

Follow-Up

Follow-Up is a column of current developments and discussions as well as additional resource information on key topics reported in previous issues.

Education for the Volunteer Leader

THE LISTINGS BELOW ARE A follow-up to VAL's special issue on education for the volunteer leader (summer 1980). Copies of the summer 1980 VAL, which contains 60 descriptions of education and training programs for volunteer leaders, are available for \$2 each from: Voluntary Action Leadership, PO Box 4179, Boulder, CO 80306.

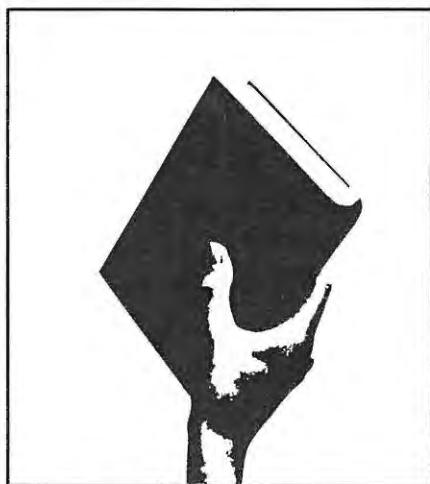
Certificate Program for Volunteer Administrators

The Calgary Association of Directors of Volunteer Resources is cosponsoring a **Volunteer Management Certificate Program** with the Faculty of Continuing Education, University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. An Admissions Committee representing both sponsors, oversees the development of this program.

The program requires members to complete seven courses or 240 hours of study, of which four courses are compulsory:

- *Practicum*—20 hours of instruction plus practicum activity. A waiver is possible in some cases for experienced managers of volunteers.

- *Managing Volunteer Programs*—An overview of the role and tasks of the volunteer manager. Content emphasizes the analysis of managerial work and the role of the manager in such areas as: setting goals and objectives, planning, man-



aging resources, personnel administration, finance, public relations.

- *Human Relations in Managing Volunteers*—Emphasis on issues of internal organization and human relations in managing volunteer programs. Topics include: value of the volunteer to the organization; recruitment, orientation and training; recognition, motivation and job satisfaction; career ladders in volunteer programs; communication; leadership styles and skills; working with staff, boards and committees.

- *Management Communications*—Covers theory and provides important practice in effective communication skills in relating to others both on and off the job. Topics include the psychological

factors of communications as well as listening and speaking effectively, helpful group behavior and leadership.

Graduate Training for Public Management

Boston University offers qualified men and women a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in Public Management on either a full or part-time basis.

Initiated in 1975, the program combines traditional management training with an emphasis on the unique skills required of managers of arts, educational and governmental organizations. To train people to work in this environment, the curriculum has been designed to focus on the special constraints and challenges faced by public sector managers. Core courses use decision-oriented case studies to develop in-depth analytic and strategy-making skills, emphasizing an ability to understand and deal effectively with the environment, the internal resources and the operating context of public and non-profit agencies.

The admissions policy of the Public Management Program places value on work experience as well as academic excellence. The average age of entering students is about 30 and most of the full and part-time students have had significant public sector experience. Among the jobs they have held are: resource director for a metropolitan cultural organization, unit manager for a public TV station, assistant commissioner of a state public health department, director of operations analysis of a metropolitan transit authority, business and finance manager for a college, and director of a nonprofit multi-service agency.

These students—and others with less work experience—have entered the program to acquire strong management skills. Some will apply these skills to their current job situation; others will qualify for positions of greater responsibility.

Inquiries about Boston University's Public Management Program may be directed to Lisa Zankman, Assistant Director, Public Management Program, 212 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215, (317) 353-2312.

Degree Programs in Nonprofit Management

Beacon College, headquartered in Washington, D.C., is a fully accredited

and highly innovative institution which operates nationally. Over the past few years it has built a reputation for offering degree programs (through the M.A.) related to community development and human service. Beacon is now working to expand these efforts to offer additional degree programs for the voluntary sector. It will announce soon the availability of both B.A. and M.A. programs in Nonprofit Management.

