



VOLUNTEER

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LEADERSHIP



The new
literacy *fun*damentals

VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP

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NATIONAL NETWORK

The Points of Light Foundation is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to engaging more people more effectively in volunteer community service to help solve serious social problems.
www.pointsoflight.org

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By Patty Rhule

Buoyed by the high-profile support of First Lady Laura Bush, programs that focus on improving literacy are in the spotlight. We look at some that have proven successful.

Cover photo: First Lady Laura Bush shares her love of reading with school children. Photo: White House

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president's letter

Literacy—A Front Burner Issue



Dear Reader:

The Points of Light Foundation was very privileged to have First Lady Laura Bush as our closing speaker at this year's National Conference.

Before the tragic events of Sept. 11, Mrs. Bush was best known for her work promoting literacy. In fact, the Saturday before the attacks Mrs. Bush had hosted the first National Book Festival on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol. The well-received national event grew out of a Texas book fair established and hosted by Mrs. Bush when she was First Lady of Texas.

If parents don't—or can't—read to their children, there's a strong possibility that the children will continue the cycle of illiteracy or low literacy. It's hard to believe that in a nation as developed and as wealthy as the United States and where education is free for all, half of our adult population lacks basic reading skills. And it comes as no real surprise that nearly half of the adults with the lowest literacy skills live in poverty.

The illiteracy rates jump significantly among our nation's recent immigrants. With many coming from developing nations where education is minimal at best, once they come to the United States they're hampered in learning a new language when they possess only basic literacy skills in their own language.

There is no easy answer to our literacy problems. Rather, we have to attack the continuing problem from a number of angles: ensuring that children—especially those from low literacy backgrounds—have basic reading skills and access to books; establishing and supporting existing adult literacy programs; working with new immigrants to teach them English as a second language, then building their basic literacy skills. If we focus substantial resources on the youngest of these potential readers, we stand a chance of beginning to break the cycle of illiteracy.

Our cover story focuses on the literacy issue. While there's no immediate answer, by working together and making the appropriate investments we can begin to reduce these appalling statistics.

And, speaking of literacy, we're very proud of the Foundation's newly launched web site (www.pointsoflight.org). With more than 1,000 separate pages, the site is crisp, easily navigated and full of current information about the Foundation, our networks and our programs. We look forward to your feedback about the site.

Finally, with the Winter 2003 issue, you'll see some changes in *Volunteer Leadership* to serve better your interests and needs.

Sincerely,

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The new literacy *fun*amentals

By Patty Rhule

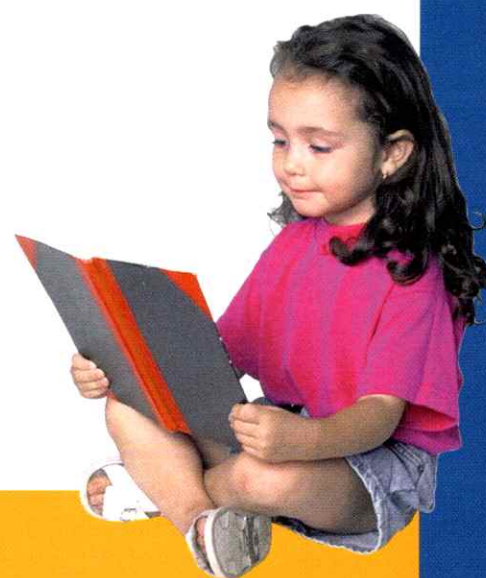
the 1,800 teenagers at Red Mountain High School in Mesa, Ariz., give out books, lasso tutors and organize motivational events for an innovative new student-to-student Reading is Fundamental program.

Club RIF “has all the best aspects of a reading/literacy program,” says RIF vice president Dick Sells. “This is also a civic responsibility program that is also community service. These high school kids run RIF programs, see that books are available for ownership, see that the children have older kids as mentors and models. The kids in Mesa serve programs in their own schools, Native American schools and homeless shelters.”

Club RIF will expand to Newark, N.J., and Minneapolis this September in two pilot programs that will attempt to replicate the success the Mesa program has had.

At 35, RIF lays claim to being the nation’s oldest literacy program. With 400,000 volunteers across the country, its mission has not changed, says Sells: “To serve the most at-risk kids in the country and to be sure that they have access to books that they can keep, that there is an adult or older child engaged in working with them to develop literacy skills; and there is a connection with the community, in the form of tutors, a community library, a group of parents or grandparents.”

Club RIF is one example of how RIF—and other organizations that promote literacy among adults and children—is looking to the future. Literacy advocates are seeking out new volunteer pools, promoting reading from birth on, inviting collaborations not just between students and volunteer tutors, but with businesses and entire communities. With 90 million adults lacking basic reading and writing skills, innovative solutions are needed. Here’s at look at some ideas that seem to be making an impact. ➡



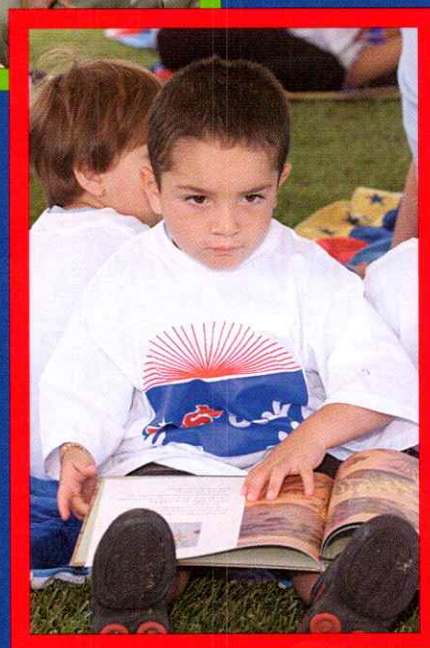
3i Implant Innovations, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., provides reading help to its employees, many of who are not native English speakers.

3i Implant Innovations

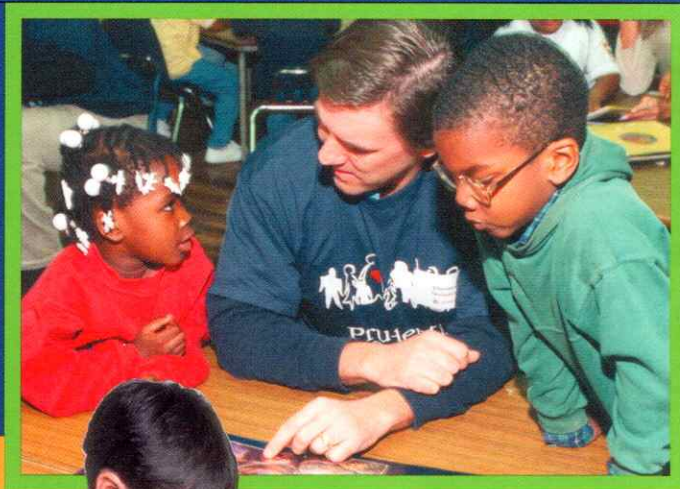


Facts about literacy

- Half the U.S. adult population—90 million adults—lack basic reading skills.
- 40% of adults in need of literacy help are recent immigrants.
- 43% of adults at the lowest level of literacy live in poverty.
- 40% of fourth-graders don't read at grade level.



First Book



Reading is Fundamental, Inc.



Reading is Fundamental (RIF) emphasizes the importance of book ownership and family literacy.

Starting young

First Lady Laura Bush, a former librarian, is a proponent of preparing children as early as possible for a lifetime of learning. In her home state of Texas, she helped promote a program called Reach Out and Read, launched by a group of pediatricians at Boston City Hospital in 1989. Doctors and nurses at ROR clinics incorporate messages about the importance of reading to new parents. After every well-baby visit, the child receives a book to keep, the start of a home library.

RIF is putting a major focus on the preschool years as well. Over the past five years, children from birth to 5 have gone from 5% of the children RIF serves to 20%. "Unless we break the cycle of low literacy in that age group, then schools five years or 10 years from now will continue to do remedial education and those kids will never catch up," says Sells.

Programs like RIF and First Book stress the importance of book ownership in promoting a life of literacy. Nearly two-thirds—61%—of low-income families have no books at home for children, says a 1996 report called *Reading Literacy in the United States*.

When you see a child take his first book home, "it makes you want to cry and laugh at the same time," says Joyce Inman, RIF coordinator for the Center for Community and Civic Engagement in Mississippi. Most of the children her program serves have never owned a book. One parent, who was illiterate, sent the child's book back to school, thinking the child had stolen it from the library.

First Book is a Washington, D.C.-based not-for-profit that works with book publishers and existing literacy groups to get new books into the hands of children who might not

otherwise own any. Children in First Book programs receive 12 books a year free. Local First Book advisory boards raise money to pay a portion of the costs.

A laudable cause, but few books will get to children if no one knows about it.

So First Book has been working to bring national advertising campaigns down to the local level of action. Last year, First Book enlisted Ford Lincoln-Mercury as a partner in a campaign with a 61-city tour that promoted its new Mercury Mountaineer and benefited First Book as well. Lincoln-Mercury gave First Book \$1 million; Random House Children's Books matched that with 1 million books. For every person who came into a dealership to test-drive a Mountaineer, \$3 was donated to First Book. Local First Book advisory boards celebrated "reading heroes" at the events.

"It's about inspiring small individual actions that collectively can transform the country," says First Book president Kyle Zimmer.

Reaching adults

More than 90 million adults lack the basic literacy skills necessary to function in society today. About 40% are recent immigrants, who may have a language barrier in addition to literacy challenges.

"You're not talking about a population that is getting its information through print," says Marcia Harrington, chief of the Literacy Resources Division of the Washington, D.C., Public Library. "We try to access them through [social] service providers, street fairs, word of mouth."

Harrington says her target population includes not just immigrants, but many native-born Americans who have marginal literacy skills.

Of critical importance, Harrington says, is removing the stigma attached to needing help with reading and writing skills. "You need to be positive and focus on 'this is skills improvement and enhancement' not 'it's a program for people who can't read.' Most people can read something—but there are gaps."

Toni White-Richardson, a Literacy Resource Division education specialist, says adding computers to the mix helps with technology literacy as well as general literacy. "People are more likely to get on a computer if they have an immediate need—math, reading, writing, anything to improve their skills. You can then introduce them to parts of the computer."

The Literacy Resource Center provides materials for adult learners, tutors and literacy programs, as well as two computer labs.

"When the adult is able to use the computer in a venue they are comfortable with, you'd be surprised how they glow and they feel a part of this whole technology age," says White-Richardson. ➤



fun

The volunteer challenge

With two-income families the norm and career volunteers a dying breed, literacy programs, like other volunteer-dependent movements, are looking at new pools of volunteer talent.

We have not had significant trouble finding volunteers for children's programs, says Susan Bodary, executive director of Project Read in Dayton, Ohio. That's an easy sell. It's much harder finding volunteers for our adult learners—it's more intimidating.

Bodary's group, a coalition of literacy groups that acts as a clearinghouse to connect literacy providers with volunteers and people in need, promotes the idea that the impact on adult learners is greater. When you're helping an adult, you're helping a family. Better communication skills can open the door to better job opportunities and earning power.

