCP) is one of the three federal senior volunteer pro-

grams, funded by the Corporation for National and Community Service ("Corporation"), designed to provide grants to qualified agencies and organizations for the purposes of (a) engaging persons 60 and older, particularly those with limited incomes, in volunteer service to meet critical community needs, and (b) providing a high-quality experience that will enrich the lives of the volunteers. Senior Companions serve an average of 20 hours per week, and they generally visit between two and three clients apiece. The clients they serve are primarily homebound elderly people in frail health, most of whom live alone. Senior Companions help their clients with the tasks of daily living. Most importantly, they provide vital human contact and companionship for the clients, some of whom have few other links to the outside world.

## OVERVIEW OF EVALUATION

In November of 1998, RTI was awarded a contract by the Corporation to examine the impact of the SCP on quality of life and quality of care outcomes for clients served. This paper reports on the 3-month follow-up

---

*Donna Rabiner, Ph.D.*, senior health policy researcher at RTI International, served as project director for the Senior Companion Quality of Care Evaluation. She has spent the past twenty years conducting research on self-care practices, attitudes toward and use of health and long-term care services, and patient satisfaction among the older adult population.

*Scott Scheffler, M.Ap.St.*, served as the lead statistician for the Senior Companion Quality of Care Evaluation. Scott is an expert in handling large data sets, complex survey designs and use of sampling weights in statistical models.

*Elizabeth Koetse, B.A.*, served as a co-investigator and research analyst for the Senior Companion Quality of Care Evaluation. Beth analyzed both qualitative and quantitative data for this study.

*Jennifer Palermo, M.S.*, served as the primary data collection supervisor for the client and family surveys. She is currently studying nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

*Elizabeth Ponzi, B.A.*, served as a co-investigator and research analyst for the Senior Companion Quality of Care Evaluation. She is currently preparing to become a graduate student in social work at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

*Sandra Burt, B.A.*, served as the lead RTI computer programmer for this study. Sandra wrote the code for telephone survey instruments, managed the initial data files, and ensured quality control during the data collection phase of all operations for the Senior Companion Quality of Care Evaluation.

*Lynelle Hampton, B.A.*, served as the RTI interview supervisor who oversaw the hiring, training, and work of all interview staff for the Senior Companion Quality of Care Evaluation. She also oversaw the data entry quality control process for this study.

findings from the client study.

The key study questions to be answered included the following:

1. How does the Senior Companion Program affect the quality of life of frail older adults?
2. What is the level of client satisfaction with Senior Companion Program services compared to similar services delivered by other providers?
3. To what extent do Senior Companions reduce clients' unmet needs for assistance with activities of daily living?

**What is the level of client satisfaction with Senior Companion Program services compared to similar services delivered by other providers?**

month intake period. Advance letters and study brochures were sent to all prospective respondents at each wave of the study. RTI telephone interviewers contacted each individual to confirm eligibility and schedule a convenient time

for a telephone interview. The same protocol was followed for all waves of the study.

Eligible individuals included those who were: (a) 65 years of age and over; (b) either newly receiving SCP services, newly placed on the waiting list for a Senior Companion, or newly provided with other community-based services; (c) residing in the community; (d) reachable by telephone; and (e) able to hear and respond to interview questions on their own behalf. A total of 2,104 clients were eligible to be interviewed at baseline and 723 were eligible at 3-month follow-up.<sup>1</sup> Over 72% of eligible clients at baseline (n=1,520) and over 90% of eligible clients at 3-month follow-up (n=658) responded to the telephone survey. The analytic sample for this study included all individuals who responded to both waves of the survey (n=658 unweighted or 54,103 weighted).

## DESIGN AND METHODS

In order to examine the impact of the SCP on quality of life and quality of care outcomes for clients served, it was necessary to develop a research design that allowed for data collection at multiple points in time. This paper focuses on the 3-month follow-up findings.

A quasi-experimental design was developed with sampling at three stages. First, 50 SCP projects were randomly selected from a national listing. Second, a random sample of four volunteer stations was selected at each of the selected projects (or a total of about 200 agencies). Third, a census was taken of all prospective clients in one of three client groups: (1) those newly receiving SCP services (the "treatment group" for this study), (2) those newly placed on the waiting list for SCP services (known as "WL"), and (3) those newly receiving other agency services from the community (known as "Other Agency").

## SURVEY DEVELOPMENT AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

RTI staff developed both baseline and follow-up telephone survey instruments that were approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in the fall of 1999. Next, RTI obtained the names of all new clients from the 50 randomly selected SCP projects and the over 200 randomly selected community-based agencies that were affiliated with the SCP. Potential clients were accrued from the sites on a monthly basis over an 18-

## ANALYTIC METHODS

Descriptive and multivariate procedures were used to analyze data at baseline and 3-month follow-up. Ordinary least squares (OLS) regression procedures were used on continuous outcome variables, and weighted logistic procedures were used on all dichotomous (yes/no) outcome variables.

## SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Table 1 presents weighted descriptive information on the characteristics of individuals in each of the client groups at baseline, with baseline differences noted relative to the SCP client group. The variables listed in Table 1 were used as control variables in multivariate analyses. Overall, the sample was fairly senior in age (mean age between 77-81 years old), female, white, with less than a high school education, widowed, and living alone. Only a minority of respondents was in

excellent or very good health, and many individuals had prevalent health conditions. Even so, most individuals were only slightly functionally impaired and were in good mental health.

See Appendix 1.

There were no significant differences between the three client groups in the proportion of females responding to the survey, the proportion married or widowed, the educational background of study respondents, their geographic location, self-reported health, independence with instrumental activities of daily living, prevalence of medical conditions, or overall satisfaction with life. However, clients from the two comparison groups (WL and Other Agency clients) differed from SCP clients with respect to some baseline characteristics. The Other Agency client group was disproportionately younger and relatively less likely to be white than the SCP group, whereas the WL group was more likely to be of Hispanic descent. Those in the WL or Other Agency group were less likely to live alone relative to the SCP group. Those in the WL group scored slightly lower on both the ADL subscale and the overall functional status scale relative to the SCP group. Finally, those in the WL group reported a slightly larger number of depressive symptoms at baseline. These initial baseline differences were controlled for in multivariate analyses.

## CLIENT OUTCOMES AND STUDY FINDINGS

The client study outcomes and key findings are reported by research question below.

### QUESTION 1:

**How does the Senior Companion Program affect the quality of life of frail older adults?**

To answer this first study question, we analyzed study outcomes representing the following quality of life domains:

- physical health status
- functional status
- mental health status
- social well-being

The **physical health status outcomes** considered at 3-month follow-up included the

following four study items:

- What is your current health status?  
Response options: 1 = poor health to 5 = excellent health
- How does your health now compare to one year ago?  
Response options: 1 = much worse now to 5 = much better now
- To what extent have physical problems limited social activities in the past month?  
Response options: 1 = not at all to 5 = extremely
- To what extent have emotional problems limited social activities in the past month?  
Response options: 1 = not at all to 5 = extremely

The **functional status outcomes** included three scale items:

- A composite scale examining six Activities of Daily Living (ADL), including ability to eat, bathe, dress, get in and out of bed, walk, and groom oneself, with higher values indicating greater functional independence
- A composite scale examining seven Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (IADL), including ability to use the telephone, get to places outside of walking distance, go shopping for groceries or clothes, prepare meals, do housework, manage money, and take medications, with higher values indicating greater functional independence
- An overall summary functional status scale, including all thirteen ADL and IADL items combined, with higher values indicating increased functional independence.

The **mental health status outcomes** included the following two measures:

- A composite life satisfaction scale, examining eleven different aspects of life satisfaction among older adults,

with higher values signifying greater satisfaction with life

- A composite depressive symptoms scale, examining nine depressive symptoms, with higher values signifying increased depressive symptoms.

Finally, the **social well-being outcomes** included the following two study items:

- How many friends have you seen or spoken to on the phone in the past month?
- How times during the past month have you gone out socially with other people?

With respect to physical and functional status outcomes, we found the following significant differences between clients at 3-month follow-up:

- WL clients reported their **current health status** to be somewhat lower than that of SCP clients. While SCP clients had an adjusted mean score of 2.46 on this 5-point index, WL clients had an adjusted mean score of 2.15, or 87% as high an adjusted mean score as for SCP clients. (Higher values indicated better current health).
- WL clients reported having a 7% lower **functional status score** (indicating somewhat less independence) relative to SCP clients.

With respect to mental health outcomes, we found the following differences between SCP and WL clients:

- WL clients reported having a somewhat lower adjusted mean score on the **life satisfaction scale** relative to SCP clients. While SCP clients had an adjusted mean score of 5.97 on the life satisfaction index, WL clients had a score of 5.06, or 85% as high an adjusted mean score as for SCP clients. (Higher values indicated greater satisfaction with life).
- WL clients reporting having a somewhat higher adjusted mean score on the

**depressive symptoms** scale relative to SCP clients. Specifically, SCP clients had an adjusted mean score of 2.74 on this index while WL clients had an adjusted mean score of 3.25, an approximately 16% higher relative value on this index. (Higher values indicated a larger number of depressive symptoms).

Finally there were no differences between SCP, WL, and Other Agency clients in social well-being at 3-month follow-up.

## QUESTION 2:

**What is the level of client satisfaction with Senior Companion Program services compared to similar services delivered by other providers?**

Both overall satisfaction with care and satisfaction with individual components of care were assessed for all SCP clients and for those WL and Other Agency clients who were receiving some other form of in-home care at 3-month follow-up. Seven individual satisfaction items were evaluated, and an overall composite satisfaction scale, ranging from 0-14, was created by summing across all seven satisfaction items, with higher values indicating greater levels of satisfaction with care.

Although SCP clients, those WL clients using other services, and those Other Agency clients using other services were all satisfied with their overall level care (e.g., the adjusted mean overall satisfaction scale ranged from 12.25 to 13.11), the following differences were found:

- SCP clients scored 8% higher on the **overall satisfaction with care scale** relative to WL clients.
- WL clients were less likely than SCP clients to be very satisfied with the **amount of time off given to family members**. Specifically, WL clients had only 18% odds of being very satisfied with the amount time off given to family members relative to SCP clients.
- WL and Other Agency clients were less likely to be very satisfied with the **amount of time they spent with their in-home provider**. Specifically, WL and Other

Agency clients only had 24% and 17% odds, respectively, of being very satisfied with the time that they spent with their companion/aide relative to SCP clients.

### QUESTION 3:

#### To what extent do Senior Companions reduce clients' unmet needs for assistance with activities of daily living?

The following three questions were asked of clients to assess their unmet need for care:

- During the past 3 months, was there any time when you needed more help with personal care in your home but were unable to get it (yes/no)?
- During the past 3 months, was there any time when you needed more help with meal preparations in your home but were unable to get it (yes/no)?
- During the past 3 months, was there any time when you needed more help with special transportation from your home but were unable to get it (yes/no)?

Results from the analyses of these three questions revealed that WL clients and Other Agency clients had some perceived unmet needs relative to SCP clients at 3-month follow-up. More specifically:

- WL clients were over 5 times more likely than SCP clients to have unmet needs for personal care. Similarly, Other Agency clients were almost 4 times more likely than SCP clients to have **unmet needs for personal care**.
- WL clients were over 2 times more likely than SCP clients to have **unmet needs for special transportation**. There were no differences between the three client groups in unmet need for assistance with meal preparations.

### DISCUSSION

The SCP is currently one of several national service programs slated for expansion under President Bush's USA Freedom Corps Initiative. Given the findings reported here, it is

clear that the program has small, but positive, effects on client well-being at 3-month follow-up. Currently, the federal government supports the SCP through grants to agency sponsors (where the SCPs are housed) and small stipends (approximately \$2.55/hour) to Senior Companions for their service to the community. The proposed FY 2002 budget calls for expending \$39.1 million in support of this program (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2002). Given that this program is relatively inexpensive to support, and provides an excellent way to match the growing demand for long-term care with the opportunity for volunteer strategies to engage the growing number of old and near old to address this increasing service need, it is not surprising that the SCP has become the focus of increased attention by the Bush Administration ("Bush seeks," 2002).

**With the large baby boom population getting ready to retire, the SCP provides an opportunity for well-intentioned seniors to give back to their communities.**

With the large baby boom population approaching retirement, the SCP provides an opportunity for well-intentioned seniors to give back to their communities. While only 44% of the adult population generally volunteers in a given year (Independent Sector, 2002), it is possible that by offering individuals new

opportunities to serve their communities, larger numbers of baby boomers will participate in this type of service program. At the same time, with the number of Americans over age 65 rapidly increasing from 4.2 million in 2000 to 8.9 million in 2030 (Administration on Aging, 2001) there soon will be a pressing need for policymakers to find alternative ways to serve frail older adults at home.

The U.S. House of Representatives has recently proposed legislation reauthorizing the Citizen Service Act of 2002 (H.R. 4854), to reduce existing restrictions placed on many of the Corporation's senior volunteer programs. Various versions of the bill have been promulgated expanding the eligibility of seniors to volunteer and reducing barriers to entry. The existing SCP eligibility requirements increasingly have hampered SCP direc-



tors, many of whom have had difficulty filling their Senior Companion "slots" because potential volunteers either: (a) were too young, (b) were of an income exceeding the 125% poverty guidelines, or (c) wanted to serve fewer than 20 hours per week. If the Citizen Service Act of 2002 becomes law, it will become significantly easier to recruit and retain an expanded number of Senior Companions in the future. These additional volunteers will contribute to the long-term care workforce by further expanding the supply of independent living services to frail older adults living at home.

---

#### ENDNOTE

<sup>1</sup>Reasons for loss of eligibility between baseline and 3-month follow-up included: death (n = 19); mental or physical incapacity (n = 176); institutionalization (n = 7); no longer receiving SCP services, no longer on the waiting list, or no longer receiving other agency services (n = 498); and no phone or no valid phone number (n = 81).

---

#### REFERENCES

- Administration on Aging, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2001). *A profile of older Americans: 2001*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Bush seeks to expand ranks of Senior Corps volunteers. (2002, April 10). *The Washington Post*, p. A6.
- Citizen Service Act, H.R. 4854. (2002). Retrieved July 23, 2002, from <http://thomas.loc.gov>
- Corporation for National and Community Service. (2002, May). *Senior Companion Program Fact Sheet*. Retrieved July 23, 2002, from <http://www.cns.gov/news/factsheets/scp.pdf>
- Independent Sector. (2002, February 15). *As President Bush calls for new spirit of civic engagement, the value of volunteer time continues to climb*. Retrieved July 23, 2002, from <http://www.independentsector.org/media/voltime02PR.html>

- Kilpatrick, J., & Danziger, S. (1996). *Better than money can buy: The new volunteers*. Winston Salem, NC: Innersearch Publishing, Inc.
- Morris, R., Caro, F.G., & Hansan, J.E. (1998). *Personal assistance: The future of home care*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- National Academy Press. (2000). *Improving the quality of long-term care*. Retrieved July 23, 2002, from <http://books.nap.edu/books/0309064988/html/1.html>
- Wacker, R.R., Roberto, K.A., & Piper, L.E. (1998). *Community resources for older adults: Programs and services in an era of change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Weissman, M.M., & Bothwell, S. (1976). Assessment of social adjustment by patient self-report. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 33, 1111-1115.

