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THE VOLUNTEER OF THE SEVENTIES*

by

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The passing of the decade known as the sixties brought also the passing of the symbolic volunteer known as Lady Bountiful. The precise cause of her demise is still uncertain. Some say she was walking in the Middle-of-the-Road, as usual. Lined up on the left were youths, demanding participation. On the other side were elders, supported by prerogatives. The weight of both sides caused a deep schism, and Lady Bountiful, so it is alleged, fell to her death through the Generation Gap.

Others say some adolescent addicts, on a bad trip, mistook her for an Establishment opiate, and gobbled her up. Still others say she melted in a ghetto fire. They report she was carrying a basket of goodies when a horde of slum dwellers, yelling "burn, baby, burn" put the torch to a market which routinely raised prices on Mother's Day, which in the sixties meant the day welfare checks arrived.

There is still some support to the story that she was bringing a band-aid to a fracture patient who had been waiting two days in the emergency admitting room of a hospital which served Medicaid beneficiaries. Suddenly, local residents joined by thousands of involved students, stormed the halls demanding a confrontation. Lady Bountiful was not one to move with the crowd. She was so jostled and pushed that her heart, already enlarged, simply failed.

Personally, I do not think Lady Bountiful is dead. I think she is alive and well and working part-time, disguised as a staff aide, in order to send her last child through college.

But in any event, agencies need plan no recognition ceremonies for her, because the recipients of her largesse scraped their thanks as she expected. She always said her reward would come in Heaven, and she carefully paved her road with Good Intentions. She was so upright, her head was already in the clouds.

The volunteer of the seventies, I predict, will not be a lady. She may even be a he, a young student of either sex, a retired professional, a welfare mother, a former felon, or an industrial giant. But whatever the age, whatever the sex, whatever the economic stratum, the volunteer of the seventies will bridge the generation gap and will offer no opiates. The volunteer of this new decade will bring no band-aids to heal a fractured society and will cool the heat generated by social injustice through playing an advocacy role.

*Prepared for presentation at Conference on Volunteers, New York State Department of Mental Hygiene, New York City, February 13, 1970.

Earlier decades witnessed the birth of the new volunteer. He was weaned in the trauma of social upheaval. He learned to speak amidst a Babel of divisive voices. He entered a world which threatened anomie and depersonalization. He rejected this world and vowed to do something to change it. A troubled Establishment has seen students demonstrate a blind impatience with their elders, and with the institutions created by their elders. But as volunteers, students emerged in the sixties to show both insight and heroic patience in serving the retarded, in tutoring the illiterate, in understanding the poor. Students will be in the forefront as volunteers. They will forge a meaningful role for themselves regardless of agency policies toward them. A wise society will welcome their services and woo their opinions.

Retired persons, once forced to retire as volunteers even before their employers displaced them, will emerge as a potent force in the ranks of the new volunteer army. They will find a lost identification in volunteer tasks. Wise agencies will make it possible for them to experience the social contacts they long for, the interaction with other human beings, and the knowledge that they are needed.

Persons who once were served will serve others. The poor will help each other claim from a grudging society what has been allotted to them legally and in so doing they will help each other climb out of their dark dungeon of poverty. A wise agency will help them.

Addicts, both alcoholic and narcotic, will volunteer to help each other with the understanding and knowledge, with the realism and identification which only they possess. Prisoners, who have absorbed the concept of their keepers, that every human being has the capacity to change, will change and they will show the same faith that the attitudes and methods of their keepers, too, can change. They will work to reform the institutions which were created to reform them. They will help others who once were losers to win by staying within the law.

Professionals will do "their thing" as volunteers, finding fulfillment, like the three district attorneys in the Bronx who spend their working days convicting young offenders and return in the evening as volunteers, to help misdemeanants and felons whom someone else convicted discern why they were self-defeating.

Men will be involved as never before, not only as impersonal fund raisers, not only as parent scout leaders, not only as role examples to youth, but also as social architects, as practical facilitators, as advocates of the deprived.

Recognition that volunteer programs are not without cost will finally permeate. Recognition will also come that expenditures for volunteer programs purchase what money cannot buy—citizen awareness, citizen concern, and the neighborly knowhow, and the heart, the personal caring that has no place in professionalism.

Before the end of the decade, we shall see degrees offered in volunteer administration. We shall see, too, the birth of a society or guild of volunteers. The purpose will be to demand a meaningful role for volunteers from reluctant agencies, to lobby for support for volunteers and volunteer programs, to provide a medium for the exchange of information through publications, institutes and conferences.