But adults have different expectations and needs than children do, as well as different challenges. Project Read offers 100 different locations where adult learners can meet for tutoring and times that are convenient to them.

Adult learners may lack GED or literacy skills, but often they're the most interesting and creative people I've met, Bodary says.

They have had to live their lives around a skill they didn't have.

For RIF, the ideal is to involve a parent in the child's reading efforts, but that's not always possible. RIF works with skip-generation volunteers, enlisting grandparents when parents aren't available to work with their fledgling reader.

And when a family member isn't possible, sometimes corporate volunteers step in to good result. Nestle's employee volunteer program in Southern California launched an adopt-a-school program with RIF. The national law firm Holland and Knight has adopted schools in various cities and in some spots, provides staff to administer RIF programs. Verizon employees across the country volunteer for RIF in a host of roles.

College students and service learning programs are another crucial volunteer pool for RIF, as are VISTA volunteers, who RIF vice president Dick Sells says, are usually somewhat better prepared to be fully dedicated for a block of time rather than try to carve out a few hours a week.

Darlene Kostrub, executive director of the Literacy Coalition in West Palm Beach, Fla., can't say enough about the 12 literacy AmeriCorps volunteers she's been able to use in her adult and children's literacy programs, thanks to a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service. One agency head told her the AmeriCorps member was so dedicated, he raised the performance bar for her paid employees.

**First Book program
participants enjoy
an outing with
Minnie Mouse.**



Targeting families

In Montgomery County, Ohio, 800 of 1,000 people who recently applied for public assistance did not have their high school diplomas or GED. "It was a wakeup call," says Susan Bodary, executive director of Project Read, a coalition of literacy providers in Dayton, Ohio.

Project Read developed a 40-hour family literacy program in the hopes that by offering adults the basic skills they needed, they could better access employment training as well. Ten literacy providers design individualized learning programs for each of 150 families that includes adult education, children's education, reading readiness and parental involvement training. Each family checks in weekly with a mentor.

"The county was finding people who don't have good reading skills have a hard time in job training activities," Bodary says. "We've been able to bridge that gap."

Educators go into homes to help the parents of young children learn activities that will stimulate brain development. "It allows the parent to become the hero and it's a rich experience for both sides of the coin. We hope they'll continue to read books together."

Finding ways to enlist parents that aren't threatening is critical to helping children's literacy.

"It's hard to get parents involved," says RIF's Sells. He says he's heard anecdotal evidence that some illiterate parents mistakenly fear social service agencies will find out they can't read to their children and take their children away. "There is a cultural and a natural fear that the issue will be discovered."

On-the-job literacy

At 3i Implant Innovations in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., the employees who manufacture dental implants and other devices come from such disparate places as Cuba, Colombia, Puerto Rico and Pakistan. In the course of a workday, they must know and adhere to strict Food and Drug Regulations as part of their jobs.

"They all come with great work ethics," says Nan Isaacson, human resources generalist for 3i. "The only downside was we felt a lot needed additional education in the area of English skills."

For the past year, 3i has paid the Literacy Coalition about \$18,000 a year to provide a twice-weekly, 90-minute classes in vocational English to about 20 employees, all of whom are paid to attend.

Often the stigma attached to needing help with English or reading is a detriment to participation, but

that hasn't been the case at 3i.

"When we announced we were going to have these classes, it wasn't so much supervisors confronting them, it was team members saying, 'Can I sign up for this class?'" Isaacson says.

When a new employee is hired who seems to have language difficulties, the supervisor tells him or her of the classes that are available.

"Employees on vacation come in for the class," says Isaacson. "They are very, very appreciative." And so that supervisors can better communicate with their team members, Spanish classes are offered—but unlike employees, supervisors must sacrifice a lunch hour to study it.

Bodary says Project Read has been working since 1988 to promote business literacy. "What is new is that business is coming to the realization that literacy is not just nice, it's critical to them having an educated workforce." ♦

Patty Rhule, a freelance writer in University Park, Md., is a frequent contributor to Volunteer Leadership.

want to know more?

For more information:

- **National Alliance of Urban Literacy Coalitions,** www.naulc.org
- **First Book,** www.firstbook.org
- **Reading is Fundamental,** www.rif.org
- **National Institute for Literacy,** www.nifl.gov

W rkshop

Better Safe Than Sorry

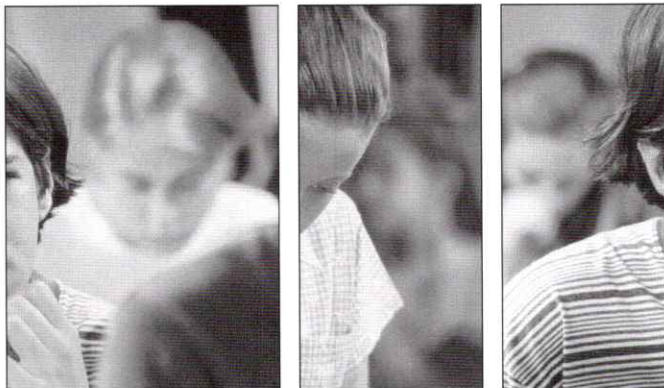
Facing the Issue of Volunteers and Child Abuse

If only it were unthinkable: allegations of child abuse by priests, neighbors, teachers and other adults in positions of trust and power. But we know it's not. It's a horrific, life-shattering reality for far too many children and adolescents, their parents and the institutions and organizations entrusted with the care of youth.

The most-respected organization can be ruined by charges of abuse and molestation, even if they prove to be false. And heaven help the organization that failed to protect its constituents out of inattention or inadequate policies.

The following Workshop articles deal with this extremely sensitive and disturbing issue.

Our guest editor, Sarah J. Schmidt, is an attorney and editor of a monthly legal newsletter, *Nonprofit Alert*, published by the Virginia law firm of Gammon & Grange, P.C. She can be reached at sjschmidt2@earthlink.com. ♦



Resources

● **Advocate Web** – a nonprofit organization that promotes awareness and understanding of the issues involved in the exploitation of persons by trusted helping professionals; maintains an informative web site that includes comprehensive summary of all state sexual exploitation laws; 512-249-1217; www.advocateweb.org

● **GuideOne Center for Risk Management** – commercial insurance company specializing in risk management for churches and nonprofit organizations; offers risk reduction tips and education materials for training employees and volunteers; 877-448-4331; www.guideonecenter.com

● **National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect** – service of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; statistics on child abuse and other information; maintains a database of documents, audiovisual materials, services, programs, excerpts of state statutes, and ongoing research projects concerning child abuse and neglect; 800-394-3366; nccanch@calib.com; www.calib.com/nccanch

● **National Data Archive on Child Abuse & Neglect** – operated by Cornell University primarily as a resource for researchers and professionals; maintains large database of research; offers newsletter and other publications; (607) 255-7799; www.ndacan.cornell.edu

● **Nonprofit Risk Management Center** – provides assistance and resources for community-serving nonprofit organizations; offers a variety of risk management tools, including collection of guidebooks for screening employees and volunteers to prevent child abuse; (202) 785-3891; www.nonprofitrisk.org

Developing a Policy of Protection

The disturbing reports of child molestation and pedophilia that have rocked the Catholic church in recent months are forcing other organizations to take a hard look at their own programs and policies. Could the same thing happen elsewhere? It's a question no one wants to answer, but fear of the possibility is motivating action.

Organizations that serve children also serve as a first line of defense against this tragic and horrifying crime. To face the risk of child molestation, organizations should adopt and implement a policy of protection. If such a policy is in place already, now is the time to review that policy and determine if it still provides the level of protection mandated by current needs. If no such policy is in place, move quickly to establish one.

An organization should establish its position of prevention and protection against all child abuse and molestation by developing a written policy that fully describes acceptable and unacceptable behaviors within the organization. The following points must be addressed in establishing an effective policy for dealing with this serious issue:

- **Standards of Conduct.** The policy must describe appropriate conduct for adult/child relationships and delineate acceptable standards of contact between adults and children during working hours and after-hours, on premises and off premises. This is the real heart of the policy, so great detail and attention should be given to these standards. An attorney should also be consulted regarding proper definitions to use and other specific legal terms that may be defined under state or local statutes.

- **Reporting Inappropriate Behavior.** Every report of inappropriate behavior should be taken seriously and investigated promptly. Your policy should describe the avenues available in your organization for reporting suspected or actual incidences of inappropriate behavior. Identify by name or position those individuals to whom children, parents, employees or others in your organization should file a report.

You may also want to include a statement that the identity of those involved, including persons making a report, will be protected to the extent possible under the circumstances. But include a caveat that information will be shared with law enforcement officials as required by law and with others as required to investigate and comply with organizational policies.

- **Consequences for Violations.** This part of the policy should briefly describe what short- and long-term steps will be taken when a report of inappropriate behavior is made. The first and most immediate step is to remove the accused from the situation in which the accusation arose and prevent any further contact with children. This should be done quietly and without fanfare, but quickly and without exception. A leave of absence or transfer to another position that does not involve contact with children are possible solutions and may be appropriately stated in this section of the policy.

- **The Investigation.** The next step is to initiate a prompt investigation. Your policy should state that the investigation will begin within a certain period (usually 24 hours of receiving the report). Consult legal counsel to determine what state or local statutes may require your

organization to report allegations of child abuse or molestation to law enforcement authorities and make sure your investigation corresponds to those time periods.

If the outcome of the investigation exonerates the accused, then his or her position may be restored. The policy should state how long the investigation record is kept on file and whether the accused will have access to that file. If the outcome of the investigation results in a finding of inappropriate behavior, then the accused faces certain discipline for the actions. The policy should clearly state what forms of discipline will result from which behaviors, including reprimand, probation, termination and so on.

- **Disseminating the Policy.** Once your policy is in place, disseminate copies to children, parents, employees and others inside the organization. At least once a year, provide reminders detailing the standards for conduct and procedures for reporting. Depending on the degree of turnover in your organization among employees, volunteers and children, dissemination of this information on a more frequent basis may be appropriate.

- **Additional Steps.** Implementing a child protection policy requires a solid commitment on the part of an organization and its members. However, a policy is only one part of a comprehensive protection program that must also include proper employment screening and monitoring. Read the Workshop articles that follow for additional information. ♦

All articles in this series were written by Sarah J. Schmidt.

Screening Volunteers and Employees

The first and best defense against child sexual abuse in nonprofit organizations is to exercise reasonable care in screening and hiring those who work with children. An optimal screening process includes the following minimum components:

- a thorough screening application, including references and a verification statement that the applicant must sign;
- investigation, confirmation, and evaluation of all the information provided on the application; and
- a criminal history background check for all applicants who will have contact with children.

Screening

This application requires data about previous employment, experience with children, personal and professional references, criminal records, and any other information pertinent to the applicant's potential role in the organization. If relevant to the job, it may also include questions regarding the applicant's driving record and use of alcohol, tobacco, etc.

All questions should be carefully worded to elicit only relevant information that does not violate discrimination laws. For instance, a question that asks whether the applicant has ever received counseling or therapy could arguably violate the Americans With Disabilities Act. Rephrase such an inquiry this way: "Is there any reason you might be unfit, unwilling, or unable to perform any job-related duties involving youth or children's activities? If so, please explain."