## APPENDIX 1

**Table 1:  
Weighted Descriptive Data for Analytic Sample by Client Group**

	SCP (N=21,930)	WL (N=11,180)	Other Agency (N=20,993)
<b>Baseline Characteristic</b>	<b>% or Mean (SD)</b>	<b>% or Mean (SD)</b>	<b>% or Mean (SD)</b>
<b>Sociodemographic Characteristics</b>			
Age (in years)	80.7 (0.96)	79.2 (0.65)	76.8 (1.01)**
Gender (% female)	86.5%	84.4%	76.3%
Race (% White)	82.1%	75.2%	63.9%**
Ethnicity (% Hispanic)	3.0%	14.5%**	3.3%
Education (% < high school)	41.2%	42.8%	27.8%
Geographic location (% rural)	46.2%	30.7%	33.6%
<b>Social Support</b>			
Marital status (% married)	10.0%	15.6%	22.1%
Marital status (% widowed)	68.8%	67.2%	62.4%
Living arrangement (% alone)	83.6%	66.2%**	67.0%*
<b>Health/Functional Status</b>			
<b>Self-reported health</b>			
(% excellent/very good)	10.9%	16.9%	14.2%
ADL sub-scale (range 0-12)	10.9 (0.11)	10.2 (0.25)**	10.4 (0.27)
IADL sub-scale (range 0-14)	10.3 (0.26)	9.6 (0.31)	10.0 (0.38)
Functional status scale (0-26)	21.2 (0.35)	19.8 (0.53)*	20.5 (0.61)
<b>Prevalent Conditions</b>			
Diabetes (%)	24.2%	32.9%	42.2%
Stroke (%)	22.2%	27.4%	18.6%
Heart disease (%)	50.0%	51.1%	36.2%
<b>Psychological Characteristics</b>			
Life satisfaction scale (0-11)	6.2 (0.29)	5.4 (0.24)	5.7 (0.38)
Depressive symptoms (0-9)	2.4 (0.09)	3.5 (0.19)**	2.9 (0.31)

Note: Comparisons reflect differences between each client group and the SCP client group.

\*significant at  $p < .05$

\*\*significant at  $p < .01$

# Assessing Impacts on Volunteers Who Participate in Collaborative Efforts to Manage Environmental Disputes

Loretta Singletary  
Marilyn Smith  
George C. Hill

## INTRODUCTION

Increased competition for natural resources, including land, water, air and wildlife, has spawned unprecedented numbers of environmental disputes and lawsuits. Since the 1970s, the United States has witnessed a steady increase in collaborative efforts to manage environmental disputes as an alternative to litigation (Bingham, 1986). These approaches include alternative dispute resolution, principled negotiation, consensus building and public issues education (Bingham, 1997; Fisher & Ury, 1981; Dale and Hahn, 1994).

Experts offer two major reasons for collaborating to manage environmental disputes. First, many believe conventional litigation and legislation are ineffective. Such actions inevitably result in winners and losers. These approaches encourage losers to get even by undermining implementation of the solution (Deutsch, 1973; Carpenter & Kennedy, 1988; Gray, 1989; Susskind & Cruikshank, 1987). Second, people are demanding more involvement in public decisions affecting management of natural resources in which they have a vested stake (Susskind & Field, 1996; Sirmon, Shands, & Liggett, 1993; Selin and Chavez, 1995; Inkpen, 1996).

Volunteers are required for most collaborative efforts to manage environmental disputes. These volunteers typically are key stakeholders in the dispute. As such, they act as representatives for a number of stakeholders who share similar concerns or have a similar stake in the issue. This study focuses on

the impacts on volunteers who participate in a collaborative effort to manage an environmental dispute.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR STUDY

Research illustrates that there are two objective criteria used to measure the impacts of a collaborative effort. The first objective is whether or not the effort manages the dispute through a negotiated agreement and the second is whether or not an agreement is implemented. Although an agreement, and its implementation provide objective measures of successful collaboration, they are not conclusive. This is especially true if the agreement is economically infeasible to implement, is arrived at unfairly and does not solicit full participation, and the dispute resurfaces soon after it is managed.

Gray (1989) maintains there are other more subjective criteria that indicate the impact of collaborative efforts. In particular, these are the impacts on the volunteers who participate in the collaborative effort. Gray (1989) suggests that a collaborative process can alter attitudes and thus behavior towards dispute and collaboration. She suggests that criteria to measure these changes include improved communication, networking and relationship building skills, in addition to increased hope of resolving the dispute. Further, a formal collaborative effort involves numerous operational details. These include how volunteers learn to share power and whether they treat one another fairly and with respect.

---

*Dr. Loretta Singletary* is an Associate faculty and Extension Educator in the University of Nevada, College of Cooperative Extension. Her research and educational programs focus on managing natural resource conflicts. She is particularly interested in assessing the impacts of these kinds of programs.

*Marilyn Smith* has 28 years of professional experience working with volunteers in community settings. This is her first effort in dealing with volunteers regarding an environmental issue. Her efforts in evaluating program impacts received national recognition in 2002.

*Dr. George C. Hill* is an Associate Professor in the Educational Leadership Department at the University of Nevada. Dr. Hill has worked in the area of program and needs assessment through his career.

Similarly, Innes (1999) suggests that even a collaborative effort that produces a high-quality agreement satisfies only a "first-order effect." Innes maintains that "secondary" effects achieved in a collaborative process are as beneficial in the end as a high quality agreement. These effects include increased knowledge about the issues; increased awareness of the dispute and the diverse viewpoints of stakeholders; new personal and working relationships among stakeholders; scientific analyses that stakeholders accept and understand; shared knowledge with others, and stakeholders regard the process and its outcomes as fair. Other effects can include a change in behavior, such as responding to future disputes civilly and cooperatively rather than in an adversarial way.

In addition, Innes (1999) suggests that researchers measure secondary effects retrospectively. That is, the assessment should take place at least one year after it is completed. She contends that assessments of collaborative efforts to date have not adequately assessed these types of effects, partly because the assessment takes place too early. Poor timing of an assessment does not allow volunteers to adequately digest and perceive these effects.

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this study is to assess the impacts on volunteers who participated in a collaborative effort to manage a water dispute. Research guidelines suggested by Gray (1989) and Innes (1999) were adapted to conduct this assessment. Impacts measure the degree to which volunteers perceive they have increased their knowledge about underlying issues, technical aspects of the problem, and possible solutions to the dispute. Other impacts measure the degree to which participants perceived that improved communication, relationship building, networking and collaboration skills were improved. Additional impacts measure increases in awareness of the dispute and diverse view-

points represented, increased citizen involvement, and increased hope that lasting solutions to the dispute are possible.

## OVERVIEW/HISTORY OF A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT TO MANAGE AN ENVIRONMENTAL DISPUTE

The dispute highlighted in this study is centered in the Walker River Basin. The Walker River drains the Sierra Nevada south-east of Lake Tahoe and flows 160 miles to its terminus at Walker Lake in northwestern Nevada. The basin includes Mono County, California; Lyon and Mineral Counties in Nevada; and the Walker River Paiute Reservation located adjacent to Walker Lake.

The water of Walker River, as is the case with many western rivers, is over-allocated. In 1992, the United States joined with the Walker River Tribe to file claims for a water right for the Reservations' Reservoir (est. 1934) and to irrigate lands added in 1936. All water right holders upstream of the reservation are defendants. In addition, since 1882, Walker Lake's surface elevation and water quality have declined steadily. Additionally, there is a build-up of salts in Walker Lake, stemming from low inflows which have caused the Lahontan Curthroat trout population to decline precipitously.

The Walker Lake Working Group, a special interest group was organized to protect Walker Lake and its wildlife, moved in 1994 to intervene in existing litigation and file a new and senior claim to water rights in order to establish a minimum lake level at Walker Lake (Horton, 1996).

In 1998, a diverse group of stakeholders indicated an interest to volunteer in an effort to manage the dispute collaboratively and avoid litigation. This group identified themselves as the Walker River Basin Advisory Committee (WRBAC). Eight individuals comprised the WRBAC representing interests from headwaters of the Walker River in California to its terminus at Walker Lake. Goals established by the WRBAC

**A diverse group of stakeholders indicated an interest to volunteer in an effort to manage the dispute collaboratively and avoid litigation.**

included: a) identify issues causing the dispute, b) identify and investigate possible solutions, c) acquire funding to conduct scientific research to investigate potential solutions, d) direct the research and dissemination of the results, and e) inform the public of all activities and findings. The efforts incorporated field tours and public forums to clarify and prioritize issues.

Social activities were held to encourage volunteers to develop relationships with one another. These activities included lunches and refreshment breaks. All events of the groups were publicized to encourage broad public participation by notices in community newspapers and postings in public buildings. Announcements were mailed to any interested individuals who offered their mailing addresses. Journalists were invited to attend all meetings and events in order to publicize further the group's activities. Additionally, a web page was established to inform citizens with Internet access about project goals, volunteers, research, and education activities.

Attendance at activities varied from 20 to 100 persons with an average attendance of 35. Most activities were held in Yerington, NV, a community located in the center of the basin and selected by WRBAC as a reasonable location to meet. Public forums to garner input and disseminate research were held in Yerington at the public library. On-site tours were held in four different areas of the basin to educate volunteers about technical issues unique to those areas and to provide volunteer stakeholders an opportunity to formally voice their concerns on site. All activities were free and open to any interested party.

## DATA COLLECTION

### Participants/Subjects in the Study

In September 2001, 16 months after the collaborative effort concluded, 121 volunteers who had provided mailing addresses collected from event attendance sheets were chosen as study participants/subjects. In addition to the eight key volunteer stakeholders (WRBAC), these included all other volunteers such as private citizens, water users, irrigation district board members, county government officials, tribal officials and spe-

cial interest groups, including Ducks Unlimited, Sierra Club and Nature Conservancy. Federal and State resource management agencies were represented at nearly every meeting and included Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, Nevada Fish and Game, California Fish and Game, Nevada Department of Agriculture and Nevada Division of Water Planning. These individuals were also considered volunteers in the collaborative effort as they indicated they were not directed but rather volunteered to participate and support the collaborative effort.

### Instrumentation

A questionnaire was developed to collect data from participants/subjects in this study. The instrument was adapted from guidelines outlined by Innes (1999) and Gray (1989) to assess secondary impacts on volunteers who seek to collaboratively manage environmental disputes.

One of the professionals involved with the WRBAC volunteer group drafted the initial survey. That professional has extensive experience in survey development. Survey questions were based upon Innes (1999) and Gray (1989) and adapted for local needs.

Prior to mailing the questionnaire, a panel of Walker River Basin residents knowledgeable about the dispute, but not involved as volunteers, reviewed several drafts of the questionnaire for content validity. These individuals reviewed and approved the final draft. A panel of survey methodology experts reviewed the final draft of the questionnaire. The investigators modified the questionnaire based upon their recommendations. Finally, the questionnaire was tested using three volunteers excluded from the study sample. The purpose of this review was to identify missing attributes, wording clarity, and time required to complete the instrument.

The questionnaire that was mailed to participants is shown in Table 1. The questionnaire featured 17 Likert-type scale items to assess impacts on volunteers. These included eight items intended to measure the extent to which, as a result of their participation in a collaborative effort, volunteers increased their knowledge about: a) the dispute and issues



causing the dispute; b) diverse viewpoints involved in the dispute, c) technical aspects of the dispute; d) possible solutions and; how to participate in a collaborative process. Six items measured the extent to which volunteers improved communication, relationship building, networking, and similar collaborative skills.

**Six items measured the extent to which volunteers improved communication, relationship building, networking, and similar collaborative skills.**

Two items measured the extent to which the collaborative effort raised public awareness of the dispute and increased the number of citizens involved to manage the dispute collaboratively. The remaining item measured hopefulness about resolving the dispute. Specifically, it asked volunteers to what extent they believed lasting solutions to the dispute were possible.

Each of the seventeen items on the questionnaire were Likert-type items using a five-point equal weight increment scale where 1=ineffective and 5=Very effective. A "DK" option, where DK=Don't Know, was included as an option on each scale. Content validity of the questionnaire was established using an expert panel discussed previously. A Cronbach's coefficient alpha was calculated to estimate internal consistency or reliability of the 17 items. The average alpha score for all 17 items was high ( $r = .90$ ) (Carmines & Zeller, 1979).

### Procedure

Each volunteer was mailed the two-page (front and back) questionnaire with instructions and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope. A cover letter was included that explained the purpose of the survey, ensured confidentiality and thanked them for their input. This one-time data collection protocol received exemption from the University Human Subjects Committee and did not require consent forms. Due to the legal nature of the dispute and concern that volunteers would not respond candidly, if they believed their names and addresses were "traced," the researchers concluded a one-time mailing would encourage the highest response rate.

## RESULTS

Thirty-six of the 121 volunteers returned completed questionnaires resulting in an approximately 30 percent (.297) response rate. This is a robust response rate given that the average response rate to a more rigorous mail survey is around 10 to 12 percent (Dillman, 1978).

Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences for Windows (SPSS, 2001). Descriptive statistics were employed to analyze the results and the means ranked for each item.

Table 2 presents ranked mean scores for each of the 17 items to assess impacts on volunteers who participated in the collaborative effort. The top five items are: a) more citizens became aware of the dispute; b) I was treated fairly and with respect; c) I heard diverse viewpoints from others; d) more citizens learned about issues causing the dispute; and e) I interacted and networked with diverse interests.

A concern, when assessing the impact of any effort, is the sensitivity of the instrumentation. This was a particular concern for investigators of this effort, given the diverse perspectives of the volunteer stakeholders involved. Therefore, an additional analysis was conducted to determine if there was congruence in the responses. The additional analysis, a Spearman's rank order correlation, was used to measure congruence among the impact variables. Spearman's rank order correlation was chosen because the data were finite, collected using a Likert-type scale questionnaire.

Table 3 illustrates the results of the correlation analysis. The variable that showed the least congruence among the 17 impact variables was the variable [that the volunteer was] "treated fairly and with respect." This variable, which ranked second in the mean scores provided by volunteers (see Table 2), is very important when working with volunteers. Such a high mean ranking by volunteers, however, may not necessarily translate into success (or a belief by participants that the

collaborative effort has been effective) or a positive impact on volunteers. The correlation results for the survey data indicate that serious interaction issues may have existed among volunteers who participated in this effort. The results suggest further that when assessing impacts of collaborative efforts, researchers go beyond simple ranking of variables to use tests of association to determine if key impact variables show congruence with other variables.

While most of the impact variables significantly correlated with being “treated fairly and with respect” in Table 3, the relationships were not strong enough to make meaningful predictions and, in fact, several were very low. These results indicate that ensuring fairness and respect among participants, while an ideal and necessary goal in shaping a collaborative effort, does not guarantee real impact or positive change among volunteer stakeholders.

## CONCLUSIONS

An assessment of impacts on volunteers who participated in this collaborative effort to manage an environmental dispute indicates overall positive impacts.