Lack of funds for coordinators and training will slow the volunteer movement. Resistance of paid staff will retard the use of volunteers. But no force is great enough to stop the concern of the citizen for his fellowman. Through the channel of volunteering, the public will return to the public agency, because that is "where it's at."

VOLUNTARY ACTION FOR THE 1970'S*

by
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In talking about the potential for voluntary action in the 1970's, we first should heed the warning of Abraham Lincoln: "If we could first know where we are and whither we are attending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it."

Where are we today? Most of us, I think, are so close to the field of voluntary action that it is difficult to see it from the perspective of somebody who is fresh on the scene. So let's review the volunteer scene briefly with the aid of a survey conducted by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1965 and entitled, "Why Americans Volunteer."

In that year, 1965, the survey tells us that 22 million Americans volunteered, a little over 10 percent of the population; 60 percent were women, 40 percent men. Ninety-four percent were white, 6 percent non-white.

The rate of voluntarism among college graduates was four times as high as among those with less than four years' college. Persons with a family income over \$10,000 were three times more likely to volunteer than those with a family income below \$5,000.

The highest incidence of voluntarism for both men and women was to be found between the ages of 35 and 44. The lowest incidence of voluntarism in the '65 survey was found among persons over 65, and I think surprisingly between the ages of 18 and 24; a young person, younger than that, between the ages of 14 and 17 was 50 percent more likely to volunteer than one between 18 and 24.

Next, how much volunteer work was done? According to the survey 46 percent served for less than 25 hours, and 79 percent for less than 100 hours. The shocking fact is that these are not hours per week, nor even hours per month; they are hours per year.

Only 4.4 percent served for more than 300 hours in the year ending November, 1965. In other words, if it takes you half an hour to get to work in the morning, you spend more time commuting each year than 19 out of 20 volunteers spend in service and compared to the population as a whole, volunteers or/and non-volunteers, you spend more time commuting than 99 out of 100 persons spend in voluntary work.

Just one final statistic. A generous weighting to the time spent in volunteer service yields a total of some 1,790,000,000 volunteer hours

*Delivered at the "Voluntary Action-Community Relations Workshop," Center for Continuing Education, Northeastern University, November 3-4, 1969.

in the year ending November, 1965. Assuming a 40-hour week, that is the equivalent of some 930,000 full-time volunteers.

If our armed forces performed at this rate, the 3½ million soldiers, sailors, and marines would be the equivalent of about 150,000 men. That is enough numbers for a while.

What emerges is a picture of the typical volunteer as a white woman, middle aged, well educated, who does volunteer work a few times a year. That is where we are numerically.

The figures look impressive until we compare them with the need. I think we are all familiar with the report showing a need for four or five million additional full-time persons to be engaged in the fields of education, health, conservation, and community services; and these estimates are limited only to domestic needs.

Even in this relatively narrow framework our one million full-time equivalent volunteers then are at best answering only 20 percent of the total need. That is where we are today.

Now, whither are we tending? We have offices of voluntary action in such strategic places as the White House, the Department of Labor, Health, Education and Welfare, Housing and Urban Development, and that is fine; but their message is shattering. We want more volunteers, they say, but we don't want to spend any money on them.

We have heard this rhetoric before and it hasn't worked. We heard it in the 1950's, about the people-to-people program. I spent most of the 50's overseas and didn't see a single person, nor discern the slightest impact of the people-to-people program.

Not so in the 60's. I was overseas then for only three years, but saw hundreds of Peace Corps volunteers working in several different countries. On our present course and with a few future educators, we do have, I would predict, a 1980 survey of volunteers which will reveal about a million full-time equivalent volunteers, about the same as we have today; but our needs will have increased to the point where volunteers would be meeting only about 10 percent of the total need.

Now, for the second half of Lincoln's agenda, what to do and how to do it. First, let me say emphatically that I have nothing but admiration for the volunteer who serves whether from a sense of duty, a desire to help people, or simply because he enjoys doing volunteer work.

I'm sure all of us will recall the thrill of a meaningful volunteer experience and surely our heart warms when we learn of individual instances where lives have been enriched through volunteer service on both sides of the volunteer equation. The attitude for which I have no admiration at all is that which expresses satisfaction, whether overtly or subtly in volunteer service as it is today.

Typically this satisfaction is expressed in a way that suggests that

volunteer service is like a virgin; it is pure and should not be tainted with any of the evils of the world.

The first evil as we are told by people who are satisfied with today's volunteer service is money. Money corrupts. And to pay a volunteer anything for his services will destroy the volunteer ethic.