The screening application should also contain a statement for the applicant to sign indicating his/her responses are true and complete. It

should state that any misrepresentation or omission of information could be grounds for rejection, or if later employed, then dismissal. The statement should also authorize the organization to investigate and confirm all information provided and relieve the organization of any associated liabilities. Finally, the statement should ask the applicant whether he or she has ever been convicted or involved in any incidents of misconduct involving children.

Verification

Employers must diligently verify all information provided on the screening application. This means every reference and employer listed should be contacted to confirm the accuracy of information. The importance of this step can't be overlooked, since even the best designed and most thoroughly constructed application provides only what the applicant writes down—true or not.

Any irregularities discovered during the process of confirming and evaluating must be resolved before an applicant is actually hired. Look for peculiarities, like gaps in employment, unexplained absences or frequent relocations. Investigate these "red flags" by questioning previous employers or asking the applicant for additional information.

Do not permit applicants to have contact with children in any capacity unless they have completely passed the screening process. This point cannot be stressed enough. Permitting an applicant to work with children, despite indications of risk discovered during screening, will inevitably lead to trouble. Failure to follow screening procedures, or failure to heed information disclosed

during screening, will expose an organization to serious legal liability.

The National Child Protection Act requires employers to conduct criminal background checks of all employees who work with children. The Volunteers for Children Act permits, but does not require, "qualified entities" (i.e., organizations that work with children) to conduct criminal background checks of their volunteers. These laws apply equally to public, private, for-profit and nonprofit organizations.

Although volunteers aren't required to undergo a criminal background check, it's a good idea to implement this requirement for both volunteers and employees since a failure to perform such a check may result in negligent hiring, for which an organization could face liability.

State law enforcement agencies perform criminal background checks upon request. The applicant's fingerprints and written permission must be provided. Most agencies charge about \$50 per search. Contact your state law enforcement agency for specific requirements and procedures.

Concerns

Organizations sometimes complain about the complexity of screening. One concern is that applicants are deterred by screening, resulting in a smaller employee or volunteer pool. No statistical data suggest this is true.

Concerns about the burdensome delay and cost of screening pale next to the million-dollar verdicts some courts have handed down in recent child molestation cases. Given the potential risks involved, the benefits of employee and volunteer screening far outweigh the costs. ♦

Legal Issues in Prevention

As if the devastating injuries and long-term trauma that result from child abuse aren't bad enough, nonprofit organizations that serve children must also consider the myriad of legal issues that arise from these tragic situations. A complete review with trusted legal counsel before problems occur helps solidify an organization's child abuse prevention plan and potentially reduces the risk of legal liabilities.

In addition to special issues that may be unique to your organization, a legal review should also address these general topics:

Hiring and Supervision

If an organization is somehow negligent in hiring or supervising an employee or volunteer, then the organization may be liable for whatever harm that employee or volunteer causes. This kind of claim rests on a legal duty of care that the organization owes to the injured party whenever there is a foreseeable risk of injury to others that the organization could prevent with reasonable efforts.

Such efforts include screening and monitoring employees/volunteers, orientation and training, and proper management. Depending on the circumstances, many other steps may be required before an organization's duty of care is reasonably satisfied.

This is potentially the most serious area of liability for organizations serving children. Liability for the acts of volunteers is just as great as for the acts of paid employees. To minimize risks, volunteers should undergo the same application and screening process as employees (see the earlier article in this series on screening). Both volunteers and employees should be properly trained and monitored.

Insuring against the risk of negligent hiring and supervision should be a significant part of an organization's overall risk management plan, but that alone cannot take the place of proper internal controls and preventative measures. Discuss with your insurance representative the possibility of offsetting restrictions in your organization's policies when you implement risk avoidance measures.

Privacy

By necessity, organizations that properly screen employees and volunteers gather significant amounts of personal information about applicants. If that information is improperly disclosed, the organization could be liable for invasion of privacy, defamation or other personal injuries.

To reduce this risk, guard personal information of all applicants as confidential. Mark applications, reference feedback and related materials as "confidential." These files should be kept in a secure location with access limited only to appropriate personnel with a need to know. Train those personnel about when the proper disclosure of such information is allowed, including how and when disclosure is required by law for mandatory reporting.

Mandatory Reporting

All 50 states require at least some measure of mandatory reporting when child abuse is suspected, although the laws vary widely by state. Some states require anyone to report suspected child abuse if they have reason to believe a child's welfare is threatened. Other state laws require reporting only by those professionals in positions to observe certain evidence.

An organization's executives should be fully versed in the laws of all the states where that organization operates facilities serving children. The key questions to address in every jurisdiction are:

- What constitutes "child abuse" and/or related offenses under the laws of this state?
- Who is legally required to file a report of child abuse in this state?
- When and where is such a report filed?

Beyond the mandatory reporting requirement, another category of "permissive" or "authorized" reporting also exists in many states. These statutory provisions generally permit, but do not legally require, reporting of suspected child abuse. This means civil or criminal penalties are not imposed for failure to report.

In either case, consultation with legal counsel is essential to determine the full extent of the state reporting obligations where an organization operates. Most states provide statutory immunity from civil or criminal liability for those individuals (including both mandatory and permissive or authorized reporters) who, in good faith, file a report of suspected child abuse. Reports filed in bad faith, however, may be subject to penalties.

Seek the advice of a local attorney familiar with your organization's mission and structure for a full review of the risks your organization faces. Remember, there's more at stake than mere liability. A charity's good name and reputation suffers great damage whenever legal claims are raised, regardless of their merit. Even more importantly, managing legal risks can help protect innocent victims and their families who may otherwise suffer lifetime consequences. ♦

Managing Mentors to Reduce Risk

Mentoring relationships provide some of the best teaching, counseling and social development that many of our nation's young people ever receive. The merits of mentoring are without question, but when mentors are left to function independently without oversight or accountability, problems occur frequently. Failure to supervise and monitor mentors adequately creates a high-risk environment for child abuse—a risk your organization simply cannot afford.

A properly managed mentor program helps reduce the risk of child abuse by establishing a level of supervision that prevents improper relations between mentors and mentees. Most of the same policies and procedures that apply to volunteers and employees who work with children should also be followed in mentor programs.

Additional essential protections include the following safeguards:

- **Written policy.** The organization's policy of protection should be clearly explained and enforced among all mentors during orientation and training—and throughout their mentor careers. Examples of proper and improper standards of conduct should be openly and widely discussed among all personnel. Parents and guardians of children involved in mentoring relationships should also be made aware of the organization's policy and standards of conduct. Even the children can be educated with age-appropriate explanations of what permissible and non-permissible forms of contact are acceptable between themselves and their mentors.

- **Family involvement.** If your mentoring program involves partici-

pation by mentees, parents or guardians, be sure your policies adequately address all family members. Conversely, if members of a mentor's family also volunteer, then they should be screened through the same application or hiring process as other mentors.

- **Observation period.** Whenever reasonably possible, consider requiring employees and volunteers to serve in their positions for a period of time—generally, three to six months—in good standing before allowing direct access or supervision of children. This provides you ample time to assess the individual's behavior and also serves as a strong deterrent to potential offenders who, according to FBI profiles, generally prefer immediate access to children.

- **Teams of two.** Arrange “teams” of at least two mentors each. Partner the mentor team with two or more children as mentees. This approach facilitates better monitoring and makes it very difficult for any single individual to achieve unsupervised access to children. It also ensures at least one adult witness is always on hand to corroborate or refute any allegations of misbehavior. It works especially well with student mentors.

- **When and where.** Set requirements as to when and where mentors may meet with mentees and for how long. Some organizations require all mentoring meetings to be held in public places during normal business hours. Prohibiting meetings in mentors' and mentees' homes unless other adults are present is a good rule because it limits opportunities for mentors and mentees to be alone together. Specifying how often and how long mentors should meet with mentees helps clarify the expectations of all parties and serves as a “red flag”

when violations are unexplained.

- **Accountability.** Sign-in and sign-out procedures should be enforced when mentoring meetings take place at an organization's facilities. If meetings occur elsewhere, an additional reporting procedure should require that mentors keep their supervisors or other contact personnel informed as to where and when such meetings are scheduled. To the extent possible, it's a good idea to monitor mentoring relationships randomly on an unannounced basis. Be alert to any warning signs of problems. Immediately pursue and probe unusual facts or circumstances.

- **What and why.** The activities that mentors and mentees participate in together should be selected based on their connection to the organization's mission. For example, an educational organization may design a mentoring program that involves primarily educational meetings between mentors and mentees at museums, libraries, etc.

Of course, the individual needs of each mentee must be considered when selecting activities, but if an organization allows its mentoring activities to be driven by its own mission, then it's much easier to solve policy questions that arise along the way.

- **An issue of trust.** Successful mentoring programs depend almost entirely on relationships, and relationships depend on trust. When the risk of child abuse goes unchecked, that trust is seriously threatened. If trust is violated, then little chance remains for building and sustaining mentoring relationships. Implementing proper policies and wisely managing mentors offers the best hope for preserving that trust. ♦

Responding to Charges

Preventing and responding to child abuse takes on special significance for charitable organizations whose missions are to preserve the welfare of children. While the importance of proper prevention measures cannot be stressed enough, it's an organization's response to charges of child abuse that often determines the long-term results. A proper response shields other children from potential abuse and helps protect an organization from the legal nightmare of failing to respond or act appropriately. As part of an organization's child abuse prevention plan, response mechanisms should be carefully developed and implemented so the organization is prepared to intervene when child abuse is suspected. These mechanisms should include:

- **Urgent Response.** Do not disregard any reported incident as lacking enough merit to warrant investigation. When a discovery, suspicion or report of child abuse is made, an organization must respond immediately. All personnel in an organization should be trained not to suppress or dismiss their suspicions. Instead, a clear procedure and chain of authority should be established for raising concerns.

- **Staff Training.** All new staff members, including volunteers, should undergo orientation, a part of which should address how and what to report when child abuse is suspected. All current staff members should receive "refresher" training at least once a year, or more often if possible. State and local law enforcement authorities may be available to attend these training sessions and offer more comprehensive discussions about reporting obligations, particu-

larly for those required by law to report child abuse.

- **Reporting Procedure.** A typical reporting procedure calls for an organization to designate a "response team" of at least two individuals trained in proper investigation techniques and crisis management. Concerns or suspicions raised by a staff member are reported directly to a supervisor, who in turn, notifies the response team, which then initiates the investigation. Outside legal counsel or other authorities may also be called upon to assist in the investigation.

If the investigation is conducted by legal counsel or at the direction of legal counsel, then the information collected may be privileged from disclosure as confidential attorney/client communication under certain state laws. For this reason, one of the response team's first steps should be to call competent legal counsel and involve him or her in any actions relating to the incident.

The attorney will also help determine the appropriate time to notify the organization's insurance carrier. Notification should not wait until civil or criminal charges have been filed, since some policies require immediate notification to be effective. Many insurance policies simply don't cover sexual misconduct due to the enormous liabilities, but a thorough review of your policy by a legal expert will insure compliance with all requirements that must be met for coverage, if any, to apply.