- Volunteers indicated that the program raised awareness of the dispute and allowed citizens to express their diverse viewpoints about the dispute.
- The collaborative effort increased volunteers’ knowledge about the technical aspects of the dispute.
- Volunteers believed that they interacted with other stakeholders involved in the dispute and improved their understanding of others’ viewpoints.
- Volunteers felt they received fair and respectful treatment during the collaborative effort and learned how to work together to manage a dispute.
- Volunteers indicated that participation in the collaborative effort helped to improve their communication and relationship building skills.

**Preliminary indications are that the positive secondary effects helped to establish the sustainability of the volunteer group over the long-term.**

Secondary impacts on volunteers who participate in collaborative efforts are somewhat subjective and may be difficult to identify precisely. Volunteers’ perceptions are invaluable in assessing these impacts, which can include increases in knowl-

edge, skills and awareness. Although these secondary impacts were generally positive, the measure of hopefulness that lasting solutions to the dispute were possible (questionnaire item #16) rated comparatively weaker.

Additional secondary impacts may include a change in attitude towards a dispute as demonstrated by increased skills and confidence to manage a dispute collaboratively rather than through polarized behavior and litigious action. Volunteers who participated in this collaborative effort continue to remain involved in collaboratively managing the dispute. Approximately two years after this effort ended, the majority of key volunteer stakeholders requested federal and state government leaders to support and fund an “alternative dispute resolution process,” in order to resolve the dispute out of court. Elected officials agreed and to date, parties identified to participate in that process include the majority of key volunteer stakeholders who participated in the WRBAC effort.

Environmental disputes involving the Walker River and many other rivers in the western United States are likely to continue. The secondary impacts assessed in this study may contribute to the skills of the current group in continuing to resolve differences. The willingness to manage and potentially resolve disputes through collaborative volunteer efforts rather than litigation is clear.

Results of this study suggest that collaborative volunteer efforts can

- increase knowledge about the dispute
- increase awareness of diverse viewpoints, and
- improve skills needed to manage the dispute collaboratively.

Results also suggest a potential need to educate volunteers involved in environmental disputes in communication, networking, relationship building and other collaborative skills.

These skills will empower volunteers to participate more equitably and effectively in collaborative processes should the opportunity arise.

Results from this study helped the professionals involved in this effort to establish guidelines for design, management and impact assessment of future collaborative efforts. An assessment of the group, one-year after completion of original goals, provided valuable information about the knowledge and skills required to sustain a group of volunteers interested in on-going work on environmental issues and disputes. Preliminary indications are that the positive secondary effects helped to establish the sustainability of the volunteer group over the long-term.

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTEER MANAGEMENT

Volunteers who participate in collaborative efforts to manage environmental disputes require thoughtful and diligent management. Managers must first identify and prioritize the educational needs of volunteers. More than likely, volunteers will need to learn about what defining features comprise a collaborative effort. This implies that managers educate volunteers on how to communicate with one another so that collaborative efforts remain civil and purposeful. Often the manager helps volunteers establish "ground-rules" to guide and support effective communication.

Managers must help volunteers establish written goals for the collaborative effort. Goals should be clear, concise, practical and meaningful to all volunteers. The manager should periodically remind volunteers about their goals to keep them "on track." Managers may also help volunteers decide when and how to bring closure to discussions and perhaps the overall effort.

**Managers must help volunteers establish written goals for the collaborative effort.**

Finally, managers must avoid personalizing issues that characterize the dispute. An effective manager does not voice his/her viewpoint about the dispute or potential solutions offered.

Rather, the manager educates volunteers and guides the collaborative effort, encouraging volunteers to voice their views.

Collaborative efforts to manage disputes are seemingly complex and overwhelming to some volunteer managers. Unless managers understand their role in these efforts as educators and guides, their efforts are unlikely to produce the desired results.

#### REFERENCES

- Bingham, G. (1986). *Resolving environmental disputes: A decade of experience*. Washington, D.C.: Conservation Foundation.
- Bingham, G. (1997). *Seeking solutions: Exploring the applicability of ADR for resolving water issues in the west* (Report to the Western Water Policy Review Advisory Commission). Washington, D.C: RESOLVE, Inc.
- Carmines, E.G., & Zeller, R.A. (1979). *Reliability and validity assessment*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Carpenter, S.L., & Kennedy, W.J.D. (1988). *Managing public disputes: A practical guide to handling disputes and reaching agreement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- Dale, D.D., & Hahn, A.J. (1994). *Public issues education: Increasing competence in resolving public issues*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Extension/ Cooperative Extension.
- Deutsch, M. (1973). *The resolution of dispute: Constructive and destructive processes*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Dillman, D.A. (1978). *Mail and telephone surveys: The total design method*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.
- Fisher, R., & Ury, W. (1981). *Getting to yes: Negotiating agreement without giving in*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- Gray, B. (1989). *Collaborating: Finding common ground for multiparty problems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Horton, G.A. 1996. *Walker River chronology: A chronological history of the Walker River and related water issues*. Carson City, NV: Nevada Division of Water Planning.
- Inkpen, A., "Creating knowledge through collaboration," *California Management Review* (Fall 1996): 136-137.
- Innes, J.E. (1999). Assessing Consensus Building. In L. Susskind, S. McKernan, & J. Thomas-Larmer (Eds.), *The consensus building handbook: A comprehensive guide to reaching agreement* (pp. 631-671). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Selin, S., & Chavez, D., "Developing a collaborative model for environmental planning and management," *Environmental Management* 19 (1995):189-195.
- Sirmon, J., Shands, W.E., & Liggett, C., "Communities of interests and open decision making," *Journal of Forestry* 91 (July 1993): 17.
- Statistical package for social sciences for Windows applications guide* (Base 10.1) [Computer Software]. (2001). Chicago: Author.
- Susskind, L., & Cruikshank, J. (1987). *Breaking the impasse: Consensual approaches to resolving public disputes*. Boston: Basic Books.
- Susskind, L., & Field, P. (1996). *Dealing with an angry public: The mutual gains approach to resolving public disputes*. New York, NY: The Free Press.

**TABLE 1**

**Questions Included in WRBAC Impact Assessment**

1. WRBAC project provided me adequate opportunities to learn about technical aspects of the problem . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
2. WRBAC project provided me adequate opportunities to hear information presented by diverse interests . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
3. WRBAC project provided me adequate opportunities to interact and network with diverse interests involved . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
4. WRBAC project helped me to better understand the viewpoints of others involved in the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
5. WRBAC project offered me adequate opportunities to share my views with others involved in the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
6. WRBAC project improved my ability to communicate my views to others involved in the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
7. WRBAC project improved my relationship with others involved in the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
8. Through the WRBAC project I learned about collaborative ways to manage disputes . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
9. Through the WRBAC project I was treated fairly and with respect . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
10. Through the WRBAC project I improved my skills to participate in a collaborative process . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
11. As a result of the WRBAC project, I helped others to clarify the problem . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
12. As a result of the WRBAC project, more citizens became aware of the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
13. As a result of the WRBAC project, more citizens learned about the issues causing the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
14. As a result of the WRBAC project, more citizens learned about some possible solutions to the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
15. As result of the WRBAC project, more citizens became actively involved in the dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
16. As a result of the WRBAC project, I believe lasting solutions to the dispute are possible . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK
17. Overall, I believe the WRBAC project was a success in terms of educating the public about how to work together to manage a dispute . . . . .	1	2	3	4	5	DK

Code Rating: 5 = very effective; 1 = ineffective; DK = don't know

**TABLE 2**  
**Ranked Mean Scores for Impacts on Volunteers**

Impacts on Volunteers	N	Ranked M
More citizens became aware of the dispute	34	4.39
I was treated fairly and with respect	34	4.38
I heard diverse viewpoints of others	36	4.31
More citizens learned about issues causing the dispute	35	4.31
I interacted and networked with diverse interests	35	4.29
I shared my views with others involved	34	4.21
I learned about technical aspects of the problem	34	4.19
I better understand the viewpoints of others involved	35	4.17
Educated the public about how to work together to manage a dispute	34	4.15
I improved my ability to communicate my views to others involved	33	4.06
More citizens became actively involved in the dispute	34	4.00
More citizens learned about some possible solutions to the dispute	34	3.97
I improved my relationship with others involved in the dispute	30	3.87
I learned about collaborative ways to manage disputes	31	3.81
I helped others to clarify the problem	32	3.50
I improved my skills to participate in a collaborative process	32	3.44
I believe lasting solutions to the dispute are possible	32	2.94
Code Rating: 5 = very effective; 1 = ineffective		

**TABLE 3**  
**Intercorrelations for Impact on Volunteers by "Treated Fairly and with Respect."**

Impacts on Volunteers	N	r
More citizens became aware of the dispute	35	.232
I heard diverse viewpoints of others	35	.413*
More citizens learned about issues causing the dispute	35	.232
I interacted and networked with diverse interests	35	.388*
I shared my views with others involved	35	.684**
I learned about technical aspects of the problem	35	.425*
I better understand the viewpoints of others involved	35	.693**
Educated the public about how to work together to manage a dispute	35	.366*
I improved my ability to communicate my views to others involved	35	.693**
More citizens became actively involved in the dispute	35	.171
More citizens learned about some possible solutions to the dispute	34	.472*
I improved my relationship with others involved in the dispute	35	.624**
I learned about collaborative ways to manage disputes	34	.600**
I helped others to clarify the problem	35	.422*
I improved my skills to participate in a collaborative process	34	.285
I believe lasting solutions to the dispute are possible	35	.114

\*significant at the .05 level

\*\*significant at the .01 level



# Investing in Volunteerism: Recommendations Emerging From the Study of the Impact of Volunteers in Texas State Agencies

By Sarah Jane Rehnborg, Ph.D. and Meredith DeSpain

## INTRODUCTION

Volunteers are indispensable to the functions of Texas State government. Individuals seeking to do good works, to gain professional experience, to repay a debt to society, members of community service organizations and school clubs, participants in national service initiatives and many others regularly give their time, effort and expertise to state agencies. When well-managed, state agencies leverage the work of their volunteers to increase efficiencies and deliver sound government and effective services to the people of Texas, they accomplish things that simply would not happen through tax dollars and state employees alone. Putting the time of volunteers to good use is not only a matter of common sense and common concern, but it is also an issue of good management and adequate fiscal allocations. It does not happen on its own. It does not happen without thoughtful attention. Volunteers may work for no pay, but they are not free!

A modern state requires the skilled orchestration of dozens of institutions and the collective efforts of thousands of permanent employees as well as thousands of volunteers. All too often we lament the inefficiency and lethargy of government agencies. Yet when jobs are done well, when benefits are delivered, when children and seniors are safe and

cared for, when parks are clean and inviting, when services are rendered efficiently and well, and when historic sites are preserved and made available for all to see and appreciate, we rarely acknowledge the efforts behind the countless duties and innumerable tasks that make it so. Likewise, we rarely notice and even less frequently hear about the work of the volunteers who serve state government agencies willingly and effectively every day, 365 days a year.

**Putting the time of volunteers to good use is not only a matter of common sense and common concern, but it is also an issue of good management and adequate fiscal allocations.**

## BACKGROUND

At the request of the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service, the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service at the University of Texas at Austin undertook a qualitative analysis of the work volunteers perform, an

assessment of the management structures governing volunteer involvement, and a review of the data collection practices associated with volunteer programs among state agencies. From the findings—based on responses to a 46-question survey instrument from 20 of the 22 organizations contacted<sup>1</sup>—the following “snapshot” of volunteerism in Texas state government emerged:

- More than 200,000 Texans serve the state through structured service opportunities providing contributions in time, in-kind contributions, and donations valued in excess of \$42.5 million.

---

*Sarah Jane Rehnborg* has an extensive background as a consultant and trainer in volunteerism and community engagement in government agencies. Presently, she leads the research and instructional agenda in the field of volunteerism for the RGK Center for Philanthropy & Community Service at UT-Austin's LBJ School of Public Affairs. Prior to joining the RGK Center, she most recently served as director of community engagement for the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin. Early in her career, she established the Institute for Volunteerism at the Community College of Allegheny County and served as president of the International Association for Volunteer Administration.

- Four organizational models facilitate the delivery of volunteer service—centralized models with dedicated staff at a central office and support at the regional level; decentralized models operating on a project or program specific level; hybrid models representing a combination of these two systems; and institution-specific programs focused on a single service-delivery site. The investigation points to a strong relationship between the centralized organization model with dedicated community resource staff and the more frequent employment of effective management practices. The eight state agencies with the most well-developed volunteer management systems engage 81% of the volunteers identified in this study and account for 97% of the cash contributions raised by volunteers.
- More than 100 different service opportunities and 9 distinct “adopt-a” programs were described. People of all ages volunteer, although seniors are often more engaged in service. RSVP was the most frequently utilized national service program. Less than half of the programs were prepared to engage youth of high school age or younger in service endeavors. Volunteer positions ranged from avocational archeologists and GPS Mapping volunteers to tutors, fund raisers and web developers.
- Placement, not recruitment, is the volunteer managers’ greatest challenge. Other key challenges to greater volunteer involvement include staff availability to supervise and support volunteers and staff understanding of the roles and functions volunteers can perform.
- Texas does not provide a uniform work environment for its volunteers. Fewer than half of the state agencies queried covered their volunteers with liability insurance. Similar inconsistencies were reported on criminal background checks.

**A standardization of these data collection processes across state agencies would be extremely beneficial in order to better understand the scope of volunteer involvement.**

## SUMMARY COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this paper is to present to the reader a summary of the study’s key findings which appear below. Persons interested in the full report can access the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service web site for a PDF version of the study at [http://rgkcenter.utexas.edu/research\\_investing.html](http://rgkcenter.utexas.edu/research_investing.html).

Although volunteers are clearly indispensable to the delivery of government services, the study does identify numerous opportunities to refine current practices and to enhance program management.

### 1. Standardize Data Collection Practices

Volunteers make an incredible contribution to the work of state agencies by delivering needed services, protecting our environment and preserving our cultural heritage. Their contributions represent serious commitments and clearly extend the reach of government and enhance service delivery. Documenting and reporting this contribution is, however, an arduous and challenging task. Recordkeeping systems are idiosyncratic at best. In some cases, volunteer contributions of time are carefully monitored and assignments tracked. In other situations, hours are collected and outcomes enumerated, but the number of persons providing the service are not counted. The variations are as diversified as the programs studied.

A standardization of these data collection processes across state agencies would be extremely beneficial in order to better understand the scope of volunteer involvement. Serious consideration should be given to adopting a uniform system of valuation thereby eliminating the existing confusion. A uniform system would help to clarify the statewide picture of volunteerism and facilitate its promotion as well as its evaluation.

## 2. Provide Liability Coverage for Volunteers

Volunteers provide an alternative delivery system for important state services. The study documented more than 100 distinct jobs volunteers perform within state agencies. It also documents that when liability coverage is available it is provided on an agency-by-agency basis. *Investing in Volunteerism* recommends that the state of Texas provide a blanket policy offering uniform coverage to all residents engaged in formal, organized volunteer service within Texas state government entities. The state should also consider allowing volunteers to drive vehicles in select situations, and provide those volunteers with the same automobile insurance that it provides to salaried state workers. While volunteers may be willing to contribute their expertise to the state, this service should not expose citizens to additional personal risk or expense.