The second evil they tell us is a poorly qualified person. We want experienced people with a real rounded educational background, not someone from the inner city ghetto who hasn't completed high school.

The third evil they tell us is large scale programs. Recently I read a report saying that a big city's teenage volunteer program involving 4,000 young people was too big and should be cut back. The participants received little personal attention. Their suggestions were not followed up.

The real problem, although not recognized as such by the writer, appeared later on in the report. It was disclosed there was only one full-time staff person for the 4,000 volunteers.

The fourth evil, they say, is academic recognition; learning by doing has achieved the status of a cliché. Everybody knows about Don Dewey, yet to grant formal academic recognition to the learning one acquires in serving his fellow man is said to demean the service. Like money, academic credit is a pollutant.

The fifth evil is the draft. The morning after John F. Kennedy's first major speech proposing the Peace Corps as an alternative to military service, looking at the date, it seems to be just exactly nine years ago today or yesterday; his opponent retorted that it would become a haven for draft dodgers. When Peace Corps director at that time, Jack Bond, said in a speech three years ago that Peace Corps volunteers are "second to no other Americans, including troops in Viet Nam in performing service for this nation," the White House told him to shut up.

These supposed evils of volunteer service have gone unchallenged for too long. It is a serious matter, because to allow these assertions to go unchallenged means the potential of volunteer service and voluntary action will not be realized. Instead of shying away from money and poorly qualified persons and large scale programs and academic recognition and the draft, let us embrace each of these concerns and utilize them in such a way that volunteer service assumes a role in society that to date it has had only in rhetoric.

This should be our goal for the 70's. Let's recall the lessons of the 60's. Consider money. We learned in the 60's in the Peace Corps and from Vista and the Teachers Corps and other HEW programs that money and even government money does not necessarily degrade the nature of the service performed, nor distort the volunteer ethic.

Let us not use money to seduce nor to coerce people to do volunteer work; rather, let us use it to facilitate volunteer service. With

only five million dollars to provide food, clothing, and shelter, we could double the number of equivalent full-time volunteers from one million to two million per year.

Consider the level of qualifications. We learned in the 60's that persons don't need Masters' Degrees to be effective tutors. In fact, high school dropouts, members of the neighborhood Youth Corps, have done well in this capacity, in necessary training and the proper attitude and placement, and these are as important to the M. A. as they are to the dropout.

Persons with very low paper qualifications can do an effective job of volunteer service. More recognition of their capabilities would open the volunteer door to millions more.

Considering large scale programs, we thought in 1964 we would be seeing some examples of large scale programs when the war on Poverty was declared, but an undeclared war took precedence. So, we have to look further back to the 30's when 2½ million men served with the civilian conservation corps, or we can look in the decade of the 60's overseas to Iran and visit the literacy corps where tens of thousands of young men volunteered within the framework of a national service obligation to go to the villages where there are no schools and there to start teaching.

The typical Iranian volunteer arrives in his military uniform, but sheds it for mufti in a few weeks as he wins respect of his own. Even more to the point, when his service obligation is completed, the typical volunteer chooses to remain in the community, as he wins the kind of personal fulfillment that comes through service.

Consider academic credit. Here we have the lesson of decades staring us in the face, but we don't recognize it. Physicians are not turned loose on society immediately following three years of medical school. First they must serve a year of supervised internship. A prospective teacher does not get a baccalaureate degree until he has done practice teaching under supervision. Similarly for social workers, public administrators, engineers, and scientists, about the only category we have overlooked is that of the citizen; and it is evident from the strains in society today that it is exactly this category, citizenship, that is most in need of improvement.

If we want our young men to become good citizens, as we want them to become good doctors or teachers, we must permit them to become responsibly involved in the real problems of the citizenship and society, and we must do so in a manner that integrates their involvement with study and discussion reflected against the principles of the social sciences, the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and one's own code of morals and ethics.

Consider the draft. In the early 50's I tested whether I could better serve my country in the Armed Forces or in voluntary service,

and I learned I contributed more to my country and my fellow man in just one month of volunteer service than in two years in the military. Similarly from the 1960's I think most Americans feel they have learned that the millions of men who have served in Viet Nam would have served their fellow man and their country more effectively in the nation's ghettos and schools and hospitals and libraries and forests.

I believe most of them would have volunteered to do so. As Robert Kennedy wrote a few days before his assassination, "The service America needs from its youth goes far beyond their military obligations." There is, of course, a degree of interdependence among these concerns in order to broaden the base of recruitment to thus less qualified persons. Money is needed.