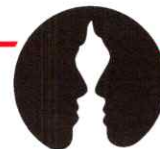
- **Personnel Management.** Immediately remove the accused from any further contact with children. Depending on the unique circumstances of the situation, an organization may decide the best

approach is to quietly place the individual on a leave of absence or transfer to another position. Alternately, an organization may choose to disclose the personnel action as a means of publicly delineating the organization's position and describing its response. Circumstances will dictate the best approach, but whatever course is chosen, it must be undertaken swiftly and judiciously.

- **Report and Cooperate.** If a staff member qualifies as a "mandatory reporter" under state law, then a legal obligation requires that the incident be reported to appropriate authorities. If no mandatory report is required, then an organization may still decide it best to report the incident. Unless otherwise advised by legal counsel, cooperate fully in any investigation conducted by law enforcement or social service authorities.

- **Release of Information.** Never release any information until its factual content has been solidly confirmed. Be especially careful with information about personal identities of the parties involved, as the release of this information could lead to serious privacy or confidentiality issues. Prepare a written statement to use when disseminating information throughout the organization or to answer media inquiries, and designate one person to handle inquiries so the organization puts forth a consistent and coordinated response.

The threat of child abuse is a real and immediate concern to any organization that serves children. Establishing effective response mechanisms is a crucial part of an overall child abuse prevention plan that helps ensure your organization offers a safe, secure environment for children. ♦



The Daily Points of Light Award

April 2002

April 1. Gayle Crabtree, Bullock, N.C., founded HopeforHealing.org to help survivors of rape and sexual assault using the medium of the Internet.

April 2. Dawn Montaner, Waco, Texas, founded Lifelines Foundation for Eating Disorders, one of the country's largest such organizations.

April 3. James Rhodes, Camp Hill, Ala., established the country's first programs for at-risk students.

April 4. Eagle Volunteer Fire Department, Eagle, Colo., assists seniors and the disabled by shoveling and de-icing walkways, raking leaves and providing many other services.



Eagle, Colo., Volunteer Fire Department, April 4 winner.

April 5. Vaqueros del Oido (The Hearing Cowboys), San Antonio, Texas, is a group of audiologists and other volunteers who provide hearing aids and hearing health care to indigents in need.

April 8. Carlos Sousa, Jr., Milford, Mass., participates in the KidCare Project, which provides parents with a photograph and a set of fingerprints of their child.

April 9. Keith Walls, Clarksburg, W.Va., helps children and veterans by developing scholarship programs for youth, fundraising for veterans and more.

April 10. Stonehill College Into the Streets Program, Easton, Mass., encourages community members to volunteer by

mentoring, assisting at nursing homes, delivering food and furniture to the needy and more.

April 11. Helping Our Pupils Excel Tutoring Centers, Inc., Arlington, Texas, is a neighborhood outreach program that tutors students in the fourth through eighth grades.

April 12. Staten Island School Reading Volunteers, Staten Island, N.Y., helps children improve their reading skills, abate their anxiety about reading and have fun.

April 15. Patti Neal, Clinton Township, Mich., campaigns to raise money and awareness and find suitable bone marrow donors.

April 16. Ann Arbor YMCA's Youth Volunteer Corps, Ann Arbor, Mich., engages youth in community projects and fosters leadership development and teamwork.

April 17. Pat Morgan, Charleston, Ill., holds fund-raisers to help The Coalition Against Domestic Violence, coordinates fund drives, volunteers at hospitals and more.

April 18. Greta Menke, Bristol, Wis., assists victims of domestic abuse with support and information to help them stay safe.

April 19. Charlene Clark, Concord, N.H., provides pet therapy to persons with mental illness at New Hampshire Hospital.

April 22. Ray Lovely, Port Angeles, Wash., helped expand the Olympic National Park's Volunteer-In-Parks program.

April 23. FamilyLinks, Pittsburgh, Pa., offers human services for children, families and individuals affected by mental retardation and mental illness.

April 24. Rita France, Johnston, S.C., teaches Conversational English at the Ridge Spring Baptist Church to foreign nationals who provide agricultural help to the local farmers.

April 25. Holli Pruitt, Rockwall, Texas, volunteers at Children's Medical Center, which helps children regardless of

About the Award

Nominations for the Daily Points of Light Awards will be accepted throughout the year, but selections will be made on a quarterly basis with deadlines of Feb. 15, May 1, Aug. 1 and Nov. 1.

Complete listings of the award winners are on the Foundation's Internet Web site: www.pointsoflight.org.

Nomination forms are available on-line or by calling the Points of Light Foundation, 202-729-3127. You may also nominate by letter, which must include a telephone number. Letters should be sent to The Daily Points of Light Awards Program, 1400 I St. NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005.

The Daily Points of Light Awards program is cosponsored by the Points of Light Foundation, the Corporation for National and Community Service and the Knights of Columbus, with the Knights providing the funding.

their ability to pay.

April 26. Marisa Flavin, McLean, Va., has devoted hundreds of hours to improve the quality of gifted education at the Myer Saturday School.

April 29. USS Saipan (LHA 2), Norfolk, Va., is a U.S. Navy general purpose amphibious assault ship that spends many hours assisting the community.

April 30. Shantelle Cochran, Layton, Utah, is president of The Layton Youth Court, a diversionary juvenile program that provides youth offenders with no previous criminal history a second chance not to receive a juvenile record.

(continued on page 23)

Youth Awards

First, there was a handful, then a sprinkling. Now dozens of U.S. corporations offer awards for youths performing community service.

And the number keeps growing, along with the dollars awarded to young volunteers, says Cynthia Scherer, Points of Light Foundation Youth Outreach vice president. Scherer estimates the number of companies offering youth service awards, including scholarships, possibly tripled in the past 12 years. She is convinced companies will be sponsoring youth service awards for the long haul. In part that's because community service activities represent a win-win-win for youths, communities and corporations.

"Young people benefit because they're realizing the impact their service is having," says Scherer. Communities obviously gain from the youth volunteerism, which ranges from park cleanup and serving seniors to tutoring and raising funds for books and supplies. "And corporations benefit because associating with these activities produces a positive image and increased visibility."

Following are three corporations offering exemplary youth community service awards programs.

Spirit of Community

Ashleigh Crowe's involvement in community service was sparked by a photograph of a girl from the Dominican Republic. She was shoeless, her feet painfully infected.

Crowe, then 12, immediately decided she would send the girl her sneakers. After the public got wind



Ashleigh Crowe, Suffield, Conn.

of her plan, she was deluged with sneakers to ship to that tiny country.

In succeeding years, that led to sending educational materials, medical and other supplies and, eventually, to the establishment of Ashleigh's Army. Recently, the 3,000-strong army raised funds to sponsor a village's first elementary school, and members erected cinderblock homes and a small bathhouse, set up a temporary clinic and trained adults in silk screening and weaving. For her heroic efforts, Crowe, now 16 and a high school junior in Suffield,

Conn., was selected a Prudential 2002 Spirit of Community national high school honoree.

"I'm most proud that I helped give these people a chance to live properly" and offered children educational opportunities, "which is the key to a brighter future," says Crowe, whose army plans to address community service projects elsewhere in the Dominican Republic and perhaps other countries.

Since launching the "Spirit" awards in 1995, Prudential officials have come across thousands of inspirational and heartwarming stories of 5th- to 12th-grade youngsters performing community service. This year alone, 28,000 youths shared their often-creative and enterprising volunteerism tales in hopes of being selected one of 10 national honorees—five high school and five middle-level students.

"I'm so proud so many young people are out there doing remarkable, committed things," says Scott Peterson, executive director of Prudential's Spirit initiative. "It's great to think these awards play a role [in promoting youth volunteerism]."

National honorees receive \$5,000, an engraved gold medallion, a crystal trophy and \$25,000 worth of toys, clothing and other products donated in their names to needy children in their area. State honorees receive \$1,000 and an engraved silver medallion. Plus, the national and state honorees and top volunteers from the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are, along with one parent or guardian, awarded an all-expenses paid trip to the nation's capital and

Corporate Scholarships Honor Kids' Service

By Harvey Meyer

feted in a four-day celebration.

The Spirit awards arose from Prudential's intention to develop a major national community relations effort that built on the company's strength and traditions and reinforced connections in various constituencies. The company targeted community service as its initiative, paying particular attention to youth volunteerism.

"Ultimately, we thought we could make more of a difference focusing on young people, who are just beginning to form their life values and priorities," says Peterson. "Plus, there was significant research showing how beneficial it was for young people's self esteem and confidence to be involved in volunteer activities."

Turned out, there were also benefits to the company. In the mid-1990s, Prudential was confronting allegations of abusive sales practices, and the Spirit awards helped counter that unfavorable publicity, says Peterson. Many employees report feeling "proud" of the program, which is credited with helping improve recruitment and retention.

Spirit generates considerable exposure and good will for Prudential, he says. In part, that's because many participating and supportive organizations, including the National Association of Secondary School Principals, align with it. Those organizations also offer a stamp of credibility, which encourages other organizations and even elected officials and celebrities like Richard Dreyfus and Roma Downey to hop on the Spirit bandwagon. Additional exposure for Spirit occurs through related

activities promoting youth volunteerism, including a booklet and youth leadership training performed by the Points of Light Foundation.

The program, which has toasted more than 40,000 local, state and national honorees, will continue expanding. More organizations are joining, and plans include promoting youth volunteerism in more countries where Prudential does business.

"There are no guarantees about the future of the program, but I can't see it being stopped, barring a severe economic downturn," says Peterson. "(Spirit) has become a signature event, and most of us realize its value."

All-Around Scholarships

As far as Target Stores is concerned, it hit the bull's eye—reflecting its well-known corporate logo—when it launched the All-Around Scholarship program six years ago.

The program offers \$1,000 scholarships, applied toward two- and four-year higher educational institutions, to high school seniors, high school graduates and students 24 and under for their exemplary community service. Four \$10,000 "grand" scholarships are also handed out annually. Since All Around's inception, more than 12,800 scholarships, approximately two for each Target store, have been awarded.

"With this program, we're trying to celebrate students who maybe aren't at the top of their class academically but deserve recognition for how they've bettered their communities," says Stephanie Calvert, Target's community relations marketing specialist.

Franco Ripple, 19, a University of

Florida sophomore, says he was "blown away" when he was selected a 2002 grand scholarship recipient. Ripple started Project R.O.S.S. (Recycle Our School Supplies) as an eighth grader, a program that this past year collected books, clothing, food and school supplies for 10,000 Boys & Girls Clubs members.

The scholarship program is one of several examples of long-standing community commitment for Target, which annually donates 5% of its pre-tax earnings to charity. In another company program, customers can earmark a percentage of their purchases for local schools. Since 1997, that program has raised more than \$56 million.

The All-Around Scholarship program itself has awarded almost \$13 million since 1996. (Another youth scholarship program called Start Something, a character-building initiative that includes a community-service component, has awarded about \$300,000 since its launch last year.) This year alone, the All-Around program, administered by the Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America, gave away more than \$2 million to 2,114 recipients.