## 3. Expand Volunteer Recognition Programs and Events

Hundreds of thousands of people volunteer to serve state government agencies. Recognizing the contributions of volunteers is critical to volunteer retention. The Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service is charged with orchestrating the annual Governor's Volunteer Leadership Awards. Although this ceremony is meaningful to the persons who receive this commendation, attention should be given to finding additional ways to recognize volunteers. Recognition events should be staged regionally, and designed to recognize far more individuals, as well as groups of people dedicated to causes or representing service organizations.

## 4. Hire Competent

### Qualified Volunteer Managers

Volunteers should be treated well and managed competently. Research demonstrates that volunteers leave positions where their time and expertise is poorly utilized. The data collected in this investigation point clearly to the advantages of centralized systems of volunteer management supported by qualified staff on both a state and regional basis. Model programs should be highlighted, and the experience of those currently managing these centralized programs should be broadly shared with other state agencies and commissions serious about expanding their systems of volunteer involvement and community engagement. Additional research should be undertaken to develop accurate cost-benefit analyses, and to address issues of position classifications and the necessary qualifications of competent volunteer management personnel.

**This study does *not* support the development of a media campaign to encourage more people to volunteer, rather it strongly recommends the attention to infrastructure development to utilize those resources fully and effectively.**

## 5. Support Adequate Infrastructure and Fund Program Development Activities

Adequate infrastructure is critical to the development of any volunteer initiative. When asked about significant challenges facing volunteer managers, funding and staff development were key.

Insufficient funding for support personnel prevents agencies from engaging all the volunteers willing to serve, though it could also be the case that agencies under-allocate their funds to this end. Experienced volunteer managers suggested that more volunteers were generally available to serve than could be assimilated into available openings. Although the sample was limited, this finding is of critical importance. This study does *not* support the development of a media campaign to encourage more people to volunteer, rather it strongly recommends the attention to infrastructure development to utilize those resources fully

and effectively. Similarly, the lack of certainty among middle managers regarding appropriate roles for volunteers thwarts a number of available opportunities. The Commission is encouraged to engage the state agency volunteer managers, along with policy advisors, to design strategies to gain additional support for volunteer program development and staff training opportunities.

## **6. Study and Replicate Best Practices From Nonprofit Organizations**

An analysis of volunteer management practices suggests that programs administered through centralized organizational structures are more effectively managed than those administered through hybrid or decentralized structures, or programs that are institution-specific. Surpassing even the centralized programs in management acuity, however, is Texas CASA, the one community-based agency included in this report. While it would be premature to assume this behavior from all community-based management systems (because only one such agency was analyzed), the finding does merit attention and call for additional research. Does the volunteer management system in place at CASA reflect the organization's years of operation? Do these good management practices translate into high levels of volunteer retention? Are they worthy of careful investigation so that the findings should be shared? What are the ingredients of successful "adoption"? What is the optimal level of staffing support? What publicity is most effective? These programs appear to address current trends in volunteer participation by providing short-term, episodic options for service as well as activities in which groups of people can participate together. Other adoption programs appear to encourage a sense of ownership between the volunteer group and the targeted problem or issue, providing participants with a clear picture of the value and consequences of services rendered. Understanding these and other successful service experiences will facilitate appropriate replication.

## **7. Share Best Practices From State Agency Volunteer Programs with USA Freedom-Corps Initiatives**

Expanded knowledge about all forms of public sector service is particularly significant given the country's current attention to the roles volunteers can perform in response to disaster. A great deal can be gleaned from current practices and existing challenges. These findings can be applied to homeland security and citizen mobilization concerns, and shared with nonprofits to encourage more effective volunteer involvement.

## **8. Encourage State Agencies to Engage More National Services Programs in Volunteer and Community Engagement Initiatives**

The contribution of volunteers can be augmented by participants in national service programs. Although many state agencies commented on the expertise and commitment of volunteers registered with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, the other Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) programs were not as well represented. One agency commented that AmeriCorps had been tried unsuccessfully. To facilitate greater integration of national service members with community volunteers, the Commission might consider seminars targeted specifically to state agency personnel to explain all of the CNCS programs as well as the methods to access these services. Special attention could be given to streamlining the AmeriCorps grants process to facilitate applicants from within state government. Additionally, state agencies could be encouraged to join together to submit joint applications designed to meet collective needs.

## **9. Encourage and Facilitate a Formal Network of State Level Volunteer Resource Personnel**

An experienced group of state level volunteer managers currently meets in Austin on a regular basis to share experiences and learn from each other. A larger and more



formalized version of this group exists in Arkansas. Calling themselves "The Council for Promoting Volunteerism in State Government," these managers of volunteer initiatives meet to "(1) promote volunteerism in State Agencies by acting as a clearinghouse, (2) for sharing information, solving problems, and (3) identifying information, trends and issues."<sup>2</sup>

The Commission should consider serving as focal point for such a group in Texas. In addition, such an organization could be organized to address the unique needs of state agency managers based on their level of experience and the organizational structure of their programs. Such a partnership could leverage the educational opportunities available through the Governor's Volunteer Leadership Conference with a track of programs and workshops designed to meet the specialized needs of this audience.

Likewise, the Commission website could be expanded to provide the information and data needs of volunteer programs in state government. Respondents shared several excellent policy and procedure manuals. With permission from the developers, posting documents such as these would assist other agencies with the creation of comparable documents. In addition, some of the state agencies have prepared materials to facilitate community volunteer involvement. Prepared in both English and Spanish, these documents are a valuable public service. The Commission should explore partnering with these groups and disseminating proven resources more broadly.

## CONCLUSION

In its inception, this report and the aforementioned recommendations ostensibly aim to create awareness and dialogue concerning

the utilization of volunteers by Texas state agencies, and the role of the Texas Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service in sustaining and strengthening public sector volunteerism. But the report has broader applicability by contributing knowledge and research to an area where an exploration of the literature confirms there is much to be done. The data collected from this survey suggest that Texas is home to many innovative state agency volunteer initiatives. In this respect, the report serves as a case study to practitioners and volunteer program personnel in state governments around the

**Active citizen service in the day to day affairs of government encourages thoughtful analysis and supports informed participation.**

United States not only by observing the extent to which volunteers can be deployed in state-run initiatives but perhaps more importantly, by identifying common challenges and model solutions.

Yes, we are a "nation of joiners" and Texas is clearly "a state of joiners." We are a people who want to make a difference, a people who care deeply about the problems and the challenges facing Texas. Yet, in today's complex and bureaucratic environment, joining requires an open door and frequently a guiding light so that people can focus their time, their efforts, their skills and their talents in the places where those gifts can make a difference. While tight budgets may propel the discussion of volunteer engagement, citizen involvement is far more than the response to fiscal or other crises. A democracy is predicated on the active and informed involvement of citizens in the affairs of governance. Knowledgeable voters need to know far more than the names and political slogans of candidates seeking office. It is imperative that they understand the consequences of their political actions and the ramifications of policy decisions. Active citizen service in the day to day affairs of government encourages thoughtful analysis and supports informed participation. Volunteerism as a mechanism to support citizen involvement is, in its most basic analysis, simply good government.

---

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>There are 136 state agencies in Texas. The authors distributed the survey instrument only to those agencies believed to engage volunteers. Of the twenty agencies responding eighteen reported engaging volunteers in more than 30 different programmatic thrusts. One of the agencies surveyed, Texas CASA, is technically a 501 c (3) organization. It was included in this study because it serves the state court system and receives a significant legislative appropriation. The state agencies participating in this study were:

Texas State Government Agencies Participating in this Study.

Texas Department on Aging

Texas Commission on the Arts

Office of the Attorney General

Texas Commission for the Blind

Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Texas Commission on Environmental  
Quality

General Land Office

Texas Department of Health

Texas Historical Commission

Texas Department of Human Services

Texas State Library & Archives Commission

Texas Department of Mental Health and  
Mental Retardation

Parks and Wildlife Department

State Preservation Board

Department of Protective and Regulatory  
Services

Texas School for the Blind & Visually  
Impaired

Texas Youth Commission

Texas Court Appointed Special Advocates

<sup>2</sup>*Spirit of 110 Council's By-laws*, March 24, 2000, p. 1.



# Dollar Value of Volunteer Time: A Review of Five Estimation Methods

Paula M. Anderson, CVA

Mary E. Zimmerer, Ph.D., CPA

Our nation's citizens are rallying to meet the call for community volunteer service in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York. President Bush is seeking a legion of Americans, each of whom will make a personal lifetime commitment to volunteer service of at least 4,000 hours. Civic engagement—volunteerism—he believes, will help build the Homeland Security network of citizens needed to fight terrorism (Grier, 2001).

Even before the national call to service, Americans were volunteering in record numbers. According to a recent survey, in the year 2000, 44 percent or 83.9 million people volunteered their time. These volunteers provided a service equivalent to more than 9 million full-time employees at a value of \$239 billion (Points of Light Foundation, 2002).

The challenge for non-profit and governmental organizations is to select a valuation system to use in financial reports and grant proposals. The challenge for each volunteer service manager should be to provide a realistic estimate of the value of volunteer time. It should be noted that this would provide a minimum value for hours of service, and is very different from calculating the value of tasks completed. Further analysis of the real impact of volunteer service would reveal a much different and almost certainly higher "value added." Since calculation of the value of time is the only efficient method readily

available to most organizations currently, we offer a range of options, and concluded with a recommendation.

Although the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB)—the national board which establishes guidelines for accountants, requires the reporting of the value of most volunteer services on corporate financial statements, it fails to provide guidelines for doing so (Bechtold). A review of the literature substantiates the perception that there are many methods now in use—methods that provide varying estimates of the dollar value of volunteer service.

This paper reviews several common methods of valuation and, using actual volunteer time data from a city-run volunteer program as a basis, provides an analysis of the application of five different valuation methods.

The purpose of the paper is to compare those dollar value methods, and to recommend a method for use in volunteer program management in local governmental and non-profit agencies. The review provides guidance for volunteer management personnel in non-profit and governmental organizations at all levels.

The City of Grand Junction, in Colorado, enlists the assistance of approximately 350 volunteers each year throughout its seven different departments. The population is about 55,000. The City government employs about 430 staff. This growing program recorded

**The challenge for non-profit and governmental organizations is to select a valuation system to use in financial reports and grant proposals.**

---

*Paula M. Anderson, CVA*, has been an active volunteer manager in Grand Junction, Colorado, for nearly 10 years. Most recently, she developed and directed the volunteer program for the City of Grand Junction. She is also secretary of the Western Slope DOVIA.

*Mary E. Zimmerer, Ph.D., CPA*, is a Professor of Business at Mesa State College in Grand Junction, Colorado, where she has taught both management and accounting over the past 14 years. One of her assignments is to coordinate business division interns, many of whom work as volunteers within the community.

that approximately 350 citizens provided 25,721 volunteer hours in 2001—the equivalent of 14.9 full-time positions. The volunteer program is administered through the city’s human resources department. It is the data from this program that serves in this study as the basis for an analysis of dollar value estimation methods.

**THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE TO THE ORGANIZATION**

Putman (Grier, 2001) wrote, “The positive benefits of such civic engagement and social connectedness ... consistently produce, for example, better schools, faster economic development, lower crime and more effective government. Life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital.” Volunteers serve in every facet of public life, and by so doing, supplement the contributions that organizations can make through their own efforts. Services extended to citizens through the city’s volunteer program illustrate some of the contributions that improve the quality of life of city residents. For example, the area Job Corps center, a training center for socially and economically challenged youth, supplied a crew and a paid supervisor, as well as equipment, to paint the interior and exterior of the city’s senior center. The value of this contribution is far more than an average rate of pay times hours of service, and would indicate this contribution provided a long-term improvement to a major recreational facility within the community. In an example such as this, there is a clear opportunity to explore how impact measurement could be applied for a more complete picture of the “value added by volunteers” above the dollar value attached to the time they donated. The results would surely demonstrate that taxpayers get more services for each investment in volunteering.

Organizations seeking grants must attach some dollar value to the work of volunteers, along with reporting the costs of managing the volunteer program. The general practice, therefore, is to take the more simple approach of estimating the dollar value of volunteers’ time. The concern is that organizations account for the value of volunteer hours

when the output of the volunteer service is often much more valuable and meaningful than an hourly wage equivalent.

**DOLLAR VALUE METHODS**

A review of the literature provided specific descriptions of a number of methods used in Grand Junction agencies, and their variations. Because the application of each method provides a different financial result, it is important for managers to select a method that best fits the mission of the organization.

It is clear that, without guidelines, organizations base their calculations on methods that may or may not be in the best interests of the volunteer services program. Financial reports and grant proposals lack a very basic construct of accounting—comparability. Methods reviewed here include Comparable Worth, Minimum Wage, Average Wage, Living Wage, The Independent Sector Formula, and Person/Year Computation.

The following table shows the range of dollar values estimated from the use of various methods.

**TABLE 1.**  
**Estimated Dollar Value of Volunteer Time – Analysis of Five Methods**  
(Based on 25,721 Volunteer Hours of Service to the City of Grand Junction)

Method	Hourly Wage	Est. Value
Average Wage – 10% Benefits	\$14.30	\$367,812
Comparable Worth – 10% Benefits	\$ 7.156	\$184,059
Independent Sector – 12% Benefits	\$16.05	\$412,823
Living Wage – 10% Benefits	\$ 9.05	\$232,776
Minimum Wage – 10% Benefits	\$ 5.67	\$145,840

**Comparable Worth.** The comparable worth method attempts to equate the work of paid employees to the work of volunteers. Actual assigned tasks are matched as closely as possible. It is assumed that the dollar value of the volunteer’s time equates to the dollar value of a paid employee’s time. This method is called the “input cost” approach when used in Aus-

tralia. Hopkins (2000) analyzes the method with a caveat that the approach is based on the concept that volunteer and paid employees are perfect substitutes.

In addition to this questionable assumption, Hopkins states that there are many unknown variables. For example, there is no determination of the level of compensation selected. The level could be an entry-level hourly wage, an average weekly or monthly wage, or some variation of any of these (2000). Behrens (2000) supports the comparable worth method, but calls it the replacement value approach. He states that the method must be measurable to be sound, an illusive goal, at best.

Susan J. Ellis addresses this computational method, giving credit for its origin to G. Neil Karn (Ellis, 1999). She refers to the method in terms of equivalent dollars. It is her premise that it is the volunteer managers' responsibility to compute dollar value estimates fairly. Her recommendation is to find equivalent positions within the organization, and then using the salaries of those positions, begin the computation. Fringe benefits as appropriate to volunteer benefits should be added to the salary figure. She cautions that the calculation should be computed on actual hours served by the salaried personnel, acknowledging that volunteer hours do not include vacation time and other non-productive hours.

The city program studied uses this method in calculating its estimated dollar value of volunteer time, using the proficient level to assign a comparable wage, as opposed to using entry level wage. Actual volunteer assignment descriptions detail the tasks to be completed, and these tasks are matched as closely as possible with paid positions. Fringe benefits are calculated specifically for each position and include Social Security, Medicare, and Workers' Compensation. Data for the comparable worth computation within this study reflects those individualized benefit calculations estimated to average approximately 10 percent.