I used to walk to work in Washington down Massachusetts Avenue and would see the buses full of black women going to take care of white kids in the suburbs, and the limousines with white women from the suburbs going to volunteer in the ghetto schools. Something of a mismatch.

Large scale programs are dependent on money and the draft, academic recognition, and broadening qualifications. Should we find agreement on this 5-point program, and that it answers the question, what should be done? We are left with Lincoln's final query, how to do it?

The best idea can falter for lack of technique. Obviously we don't have time right now, although the agenda will take us into many of the concerns in the next two days; we don't have time now to fill this in completely, and even if we did, we couldn't finish the job, because some answers won't be found except through the empirical approach; but let us deal briefly with one issue that is central to each of our five points; that is, training and supervision.

Recall the large scale summer teenage program whose real fault was not size but lack of supervision, and no matter how well intentioned they are, volunteers cannot man a helicopter rescue service, nor survey the needs of a neighborhood, nor tutor a child without training. A major breakthrough can be made in the areas of training and supervision if we ask public employees to spend 10 percent of their regular work time training or supervising volunteers.

I am not worried about after hours. Once they become engaged in a volunteer effort, the chances are they will participate during their leisure time as well. We have got to make a quantum jump to get in there.

I suggest we be serious about this. In addition to memos from the White House encouraging voluntary action, I should like to see one telling federal employees that they should expect to be called upon to work with volunteers and similar memos should issue from state houses and city halls.

In order to get these people out we have to be strong in our conviction that volunteers do perform useful service and in the long run the public interest will be repaid many times over as a result of the 10 percent supervision and training policy.

Once it is clear from a cost of benefit analysis that such a policy is favorable to the accomplishment of needed public service, a big hunk of the problem of training and supervision shall have been solved. If we respond fully to the suggested agenda for the 70's, if we appropriate five million dollars a year to underwrite volunteer service, if we broaden the base of recruitment to all who want to serve, if we embark on truly large scale programs, if we think of volunteer service with a learning that accompanies it and give academic recognition to the process, and if we give national recognition to the fact that many young people can serve their country better in non-military service than in the Armed Forces; then we can return in ten years and find that we have met 90 percent, not 10 percent of the need for volunteer service.

If we fail in this effort and have the temerity to get together in 1979, the agenda will be the same and we shall have wasted a decade.

VOLUNTEERS IN CORRECTIONS *

by
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Community involvement and public understanding of correctional needs is of prime importance in all areas of corrections today. Probably one of the best ways to attain this desirable state of affairs is to utilize the large reservoir of potential volunteers in some phase of the correctional process. Only slightly more than one-third of the correctional agencies and institutions in the country are now using volunteer assistance at any level of operation.¹ More volunteers are used in juvenile institutions than are used in adult institutions or in field operations, either juvenile or adult. The trend, however, is to an increasing use of the volunteer, particularly in field operations in juvenile courts. In 1961 there were only three or four courts using such volunteers and even four years ago there were only 24.² In 1967 there were in excess of 10,000 unpaid volunteers who were providing probation supervision in more than 125 courts,³ and by 1969 there were between 300 and 400 courts using local volunteers.⁴

Many agencies have attempted to use volunteers; some have been successful, some have had unfortunate experiences. Apparently the key to the successful operation of any volunteer program is to have one person in charge of the volunteers. This person should be a specialist in the field of corrections who is able to recruit, organize, and train the volunteers. Because most correctional agencies are understaffed in the area of professional personnel, many of them feel they cannot afford to release one of their highly trained persons to work with volunteers. Most of the programs that have been attempted without the services of a supervisor of volunteers have failed. The needs in institutions are

*Revision of a paper presented at the Southern Conference on Corrections, Florida State University, February 25, 1970.

¹Corrections 1968, *A Climate for Change*, Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training, Washington, D.C., August 1968, p.22.

²Ivan H. Scheier, *Using Volunteers in Court Settings, A Manual for Volunteer Probation Programs*, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (Washington, D. C.: Superintendent of Documents, n.d.), p. iii.

³*Ibid.*, p. v.