The program annually receives between 16,000 and 20,000 applications, which are distributed at Target stores and some educational conferences. Those applications, along with those filled out on Target's web site, are delivered to CSFA. All things being equal, preference is given to volunteering students who live closer to the retailer's stores. Many stores participate in honoring the winning students ➡

More Corporate Sponsorships

● The Discover Card Tribute Award Scholarship program, sponsored by Discover® Card, in cooperation with the American Association of School Administrators, recognizes the achievements of high school juniors in areas beyond academics. The program awards scholarships for any type of post-high school education or training. Students need a cumulative grade point average for grades 9 and 10 of at least 2.75 on a 4.0 scale. www.aasa.org/discover.htm

● Angels in Action, sponsored by Angel Soft Bath Tissues, rewards children, ages 5-15, for acts of kindness that benefit their community or charity. Ten young people will receive \$5,000 and a year's supply of bathroom tissue for their efforts. www.anglesoft.com

● The Bayer National Science Foundation Award is for 6th, 7th and 8th graders in public, private or home schools as well as youth organizations. Four students work together as a team to come up with an innovative solution to a commu-

nity problem. Each team will compete for an all expenses-paid one-week trip to Epcot at the Walt Disney World resort for Finals Week; a \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant to develop their idea in their community; and \$36,000 in savings bonds for student team members.

www.nsf.gov/bayer-nsf-award.html

● Colgate's Youth for America Award provides monetary grants of up to \$2,000 to groups with the most creative and successful projects. Colgate is especially interested in Boy/Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, Camp Fire Girls, Girls, Inc., and 4-H Clubs, although all groups are eligible for over 315 cash awards. www.colgate.com

● The Tylenol Brand Scholarship Fund awards 10 \$10,000 and 150 \$1,000 scholarships for higher education to students who demonstrate leadership in community and school activities and who intend to major in health-related fields. <http://scholarship.tylenol.com/rules.html>

who live near their facilities, perhaps with food and refreshments.

"It's unbelievable what some of these kids do," says Calvert. "It makes me feel good and proud that I work for a company that recognizes their efforts."

Disney All Stars

"Hey now, you're an all star..." That lyric from the 1999 song "All Star" by Smash Mouth particularly resonates with children participating in the Disney Adventures All Stars Program. The program was launched last spring as a character-building initiative aimed at inspiring com-

munity volunteerism in kids 6-14.

"Our company has always had community service as a key value, and we're in a unique position because Disney speaks to families and kids," says Jeff Hoffman, vice president Disney Worldwide Outreach. "This program enables us to bring those pieces together and promote volunteerism among children."

The program honors kids who have performed outstanding community service, either as an individual or part of a group. Underlining the program's altruistic intentions, winners—announced Oct. 1—receive

\$1,000 for the nonprofit of their choice. (All applying kids will receive a T-shirt.) Winners also get a trip to California to meet, and participate in a volunteer project with, the cast of Disney Channel's most popular show, "Lizzie McGuire."

"When the Lizzie McGuire cast pitched in to promote the All Stars program, that helped give it relevance to kids; it helped make volunteerism cool," says Suzanne Harper, editor of Disney Adventures Magazine, a prime backer of All Stars.

Winners and their projects will be featured in the May 2003 *Disney Adventures*, a top-ranked publication for kids ages 6-12. The magazine, with assistance from the Points of Light Foundation, provided step-by-step suggestions for how kids could start and maintain their volunteerism, even recommending community service projects and local nonprofits to work with.

Hoffman says various Disney properties—Disney Adventures, Disney Channel, Radio Disney and Disney Online—also receive business benefits from their support and participation of All Stars. Their image, visibility and credibility are enhanced.

Adds Hoffman, who says All Stars could reach Europe and Asia next year: "We're giving up space in the magazine and time on the Disney Channel to promote the program, where we could be, for instance, promoting the next Disney movie. So we're putting our money where our mouth is in supporting volunteerism. I'm proud to be with a company that is putting a stake in the ground and saying volunteerism is important." ♦

Harvey Meyer is a freelance writer based in Twin Cities, Minn., area.

Service Fuels the Spirit of America

by Laura Bush

Following are excerpts from a speech given by First Lady Laura Bush at the closing plenary of The National Conference on Community Volunteering and National Service, June 2002, Salt Lake City.

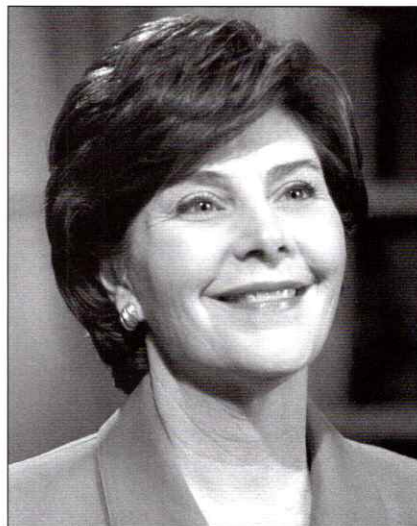
In his radio address on June 1st, President Bush said, "Americans have always believed in an ethic of service. Americans serve others because their conscience demands it, because their faith teaches it, because they are grateful to their country, and because service brings rewards much deeper than material success."

Everyone here has played some part in helping America respond to the tragedy of Sept. 11 by volunteering to serve in some capacity. Many of you have a long history of helping people find ways to give back to the places we call home ... you help people overcome a sense of hopelessness with meaningful action.

Like you, President Bush and I want more Americans to become volunteers.

In his State of the Union Address, President Bush called on every American to dedicate at least two years—or 4,000 hours—to serving others. I join him in encouraging people to participate in one of the thousands of meaningful volunteer projects: building homes for the homeless, helping feed the hungry, or reading with children who are learning to read.

We ask Americans to consider being a part of the USA Freedom Corps, which John Bridgeland talked about yesterday. The Freedom Corps strengthens programs like AmeriCorps, the Peace Corps, Learn and



First Lady Laura Bush

Serve America, and the Senior Corps. Freedom Corps is also helping people participate in the new Citizens Corps, and Americans can find local service opportunities online at: (www.usafreedomcorps.gov) or by calling 1-877-USA-CORPS.

So far, the response has been overwhelming. Since the President issued his call to service, more than 45,000 people have called the United States Peace Corps to request applications for only 6,300 open slots.

Recently I visited Texas A&M University in College Station, where, at a football game last September, a handful of students convinced 70,000 football fans to trade in their team colors and instead buy a red, white, or blue shirt, depending on their stadium seat level. ... In that one day, A&M students raised about \$200,000 for the New York Firefighters 9/11 Relief Fund and the WTC Police Disaster Relief Fund.

When I visited the university, I asked a group of students if they

could remember when they were in second grade and their teachers asked them to draw a picture of someone or something they wanted to be when they grew up. I said, think about what you drew as a child: a firefighter, a police officer, an athlete, a doctor, an astronaut, a teacher ... or sometimes even a president.

These are people whose actions make them heroes, and that's why children draw them. They want to be heroes like them. But you don't have to walk into a burning building or wear a badge to rescue someone.

You don't have to score a touchdown to win points with someone. You don't have to go medical school to help a person feel better. You don't have to walk on the moon to change the earth ... and you don't have to sign a bill to change your state or country.

Kindness and heroism can't always be drawn in a picture. Many acts of kindness never make the evening news or the morning paper.

We are fortunate to live in a time of great awakening ... a time of realizing what it means to live in this country and how good it feels to give something back to this place we call home.

We are a different country than we were on September 10th. We will not forget the images and events of the past nine months. I've seen people helping strangers; I've seen strangers becoming heroes; I've seen this country at its best.

Americans are proud; Americans are united; and Americans care about others. These are the qualities that make your jobs easier; and these are the qualities that will sustain this country through tough times. ♦

Runaways

Back in the 1970s, Lois Lee was a graduate student working on a dissertation that required her to do some research on a social problem. "I ended up getting invited to the first national conference of COYOTE, the first organization for sex workers," she recalls. "Two of the girls I met there were later killed by the Hillside Strangler, and I ended up helping organize prostitutes to testify against the Hillside Strangler.

"These women said that it was too late for them, but that maybe I could do something to help the kids on the streets. They told me that there was no place for young people to go for help, so I set up a drop-in program in my living room. During that first summer, 250 kids came to my apartment looking for help.

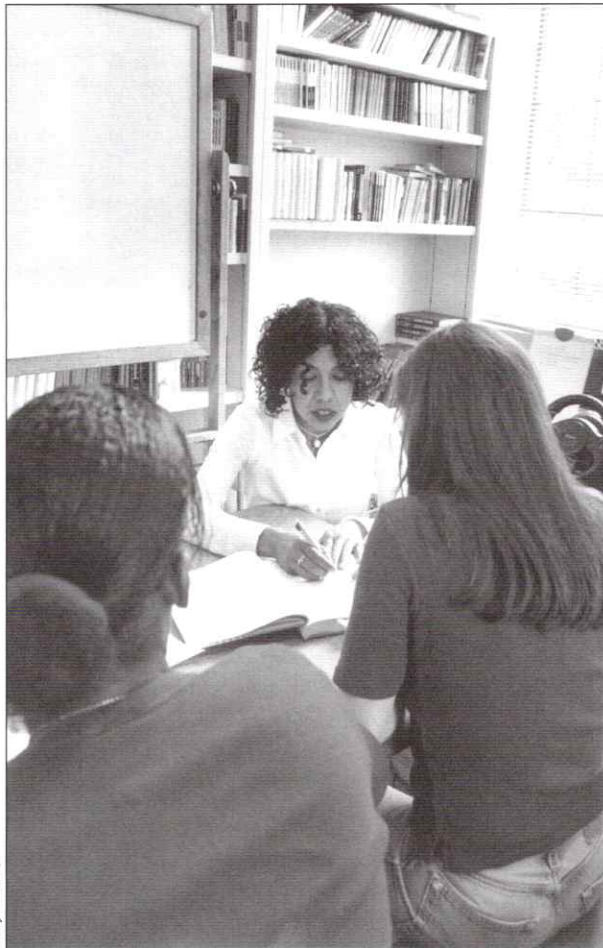
"Back then, I still thought I was going to teach college and spend my summers in Europe," she says with a laugh.

New Hope

Instead of the academic life, however, Lee went on to create Children of the Night, a Van Nuys, Calif.-based shelter home for teenage prostitutes. Children of the Night is now considered a prototype for all of California's group home programs. She estimates that since 1979, she's worked with some 10,000 kids, about 80% of whom have stayed off the streets.

Over the years, Lee has seen the age of her clients drop. "The more

established the program got, the younger the kids I saw. When it was a drop-in center, they were mostly in their late teens and early twenties,"



Sonia Ventura, high school principal (10 years at Children of the Night), tutors residents in classroom.

she explains. "Now that we have a school connected with the program, my most common age is 15. But the young kids always have been there. They just didn't have anywhere to go."

Lee estimates that the young people in her programs, who are overwhelmingly female, come from all ethnic and socioeconomic back-

grounds. "I have three kids starting college in January, and then I have others who need special education," says Lee.

"The one thing they share is that they were all sexually abused. From early ages, these kids were left to fend for themselves," she points out. "The fact is, far more people have sex with kids than we are willing to deal with. It is such a horrific crime that people don't want to believe it happens," she says.