The city has presented a very conservative calculation of volunteer time value—one that does not recognize the value of volunteer impact. True, volunteer output is rarely measured, but the dollar value of volunteer time can be estimated; therefore, the method is acceptable in that it is a fair measure of estimated dollar value of volunteer time.

**Minimum Wage.** Many organizations use federal minimum hourly wage computations—\$5.15—as a basis for their volunteer time dollar value estimates. This system sometimes also reflects an additional computation for fringe benefits.

Ellis (1999) feels this method is a trap, easy to use but not reflective of volunteer activities. Her position is that most volunteer assignments are above minimum wage levels—maybe even above median wage levels.

One Grand Junction no-pay medical facility uses this method (Foster, 2002); this clinic serves indigent citizens. According to Foster, the minimum wage computation

results in an estimate of the dollar value of volunteer time which closely reflects the economic reality of the clinic and its clientele. Unadjusted federal minimum wage—\$5.15 per hour—is the basis for estimates, and those data are reported in financial information and grant proposals. This method does not, in any way, reflect the value of the per hour expertise of the volunteers.

It would not be meaningful for the City of Grand Junction to use the minimum wage method when estimating the dollar value of volunteer time—the computations would have little relationship to the pay scale of the city or to the value of volunteer time contributions.

**Average Wage.** Average wage calculations can be gleaned from census data and reflect a middle ground to be used for calculations. This calculation is a wide-spread method of estimation of the dollar value of volunteer time (Hopkins, 2000, National Centre for Volunteering, 2002). Ross (1998) supports

**This method does not, in any way, reflect the value of the per hour expertise of the volunteers.**

this method, indicating that Canadians often use this method, based on national average hourly wages published by Statistics Canada.

In computing average wage in this study, the local metropolitan area Bureau of Labor Statistics data were used to determine the mean wage. Third quarter 2001—the most recent information—lists mean wage in the area at \$13. Using the wage plus benefit method most closely applied in this study, the wage calculated at average hourly wage plus 10 percent benefits is \$14.30. This method is patterned after the national Independent Sector Formula, and therefore employs the methodology of the national method with the added advantage of local orientation.

This calculation results in a significantly higher estimated value than does the comparable wage method currently used by the city and because it is localized, may be a viable alternative.

**Living Wage.** New on the horizon is the concept of value based on dollars required to subsist. That value is aligned with the federal poverty line for a family of four—\$17,800 a year or about \$8.23 per hour (Wagner, 2002, Foster, 2002). This concept when applied to the dollar value of volunteer time moves the calculation to a level more reflective of the cost of living.

The living wage valuation method may be a useful approximation if applied to basic skill volunteer tasks. The City of Denver, for example, applies this value to those assuming entry-level positions. (Wagner, 2002). One Grand Junction charity uses a living wage of \$10, a subsistence estimate which organization leaders believe to be appropriate for the area. (Anderson, 2002). Using the more defensible federal poverty line figure of \$8.23 per hour, volunteer managers could develop financial information which could withstand scrutiny from foundations and funding agencies. The living wage concept, however, lacks any relationship to the nature of volunteer service and, unless matched with low skill services, lacks any tie to the value of volunteer hours contributed.

**The living wage valuation method may be a useful approximation if applied to basic skill volunteer tasks.**

**The Independent Sector Formula.** One the most widely used calculation methods for estimating the dollar value of volunteer time applies the average hour earnings of all production and non-supervisory workers on private non-farm payrolls (as released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics). It then increases the rate by 12 percent (estimated fringe benefits) to arrive at the dollar value of volunteer time each year (Independent Sector, 2002). That dollar value for 2002 is \$16.05—significantly above the dollar value computed using local average wage data.

This method is used widely throughout government and non-profit sectors. Working closely with the Independent Sector are the Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National Service. Both of these organizations promote volunteerism and provide community-level support for volunteer centers.

Among the network associates are government organizations such as the Bureau of Land Management, the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the National Parks Service.

Non-profit associates include AmeriCorps and RSVP. The over 500 volunteer centers coordinated through these organizations use the Independent Sector Formula to estimate the dollar value of volunteer time.

**Person/Year Computation.** Canadian scholars have proposed that it is useful to value volunteer time in terms of full-time, year-round positions, or “person-years” which the volunteer hours would equal (Ross, 1998). The computation is completed by dividing total volunteer hours per year by the annual average number of hours worked by a full-time employee. An organization with accurate volunteer service and payroll records can use this formula to estimate person-years of volunteer service. No effort is made to differentiate the type of work, the quality and quantity of work, or the estimated dollar value of the volunteer’s time.

If a typical worker had two weeks of vacation time, ten days of holiday time, and ten days of sick and personal leave, the worker

would be available for 46 weeks (37.5 hours per week) or 1,725 hours annually. Using 2001 city volunteer time data and an annual 1,725 average full-time equivalent employee hours, the contribution of volunteers to the city and its citizens is significant. This method is an accurate, non-financial assessment of volunteer time contributions; it could only be used as a footnote in financial reports if an estimated per year wage were not attached.

**TABLE 2.**

**Full-time Equivalent Volunteer Person-Year Computation:**

---

Hours Contributed / Annual Full-Time Hours = Person-Years Contributed
25,721 hours / 1,725 hours = 14.9 years

---

Volunteers supplemented the city's level of service by contributing nearly 15 person-years—a noteworthy addition to its service efforts.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The purpose of the paper was to identify those dollar value methods most appropriate for use in volunteer program management in local governmental and non-profit agencies. The recommendations provide guidance for volunteer management personnel in non-profit and governmental organizations at all levels.

Accounting regulations and requests for quantifiable data at management levels require that fair and defensible methods be applied. After studying several methods and applying them to volunteer program data, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. There are no established guidelines for calculating the dollar value of volunteer time.
2. Establishing an estimated dollar value of volunteer time ignores the qualitative and quantitative value of long-term gains to the organization and its clientele.
3. Comparable worth estimates give a reasonable level of substitute value if tasks are closely aligned.
4. Minimum wage estimates do not reflect the substitute value of volunteer service and generally understate the contributions of volunteer time.

5. Average wage (using local data) and the Independent Sector Formula (using national data) measure value in the same way. Of the two choices, it is appropriate for local organizations to use local average wage data because they more closely reflect the economics of the area.
6. Person/Year computations provide valid analytical results.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Local governmental and non-profit agencies should adopt a method which most fairly reports the estimated dollar value of volunteer time, recognizing that the reported data does

not include output measures assessing qualitative and quantitative components of volunteer contributions. The two most usable methods for local organizations are comparable worth and average wage. The more accurate of the two is comparable worth; it is also the more complex of the two. Care should be taken to ensure that the cost of compiling comparable worth statistics does not outweigh the benefit of having such information available to management.

**REFERENCES**

Anderson, Paula M. Personal interview June 24, 2002.

Bechtold, Bruce W.; and Worley, Sharon L. [no date]. *Meeting the New FASB Standards*. Retrieved June 10, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.energizeinc.com/art/cfasb/html>

Behrens, Alfredo (Posted September 26, 2000). *Responses to Be Careful What We Wish For! The Cost-Benefit Analysis of Volunteering*. Retrieved June 7, 2002 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.energizeinc.com/hot/ressept00.html>

Bureau of Labor Statistics (Third Quarter 2001). *2001 Metropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates, Grand Junction, Colorado MSA*. Retrieved June 14, 2002, from the World Wide Web: [www.gjep.org](http://www.gjep.org)

- Ellis, Angela. Email message received June 2, 2002. Email address: Angela.Ellis@thecentre.org.uk
- Ellis, Susan J. (1999). "The Dollar Value of Volunteer Time" *Focus on Volunteering KopyKit, 2nd Ed.*, p. 95.
- Foster, Mark. Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Marillac Clinic. Telephone interview, June 11, 2002.
- Grier, Peter. "Bush Call for Volunteerism: Will Citizens Take Heed?" *Christian Science Monitor*, January 31, 2001, Vol. 97 Iss. 47. Retrieved May 29, 2002, from the World Wide Web: [http://ehostvgw2.epnet.com/get\\_xml.asp?booleanTerm+Volunteerism&fuzzyTerm=&resu](http://ehostvgw2.epnet.com/get_xml.asp?booleanTerm+Volunteerism&fuzzyTerm=&resu)
- Hopkins, Sonnie (April 2000). *Researching VET and the Voluntary Sector: Dealing with Ambiguities*. Retrieved June 10, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.education.monash.edu.au/centres/ceet/wp26.htm>
- Independent Sector (2002). "Value of Volunteer Time" Research. Retrieved June 15, 2002, from the World Wide Web: [http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer\\_tim](http://www.independentsector.org/programs/research/volunteer_tim)
- National Centre for Volunteering (2002). "Information Bulletin" Working with Volunteers. Retrieved June 10, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.volunteering.org.uk/economicvalue.htm>
- Points of Light Foundation (February 16, 2002). *Facts and Stats*. Retrieved June 6, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.pointsoflight.org/pressroom/2002facts.html>
- Ross, David (1998). *How to Estimate the Economic Contribution of Volunteer Work*. Retrieved June 10, 2002, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/heritage/ComPartnE/estvole.htm>
- Taylor, Linda. Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Community Hospital, personal interview, June 10, 2002.
- Wagner, Rick (June 12, 2002). "Living wage ordinances can't change economics" *The Business Times of Western Colorado*.
- Wilson, Bradley (February 2001). "In Praise of Volunteerism" *News Photographer*, Vol. 56, Iss. 2, p. 12. Quoting Robert D. Putnam. (1995) "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" *Journal of Democracy*, [no page given]. Retrieved May 29, 2002, from the World Wide Web: [http://ehostvgw2.epnet.com/get\\_xml.asp?booleanTerm=volunteerism&fuzzyTerm=&chitNu](http://ehostvgw2.epnet.com/get_xml.asp?booleanTerm=volunteerism&fuzzyTerm=&chitNu)



## VIVA in Europe A Comparative Study of the Volunteer Investment and Value Audit

Katharine Gaskin M.A. (LSE), M.A., Ph.D.

### INTRODUCTION

We have seen, in recent years, increasing interest in the whole issue of the economics of voluntary work. As volunteering assumes even greater significance in national policy agendas and voluntary organisations respond to increasing pressure for efficiency, transparency and accountability, the values and costs of volunteers are coming under close scrutiny. The research explored these aspects of volunteering in eight large voluntary organisations in the Netherlands, Denmark and England, using the Volunteer Investment and Value Audit. VIVA is an innovative tool in the management of unpaid human resources, which:

- places a financial or 'market' value on unpaid work, producing a total volunteer value or notional 'volunteer wage bill'
- adds up all items of expenditure on volunteers, including staff costs, to produce a total investment figure
- compares the two through the VIVA Ratio, which measures cost-effectiveness in volunteer programmes

Audit results in the UK over the past four years have been used for strategic planning and volunteer programme development, and for public relations, contract negotiations and funding bids. Accepting volunteer value as partnership or match funding is a feature of major grant-making bodies such as the Euro-

pean Social Fund and British Community Fund.

The organisations studied work in the fields of conservation, HIV and AIDS, prisoners and crime prevention, scouting and guiding, emergency telephone advice, protection of the unborn child, a range of welfare services, and social cafés. They have a wide range of structures and volunteer roles, with volunteer numbers varying between 250 and 37,000.

### THE ORGANISATIONS

- The National Trust
- The Terrence Higgins Trust
- The National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (Youth Activity Units)
- Scouting Nederland
- Federatie van SOS Telefonische Hulpdiensten in Nederland
- Vereniging ter Bescherming van het Ongeboren Kind
- Dansk Rode Kors
- KFUM: Danish Young Men's Christian Association (Social Cafés)

### THE RESULTS

The organisations produced VIVA results which captured their major inputs into volunteers and outputs in terms of volunteer value. Each VIVA is valid for its organisation, but caution is needed when assessing the

---

*Katharine Gaskin* is an English freelance researcher and consultant and Research Associate at the Institute for Volunteering Research, London. Formerly deputy director of the Centre for Research in Social Policy, she carries out research, consultancy and training for national voluntary sector support bodies, governments, and British and international non-profits and charities. Katharine has carried out evaluations of several national volunteering programmes funded by the British government, including those for young people and for black and minority ethnic people. She created the VIVA method of valuing volunteer work and the FLEXIVOL wish-list for youth volunteering.

results and invidious comparisons should not be made which appear to judge one organisation as more cost-efficient than another. Rather, the different VIVA ratios reflect a great deal about different types of organisations, the role of volunteers and the ways volunteers are managed.

The VIVA ratio varies over a range between 1.3 and 13.5 (see table). The ratio means that NACRO's Youth Activity Units, for example, gain a return of £1.30 in the value of unpaid work for every £1 they invest in volunteers, while Scouting Nederland's return is £13.50. Most organisations multiply their investment between threefold and eightfold. The average annual volunteer input is between 60 hours and 396 hours, although there may be considerable variation among the time inputs of different types of volunteers within organisations. Average value per volunteer ranges between £339 and £3,621, and average cost per volunteer varies from £57 to £1,420.

When volunteer expenditure is analysed over ten categories, some general patterns emerge, with a few outstanding differences distinguishing variations in organisations and practice. By far the most substantial investment is the payment of salaries of staff with volunteer management responsibilities, representing between one half and three quarters of expenditure in most organisations. Only where a substantial amount of volunteer management is done by other volunteers, such as in the National Trust and Scouting

Nederland, is this percentage significantly lower. Formal management volunteering (on boards and committees) represents a small proportion of total value: usually between one and five per cent. The exception is Scouting, where thousands of volunteers serve on boards in a highly decentralised structure.

The advertising and recruitment budget is a small proportion of overall expenditure, usually one to two per cent, and training is not much higher in most. Spending on volunteer supplies and equipment varies considerably, and there is difficulty in some organisations in separating specific volunteer-related expenditure from general organisational expenses, particularly for equipment and building costs. Travel expenses consume between 1.5 and 7.0 per cent of expenditure, with the exception of the National Trust, where they represent 40 per cent. The nature of the National Trust's work also determines a high expenditure on accommodation and food for volunteers, and the same is true of Scouting Nederland and KFUM, which gives volunteer workers free meals in the cafés. Other volunteer-related expenses and administration costs represent just a fraction of expenditure in most organisations.