⁴U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Social and Rehabilitation Service, Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, *Volunteer Programs in Courts* (Washington, D. C.; Superintendent of Documents, 1969, p. v.

somewhat different. Representatives of community groups can come in and work with groups of children or adults. It is easier to assign tasks to volunteers in such facilities without having to worry about exact days and times of the volunteer; however, in general, it appears that there is a linear relationship between increased education of administration and specialists and approval of the use of volunteers. On the other hand, approval of the job done by volunteers appears to decrease as the education of the specialist increases.¹

What kind of people volunteer their services to correctional facilities? According to a Harris survey done for the Joint Commission on Correctional Manpower and Training, 57% are professionals, executives, or other white collar workers. Twenty-six percent are housewives. Better than 60% of the volunteers have a family income in excess of \$10,000. Almost 50% are college graduates and 74% have had at least one year of college. More than 90% of present volunteers are white. Most are motivated by altruism—the need to help others. Very few had any actual knowledge of the specialized area of problems which they were desirous of helping to solve and very few of the agencies using such help had meaningful training programs designed to increase the expertise of the volunteers.

What kind of work do volunteers do? Many agencies and institutions use special talents of the volunteer. Many work directly with the offender in counseling, guidance, or testing; others are found in self-improvement programs and in recreational activities. Many volunteers are involved in routine clerical and typing assignments which free overworked office personnel for work which requires more knowledge of the agency's operation. No matter in which capacity the volunteer is used, he becomes exposed to the very real problems faced by our correctional facilities because of the lack of public support for adequate resources for treatment of the correctional offender and for the need for legislative reforms. The volunteer becomes a proselyte for needed changes in community attitudes toward our juvenile and adult offenders. This vocal advocacy is carried into areas of the community where professionals have few or no channels of communication. The amount of time devoted by our interested citizens in assuming duties which must otherwise be done by our overworked and hard pressed correctional personnel must be considered to be the main contribution of the volunteers. The role such persons play in interpreting correctional policy and in disseminating information to the community at large approximates the value of the time, services, and material donated.

The advantage claimed for the use of volunteers in juvenile probation agencies, in addition to relieving overburdened staff and acting in a public relations capacity to translate organizational needs and problems to the community, is the fact that the volunteer usually has a

¹Corrections 1968, *A Climate for Change*, pp. 23-24.

one-person caseload. Because the probationer does not see the volunteer as a paid authority figure, a friendly relationship is possible and the emergence of the image of a person who is there because he wants to be, who is interested only in the problems of the individual, and who can be trusted is also possible.

The disadvantages are formidable unless supervision and training are available to the volunteer. One of the problems that has been encountered is the undependability of volunteers. Many volunteer—few are the chosen. The damage to any client, juvenile or adult, that can result from failure of the volunteer to fulfill his or her commitments is great. Few offenders are able to trust anyone, most have histories of parental rejection, and when they tentatively accept the volunteer as a friend, this relationship is subject to suspicion. If the offender accepts the proffered friendship and offer of help and the volunteer fails to fulfill his obligation, the negative feelings of the offender are reinforced, intensifying his or her problems. To be a correctional volunteer in a probation setting entails a tremendous responsibility but with adequate training and supervision, volunteers can become an important and valuable asset to any juvenile court.

Probably one of the best known volunteer programs is "Project Misdemeanant" in Royal Oak, Michigan.¹ Judge Keith J. Leenhouts is responsible for this program that started in 1960 with eight citizens serving as volunteer probation officers. There were no funds available to provide probation services to misdemeanants. By 1965, more than 500 volunteers were involved in the program and the court was able to supply rehabilitative services which would have cost \$200,000 on a \$17,000 annual city budget.

In the Denver County Court alone, nearly 1,000 citizen volunteers are on duty.² Each serves without compensation, has completed a three-evening training session, has been sworn in as an officer of the court, and has been assigned a caseload of just one youthful, misdemeanor offender with whom he has agreed to spend at least an hour per week for one year. The volunteer may be of any occupation and any age, of either sex, and of any religious, ethnic, or economic group. The very diversity of backgrounds is one of the strengths of the system, since each probationer may be matched to a volunteer on an individualized basis. While some screening is necessary, experience in Denver and other cities is that it is the leading and most stable citizens who volunteer.

¹Keith J. Leenhouts, Judge, Municipal Court & District Court; Director, Project Misdemeanant Foundation, Inc., mimeo attachment to letter dated January 13, 1970.

²William H. Burnett, "The Volunteer Probation Counselor," *Jucicature*, 52 (7): 285-289, 1969.

Another volunteer program was started in the Juvenile Court in Eugene, Oregon, in 1964.¹ Here again is the one-child one-adult relationship based on the philosophy that the child needs an adult friend whom he can trust. The amount of time contributed by each volunteer is reported in excess of ten hours per week—some 40-50 man hours per month. The two points stressed to the volunteers were (1) dependability, and (2) confidentiality to ensure that case histories did not become a topic of tea-time conversation. A professionally trained worker coordinated the efforts of the volunteers. Group meetings were held during which mutual problems were solved and informal training sessions were conducted.