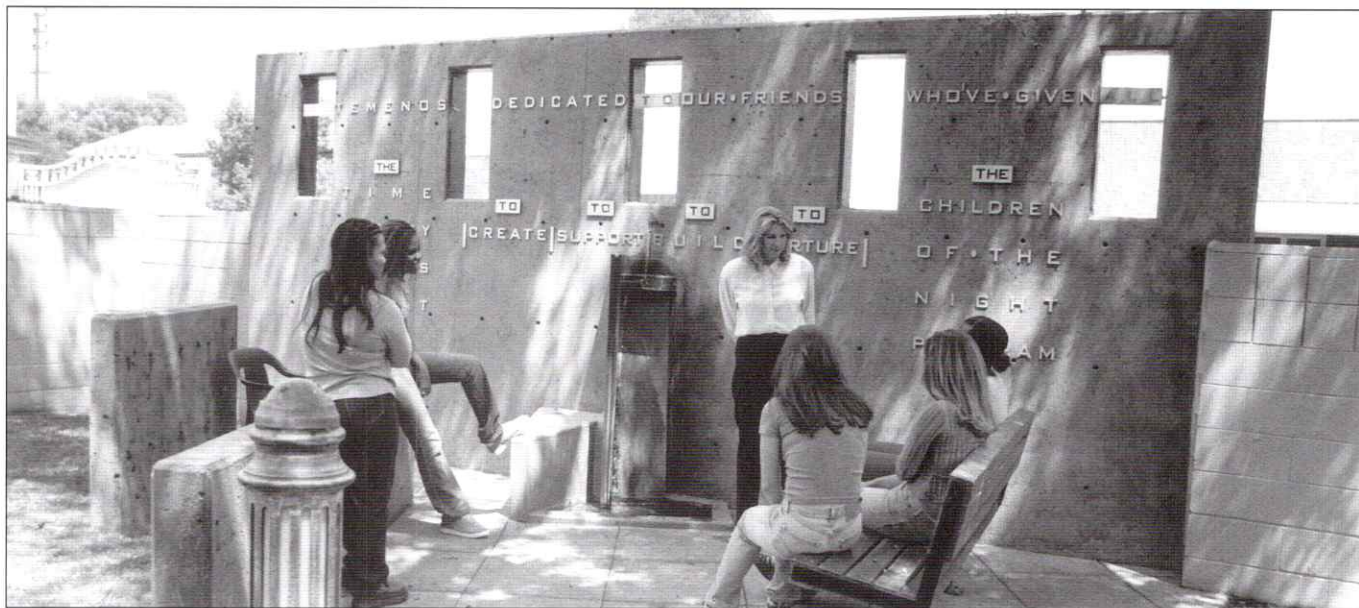
One challenge Lee faces is connecting with the young people who might be helped by a program like Children of the Night. She aids children from across the country, many of whom find their way to her shelter through their local police. "The kids are not easy to find, and they don't always want help," she says. "And they're not always the most attractive: They have piercings and tattoos and strange haircuts. They don't always look pretty for a brochure."

The kids who end up in one of the 24 beds at the Children of the Night facility are there because they choose to be. "This is a completely voluntary program. I tell every single kid, if you don't want to be here, I'll get you a plane ticket home, because we don't want you here," Lee says. "Nobody has ever taken me up on that offer."

Children of the Night residents have a very structured day that includes academics, GED and SAT prep classes, science projects, one-on-one tutoring, independent living pro-

Trio of Programs Targets Teens on the Street

by Roy DeLaMar



Amy Graves

Dr. Lois Lee talks with residents in Yard of Shelter.

grams, driver's education, and evening activities with about 150 volunteers. Every night, it's lights out at 10 p.m.

Children of the Night's funding comes from foundations, corpora-

tions and individuals. "I don't take any money from the city because this program is not about numbers of beds and kids," says Lee. "At the federal level, there is no government commitment, no money and no action."

A Phone Call Away

Like Children of the Night, the Chicago-based National Runaway Switchboard began in 1971 as a local operation. "We began as a program just for Chicago youth, because the city is a gathering ground for kids who are running away. It's a big place surrounded by lots of little places," says Cathleen Carolan, spokeswoman for the National Runaway Switchboard.

The Switchboard distributes posters and wallet cards in areas where runaways are known to converge. "The police also give kids our number," Carolan says. "We can provide, food, clothes, medical assistance, legal assistance. We can help

them find shelter for the night, or we can facilitate their going home. We're a hotline, so everything is driven by the kids themselves."

Last year, the Switchboard handled 116,000 calls from all over the country. The callers were evenly divided between parents whose children had run away and kids who had already run away or were contemplating doing so.

The Switchboard is manned 24 hours a day by both employees and approximately 125 volunteers. The organization receives funding from the federal government, as well as from corporations, foundations and individual donations. The National Runaway Switchboard operates with an annual budget of about only \$1 million. "We make it thanks to the generosity and dedication of our partners and volunteers," says Carolan.

According to Carolan, one of the most frequently cited reasons for a ➤

Who Runs Away

Forty two percent of all run-away youth in 2000 had already left home at least once before, according to national demographics compiled by the National Runaway Switchboard. In addition, of the majority of teenagers who called the Switchboard:

- 85% were between the ages of 14 and 17
- 75% were female
- 60% had been on the streets for up to 7 days
- 36% were running away from some family dynamic

kid to leave home involves some sort of family dynamic, such as a blended family or trouble with a step family. Problems with peers and problems at school are also common causes for running away. "And now, the Internet is also having an impact," she says. "We get parents calling who say, 'My daughter met a guy online and ran away to be with him.'"

Still, Carolan believes that "most kids are not running away to something. They're running away from something. And yet, as bad as it was at home, they don't want their parents to think they're dead."

In many cases, a teenager will contact the Switchboard and leave a message for his parents. "We then call the parents and read the message verbatim. We don't give out any other information. But we ask the parents if they'd like to leave a message in case the kid calls back," Carolan explains. "We try to encourage some sort of dialogue. From there, we can set up a conference call where we mediate to help get issues on the table and make sure everyone gets a voice in the conversation. We help form a plan, and everybody knows the expectations."

If everyone decides that it makes sense to go home, the Switchboard will provide a free bus ticket through its Home-Free Program, a partnership with Greyhound Lines. "If the young person ends up going home, we help set up counseling and other community-based services. And we follow-up after the child is home," Carolan adds.

Last year, the Switchboard helped reunite about 1,000 young people and their families.

'Extraordinary People'

"I think that many times we are providing the family these kids don't have," says Stacy Horn Koch, executive director of Covenant House-New

Orleans. "We offer them structure, support, communication, you know, exactly what you got if you were lucky enough to have good parents."

The New Orleans outpost of the national organization Covenant House has been around since 1984. Since then, it has helped more than 17,000 kids, most of whom come from Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Arkansas. "They find us because the word is out on the street. We are the only agency that offers open intake for kids ages 16 to 21. They don't need an ID or a job. They just have to be in need," says Koch.

In addition to their community center, Covenant House-New Orleans operates the Rites of Passage transitional living programs, which are open to young people who show a high level of commitment and responsibility toward building independent and productive lives.

"We provide educational, psychosocial, and job readiness assessments, anger management classes, and therapy. We'll help a kid get an ID so he can get a job. The community center provides GED classes, computer training, even a landscaping program," says Koch. "Kids in the program are eventually required to find some type of work, even if it's only part-time. They have to pay some rent and they have to save money."

The facility can serve up to 114 kids. Every year, Covenant House-New Orleans helps at least 1,000 young people in crisis. "Many are throwaways," explains Koch. "They've been thrown out for a variety of reasons. One particularly heartbreaking reason I often hear is, 'my mom's boyfriend doesn't like me.' We always work toward reuniting with family, except in cases of violence or sexual trauma," she says.

Despite the hard lives they've lived, most of the young people Koch works with seem to respond when

they're shown even the smallest amounts of attention and kindness. "What gets through to many of them is hearing that there is a different way to live," she adds. "That, and someone saying that you're worth loving, even if the people who should've loved you didn't."

With an annual budget of about \$5.9 million, including \$1 million from the city of New Orleans, Koch already has seen the effects of a souring economy on her agency's bottom line. "Most of the budget comes from individual donations," she says. "The number of donors isn't down, but the actual dollar amounts are."

Koch sees amazing potential in every young person with whom she works. "Some people see these kids as the scourge of the earth," she says, her voice choked with emotion. "But if they were smart, they'd realize these kids are incredibly smart because they've survived. How many people have the strength to keep on hoping when their foundations are ripped away? These kids are extraordinary people. These kids are savable. And every child is worth saving." ♦

Roy DeLaMar is a regular contributor to Volunteer Leadership.

Want to Know More?

● Children of the Night, 14530 Sylvan St., Van Nuys, CA 91411; 818-551-1300; hotline: 800-551-1300; www.childrenofthenight.org

● National Runaway Switchboard, 3080 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL 60657; 773-880-9860; hotline: 800-621-4000; www.nrscrisisline.org

● Covenant House-New Orleans, 611 N. Rampart St., New Orleans, LA 70112; 504-584-1111; www.covenanthouseno.org

Daily Points of Light

(continued from page 15)

May 2002

May 1. Carl Zimmerman, Bayside, N.Y., founded AMP@115, a mentoring organization that pairs elder mentors as grandparent figures to children as well as youth to youth.

May 2. Dave Marshall, Heber Springs, Ariz., volunteers for Cleburne County Cares, a program that serves children and senior citizens.

May 3. Noyes Free Clinic, Dansville, N.Y., offers health screening opportunities at county fairs, banks, pharmacies, grocery stores and the hospital.

May 6. Therese Cote, Amherst, N.H., is the president of Hudson Seniors, which provides meals, foot care services, fundraisers, trips, line dancing and more.

May 7. Mark Moseley, Harrisburg, Pa., volunteers for the Housing and Credit Counseling Service, the Indian Center and other organizations that help underserved populations.

May 8. Steve Edwards, Rome, Ga., established "One Family Helping One Family" to help the needy living in public housing to pay their gas bills.

May 9. Heidi Greene, Powell, Tenn., campaigns for improved car seat and caving safety measures.



Camptown, Inc., Carmel, Ind., May 23 winner

May 10. Jean Hand, Coarsegold, Calif., is the founder and director of the Children's Museum of the Sierra, where parents share in meaningful activities with their children.

May 13. Doris McCanon, Washington, D.C., serves many organizations, including the DC Experience Corps, which creates volunteer opportunities in schools for seniors.

May 14. Volunteer Senior

Companions, Chester, S.C., assists seniors with daily tasks and provides respite care for family caregivers.

May 15. Dewayne Howard, Catoosa, Okla., mentors with the PAL Program of Rogers County Volunteers for Youth and tutors students in the school system.

May 16. Zeyad Elsayed, Sacramento, Calif., administers The Learning Resource Center, which improves computer literacy in south Sacramento, a low-income urban area.

May 17. The 11-10-02 Foundation, also known as BrunchBunch.com, is a program that brings young professionals and students together over brunch.

May 20. Jack Schuh, St. Joseph, Minn., is a Volunteer Leader for the Greater St. Cloud Area Retired and Senior Volunteer Program.