#### A MENU OF METHODS

The VIVA approach is defined more by its purpose than by methodological prescription. The study offered a menu of routes to calculating expenditure and value, for individual organisations to "mix and match," with the

**TABLE 1**  
VIVA Ratios and Annual Average Hours,  
Value and Expenditure per Volunteer

	NT	THT	NACRO	SCOUT	SOS	VBOK	RC	KFUM
<b>Ratio</b>	6.0	3.4	1.3	13.5	3.0	3.7	7.9	4.3
<b>Average Hours Per Vol</b>	60	65	153	287	234	75	169	396
<b>Average Value Per Vol</b>	£339	£608	£1,867	£2,940	£3,247	£799	£1,588	£3,621
<b>Average Expend Per Vol</b>	£57	£177	£1,420	£218	£1,083	£214	£194	£848

NT – National Trust THT – Terrence Higgins Trust NACRO – National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders SCOUT – Scouting Nederland SOS – Federatie van SOS Telefonische Hulpdiensten in Nederland VBOK – Vereniging ter Bescherming van het Ongeboren Kind RC – Dansk Rode Kors KFUM – Danish Young Men's Christian Association

aim of producing estimates that are as good as possible depending on records and resources. The organisations used the full range of methods: analysis of organisational records and central accounts, estimation and extrapolation, and the collection of new data

from national and regional volunteer organisers, local volunteer coordinators and volunteers themselves, through surveys, questionnaires, proformas, telephone interviews and visits to local projects.

The calculation of value relies on the classification of volunteer tasks and roles and the allocation of an equivalent hourly pay rate. Organisations used different approaches to determining the "volunteer wage bill" or notional volunteer value, making reference either to the external employment market or their internal pay structures. Approaches to valuing management volunteers and non-regular volunteers are discussed in the full report, as is the question of adding a 20 per cent "employment overhead" to capture costs over and above actual wage totals.

## CONCLUSIONS

In general, the VIVA results show that volunteers are cost-effective. For every pound, gilder or kroner invested in volunteers, generous returns are received in the value of the work done by unpaid staff in the majority of organisations. But the figures underline that there is no "standard" practice in volunteering, volunteer management and deployment, but a sizeable range of possibilities in the way volunteers operate and are provided for. While all volunteers are cost-effective, it is fair to say that some appear more cost-effective than others. This is not to do with the productivity of individuals or the efficiency of the organisation. While we do not yet have a full picture of the factors associated with ratio size, the type of organisation, its purpose and client group, the nature of volunteer roles, structure of the volunteer workforce, management and support systems, may all exert an influence. These are reviewed in the full report.

**We conclude that VIVA is a useful technique for any voluntary organisation or volunteer programme, regardless of nationality.**

We conclude that VIVA is a useful technique for any voluntary organisation or volunteer programme, regardless of nationality. The organisations in the study gained new perspectives from their audits and have used the results for funding and contract negotia-

tions, volunteer information, internal and external accountability, public relations and programme development. VIVA ratios provide targets for existing and new volunteer programmes, with patterns of expenditure offering a guide to likely costs and resource implications when preparing budgets. Results indicate, for example, that financing staff salaries is not in itself sufficient, but that there are significant accompanying costs to having volunteers.

VIVA results can also be used to represent costs and returns to external audiences, particularly funders and policy makers. They in turn can use VIVA to help assess performance and understand the relationship between inputs and outputs, particularly the infrastructural costs of volunteering and measurable returns. However, it is essential that the use of VIVA is accompanied by an understanding of the dynamics which affect potential ratio levels.

To prevent misinterpretation that "cheap" volunteers should replace paid staff or, conversely, that volunteers are an expensive luxury, it is important to place the economic dimension within the framework of a broad volunteer audit. VIVA measures an aspect of volunteering which is quantifiable, has validity and is informative. But indicators of cost-effectiveness should be assessed in the context of the aims of the organisation and of all the values and benefits of having volunteers.

A full social audit of volunteers would convey the value to users and clients of the organisation, including the unique qualities that unpaid workers bring to their work. It would assess their contribution to the wider community. It would capture the value to the organisation in extending its capacity, grounding its work in communities and promoting the organisation through volunteer

### Characteristics associated with size of VIVA ratio

	LOW RATIO	HIGH RATIO
Size of Organisation	Smaller organisation or volunteer project, with perhaps core staffing disproportionate to volunteer numbers	Large organisation which can achieve economies of scale in its use of volunteers
Structure	Professionally led organisation which uses volunteers for specific work	Volunteer-based organisation with minimal professional staffing
Ethos	Volunteers are important but are 'employed' to deliver services in specific ways	Decentralised organisation with high levels of local volunteer group autonomy
Client group	Clients and users have complex problems and high levels of vulnerability	Generally, lower levels of client need and vulnerability
Volunteer roles	Highly structured, challenging and sensitive, requiring expertise and sympathetic understanding	Generally, less sensitive and specialised work
Organisation and Management	Volunteers' work is organised and managed by paid staff	Significant amounts of volunteer self-organisation and management by other volunteers
Training	Specialised training is vital to provide effective services; initial and ongoing training given	Relatively little specialised training required; training provided at little cost to the organisation
Supervision and Support	High levels of supervision essential; support and counselling necessary in potentially distressing work areas	Relatively little supervision and support required
Supplies and Equipment	Essential supplies, equipment and facilities provided free to volunteers	Supplies, equipment and facilities not needed or volunteers pay for them
Methodological Factors	Difficult to separate organisational running costs from volunteer-related costs	Difficult to capture all of the expenditure in a highly devolved organisation

"ambassadors." It would have reference to the cost savings and income generation which can be attributed to voluntary effort. And it would cover the benefits and costs to volunteers themselves, relating the gains of satisfaction, skills development and social citizenship which volunteers experience. A full volunteer audit is the subject of ongoing research.

#### ABOUT THE RESEARCH

The study began in spring 1998 and concluded in February 1999. It was commissioned by Dr. Justin Davis Smith, Director of the Institute for Volunteering Research and carried out by Dr. Katharine Gaskin. The work was assisted by partner organisations in the Netherlands and Denmark: especially Thijs Torreman, Deputy Director of the Dutch National Volunteer Centre (Nederlandse Organisaties Vrijwilligerswerk) and Birthe Behrens, Secretary of the Danish Committee on Voluntary Effort at the Danish National Volunteer Centre (Center for Frivilligt Socialt Arbejde). The study was funded by three English bodies: the Institute

for Volunteering Research, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Charities Aid Foundation.

VIVAs were carried out by eight voluntary organisations following briefing sessions and the issue of standard guidelines. VIVA reports were submitted, together with completed questionnaires, for comparative analysis by the researcher.

The full study, "Valuing Volunteers in Europe: A Comparative Study of Volunteer Investment and Value Audit" was published by the Institute for Volunteer Research and may be downloaded at [www.ivr.org.uk/valuingvolunteers.html](http://www.ivr.org.uk/valuingvolunteers.html).

## Valuing Volunteering

Justin Davis Smith, Ph.D., and Angela Ellis, Ph.D.

### INTRODUCTION

We live in a world in which we need to account for every aspect of our lives. Regulation and accountability have become the watchwords of our time. And volunteering is not immune from this trend. Volunteering is increasingly having to justify its existence and prove that it is worth investing in. It is no longer sufficient to assert that volunteering is "a good thing." Evidence is required that 'volunteering works'; that it can deliver on its promises. This push for greater performance measurement has come from a variety of sources.

On the whole this trend is to be welcomed. It is surely right that volunteering should embrace the demand for greater accountability. And as Susan Ellis (1996) asserted: "No one wants to give their time for something that has no impact." But a word of warning needs sounding. In the rush to develop models for valuing volunteering we need to ensure that we don't, by default, serve to devalue its contribution.

A number of useful models have been developed for measuring the economic value of volunteering. But we should be wary of over-emphasising the monetary value of volunteering. Volunteering should not be reduced to the bottom line on a balance sheet. We should avoid at all costs the crass and damaging equation that volunteering equals money saved.

What we need we will argue is a more complete audit of volunteer performance; one

that embraces the economic dimension, but is not enslaved by it. An audit which takes account of the full range of stakeholders involved in the volunteering contract—the volunteer, the host organisation, the recipient of the service, and the wider community. And an audit which pays attention to the harder to measure, qualitative aspects, as well as the easier to measure economic impacts.

### A BIT OF THEORY

Most impact assessments of volunteering to date have tended to focus on the production of economic and physical capital — the financial saving to the organisation and the delivery of identifiable or "physical" outputs arising out of the volunteer's efforts.

In many ways these are the easy bits to measure, important though they are to the overall picture. There are other less obvious measures which also need to be considered in drawing up a complete picture of the impact volunteering makes.

Wilson (1997) has argued that in addition to generating economic and physical capital, volunteering is:

- Productive work that requires human capital;
- Collective behaviour that requires social capital;
- And ethically guided work that requires cultural capital.

A total volunteering audit needs to take into account each of these different forms of capital.

---

*Justin Davis Smith, Ph.D.* is Director of the Institute for Volunteering Research in the UK, a specialist research and consultancy agency on volunteering. His extensive research includes two national surveys of volunteering in the UK, a 10-nation European study of volunteering, and commissions for the UK government and the United Nations. He is editor of the journal, *Voluntary Action*, and co-founder of the Voluntary Action History Society.

*Angela Ellis, Ph.D.* is a Research Officer at the Institute for Volunteering Research. Her current work includes a study of volunteering and social exclusion and evaluations of the UK government's Millennium Volunteers programme and Active Citizens in Schools pilot for young people.

## **Economic Capital**

Assessing the economic value of volunteering can be done in a variety of ways.

The Institute for Volunteering Research has estimated the economic value of volunteering to the UK national economy using the simple formula of number of volunteers multiplied by the average hours volunteered per week multiplied, by the average hourly wage rate, to come up with a figure of £40 billion—making the volunteering industry one of the largest contributors to the Gross Domestic Product.

However, such a calculation is of rather limited value. It tells us how much the country would have to pay if all volunteers were paid. But tells us nothing about the investment costs required by an organisation to generate this economic value—volunteering is not cost free.

The Volunteer Investment and Value Audit (VIVA) has been developed in the UK (Gaskin, 1997, 1999a, 199b) to enable us to calculate the economic return for every pound or dollar invested by an organisation in its volunteering programme. The VIVA ratio places the volunteer's wage equivalent against the total investment costs to the organisation.

The market value of volunteers' work can be calculated by breaking down a volunteer's workload into individual tasks, which can then be costed against equivalent local wage rates. Alternatively, the market value can be calculated taking volunteer job descriptions/titles and finding the wage rates for equivalent paid jobs in the local market.

Investment or expenditure costs include paid support staff (the volunteering manager), building rent, training courses (for manager and volunteers), recruitment costs, expenses and insurance.

In a comparative study between the Netherlands, Denmark and England VIVA ratios were found to vary between 1:2 and 1:13.5 (Gaskin, 1999a). In other words, for every pound that was invested in volunteers a notional return of between £2 and £13.50 was generated.

Volunteering will also have a more profound economic value that is much harder to

measure. The saving to the nation by a reduction in crime brought about by volunteering neighbourhood watch schemes; or the savings in unemployment benefit caused by the increased employability resulting from volunteering.

Despite the usefulness of such equations we need to move beyond the economic if we are to fully represent the value of volunteering and not to fall into the trap of presenting volunteering as a great way for organisations and governments to save money. Volunteering has a value which transcends economics and it is to try and get at these less easy to quantify measures that we now turn.

## **Physical Capital**

On the surface physical capital is also quite straightforward to measure. Physical capital refers to the concrete product or output produced by volunteer effort—for example the number of trees planted or the number of wells dug. To measure the contribution of volunteers in these terms merely requires the organisation to count the physical outputs of their projects, and most organisations will already keep such data as part of funding requirements.

However, the issue is not so simple. To complicate matters there is a need to consider the quality of the outputs, alongside mere numbers. Fifty trees planted which fall down in the first strong winds is worth less than ten trees which survive the storm. Somehow a quality measure needs to be introduced into the equation.

## **Human Capital**

So far we have been focusing on the value of volunteering to organisations or to the nation at large—in terms of economic and physical capital generated. Human capital turns our attention more to the volunteers themselves, as it relates to the acquisition of skills and personal development resulting from volunteering.

Studies have shown a link between volunteering and employability—both in terms of hard factors such as new skills learned, and soft factors such as increased confidence. Studies suggest that volunteering has a role to



play in countering social exclusion and helping to re-integrate marginalised groups such as the unemployed and those with disabilities into mainstream society.

But measuring this impact can be difficult. We can count the number of training courses a volunteer has attended, but we need to know what impact this has had on their personal development. Measuring such things as growth in self-confidence is difficult, not least because of the issue of causality. It is hard to disentangle whether it is the volunteering which has caused the increased confidence or whether it is the fact that confident people are more likely to volunteer.

### **Social Capital**

While physical capital is concerned with inanimate objects and human capital is concerned with individuals, social capital is about relationships and building bonds of trust between people.

Since Coleman and Bourdieu first used the concept of social capital in the 1980s it has found ever-increasing popularity, especially over the past decade following the work of Robert Putnam. Putnam (1993, 2000) defines social capital as networks, norms and trust which enable and enhance co-operation for mutual benefit.

For Putnam social capital is a component of civic virtue. It is accumulated through the contributions that people make to community life, for example, through volunteering. Through enhancing norms of reciprocity social capital increases with use. As such it is rather different to other forms of capital. Spending social capital actually increases your savings account!

However, social capital is not always positive. In some instances the creation of strong community ties can lead to certain groups in society being excluded. A distinction has been drawn between bonding and bridging social capital to emphasise the point that not all social capital is outward looking.

Social capital is, of course, broader than volunteering. It is also particularly difficult to measure. There have been a few attempts to develop tools for measurement, most based on the compilation of a range of indicators.

For example, indicators of social capital include voting behaviour, trust in government, membership of voluntary organisations and volunteering.

### **Cultural Capital**

Finally, when thinking about a total audit of volunteering, an assessment of cultural capital must also be undertaken. Cultural capital refers to assets such as a shared sense of cultural and religious identity, including language and heritage. Volunteering can play a valuable role in helping communities to develop a closer identity. Although as with bonding social capital there is a danger that some forms of cultural capital can become exclusionary and discriminative.

### **Applying the Theory**

Having looked at the different components of a total volunteering audit, at the need to measure the contribution of volunteering to the development of economic, physical, social, human, and cultural capital, we now turn to the all-important question of how to implement such an assessment. The Institute has just received funding from the Global Services Institute in the States to develop a Volunteer Audit Tool Kit to enable organisations to effectively measure the contribution volunteers are making.

It is envisaged that the Total Audit will have a number of different elements to it:

First, we would propose a questionnaire to a sample of volunteers involved with an organisation asking about the impact of the experience on their lives: in terms of such things as enhanced social networks; skills gained; health benefits; and increased confidence. This questionnaire could be supplemented by a series of focus groups or one-to-one interviews with volunteers to tease out emerging issues.

Second, the total audit should consist of a different questionnaire to key staff within the organisation to assess the impact of the volunteers on the work of the group. The questionnaire would seek evidence of the economic and physical capital generated by the volunteers.

A survey is probably not the best way of

asking recipients what impact volunteers have had on their lives; and better results will be gained from one-to-one interviews. Particular care will need to be taken when interviewing vulnerable clients, such as people with learning difficulties or mental health problems.

Perhaps the most difficult element of the audit, however, will be assessing the impact on the broader community. Some of the measures will be of a macro nature—reduced crime levels resulting from a volunteer-inspired crime prevention programme; improved health brought about by a major volunteer-led inoculation programme. Others will be of a more micro level—a new community centre being set up; an inner-city wasteland being reclaimed as a public green space. It will clearly not be possible to ask all residents what impact volunteering has had on their lives and in some instances one may need to rely on the perceptions of leading community leaders as a proxy for public opinion.