Here, as in all volunteer programs, the aides encountered the same problems the professional worker faces—the inadequacy of existing community resources for the treatment of the individual offender. However, being “realistic idealists,” the volunteers concentrated on relieving immediate problems. They exhibited an amazing amount of ingenuity in obtaining needed services and supplies from the private sector.

In addition to helping the children, four additional benefits to the agency and to the community were reported:

1. Liaison with the community for needed changes;
2. Support for all facets of agency objectives and goals for the community;
3. They become perceptive concerning legislative matters, particularly child welfare;
4. Some of the volunteers were motivated to become professional workers through further education.

Minnesota has several programs and all correctional institutions in that state have at least one program involving volunteers.² The Minnesota Home School, a co-educational institution, has a horseback riding program because an organization of ex-airline stewardesses has provided a stable of 15 horses. The program has been in existence for the last six or seven years, with funds for the purchase of horses and riding equipment being raised annually through a Ball. The group has also contributed other sporting equipment to the institution.

This school has a half-time paid volunteer coordinator. The attempt is made to recruit various groups who “adopt” cottages and who come once or twice a month to offer various services such as crafts,

¹Robert J. Lee, “Volunteer Case Aid Program,” *Crime and Delinquency*, Vol. 14, No. 4, October, 1968, pp. 331-335. See also Jewel Goddard, “Volunteer Services in a Juvenile Court,” *Crime and Delinquency*, Vol. 13, No. 2, April, 1967, pp. 337-343.

²Connie Schoen, “Things Volunteers Can Do,” *American Journal of Corrections*, Vol. 31, No. 4, July-August, 1969, pp. 26-27.

sports, picnics, or just visiting. A few of the volunteers engage in a one-to-one type activity in which they visit youngsters who do not have any other visitors. Other groups supply needed items such as books, clothing, greeting cards, and miscellaneous items. Another group supplies funds at Christmas time.

The State Training School at Red Wing, a school for boys, has a full-time volunteer coordinator who is herself a volunteer. Forty citizens responded to the first request for volunteers and it is reported that there are three types of services performed by the volunteers at this institution: (1) Institutional services—improving comfort and looks of the institution and providing services that relieve staff; (2) Enrichment program—social and recreational activities; and (3) Volunteers in the Community—a public relations group that conduct panel discussions on radio and in the community for other organizations.

At a short-term institution, the Minnesota Reception and Diagnostic Center, where the average stay is about four weeks, volunteers have been used effectively in establishing "significant relationships" with the children. One group is composed of students from the University of Minnesota and is engaged in group recreational activities. Another group of Jaycees conducted a series of informative programs in the institution where speakers were brought in.

There are many ways volunteers can be used in institutions and in probation agencies and there is a trend toward the use of volunteers in all areas of social problems. It is estimated that 130 million Americans are eager to contribute time and effort but many of them don't know where to go to volunteer. Recognizing the magnitude of the problem, and also recognizing the constructive potential of such a large number of available man hours, President Nixon has recently created a special cabinet level committee to assist such volunteers.¹ The object is to provide a clearinghouse for information on volunteer activities and to assist volunteers to find areas of service.

If you are interested in starting any type of volunteer program or if you would like to know more about how such programs operate, free material such as films and literature is available from Judge Keith J. Leenhouts, Director, Project Misdemeanant Foundation, Inc., 200 Washington Square Plaza, Royal Oak, Michigan 48067. A program similar to the Royal Oak and Denver programs has been operated in Boulder, Colorado, since 1963. This is the locus of the National Information Center on Volunteers in Courts. A Volunteer Courts Newsletter (6 issues annually) and a number of good publications are available. For information concerning this source of material, write Dr. Ivan Scheier, Juvenile Court, Hall of Justice, Boulder, Colorado 80302.

¹*Community Exchange*, Washington, D. C.: Bureau of Prisons, Vol. 2, No. 16, August 8, 1969, pp. 1-2.