May 21. Dare to Dream Kids Care Club of Grinnell School, Derry, N.H., is a group of 300 clubs nationwide that provide public service activities.

May 22. Leela Shankar, Kalamazoo, Mich., volunteers for Growing In-Home Volunteer Effort, which provides in-home support for frail seniors and disabled people of all ages.

May 23. Camptown, Inc., Carmel, Ind., helps underprivileged youth develop wholly as young people and encourages them to get involved with local churches.

May 24. Edwin Dankworth, Alameda, Calif., helped establish Smart Healthy Babies Home Visit Program to give greater language exposure, interaction and stimulation to children in need.

May 27. Nita Jones, Inglewood, Calif., volunteers full time, dividing her energies between the Vermont Square United Methodist Church and AARP.

May 28. Literacy Volunteers of America Newark and Essex County, Newark, N.J., provides free literacy services to adults 15 years and older.

May 29. Lane Ballard, Seattle, Wash., volunteers for the Children's Hospital's Recreational Therapy department and Tree Zone program.

May 30. Doreen Scott, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., is one of the first members of the Kids in Distress Auxiliary, which helps abused and neglected children.

May 31. Reverend Charles Flowers, San Antonio, Texas, helped establish Love Demonstrated Ministries, Inc. Christian Boot Camp (CBC) for troubled youth aged 13 through 19.



Allen Baca (right), June 21 winner

June 2002

June 3. Richard Scherrer, Sacramento, Calif., volunteers for several organizations that impact children, such as The Elks Club of Carmichael and The Casa Garden Restaurant.

June 4. Devony Duhe, Plano, Texas, volunteers for Humanity United in Giving (HUG) International, Inc., serving children around the world victimized by poverty and war.

June 5. C. Howard Watkin, Richfield, Utah, volunteers for the Retired Senior Volunteer Program and helps students in the Five Fundamental Resources program.

June 6. Cal State Fullerton Volunteer and Service Center, Fullerton, Calif., develops civic-minded individuals by providing community volunteer opportunities.

June 7. American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), Washington, D.C., a membership organization for people 50 and over, offers diverse volunteer opportunities.

June 10. Pamela J. Atkinson, Salt Lake City, Utah, is an advocate for the homeless and low-income populations, focusing her concerns on children's needs.

June 11. Urban Peak, Denver, Colo., provides programs exclusively for homeless and runaway youth under age 21, such as medical care and GED classes.

June 12. Intermountain Therapy Animals, Salt Lake City, Utah, provides animal-assisted therapy to hospitals, schools, nursing care centers and youth detention facilities.

June 13. Waycross Kiwanis Club, Waycross, Ga., participates in community service and acts as a networking system for business and professional members.

June 14. Lisa Young, Pleasant Grove, Utah, volunteers for the Pleasant Grove Youth City Council and Youth Court, which helps young people see how local government works.

(continued on page 25)

Plug in to the Freedom Corps

By Patty Rhule

If you run a soup kitchen and need volunteers to make sandwiches, www.usafreedomcorps.gov is for you.

If you're an individual who wants to volunteer, either in your community or serving virtually from your home computer, www.usafreedomcorps.gov is for you.

Launched in January as a way to make President George W. Bush's State of the Union goal that each American volunteer 4,000 hours—or two years—over a lifetime easier to accomplish, the web site has some powerful partners, including VolunteerMatch and SERVENet, two online services that connect volunteers to groups that need them, the United Way and the National Mentoring Partnership.

"Our goal is to expand [volunteer] opportunities and to help people find them," says Freedom Corps communications director Lindsey Kozberg. "We work across sectors, with businesses, schools, nonprofits, state and local agencies."

"More than half of the people in America who don't volunteer say they would if they knew how," says Steve Culbertson, president and CEO of Youth Service America, which has operated SERVENet since 1995.

www.usafreedomcorps.gov is designed to make that easy:

- If you're a government agency,

register through the Department of the Interior.

- If you're a nonprofit looking for local volunteers, sign up through VolunteerMatch, SERVENet, the United Way or the National Mentoring Partnerships. All have links at the USA Freedom Corps site.

are bringing together groups that have online matching, Volunteer Centers, toll-free phone centers. An individual looking for volunteer opportunities can look [online] ... that's going to be good for individuals and organizations."

The idea is to make it as simple as possible for any organization to tap

into a national volunteer pool—a not-for-profit need simply go to the web site and sign up. There is no charge for organizations to list their volunteer opportunities.

Potential volunteers can go to the web site, and select a category of interest:

"We're trying to use technology to supplement what we know is the fundamental reason why people volunteer, and that is that they're asked," says Culbertson. "If we use technology to ask, we may get a whole new generation of people who haven't been presented with the opportunity to serve."

SERVENet supplied about 40% of the content for the database of the White House site, Culbertson says.

The USA Freedom Corps marked its six-month anniversary in July, with a web site relaunch and public service advertisements designed to draw more people to community service.

"We work as a clearinghouse of clearinghouses," says Kozberg. "We

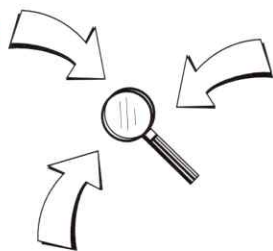
animals and environment; arts and culture; children and youth; civic and community; education and technology; faith-based organizations; health; human services; public safety and disaster preparedness. They can select a location by zip code, or choose virtual volunteer opportunities that can be done from home, such as grant writing or fundraising. Next, they simply click on the "find opportunities now" button.

One key is simplicity and synchronicity. A not-for-profit that posts its volunteer opportunities on SERVENet will automatically have the same opportunity appear on usafreedomcorps.gov.

"There's a seamless technology that's in place," says Culbertson. "We

USA Freedom Corps

The President's Call to Service



ask organizations to register first. You have to supply an IRS number so we know you are a certified 501(c)3."

The Freedom Corps site likewise operates as a portal to the larger aspects of SERVENet, including databases that offer a talent bank, where volunteers list the skills they can offer nonprofits, ranging from grant writing to owning a 4-wheel drive vehicle. Nonprofits can tap into that and send out e-mails to people when they have a corresponding need. SERVENet also has a quote databank for speech writing, best practices and more.

Once an organization has signed on, the posting should be online within 24 hours. "The goal for USA Freedom Corps is to make this as easy as possible and provide nonprofits with a resource for recruiting," says Kozberg.

Kozberg's advice for organizations that want their volunteer opportunities listed:

- Provide a detailed description and title of the volunteer position that needs to be filled.
- Be as accurate as possible about the date and time period volunteers are needed.
- Make sure contact information is up to date. The quality of information provided is key to capturing the volunteer who's made the initial contact, says Kozberg. After the volunteer finds an opportunity that interests him or her, it is up to the volunteer to contact the organization.

"We're working to develop additional resources for nonprofits, to help recruit, training and retention activities," says Kozberg. Organizations can sign up for an e-

mail newsletter that will soon come out on a weekly basis, providing suggestions and information on attracting and working with volunteers.

"Our structure is a government coordinating council," says Kozberg. "We strengthen federally supported service opportunities and strengthen the nonprofit volunteer opportunities available."

Since the president announced the USA Freedom Corps in his State of the Union address, there's been a 40% increase in application requests for the Peace Corps, and AmeriCorps has seen a 90% increase in online applications.

"It's raising all ships in terms of this new influx of energy that's coming in from the White House," says Culbertson. "The entire service industry is going to be helped." ♦

Freedom Corps Partners

America's Promise
AmeriCorps
Citizens Corps (new, devised to promote citizen involvement in homeland security)
Learn and Serve America
National Mentoring Partnership
Network for Good
Peace Corps
Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network
Senior Corps
SERVENet
United Way
Volunteer.gov/Gov
VolunteerMatch

recognition

Daily Points of Light

(continued from page 23)

June 17. Randy Povey, Ore., led a group of volunteers in building two large sports complexes, both of which include several fields for baseball and soccer.

June 18. Mark and Linda Staley, Omaha, Neb., volunteer for Compassion In Action, Inc., a ministry and educational program for incarcerated women.

June 19. Project HOPE for the Homeless, Plainville, Ohio, provides temporary emergency shelter, Bible study, substance abuse prevention and more.

June 20. Steven Burda, Philadelphia, Pa., volunteers for the Jewish Relief Agency, a grassroots organization that identifies and feeds needy Jewish families.

June 21. Allen Baca, Round Rock, Texas, volunteered for Bell County Jail, where he started a GED program for seniors that became a senior literacy program.

June 24. Jonathan Paoletti, Philadelphia, Pa., has organized various community projects, including fund raising for Veterans and creating a library for St. Christopher's Hospital for children.

June 25. Steve Curtis, Layton, Utah, is active in the Layton Community Action Council, participating in neighborhood watch, literacy and other programs.

June 26. Unity Health Hospice Volunteer Program, St. Louis, Mo, provides support services to terminally ill patients and their families.

June 27. Bill and Marie Louise Kingsbery, Lubbock, Texas, volunteer for Women's Protective Services, which helps families affected by violence.

June 28. Lynda Hales, Salem, Utah, represents Kids Cause, which enables children with literacy difficulties to receive clothing, shoes, eyeglasses, food, and vision, dental and medical care. ♦



Jonathan Paoletti, June 24 winner

Colorado Blaze

It began on Saturday, June 8, in a forest near Lake George, Colo., about 4 p.m. Police say the fire was started by Terry Barton, a U.S. Forest Service worker who first reported the fire. I was in Salt Lake City attending The National Conference on Community Volunteering and National Service and didn't hear about the fire until Sunday. This blaze wasn't very far from my home in Cripple Creek, in the middle of the Rocky Mountains. As the crow flies, it was only three mountains away.

By the time I returned home later that week, the fire was devouring hundreds of acres of forest. Black smoke and ash covered the area, even into Colorado Springs, about 60 miles away. My husband and son volunteered to rescue livestock, and our small ranch became a refuge for animals and people who were evacuated, often with only 10 minutes' notice.

As in the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, the response to this disaster was immediate and overwhelming. Offers of help poured in from surrounding communities. The American Red Cross and the

Salvation Army had mobilized and were on-site, feeding firefighters and assisting evacuees. We have a VOAD group, comprised of disaster services organizations, but this situation was no longer a test, and everyone had already gone their own way. The immediate challenge was to decode how best to involve the Volunteer Center of the Pikes Peak Region and where to be most effective. And how not to duplicate efforts.

Finding a Niche

We quickly identified and connected with one of the community initiatives that had formed literally overnight—the Ute Pass Fire Relief Fund. A local businesswoman, Kathy Kniss, had started a daily conversation with the volunteer fire departments about their immediate needs and was publishing a daily e-mail list. I emphasize the word “volunteer”—these fire departments are in rural, heavily forested communities and had limited funds and resources to



Photos courtesy of Kathy Kniss, Cascade, Colo.

Volunteer Center a Key Player in Disaster Response

By Brenda Clifton



Colorado volunteers collect and send food and supplies and raise money in response to the fire.

fight a fire of this magnitude.

The Volunteer Center quickly became the conduit for sharing the e-mail information with our community listserv. Within six hours of sending out our first e-mail, we began receiving calls for donations of items and financial contributions and people wanting to volunteer.