One innovative method of capturing the broader public impact is to engage in so-called participatory appraisals, whereby assessment becomes the responsibility of the community itself. Participation in the appraisal of a programme helps to engender a greater sense of ownership, and may help with the long-term sustainability of the project.

In all of this the key question is getting the indicators right. The number of possible indicators in assessing the impact of volunteering is virtually infinite. The trick is to choose a range of indicators which are robust enough to stand up to academic scrutiny, but not so complicated that they are impossible to implement.

## CONCLUSION

Volunteering is having to move with the times. It is no longer sufficient simply to assert that volunteering is a good thing. Increasingly funders, regulators, managers (and volunteers themselves) are demanding to know what impact volunteering is having. To date most attempts at measurement have focused on the economic impact—what it would cost the organisation, or the country, if all volunteers were paid. But such indicators

give a very partial picture of the total value of volunteering and, used in isolation, are potentially damaging in that they serve to reinforce the notion that volunteering is all about saving money.

In this paper we have argued that other, more sophisticated measures are required. Such a total audit would need to focus on the physical and human capital produced and the social and cultural capital generated. Developing the tools to carry out such an audit will not be easy. But it will be time and money well spent if it enables us to speak with confidence for the first time about the true value of volunteering.

---

## REFERENCES:

- Ellis, S. (1996). *From the top down: The executive role in volunteer program success*, Philadelphia: Energize
- Gaskin, K. (1997). "Assessing the economic value and cost of volunteers" in Pharaoh, C. (ed) *Dimensions of the voluntary sector 1997*, Charities Aid Foundation: London.
- Gaskin, K. (1999a). *VIVA in Europe: A comparative study of the Volunteer Investment and Value Audit*, Institute for Volunteering Research.
- Gaskin, K. (1999b). Valuing volunteers in Europe: a comparative study of the Volunteer Investment and Value Audit, *Voluntary Action* 2(1) pp.35-49.
- Putnam, R. (1993). *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*, Princeton University Press: Princeton, New Jersey.
- Putnam, R. (2000). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital—An interview with Robert Putnam, *Journal of democracy* 6(1)—[http://muse.jhu.edu/demo/journal\\_of\\_democracy/v006/putnam.html](http://muse.jhu.edu/demo/journal_of_democracy/v006/putnam.html) – accessed on 6/7/00
- Wilson, J. (1997). "Who Cares? Towards an integrated theory of volunteer work" *American Sociological Review* Vol 62(5)

## Brookfield Zoo Volunteer Opinion Survey Design and Administration

Ms. Regi Mezydlo

### ADMINISTRATION

Brookfield Zoo's Docent Program, managed by the Education Department, was established in 1977. The docent corps numbers approximately 250. In recent years, several major programmatic changes had been made to the docent program, including the transition of paid staff reaching classes rather than docents, some tightening of volunteer policies and procedures, the merging of volunteers other than docents into the Education Department, the changing of volunteer name badges to indicate "volunteer" rather than docent on them, and the implementation of an earned membership program. In late 1998, the time seemed right to survey our docents to assess their satisfaction levels with various aspects of the zoo's Docent Program.

Volunteer management staff, drawing on previous experience in the human resources field, designed a survey instrument concentrated on several constructs: motivation, retention, recognition, cooperation, communications, staff relations, docent activities/ assignments, and docent evaluation. With the assistance of the zoo's Communications Research Department, the questions and rating system were finalized.

The Communications Research Department staff agreed to tabulate and analyze the results. A cover letter, survey and return postage-paid envelope were sent to all docents. The survey was returned directly to the Communications Research Department.

**The survey received an astounding 76 percent response rate.**

This procedure ensured confidentiality for the participants' answers.

The survey received an astounding 76 percent response rate.

A final analytical survey report was prepared by Communications Research staff members Andrej A. Birjulin, Ph.D., Todd J. Gieseke, and Carol D. Saunders, Ph.D. The results of the survey showed us that, overall, the docents were highly satisfied with our Docent Program. Volunteer management staff held general meetings in March 2000 that were open to all docents, to explain all the results of the survey. We were able to implement some programmatic changes immediately, such as

assigning the docents to their favorite exhibits, and including more bio-facts in exhibit activities. In other cases, it was necessary to explain why certain tasks, such as teaching classes or holding a "pot-luck" volunteer picnic, were no longer feasible.

The docents appreciated our efforts to talk with them about the survey and actually implement some of their suggested changes. Our Docent Opinion Survey yielded valuable information that will serve us well in future strategic planning initiatives.

Since we had such a good response with our Docent Opinion Survey, we decided to use the same basic survey with all of our other volunteers. Knowing that our original survey was scientifically valid and reliable, we simply adapted some of the questions to reflect the operations of the other volunteer

---

*Ms. Regi Mezydlo* is the Volunteer Manager at Chicago's Brookfield Zoo, where she has led 600 active volunteers since 1994. She has been a workshop presenter at several national volunteer management conferences. Prior to joining the zoo, Ms. Mezydlo spent 15 years in the organizational development field in the healthcare industry. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Voice Performance from DePaul University (Chicago) and completed her graduate work in Communication & Theatre at the University of Illinois-Chicago where she received a Teaching Assistantship.

programs. Using the same cover letter with appropriate word changes, we sent out the opinion survey to 200 volunteers in June 2001. Again, our return rate was a very high 64 percent. However, at this time, Dr. Birjurlin had left the zoo and the Communications Research Department simply did not have the time to analyze this survey in detail. So we turned to one of our docents, Susan Walter, who has a background in management consulting. She tabulated the raw percentages for each question, and from these tabulations, we were quickly able to analyze patterns. The results of this survey also showed that, overall, our volunteers were highly satisfied with the volunteer program.

### ONE STEP AT A TIME

1. If you do not have a communication research professional on staff, ask your Human Resources Department if any of their staff have expertise in organizational development and would be willing and able to assist you with this project. HR professionals very often design and administer employee opinion surveys. If not, find out if any of your volunteers or board members have expertise in designing and/or in analyzing surveys. Or ask them if they know anyone who does. Once you have your "pro bono" expert on board, involve them every step of the way.
2. Make the time to design the survey.
3. What do you want to know/measure?
4. Brainstorm questions individually, with staff who work with volunteers, with a volunteer focus group, with your board, with clients, etc.
5. Either individually or with a team (depending on your preferred style), do the following:
  - Review each question. Do you really need to know this information?
  - Choose questions for the survey.
  - Group the questions by interest area, e.g., motivation, recognition, training, "hot issues," etc.
  - Rewrite all questions so they are worded consistently
  - Write the survey draft
6. Let others review the survey—your manager, fellow staff, selected volunteers, etc.
7. Incorporate suggestions and rewrite another draft.
8. Let the people who reviewed the first draft also review this draft.
9. Repeat three previous steps until the survey is just right!
10. Write the final copy of the survey.
11. Proofread, proofread, proofread. Ensure the survey is visually pleasing, i.e., all the questions are formatted consistently. If your volunteer corps is older (over 40) use a font that everyone can easily read.
12. Have the survey professionally printed rather than run off the copy machine. There is probably a printer in your community willing to donate this in-kind service.
13. Decide who will see the surveys when they are returned. The fewer people, the better. People are more likely to be open with their opinions if they know their confidentiality is ensured.
14. Decide who will tabulate the results.
15. Write your cover letter with clear instructions on how the survey should be completed. Include a deadline date. Include a self-addressed, self-stamped envelope addressed to the person who will tabulate the results. Make sure the envelope is large enough to accommodate the survey.
16. The easiest way to analyze results is with raw percentages. The majority of us can easily see patterns and know when 90 percent of our volunteers like or dislike a certain thing.
17. Tabulate results and review answers.
18. Do not take any negative answers personally.
19. Ask yourself if you will make any changes to your volunteer program based on these results? If so, what will you change and how will you change them?
20. Hold a meeting with your volunteers to discuss results and changes.

Now you know, in a true sense, how satisfied your volunteers really are volunteering for your organization.

---

## RESOURCES

- Diamond, J. (1999). *Practical evaluation guide: Tools for museums and other informal educational settings*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
- Patton, M.Q. (1997). *Utilization-focused evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Smith, M.J. (1988). *Contemporary communication research methods*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Sudman, S., & Bradburn, N.M. (1991). *Asking Questions: A practical guide to questionnaire design*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- American Evaluation Association —  
[www.eval.org](http://www.eval.org)
- Visitor Studies Association —  
[www.visitorstudies.org](http://www.visitorstudies.org)

# 2001 VOLUNTEER OPINION SURVEY

This survey will give us information about your thoughts and opinions on your participation as a Brookfield Zoo Volunteer. It will take you approximately 30-45 minutes to complete. Please be sure to read each question and answer it honestly. Please feel free to write in any comments you have for each section as well.

Once the results of this survey are compiled, the Education Department will review the information and make appropriate changes where and when we can. The results of this survey will also help us determine how best to communicate future changes to the volunteer corps.

We sincerely appreciate your taking the time to complete the survey. **YOUR OPINION COUNTS!!**

## SECTION I

Below are a number of reasons that some people gave for **ORIGINALLY BECOMING** a volunteer. Please rate the extent to which each reason **WAS** important to you by circling the number that best represents your response.

I **BECAME** a volunteer because:

	A Very Important Reason for Me			Not An Important Reason for Me	
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I wanted a chance to be around animals.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I had a passion for sharing with others the importance of conservation.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I wanted to meet new people/make new friends.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I wanted to spend time outdoors.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I believed in Brookfield Zoo's mission.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I wanted to volunteer close to home.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I needed to fill up my spare time.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I thought about switching careers to animal care/conservation.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I wanted to learn new things and develop professionally/personally.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I wanted to educate others about animals, their habits, and their habitats.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Other _____	1	2	3	4	5

## SECTION II

Below are some reasons given for **REMAINING** in the Volunteer Program. Please rate the extent to which each reason is important to you **NOW** by circling the number that best represents your response.

I **REMAIN** a volunteer because:

	A Very Important Reason for Me			Not An Important Reason for Me	
	1	2	3	4	5
1. I like being around the animals.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have a passion for sharing with others the importance of conservation.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I enjoy socializing with the friends I've made here and continue to make.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I like being outdoors.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I believe in Brookfield Zoo's mission.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I like volunteering close to home .	1	2	3	4	5
7. Volunteering here fills my spare time.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I plan to switch careers and need the experience I'm gaining here.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I continue to learn new things and develop professionally/personally.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I want to teach others about animals, their habits, and their habitats.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Other _____	1	2	3	4	5



**Section III**

Below are about the zoo's mission. For each statement, rate the extent to which you agree by circling the number that best represents your response.

I REMAIN a volunteer because:

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I feel that I contribute to the zoo's mission.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. I'm not sure if I really understand the zoo's mission.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I'm excited about Brookfield Zoo's transition to a conservation center.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I'm not sure if I know what a conservation center is.	1	2	3	4	5	

Comments:

**SECTION IV**

Below are statements regarding relations between volunteers. For each statement, rate the extent to which you agree by circling the number that best represents your response.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree	
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I feel comfortable interacting with docents and with volunteers in other programs.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. Docents and volunteers cooperate with each other	1	2	3	4	5	
3. Docents and volunteers don't show up for their assignments	1	2	3	4	5	
4. Docents and Volunteers are "cliquish" with other friends and are not particularly friendly to new volunteers or volunteers from other programs.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. Docents and volunteers speak inappropriately about other docents and volunteers.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. Docents and volunteers speak inappropriately about zoo staff.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. Docents and volunteers speak inappropriately about overall zoo management.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. Docents and volunteers would rather socialize with each other instead of completing their assignments.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. Some docents and volunteers seem "burned out"; have an overall negative attitude; "whine" too often.	1	2	3	4	5	

Comments:

**SECTION V**

Below are a number of statements about communications. For each statement, please rate the extent to which you agree by circling the number that best represents your response.

	Always		Sometimes		Never	
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. I feel the 9:30 Meeting is the best way to communicate important information.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. I feel mailing information to my home is the best way to communicate important information.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. I feel putting information in my folder is the best way to communicate important information.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. I read the monthly Docent Liaison Board Meeting minutes posted on the bulletin board.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. When I miss a duty day, I read the 9:30 Meeting notes from previous weeks to catch up on information.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. I read everything on the bulletin boards in the Volunteer Office.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. I read The Bridge thoroughly every week.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. I read the volunteer newsletter, Zooscape News, thoroughly.	1	2	3	4	5	
9. I refer to my Volunteer Handbook when I have a question about policies or procedures.	1	2	3	4	5	

Comments:

**SECTION VI**

Below are several suggestions that may help improve interpersonal communications between volunteers and staff. For each statement, please rate the extent to which you agree circling the number that best represents your response.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree
1. I feel a Volunteer Advisory Council Board that includes all volunteers, not just docents, should be established.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Education staff other than Regi, Dana, Linda, or Carol should conduct 9:30 Meetings on a more frequent basis.	1	2	3	4	5
3. More Education staff should work on the weekends.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Implement quarterly meetings with Keith Winsten, Curator of Education and/or other members of the Education Department.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Implement annual meeting with Dr. Rabb and zoo senior management staf.	1	2	3	4	5
6. There is sufficient contact between volunteer management staff (Regi, Linda, Carol) and volunteers.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

**SECTION VII**

We would like to know which tasks and activities are your favorites. If a task or activity does not apply to you, simply leave the response blank.

Please rate the extent to which you agree with each statement by circling the number that best represents your response.

THE FIRST THREE QUESTIONS ARE FOR GUEST GUIDES ONLY.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree
1. I really enjoy being stationed in the South Gazebo.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I really enjoy being stationed in the North Gazebo.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I really enjoy roaming through the zoo.	1	2	3	4	5

THE NEXT SIX QUESTIONS ARE FOR CHILDREN'S ZOO VOLUNTEERS ONLY.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree
1. I really enjoy assisting in the Pet & Learn Circle.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I really enjoy handling animals for guest contact.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I really enjoy volunteering in the Walk-In Farmyard.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I really enjoy presenting Animal Encounters talks.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I really enjoy narrating cow and goat-milking demonstrations.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I really enjoy volunteering during Animals in Actions shows.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

THESE QUESTIONS ARE FOR ANYONE WHO VOLUNTEERS FOR SPECIAL EVENTS

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree
1. When I volunteer for a special event, I feel sufficiently oriented to my responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I really enjoy craft activities.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I really enjoy volunteering on National Pig Day.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I really enjoy volunteering for previews and events related to the opening of new exhibits.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I really enjoy volunteering for Breakfast with Bunny.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I really enjoy volunteering for Affie's Birthday.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I really enjoy volunteering for the Rhythm & Roots Festivals.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I really enjoy volunteering for Teddy Bear Picnic	1	2	3	4	5

9. I really enjoy volunteering for Fiesta Para Todos.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I really enjoy volunteering for Zoo Run Run.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I really enjoy volunteering for Boo! at the Zoo.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I really enjoy volunteering for Holiday Magic.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I really enjoy volunteering for Breakfast/Lunch with Santa during Holiday Magic.	1	2	3	4	5

THESE QUESTIONS ARE FOR ANYONE WHO VOLUNTEERS IN THE OFFICE

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree
1. I really enjoy volunteering in the offices.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I really enjoy affixing labels and stuffing envelopes.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I really enjoy doing data entry and computer work.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I really enjoy collating and putting materials together.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I really enjoy stuffing membership bags.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION VIII

Below are several statements related to administrative tasks we handle for you in the Volunteer Office. For each statement, please rate the extent to which you agree by circling the number that best represents your response. If a statement does not apply, leave it blank.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree
1. My name and address changes are handled quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
2. My name and address changes are handled accurately.	1	2	3	4	5
3. My attendance/absence requests are handled accurately.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION IX

Below are a number of ways the zoo recognizes docents and volunteers, For each statement, please rate the extent to which you agree by circling the number that best represents your response.