THE VOLUNTEER SERVICE COORDINATOR IN MENTAL RETARDATION*

by

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Division of Mental Retardation
Hackettstown, New Jersey

As you probably know, the parents and the professional workers in mental retardation are somewhat sensitive about the second class status which Mental Health Agencies usually give the mentally retarded in relation to the mentally ill. We are accustomed to hearing "mental illness and mental retardation," "Mental hospitals and schools for the mentally retarded." Perhaps for this one committee meeting we might switch to "mental retardation and mental illness" as a gesture of appreciation for the financial support being provided by the Division of Mental Retardation, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

There are presumed to be five and a half million mentally retarded in our society. These are the persons defined by the American Association on Mental Deficiency as having sub-average general intellectual functioning, which originates during the developmental period and is associated with impairment in adaptive behavior. More than a hundred causes have been identified, but only a few preventatives have been discovered. Specific therapeutic and rehabilitation goals for mentally ill or physically handicapped persons are hardly applicable. There is no known cure for mental retardation. Care, training, and habilitation within a developmental framework must be the areas of emphasis. Such services as are extended to the mentally retarded, beyond those to meet their basic human needs, are broadly educational, ranging from the visual, aural, tactile and kinesthetic stimulation for the profoundly retarded to the practical preparation for independent community living of the mildly retarded. Progress is always slow, and gains are modest.

To provide each retarded individual with the additional attention he needs requires tremendous man-power. Parents, institutional attendants, teachers, nurses, and other professional personnel have not been able to meet the requirement. Volunteers in increasing numbers are being drawn upon. One of the most astounding current developments in the enlistment of volunteers within a neighborhood by parents to give assistance in the "patterning" program for their neurologically impaired children. In the community agency or the public institution for the retarded, the volunteer service coordinator is the one who has the responsibility for enlisting and for utilizing appropriately the service of the volunteer.

*Prepared for a workshop of the Committee on Continuing Education, American Association of Volunteer Services Coordinators, Supported by the Division of Mental Retardation, U. S. HEW, held at Northeastern University, May 1967.

Scarcely five percent of the retarded are in institutions yet these are now the most severely retarded, the sickest, the youngest, many with serious physical or emotional handicaps in addition to their basic retardation, according to such authorities as Dr. Herbert Grossman, Illinois Pediatric Institute, and Dr. Donald Jolly, Muscatatuck State School, Indiana. A recent listing, compiled by the National Association for Retarded Children shows 162 state residential facilities with enrollments ranging from 150 to 5,000. More than half of these, judging from the response to the initial survey for the Volunteer Service Coordinator's Workshop of last October have organized volunteer service programs under the direction of a staff person, which is an increase over the number reported in the NARC residential study of 1963. The trend seems to be toward having a full-time paid coordinator, who has a college degree, but no specific training as a coordinator, and no background in mental retardation. Institutions are the major employees, but community agencies working with the retarded are beginning to look for coordinators too. Our recent NARC workshop suggests that the volunteer service coordinator should be a department head, with status comparable to that of other department heads and serve with them as a member of the health and habilitation team. Such a position calls for professional training at the graduate level.

The generic aspects of volunteer service coordinating will be considered more appropriately in other presentations at this meeting. We know that the formulation of a definitive set of professional functions is already under consideration, as a result of the AAVSC Time Study. An analysis of what needs to be done will reveal more similarities than differences among the various settings in which coordinators work.

However, the volunteer service coordinator who is to work in a retardation setting, whether a state school or a community center, needs an orientation in mental retardation. This would certainly be in addition to skills in administration, community organization, public relations, program development, interviewing and public speaking. It would be built upon an understanding of personality development, group dynamics, and inter-personal relations. In a graduate curriculum this specialized material could be presented in a course, "Orientation to Area of Service-Mental Retardation" (other areas: mental illness, chronic disease, physical handicaps, aging) and advanced further through Field Practice and possibly during an internship.

The course content should incorporate historical, sociological, psychological, medical, neurological, behavioral and developmental aspects of mental retardation. Such a course might begin with a consideration of the degree to which mental retardation is a problem in our society, and the means we have developed for dealing with the problem. Do we possibly create a problem? To what extent does cultural deprivation contribute to mental retardation? Historically, how have we dealt with the mentally retarded, and what have been our goals?

What are our current expectations for the proliferation of programs resulting from recent legislation—national, state and local?

The course would also identify the retarded as to the level of their intellectual functioning and their adaptive behavior. It would familiarize the students with the instruments used in determining these and with the classification system of the American Association on Mental Deficiency. It would identify the retarded as to causative factors—medical, neurological, genetic, etc. It would acquaint the student with the clinical types of mentally retarded. It would give consideration to drugs and training techniques which can modify behavior or facilitate the management of the retarded person.