Volunteer Center staff began tracking and logging in all calls and e-mails. We set up a simple system of folders labeled "Volunteers," "Evacuees," "Animal Rescue" and so on, to help us track the volume of responses. We were in communication with the Salvation Army about volunteer needs, and with the Red Cross shelter about help with people who were being evacuated. Our role was that of liaison to the existing services, being careful not to send peo-

ple to the fire fighting sites or directly to the evacuee shelters. The community was particularly moved by this disaster as they felt the firefighters were fighting a losing battle and everyone wanted to help.

Joining Forces

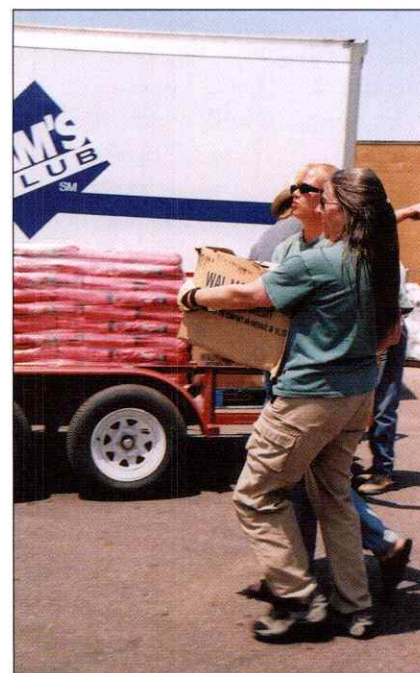
The Volunteer Center participated in a one-day fund and items drive at a local Wal-Mart store that was



coordinated within a 24-hour period. Within eight hours we had collected \$57,000 and 12 truckloads of items for the fire districts. Volunteers were engaged to transport the items to the fire districts as soon as a truck was filled, and a local bank was on hand to handle the funds that were collected. Perishable items were taken to the local Salvation Army for refrigeration. Several radio stations set up on-site broadcasts to help promote the event. In the days following, the Volunteer Center continued to serve

as a drop-off site for an amazing array of items—diesel oil, brake fluid, gloves, lip balm, sunscreen and much more. We limited the items we would accept—no clothing, no used items.

Volunteers delivered the items to the fire districts, and staff helped out as well. Financial contributions continued to arrive, and these were all handed off to the Ute Pass Fire Relief Fund. Once the needs of the volunteer fire districts were met, we continued to promote the needs of evacuees and share donations with the Salvation Army and Red Cross. The Volunteer Center aimed to be the "voice of reason in the midst of chaos." We were able to help the Ute Pass Fire Relief Fund identify an area nonprofit that could dispense donations and funds to evacuees. We worked with El Pomar Foundation, a large community funder, to promote a Wildfire Fund that they established



Photos courtesy of Kathy Kniss, Cascade, Colo.



Colorado volunteers pitch in to fight the fires and assist evacuees.



and to encourage companies to funnel donations there.

Looking Back

What worked well? The Volunteer Center's ability to mobilize resources and yet not duplicate services. Everyone wanted to help, and we made sure they were connected to something. We also made sure every call and every e-mail was responded to—a major challenge with only two full-time staff members. We tracked all of the responses we received from the community, and it was a great opportunity to work closely with companies that wanted to help.

What didn't work so well? There was confusion about who was doing what. The Red Cross immediately brought in their national disaster team to help. The Salvation Army has staff that were mobilized to set up canteen services. The challenge for the Volunteer Center was to help the community understand that it was impossible to just show up and fight the fire. Our role was that of a conduit to other efforts, to help people to help, but to do so effectively.

In a two-day period, the Volunteer Center responded to 360

calls. We connected 96 companies to donate cash and goods. We provided 120 individual volunteers who helped with transportation of goods, served meals to firefighters, sorted items and prepared food. We tracked and referred information to the Red Cross regarding offers to house evacuees, pets and livestock. We served as a donation site for goods, and as a "pass-through" for financial donations.

Unfortunately, there was no cohesiveness to our VOAD group. People went their own way and in the course of being busy with what each of the disaster organizations does, no one had time to communicate effectively. Fortunately, the Volunteer Center knew the correct contact person for each agency, and we made an attempt to keep as current as possible.

We also worked with a local company that was desperate to make a donation of on-site "mobile-mini" storage containers. These containers eventually went to several fire-fighting locations and to the Salvation Army. Daily information updates were posted to our web site, and local media outlets turned to the Volunteer Center for updates on needs and referrals of people needing assistance.

In the course of two weeks, 8,000 people were evacuated, 137,000 acres were destroyed, 133 homes were burned, and 2,564 firefighters, both volunteer and federal, were utilized. As this community enters into the recovery phase of the fire, the role of the Volunteer Center continues to be varied. Funds are still being collected, people still want to help, and volunteers will need to be engaged now more than ever. Reforestation, restoration and replanting have become the main emphasis of the recovery effort. We will continue to play a role in providing volunteer resources, working with FEMA and the U.S. Forest Service as the recovery effort progresses. ♦

Brenda Clifton is director of the Volunteer Center of the Pikes Peak Region, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Want to Help?

Contributions can be made to:

Ute Pass Fire Relief Fund
7825 Bluff Road
Cascade, CO 80809
www.utepassfirerelief.com

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Sharing THE AMERICAN SPIRIT 2002

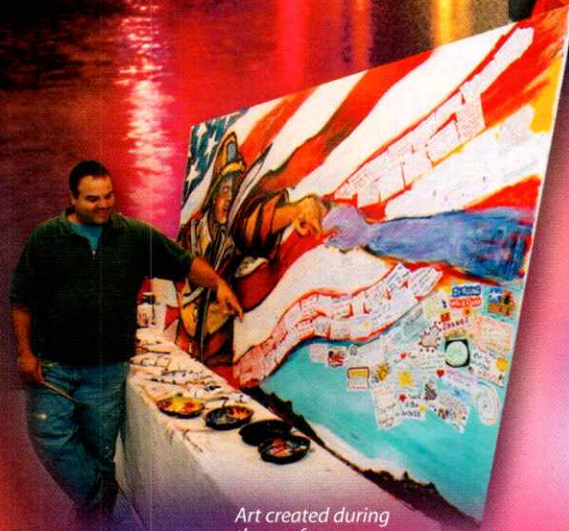


Marie Osmond,
winner of the
2002 Romney Award



First Lady
Laura Bush

Entertainers



Art created during
the conference
and dedicated to the
heroes of Sept. 11

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2003



Baltimore Convention Center
Baltimore, Maryland
June 8-10, 2003

Conference information
is available on the web at

www.pointsoflight.org

More than 3,300 volunteer leaders gathered at the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City, Utah, June 9-11 for the National Conference on Community Volunteering and National Service. The annual conference - sponsored by the Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National and Community Service—draws attendees from the nonprofit sector and from government, business and the international community. This year's theme: Sharing the American Spirit. The three-day conference offered 240 workshops and an exhibit hall featuring 90 exhibitors.



These Scholars Excel in Service

The **Connect America National Partnership** is a national partnership of diverse organizations working in collaboration to leverage knowledge, resources and volunteers to address social and community problems.



Connect America Partners

100 Black Men of America • Alliance for Children & Families • Allstate Insurance Co. • America's Promise • America's Second Harvest • American Assn. for Single People • American Assn. of Retired Persons Tax-Aide • American Bar Assn. • American Society of Military Comptrollers • American Red Cross • American Society of Assn. Executives • Arkansas Dept. of Human Services • Assn. for Volunteer Administration • Assn. of Fundraising Professionals • Assn. of Jewish Family and Children's Agencies • Assn. of Junior Leagues Int'l. • Big Brothers Big Sisters of America • Camp Fire USA • Character Counts • Child Watch of North America • Child Welfare League of America • Citizens' Scholarship Foundation of America • Civil Air Patrol • Communities In Schools • Compeer • Connect L.A. • ConnectMichigan Alliance • Corporation for Nat'l. Service • Cross-Cultural Solutions • Dept. of Human Services, Ark. • Dept. of Veterans Affairs • Earth Force • Enterprise Foundation • Faith In Action • Family, Career and Community Leaders of America • Farmers Insurance Group • Federal Bureau of Prisons • First Book • Future Business Leaders of America • Phi Beta Lambda • General Federation of Women's Clubs • Generations United • Global Volunteers • Habitat For Humanity • Halftime • HOPE worldwide Ltd. • InKindex • Internal Revenue Service • Int'l. Assn. of Jewish Vocational Services • J.P. Morgan Chase Foundation • Jewish Women Int'l. • Joint Action in Community Service • Kiwanis Int'l. • KPMG Foundation • March of Dimes • MENTOR/Nat'l. Mentoring Partnership • Miss America Organization • Mothers Against Drunk Driving • NATSO Foundation • Nat'l. 4-H Council • Nat'l. Alliance for Youth Sports • Nat'l. AmeriCorps Assn. • Nat'l. Assembly • Nat'l. Assn. for Community Mediation • Nat'l. Assn. for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education • Nat'l. Assn. of Blacks in Criminal Justice • Nat'l. Assn. of Partners in Education • Nat'l. Assn. of Planning Councils • Nat'l. Conference for Community and Justice • Nat'l. Consumers League • Nat'l. Council of Catholic Women • Nat'l. Council of La Raza • Nat'l. Council of Negro Women • Nat'l. Council on Family Relations • Nat'l. Council on Workplace Volunteerism • Nat'l. Crime Prevention Council • Nat'l. Exchange Club • Nat'l. Fair Housing Alliance • Nat'l. Fatherhood Initiative • Nat'l. Football League • Nat'l. Fraternal Congress of America • Nat'l. Future Farmers of America Organization • Nat'l. Institute for Literacy • Nat'l. Interfaith Community Ministry Network • Nat'l. Organization of Concerned Black Men • Nat'l. Restaurant Assn. Educational Foundation • Nat'l. Safety Council • Nat'l. Society of Collegiate Scholars • Nat'l. Wildlife Federation • NetDay • Patterson Communication • Pew Partnership for Civic Change • Phi Mu Foundation • Points of Light Foundation • RISE Learning Solutions • Salvation Army • Shell Oil Co. • Telephone Pioneers of America • U.S. Chess Federation • United States Junior Chamber of Commerce • United Way of America • Verizon Foundation • Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. • Volunteer Center Nat'l. Network • Volunteers of America • Wal-Mart Foundation • W.K. Kellogg Foundation • The Working Group • Women in Community Service • YMCA of the USA • Youth Achievers Int'l. • Youth Service America

They are bright, they are young and they are leaders. And they channel their energies into community service.

The **National Society of Collegiate Scholars** has 250,000 members at 170 colleges who are dedicated to scholarship, leadership and service. The students gathered in Austin, Texas, July 25-28 for their seventh annual leadership summit. As part of summit activities, Scholars constructed a YMCA playground, dedicated to the memory of Candace Williams, a

Scholar at Northeastern University who was killed in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

To commemorate Sept. 11, 2001, 40 NSCS chapters already have performed acts of service in memory of victims, part of the Unity in the Spirit of America Initiative. NSCS calls its efforts Helping is Healing; so far more than 40 chapters have completed projects. The Society expects to have near total participation in this initiative.