The College has already done considerable work in the field of community organization administration. Through this experience, Beacon has seen the need for a comprehensive degree program in non-profit management appropriate to more established voluntary and other public service organizations, as well as to community-based groups. The College is collaborating with the Institute for Non-Profit Management Training, the National Association of Public Service Organization Executives, the Planning and Management Assistance Project/Center for Community Change, and the Taft Corporation in the design and implementation of this new degree program.

Beacon matches each student with a program advisor and that team then designs an individualized curriculum. Education takes place through a series of learning projects, also designed by the team, which draw upon resources in the student's own community and which employ a wide range of methods, such as tutorials, independent reading and professional training programs. Curriculum plans are approved by an academic council, which also awards credit when projects are completed, documented and evaluated.

Most of Beacon's students are working adults. They frequently utilize past and present vocational experience and voluntary service as creditable components of their degree programs.

Beacon has a "rolling admissions" process which allows application and enrollment throughout the year. Its existing community/nonprofit-focused degree programs operate in the Washington, D.C., and New England areas. It also works with individual students in about 75 locations around the country. Persons interested in these opportunities and in the new degree programs in nonprofit management are encouraged to contact: Beacon College, Central Office, 2706 Ontario Road, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009, (202) 797-9270.

What About Correspondence Courses?

By Linda Evenson

The 4-H program, conducted as a joint effort of the Department of Agriculture's State Cooperative Extension programs and counties throughout the United States, long has depended on the efforts of volunteers to extend university resources to youth. Counties employ university faculty members to work in the county, assess needs, design educational programs and recruit and train volunteers to carry them out.

The principle is sound and the system has worked for more than 30 years, but as times change, so do the needs of the clientele, including volunteers. The program expands and the old methods just don't work as well anymore.

This was particularly the case in Rock County, Wisconsin, where the program has expanded to include two faculty members working with 1,100 volunteers to meet the needs of the 2,600 youth enrolled.

It became virtually impossible for the two faculty members to give each of the volunteers the attention needed to train them effectively. Although a comprehensive training course was conducted each fall for new volunteers, only about 25 percent attended in 1978 and 1979. The number of volunteers remained relatively stable over the last three years, but 250 first-year volunteers enrolled in 1978 and only 186 re-enrolled in 1979 as second-year volunteers—a 26 percent "drop-out" rate. This seemed to indicate a need for improved quality and quantity of training.

The majority of today's Extension volunteers are working mothers with less time to devote and with numerous responsibilities to church, school and other organizations. Since 4-H has expanded to include urban clientele, many of the volunteers have not had previous contact with the program. As a result, they do not have the high level of commitment that 4-H "leaders" once had. Furthermore, with the economic pressures and energy shortage facing today's

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families, volunteers are increasingly hesitant to drive to a central location to attend meetings.

In response to the needs of changing clientele, the Rock County staff designed a correspondence-type training course for volunteers. The objectives that were established for the course, called "Stepping Stones," were:

- To reach more than 25 percent of the new volunteers.
- To cover training information more completely than is possible at a two-and-a-half-hour training session.
- To provide a measurable means of assessing comprehension of basic concepts.
- To establish individual contact with new volunteers.

The 70-page course was written by the Rock County faculty members in 1979, critiqued by both new and experienced volunteers, and revised to contain four units: Basic Goals and Philosophy of 4-H, Responsibilities of a 4-H Volunteer, How to Work with Youth, Organizing for Action (hints on setting up project meetings, available resources, etc.).

Seventy five copies were distributed at random on a trial basis in January 1980. Participants were asked to complete and return the study sheets within one month and an evaluation form at a later date. Fifty-one sets of study sheets were returned—a 75 percent response—indicating a 200 percent increase from the previous training response.

Statistics of 1981 show that 47 or 92 percent of the 51 volunteers who completed the correspondence course re-enrolled as second-year volunteers. If these figures could be expanded to include the entire volunteer force, they would indicate an 18 percent increase.

The use of "Stepping Stones" successfully met all of the established objectives, and it has been further revised based on evaluations by participants and distributed to all new 4-H volunteers in Rock County. Only continued use for several years can fully prove its effectiveness. Colleges and universities have used correspondence courses with success for many years; so why not volunteer organizations? ♥