Of considerable importance during the academic experience would be the development of a reference file by the student as a source of information for herself, and also for the volunteers whom she will be educating later. There are of course many novels and personal accounts which reveal the emotional response to retardation. Pearl Buck's *The Child Who Never Grew* is one of the better known. There are other books of a non-technical nature which provide a realistic view of retardation, such as Kirk and Karnes—*You and Your Retarded Child*. There are the monumental productions of Masland, Sarason and Gladwin, and of Stevens and Heber. There are many pamphlets from the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, from the National Association for Retarded Children, United Cerebral Palsy Association, and other organizations which present practical information or guide-lines for working with the retarded. There are the professional journals of the American Association on Mental Deficiency, the American Orthopsychiatric Association, the Council for Exceptional Children. There are the practice-oriented magazines—*Mental Retardation* and *Mental Hospitals*. There are manuals and monographs dealing with specific aspects of mental retardation. Perhaps the newest and most helpful for a reference file is *Mental Retardation Abstracts* from the National Clearing House of Mental Health Information, Public Health Service, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The volunteer service coordinator who wishes to participate fully in the field of mental retardation should as a graduate student establish an affiliation with the professional, interdisciplinary American Association on Mental Deficiency. She should also have gained familiarity with the goals and the informational and consultative services of the National Association for Retarded Children, and be prepared to develop a working relationship with the state and local units of the Association in whatever geographical area she accepts employment.

While this is a sketchy review of the content of an orientation to mental retardation, such a course would help to make the volunteer service coordinator sufficiently knowledgeable about the whole field of Mental Retardation as to enable her to communicate with the members

of the other professional disciplines for the development and implementation of programs for the retarded, and for the utilization of volunteers in such programs.

She needs also to understand mental retardation in order to help the volunteer understand the mentally retarded person. As Glenna Kent reminded us at the NARC Workshop, the new volunteer is most likely an alert, intelligent individual who wants to know what he is doing and why. He will look to his first and continuing contact, the coordinator, for this information and understanding. My own experience with college students validates this observation.

Perhaps more fundamental than information and understanding is the coordinator's feelings about the mentally retarded. At some point in her educational program the volunteer service coordinator must come to an acceptance of the mentally retarded as human beings and a part of the human continuum, no matter how profoundly retarded or physically handicapped they may be. She must have come to grips, in the words of Michael Begab, with the "residual feelings of anger and fear about the defective child which remains in most of us."¹ She must also have come to a realization that her ultimate goal, like that of all the other staff members, and the volunteers, is to contribute to the development of each retarded person, so that he may live as mature a life as is possible for him.

¹Begab, Michael J. *The Mentally Retarded Child. A guide to services of social agencies.* Washington, D. C. U. S. Government Printing Office 1963.

WHAT IS VOLUNTEERING?

by

Bob Groden

Volunteer, Children's Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

Volunteering is having a lonely little girl give you a warm kiss with an ice cube in her mouth.

Volunteering is holding a small child on your lap in a movie and being peed on during an exciting scene.

Volunteering is reading a Nancy Drew story to an eleven year old girl struck blind by Meningitis.

Volunteering is having a dying twelve year old Philippino boy whose widowed father is back home, tell you that you have been like a second father to him.

or

telling an eight year old Portuguese boy not to worry about his up-coming heart surgery, and then learning that he did not survive.

Volunteering is asking a little girl to marry you and having her tell you that you're too old.

Volunteering is telling a nine year old boy not to worry about his surgery and having him survive it.

Volunteering is listening to a teenager talk about death.

Volunteering is building a model airplane with a boy from far away.

or

doing a puzzle with a Vietnamese girl who doesn't speak English—In general, somehow communicating with a child from some far away land.

Volunteering is having one of your favorite patients go home and come back a year later, not remembering you

and

your not remembering a patient who comes back and is happy to see you again.

Volunteering is seeing a crippled child you've known for a long while walk towards you for the first time—as you try to hold back a tear.

Volunteering is having a patient go home after many months of hospitalization, come back briefly three years later, go home again and leave you a note that she hopes you'll be there when she comes back in three more years.

Volunteering is playing cards or checkers with older patients, or making up fairy tales to help a small child over a rough spot.

Volunteering is reluctantly giving up a ticket to a playoff game and finding a child waiting for you by the elevator because

Volunteering is he was afraid you wouldn't come.
Volunteering is playing Peter Rabbit at Easter time.
Volunteering is all these things and much more which cannot be put
into words.

It is
learning about yourself and that giving to others some-
how makes your own troubles seem insignificant.

It is
walking into a ward full of kids thinking of your own
failures that particular day—and walking out feeling
satisfied and realizing tomorrow is another day.

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