	Strongly Agree		Agree		Strongly Disagree
1. The annual volunteer appreciation dinner is an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5
2. The annual volunteer picnic is an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5
3. The staff saying "thank you" is an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5
4. A thank-you note from staff is an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Gift shop discounts are an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Restaurant discounts are an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5
7. 10 cents refills on soft drinks/coffee are an excellent way to recognize us.		1	2	3	4 5
8. Receiving a T-shirt, water bottle, or other gift when we've worked a special event is an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5
9. The service award pins are an excellent way to recognize us.	1	2	3	4	5

Comments:

**SECTION XI**

Below are several statements about your involvement in our Volunteer Program. For each statement, please rate the extent to which you agree with each belief by circling the number that best represents your response.

	Strongly Agree	2	Agree	4	Strongly Disagree
1. I am proud to say I volunteer at Brookfield Zoo.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I continue to have opportunities to grow personally and professionally.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I plan to remain in the Volunteer Program at least two more years.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I'm thinking about leaving the Volunteer Program within the next two years.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I'm definitely leaving the Volunteer Program within the next two years.	1	2	3	4	5

**NOW, HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO LET US KNOW WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND. USE THIS PAGE FOR ANY OTHER THOUGHTS, COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, OR SUGGESTIONS.**

**Leave one full blank page here**

---

**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

For each question, please check the answer that best applies to you. Thanks!

1. Are you a weekday or weekend volunteer?

- weekend
- weekday
- both weekend and weekday

2. How long have you been a volunteer?

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 15-20 years
- 20+ years

3. What is your age bracket?

- 21-30 years old
- 31-40 years old
- 41-50 years old
- 51-60 years old
- 61-70 years old
- 71+ years old

4. I consider my racial group to be:

- African-American
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- Caucasian
- Hispanic
- Native American
- Multi-racial
- Other

5. How do you usually get to the zoo?

- I drive alone
- I carpool with other volunteers/staff
- I walk
- I ride my bike
- I use public transportation

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY. PLEASE RETURN IT IN THE ENCLOSED SELF-ADDRESSED ENVELOPE NO LATER THAN FEBRUARY 15, 2001.**

© 2002 Chicago Zoological Society  
Use only with written permission

# GUIDELINES

## FOR SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

### Content

*The Journal of Volunteer Administration* seeks to publish original manuscripts that provide for an exchange of ideas and sharing of knowledge and insights about volunteerism and volunteer management and administration. Manuscripts may focus on volunteering in any setting, in North America and internationally.

*The Journal* is a refereed publication of the International Association for Volunteer Administration (AVA) and expands and updates the research and knowledge base for professional volunteer administrators and other not-for-profit managers to improve their effectiveness. In addition, *The Journal* serves as a forum for emerging and contemporary issues affecting volunteerism and volunteer administration. *The Journal* is written, peer-reviewed, edited, and published by professional volunteer administrators, researchers, and consultants, sharing with their colleagues successful applications, original and applied research findings, scholarly opinions, educational resources, and challenges on issues of critical importance to volunteerism and the field of volunteer administration.

Manuscripts may be submitted at any time during the year. *The Journal* is published quarterly. Authors submitting manuscripts to *The Journal* must follow the guidelines in this document.

Submissions that deviate from these guidelines will be returned to the corresponding authors for changes. Manuscripts must be submitted for one of five focus areas:

**Feature Article** (reviewed by three reviewers): Discusses applied concepts and research findings of particular interest and significance to volunteerism and volunteer administration both in North America and worldwide. Connects theory to practice and emphasizes implications for the profession. (Maximum length: 2000-3500 words, plus abstract, tables, and graphics.)

**Research in Brief** (reviewed by three reviewers): Summarizes basic and applied original research results of importance to volunteer administrators. (Maximum length: 1000-2000 words, plus abstract, tables, and graphics.)

**Ideas That Work** (reviewed by one reviewer): Describes novel ideas, training formats, innovative programs, and new methods of interest to volunteer administrators. (Maximum length: 1,500 words plus abstract, tables, and graphics.)

**Tools of the Trade** (reviewed by the editor): Reports on specific materials, books, and technologies useful to volunteer administrators. (Maximum length: 1,000 words plus abstract, tables, and graphics.)

**Commentary** (reviewed by the editor): Offers a challenge or presents a thought-provoking opinion on an issue of concern to volunteer administrators. Initiates discussion or debate by responding to a previously published *The Journal* article. (Maximum length: 1,500 words plus abstract.)

### Manuscript Style and Preparation

1. Submit manuscripts as Microsoft Word 5.0 for Windows or Word Perfect 5.2 or higher, 12-point type, Times New Roman font, double-spaced, 1.5 margins all round. May be submitted either by floppy disc (labeled with the author(s) names), or via e-mail.
2. All manuscripts must have a running head, which is an abbreviated title that is printed at the top of the pages of a published article to identify the article for readers. The head should be a maximum of 50 character, counting letters, punctuation, and spaces between words.
3. Manuscripts must have all identifying information removed. Include all author's name/s, affiliation/s, address/es, phone number/s and e-mail address/es on a separate cover page that will be removed for the review process.
4. Include a short (3-4 sentence) biography of each author.
5. Include an abstract of 150 words or less.

6. Double space everything: text, abstract, end notes, author's notes/acknowledgments, references, block quotations, appendices, AND tables.
7. References should be italicized, not underlined.
8. Left-justify everything with a ragged right-hand margin (no full justification).
9. Begin each required section on a separate page, and in this sequence: title page, abstract, text, appendix(es), notes, references, table/s, figure/s.
10. End notes are used for discursive purposes only. They should be grouped on a separate page. There are no footnotes.
11. All in-text citations are included in the reference list; all references have in-text citations.
12. Figures are camera ready; they appear exactly as they should in *The Journal*, except for sizing. Do not send glossies.
13. In all other aspects, follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA)* (Fifth Edition, 2001).
14. *The Journal* will not accept submissions that are under consideration by another publisher.
15. Authors are advised to use inclusive language. Use plural pronouns or "s/he."
16. Written, signed permission has been obtained for (a) all quotations from copyrighted publications and (b) all tables or figures taken from other sources. Permission is required to reprint:
  - More than 300 words from a single journal article.
  - More than 500 words from a full-length scholarly book.
  - Anything, even a few words or a phrase, quoted directly from newspaper article, magazine, poem or song.
  - Anything quoted directly from a news broadcast.
  - Any table or figure reproduced or adapted from another work.

ANY direct quote requires a page reference or a reference to the name of the person and the date of the interview. Any quotes without permissions must be paraphrased or deleted if the manuscript is accepted for publication. Please check with the *The Journal* editor for more information.

**Please send manuscripts to:** Association for Volunteer Administration, P.O. Box 32092, Richmond, VA 23294 USA, Attn: Journal Editor. FAX: 804-346-3318 [avaintl@mindspring.com](mailto:avaintl@mindspring.com)

### Review Process

Depending on the type, manuscripts will be reviewed by editor and/or editorial reviewers within six weeks of receipt. For Feature Articles, Research in Brief, and Tools of the Trade, the author(s) name(s) is/are removed for the review process. The author will be notified in writing of the outcome of the review process. *The Journal* retains the right to edit all manuscripts for mechanics and consistency.

If a manuscript is returned for major revisions and the author(s) rewrite(s) the manuscript, the second submission will be entered into the regular review process as a new manuscript.

Authors may be asked to submit a hard copy of the final version of an accepted article. It may be mailed or faxed, double-spaced, 1.5 margins all round, printed on one side of the paper only.

All authors of published manuscripts receive two complimentary issues of the *The Journal* in which his/her articles appeared.

Copyright for all published articles is retained by the Association for Volunteer Administration and should be referenced when appropriate. No portion of the contents may be reproduced in any form, including posting to the World Wide Web, without the prior written permission of the Editor, except for brief quotations (not to exceed 500 words) in a review of professional work. Credit must be given to *The Journal of Volunteer Administration*.



# A GUIDE TO INVESTING IN VOLUNTEER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

**NOW AVAILABLE!**

Developed for foundations, corporate grant makers, and managers of employee volunteer programs, this publication provides practical suggestions and examples from over 50 foundation, nonprofit, government, and business leaders on how to support effective volunteering.

## LEARN HOW TO:

- Better leverage your charitable contributions and community involvement
- Increase the service capacity of the nonprofit sector
- Build employee morale and community goodwill

## YOU'LL FIND:

- "The case" for volunteer resources management
- Checklists of best practices and strategies to support volunteerism and volunteer resources management
- Tools for grant makers and grant seekers to assess an organization's capacity to engage volunteers effectively
- Examples of how corporations and foundations support volunteerism by investing in volunteer resources management
- A list of internet resources and other references

## TO DOWNLOAD A FREE COPY, PLEASE GO TO:

UPS [www.community.ups.com](http://www.community.ups.com)

Association for Volunteer Administration [www.AVAintl.org](http://www.AVAintl.org)

Points of Light Foundation [www.pointsoflight.org](http://www.pointsoflight.org)

**A Guide to Investing in Volunteer Resources Management** was funded through a generous grant from The UPS Foundation, in partnership with the Association for Volunteer Administration and the Points of Light Foundation & Volunteer Center National Network.

A limited number of four-color, printed copies are available for a shipping fee of \$2 US per copy. To order, complete this form and mail to AVA, P.O. Box 32092, Richmond, VA 23294 USA.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Organization \_\_\_\_\_

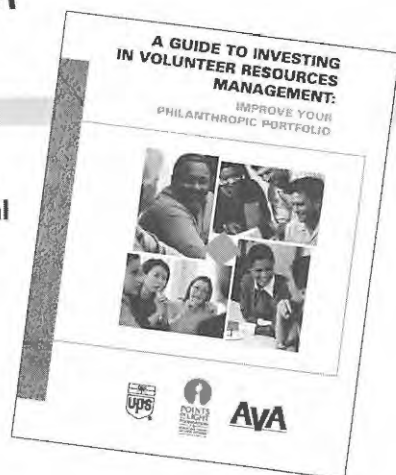
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: (        ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of copies: \_\_\_\_\_ at \$2 US/copy for shipping      TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check or money order payable to AVA. US dollars only.

If you are interested in bulk quantities of this publication, please call AVA at 804.346.2266.



## THE JOURNAL OF VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

A publication of the Association for Volunteer Administration

P.O. Box 32092, Richmond, VA 23294, U.S.A.

Tel (804) 346-2266 • Fax (804) 346-3318 • E-mail: AVAintl@mindspring.com • Website: www.AVAintl.org

### EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**Mary V. Merrill, L.S.W.**, Merrill Associates, Columbus, OH, U.S.A.

### ASSOCIATE EDITOR

**R. Dale Safrit, Ed.D.**, North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, U.S.A.

### COPY EDITORS

**Jan Davison, M.Ed.**, the Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, U.S.A.

**Colin Hoare**, Glen Williams, Ontario, Canada

### EDITORIAL REVIEW BOARD

**G. Ann Bain**, Scottish Association Volunteer Managers, Edinburgh, Scotland

**Ms. Tere Calvo**, Coordinator General for the Association Mexicana de Voluntarios, Mexico

**Jayne Cravens**, United Nations, Germany

**Carol Kleinmaier**, Shanti National Training Institute, San Francisco, CA, U.S.A.

**Michael Lee Stills**, Graduate Student, Masters in Nonprofit Management,  
Regis University, Denver, CO, U.S.A.

**Wendy MacDonald**, Grant MacEwan College, Alberta, Canada

**Nancy Macduff**, Macduff/Bunt Associates, Walla Walla, Washington, U.S.A.

### EDITORIAL REVIEWERS

**Liz Adamschick**, Volunteer Resource Manager, American Red Cross of Greater Columbus, Columbus, OH,  
U.S.A.

**Lynne M. Borden, Ph.D.**, Extension Specialist, Associate Professor, University of Arizona,  
Tucson, AZ, U.S.A.

**Harriet C. Edwards**, Extension Staff Associate/4-H Youth Development, North Carolina State  
University, Raleigh, NC, U.S.A.

**Jane Federer**, Federer Training Group Inc., Columbus, OH, U.S.A.

**Linda Graff**, Graff and Associates, Dundas, Ontario, Canada

**Lori Gotlieb**, Manager of Volunteer Resources, Eva's Initiatives, Toronto, CA

**Jane Hilfer**, Director of Community Relations, Texas Department of Mental Health and  
Retardation, Austin, TX, U.S.A.

**Mary Kay Hood**, Director of Volunteer Services, Hendricks Community Hospital, Danville, IN, U.S.A.

**Reneé B. Johnson**, Program Specialist, Minority Arts Program, Missouri Arts Council/Black Economic  
Union, West Alton, MO, U.S.A.

**Georgian C. Johnson-Coffey, M.Ed.**, Blue Vision Training & Consulting, Fort Wayne, IN, U.S.A.

**Christine Nardecchia**, Coordinator of Volunteer Service, City of Dublin, Dublin, OH, U.S.A.

**Connie Pirtle**, Strategic Nonprofit Resources, Washington, DC, U.S.A.

**Pamela Robinson**, Director Pro Bono Program, University of South Carolina School of Law, Columbia,  
SC, U.S.A.

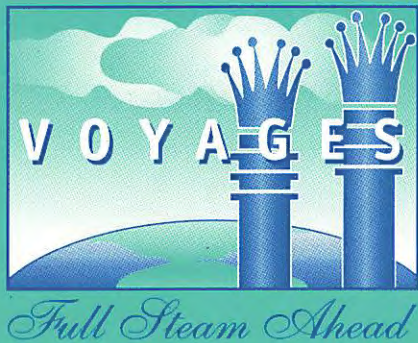
**Ryan Schmiesing**, 4-H Youth Development, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, U.S.A.

**Marti Sowka**, Director Portage County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, Stevens Point, WI, U.S.A.

**Barbara K. Wentworth**, Director of Community Building, United Way of York County, Kennebunk,  
ME, U.S.A.

### BOARD LIAISON

**Anthea Hoare**, Allendale, Milton, Ontario, Canada



# International Conference on Volunteer Administration

October 15 - 18, 2003  
Cincinnati, Ohio, USA

## THE JOURNAL OF **VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION**

P.O. Box 32092  
Richmond, Virginia 23294  
U.S.A.

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Richmond, VA  
Permit No. 1684

---